PUBLIC LAND ADVOCACY NETWORK
Community members, researchers and peak environmental groups campaigning to curb excessive roadside clearances around Victoria

THE PROBLEM
VicRoads Projects have been attracting much community angst.

FINDING SOLUTIONS
In response, VicRoads set up its Roadside Environment Committee (VREC), a “community and technical expert group to advise how to achieve best practice environmental stewardship of proposed and existing road reservations in co-ordination with other road corridor objectives.” It is similar to the former highly successful Victorian Roadside Conservation Advisory Committee, although not agency-wide; and the current NSW Roadside Environment Committee (which is agency-wide). It meets monthly and began in April 2017.

Current VREC members:
• Community reps (4) • Landcare Vic (1)
• College of Engineering & Science, Victoria University (1)
• School of BioSciences Melbourne University (1)
• Local Government (Occasionally 1)
• National Trust (1 – 2) • DELWP (2)
• VicRoads - Manager Environment Practice, and others

WHAT HAS BEEN/WILL BE ACHIEVED?
• Community campaigners are “at the table” with VicRoads and are taken seriously
• A protocol for the re-use of cut trees for all projects - eg re-snagging waterways, adventure playgrounds
• More thorough training in environmental awareness and practice on roadsides for field and office VicRoads staff and contractors
• Ensure roadside protection is an integral component during project conception, planning and management
• Facilitate the compilation of Roadside Management Plans, which included detailed roadside vegetation surveys
• Hot-spots – why is community upset still occurring and how can we help? (Yan Yean, Batesford, Mornington Peninsula…)
• Involvement of other agencies
• Presentation at ISCA (Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia) on World Environment Day
• Use an app for roadsides similar to one the National Trust uses. It can be used for information or to report issues
• Nature walk and info session with VR staff (Lots more)

CURRENT/RECENT PROJECTS WITH ESTIMATED LOSSES OF ROADSIDE TREES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>ROADSIDE LENGTH WHERE CLEARING OCCURRING</th>
<th>TOTAL NUMBER OF TREES TO BE REMOVED</th>
<th>NUMBER OF LARGE TREES TO BE REMOVED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Highway Duplication</td>
<td>74km</td>
<td>Unknown. Rough estimate by community group ~ 30,000</td>
<td>~2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transalla to Beaufort</td>
<td>74km</td>
<td>Unknown. Rough estimate by community group ~ 30,000</td>
<td>~2000</td>
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<td>Western Highway Duplication</td>
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<td>~2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort to Stawell</td>
<td>74km</td>
<td>Unknown. Rough estimate by community group ~ 30,000</td>
<td>~2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushworth-Tatura Road</td>
<td>74km</td>
<td>Unknown. Rough estimate by community group ~ 30,000</td>
<td>~2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Gippsland Princes Highway duplication</td>
<td>43km</td>
<td>25 ha of endangered woodland. 61 in addition to 25 ha.</td>
<td>Unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rawne Interchange</td>
<td>74km</td>
<td>Unknown. Rough estimate by community group ~ 30,000</td>
<td>~2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echuca/Moama Project</td>
<td>74km</td>
<td>Unknown. Rough estimate by community group ~ 30,000</td>
<td>~2000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Left: A beautiful roadside at Rushworth that Edna Walling would be proud of.

Above: The VREC includes PLAN members.