

# Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

8 March 2012

## Funding boost for coast conservation

The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) is set receive a slice of \$1.81 million of Australian Government funding to protect habitat critical for threatened species along the Corangamite coast.

GORCC is one of 18 successful tender applicants to the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority's CoastalTender program funded by the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country program.

Federal Member for Corangamite Darren Cheeseman said \$629,000 in funding had been secured by GORCC for the conservation and rehabilitation of 13 significant sites covering 177 hectares between Point Impossible and Lorne over five years.

"These sites include areas of endangered Coastal Salt-marsh and Alkaline Scrub Ecological Vegetation Classes which provide critical habitat to a number of threatened species including the Rufous Bristlebird and the Southern Brown Bandicoot," he said.

GORCC CEO Richard Davies said the funding would enable the protection and enhancement of natural environments ranging from fragile sand dunes to salt marshes and heathlands.

"Our focus will be on environmental weed control, revegetation, pest animal control and reducing recreational impacts in vulnerable areas with work to be led by our dedicated and skilled conservation team.

"The funding will also enable us to continue supporting the vital work of local volunteers, who contribute thousands of hours every year conserving the nature of our coast," he said.

Corangamite CMA Chief Executive Officer Gareth Smith said this funding is for round two of Corangamite CMA's CoastalTender program which had received a positive response from coastal land managers.

"The program is a strategic engagement and investment program for the entire coastal region, but with an emphasis on those components of the coastal hotspot of the Port Phillip Bay's western shoreline and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site in the Corangamite region.

"Round one of the project was used to test project design prior to implementing a significantly larger second round. In round one, the program invested \$269,680 in five-year landholder agreements at eight sites," Mr Smith said.

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*Caring for the coast and community*

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“In round two the authority received 80 expressions of interest, double the first round, from 43 land managers, created 88 draft management plans for a total 1,811 hectares eligible for funding. This has resulted in a total investment offer of \$1.81 million to 18 land managers on public and private land for five-year agreements covering 590.48 hectares with 4 new properties under permanent protection.”

Corangamite CMA’s CoastalTender is an incentive and engagement program for coastal public and private land managers that select projects that deliver strong environmental results and encourage community involvement.

- Ends -

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**Photo Opportunity:**

**When:** Thursday 8 March 2012, 10am

**Where:** Jan Juc conservation site (meet at the Steps Car Park just off Ocean Blvd, Jan Juc).

**What:** Darren Cheeseman Member for Corangamite, Richard Davies GORCC CEO, James Hattam, CCMA Coastal Tender Coordinator, Georgie Beale, GORCC Conservation Team Officer. The photo location is an area of intact heathland of high conservation value with views to the ocean



Australian Government

