



ROCK CLIMBING IN THE GRAMPIANS NATIONAL PARK

March 2019



AGENDA

1. About the Grampians National Park
2. Situation overview
3. Next steps

THE GRAMPIANS NATIONAL PARK



Parks Victoria has legislative requirements to protect Victoria's natural and cultural values and we're committed to acting on our obligations.

Nationally listed for its biodiversity and cultural heritage, the Grampians National Park was established in 1984 to protect environmental and cultural values of national significance.

The park is the most important area for floristic richness and endemism in eastern inland Australia, with more than 800 indigenous plant species; it is home to one third of the Victoria's flora. It also supports a wide range of wildlife with more than 40 mammals and an abundance of bird species.

Known by Traditional Owners as Gariwerd, the Grampians National Park and other protected areas such as Black Range, Mount Arapiles-Tooan, Red Rock and Mount Talbot, contain the majority of surviving Aboriginal rock art sites in south-east Australia.





SITUATION OVERVIEW

ROCK CLIMBING IN THE PARK

In recent years, rock climbing in the Grampians has significantly increased and contemporary rock climbing activities, such as bolting, have emerged creating significant risk to Aboriginal cultural heritage, rock faces and vegetation and visitor safety.

Under the existing Grampians National Park Management Plan (2003), rock climbing in Special Protection Areas is a prohibited activity. Further to the Special Protection Areas identified in the current management plan, 29 additional areas have also been set aside as Protection Areas in which climbing is prohibited to protect their cultural and natural values.

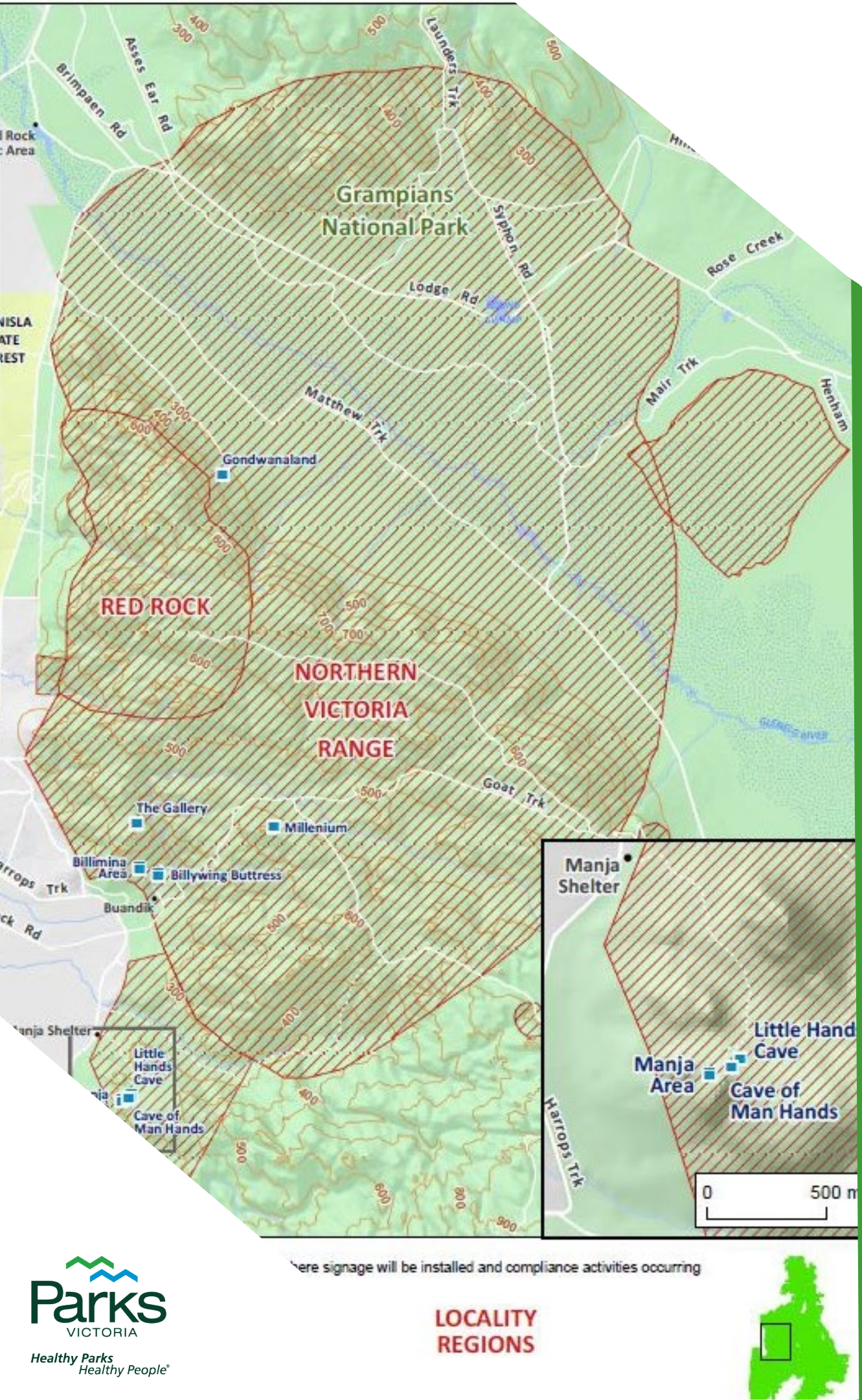
The increase in activity and changes in climbing techniques have impacted irreplaceable cultural and environmental assets to a level where enforcement is necessary to preserve these special areas.

We acknowledge the physical, social and economic benefits that climbing brings to our communities and understand the rock climbing community cares passionately about the Grampians National Park.

PROTECTING VALUES – Independent climbers

Parks Victoria is currently undertaking enforcement activities to prevent rock climbing at eight key locations where signage is installed.

In broader Special Protected Areas, outside those eight key locations, Parks Victoria is sharing the information materials on rock climbing and undertaking enforcement activity relating to other activities not permitted in any National Park including cutting or damaging vegetation (for instance to make or enhance tracks), lighting fires outside of designated fireplaces, depositing litter, interfering with Aboriginal cultural heritage such as rock art or any damage to rock faces such as drilling holes.





PROTECTING VALUES – Licenced Tour Operators

Licensed Tour Operators and those participating in an event or activity conducted by a Licensed Tour Operator are authorised to undertake an activity prescribed by the license or permit within the area prescribed.

The license outlines the installation of mechanical or artificial rock climbing/abseiling aids, i.e. pitons and permanent anchoring pins are prohibited. It also notes the licensee must not damage, destroy, disrupt or remove any native flora (live or dead) or any native fauna, or any built asset, natural feature or cultural heritage place (including creating new access trails without the Licensor's consent) from the Licensed Area or the Park.

We are not undertaking enforcement to prevent rock climbing activity in broader Special Protected Areas at this stage and will communicate if anything changes.



NEXT STEPS

Over the coming months, Parks Victoria will be reviewing the Grampians National Park Management Plan.

A Stakeholder Reference Group will be established where Parks Victoria will meet with affected partners, Licenced Tourism Operators, stakeholder groups and local businesses – including the rock climbing community.

Special Protection Area boundaries may change.



THANK YOU