



Victorian National Parks Association Inc.

Level 3, 60 Leicester
Street Carlton Vic 3053,
Tel: (03) 9347 5188
Fax: (03) 9347 5199
Email: vnpa@vnpa.org.au
Website: www.vnpa.org.au
ABN 34 217 717 593

MEDIA RELEASE

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Alpine grazing decision applauded

The Victorian National Parks Association is applauding today's announcement of an end to licensed private cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park.

Charlie Sherwin, VNPA Director says "Giving strong protection to the Alpine National Park is the right decision.

"This is a responsible decision, which will deliver a balanced outcome by protecting native wildflowers, animals and ecosystems in the park while licensed grazing continues on public land outside the park. This decision gives everyone a fair go:

- "It gives strong protection to endangered species which are being pushed to the edge of extinction by trampling and grazing cattle in the park
- "It protects the headwaters of eastern Victoria's major water catchments from fouling and soil erosion by cattle
- "It gives all Victorians the opportunity to experience swathes of wildflowers across alpine landscapes free from soil erosion and other damage caused by cattle grazing
- "It saves taxpayers from the heavy cost of subsidising grazing in the park- currently some \$500,000 a year, with only \$30,000 returned to the Government in licence fees.
- "It provides a fair and level playing field for other farmers who have to pay commercial agistment rates or make their own hay and silage for summer feed
- "It offers very generous financial assistance to any cattle business adversely affected by the shift of grazing out of the national park

"This responsible decision will create a better future for the Victorian Alps, protecting the natural environment within the national park, and securing the future of some of the most spectacular landscapes in Australia.

"Today's announcement will give our children's children the opportunity to enjoy spectacular, healthy alpine landscapes swathed in native wildflowers. We commend the Bracks Government for this memorable and lasting contribution to nature conservation in Victoria.

For comment:

Charlie Sherwin, Director 0418 357813

Phil Ingamells, Alpine Project Officer 0427 705133