

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Wetland wonders on show at Rutherglen this weekend

Organisers of a wetland tour being held in the Rutherglen area this Saturday (12 September) are delighted by a surge of interest in the event.

Almost 40 farmers, ecologists, teachers and artists have signed up for a bus tour of Lake Moodemere, Black Swamp and Boorhaman Plains.

The wetland tour is being organised by the North East CMA, Parks Victoria, Trust For Nature, Riparian Management Services and the Department of Sustainability & Environment.

The north east region of Victoria is home to almost 2,000 wetlands. Black Swamp near Rutherglen is one of eight wetlands in the region listed as nationally important.

“In comparison with other parts of the region, the Rutherglen and Wangaratta area contain an enormous number and area of wetlands,” said Sarah Daniell, Environmental Water Reserve Officer with the North East CMA.

“This is largely due to the geomorphology of the area and changes to the river course over time.”

The North East CMA received funding to conduct the wetland community education tour from the Australian Government’s ‘Caring for our Country’ program.

Guest speakers will discuss environmental projects undertaken on wetlands in the Rutherglen area and explain the challenges involved in managing wetlands.

“ We’re hoping that people taking part in our tour will discover that wetlands are both beautiful and functional,” said Ms Daniell.

“ They are important sites for migratory water birds, provide refuge for animals during drought, intercept and modify nutrients, minimise flood surges. They are also lovely places to visit.”

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▼ Photo and interviews available on Saturday. See tour program on following page.

For further information, please contact:

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#### *Wetlands – quick facts:*

- Wetlands are areas that have acquired special characteristics through being wet on a regular or semi-regular basis. The term ‘wetlands’ includes swamps, billabongs, lakes and saltmarshes, bogs, soaks, mudflats and mangroves.
- Eight wetlands in North East Victoria are listed in the “*Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia*” - Black Swamp, Ryans Lagoon, Davies Plain, Mount Buffalo Peatlands, Lake Hume, Lake Dartmouth, the Ovens & Mitta Mitta rivers.

**Lake Moodemere, Black Swamp, and Boorhaman Plains Wetlands Tour  
Saturday 12 September 2009**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Program Details</b>	<b>Speaker/s</b>
8:30	Lake Moodemere Lake Reserve picnic area (Murray Valley Highway, Rutherglen)	Arrive at Lake Moodemere for registration, welcome/housekeeping and ready to board the bus.	Sarah Daniell (North East CMA).
8:45	Lake Moodemere Lake Reserve picnic area (Murray Valley Highway, Rutherglen)	Introduction - provide context for the day. Discussion on threats and values of wetlands, where they are in the landscape, hydrological context.	Jim Blackney (Trust For Nature), Matt Looby (Department of Sustainability and Environment).
9:00	Lake Moodemere Lake Reserve, River Murray Reserve (Murray Valley Highway, Rutherglen)	Discussion on the Rail Trail proposal, water savings project, the regulator at Hiskins Bend, and cultural heritage aspects. Discussion also including the challenge of managing a wetland for multiple use (recreation, natural resources and water extraction for irrigation).	Geoff Barrow (Parks Victoria).
10:00	Black Swamp (Boorhaman East Road, Boorhaman)	Discussion on its status as a Nationally Important Wetland, links to Black Dog Creek, and importance as a local target template for revegetation projects. Also discussion on the newly purchased land with established plantation.	Geoff Barrow (Parks Victoria), Rick James (Riparian Management Services), Matt Looby (Department of Sustainability and Environment).
10:40	White Swamp (Boorhaman East Road, Boorhaman)	Drive by White Swamp – short discussion on the wetland's significance/values, threatening processes.	Matt Looby (Department of Sustainability and Environment), Jim Blackney (Trust For Nature).
10:45	Ex Fogarty Property (O'Keefe Road, Boorhaman)	Short discussion the wetland. Morning Tea	Jim Blackney
11:30	Boorhaman Plains (Dockers Plains Pastoral Company (DPPC), Boorhaman Road, Boorhaman)	Examples on environmental projects to protect plains river red gum and grassy wetlands; and discussion on the flow regime.	Rick James (Riparian Management Services), Jim Blackney (Trust For Nature).
1:00	Lake Moodemere Lake Reserve picnic area (Murray Valley Highway, Rutherglen)	Closing and lunch.	Sarah Daniell (North East CMA).