

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC**

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Regional Development

Deputy Leader of the Government  
in the Legislative Council



Getting Things Done.  
Making Things Fair.

Friday, 18 May, 2018

## SUPPORTING ECO TOURISM ON THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD

The Andrews Labor Government is investing in an eco-tourism project on the Great Ocean Road to broaden the range of experiences and encourage visitors to stay longer in one of the state's most beautiful destinations.

In Apollo Bay today, Minister for Regional Development Jaala Pulford announced a \$1.5 million grant to the Conservation Ecology Centre's Wildlife Wonders project.

The Conservation Ecology Centre will create a new nature park, *Wildlife Wonders*, on a spectacular 50-acre site just outside Apollo Bay that will give visitors the chance to observe and learn about native animals in their natural setting.

Visitors to Wildlife Wonders will receive a guided walking tour by qualified conservationists through protected habitat where they will encounter native animals living freely in natural bushland overlooking the ocean.

The Wildlife Wonders experience will be designed by Brian Massey, art director from the Lord of the Rings and Hobbit Trilogies and landscape designer of the highly successful tourism experience 'Hobbiton' in New Zealand.

With over 2.1 million people visiting the 12 Apostles and Shipwreck Coast region each year, the project seeks to capitalise on this tourism market while also delivering environmental benefits.

All profits generated by Wildlife Wonders will go towards conservation of the region's flora and fauna through investment in ecosystem restoration, ecological research, species recovery programs, and community education programs.

The project will create 44 jobs during the construction phase and 35 jobs in ecotourism and environmental conservation once the project is complete.

The \$9.64 million project has been in development for several years and has the support of the Federal Government through a \$2 million grant from the Regional Jobs and Investment Package.

Right across the state, the Government is investing in initiatives that make regional Victoria a better place to live, work and do business.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaala Pulford

*"There is simply no better place in Victoria – where our natural habitat and beauty combine."*

*"This project will create 35 jobs for people working in the visitor economy and nature conservation, providing meaningful employment pathways for people in Otways."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

*"We know visitors love to see our native fauna, and we know the 12 Apostles and Shipwreck Coast region attracts 2 million visits each year, so the Wildlife Wonders project outside Apollo Bay is destined for great things."*

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