

Media release

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New report shows Victoria's game reserves are in good health

Game Management Authority (GMA) Chairperson Brian Hine has today released a report on the audit of Victoria's 200 State Game Reserves.

The first State Game Reserves were established in the late -1950s and early -1960s through the public purchase of private land funded by the revenue generated from the introduction of the State's first game hunting licence.

The report, which is available on the GMA website, provides detailed information on the current status, condition and availability of public land principally set aside for wildlife conservation and game hunting in Victoria.

"This audit surveyed approximately 75,000 hectares of public land and is the most comprehensive audit ever to be conducted on Victoria's game reserves," Mr Hine said.

"The audit found the overall condition of the State Game Reserves to be generally good. However, accurate signage, public access, improved boundary fencing and increased pest and weed control were identified as areas for future improvement."

"The audit helps establish a baseline from which priorities and best practice for the holistic management of State Game Reserves can be determined. It also creates a baseline to measure the impact of management actions on reserve condition and to monitor the reserve health over time."

"State Game Reserves provide valuable opportunities for recreation, including game hunting on public land. It's vital that we continue working hard to ensure that people who want to hunt can do so in a safe, sustainable way."

The audit was conducted by the GMA with assistance from Parks Victoria as the land managers responsible for each reserve.

GMA Chairperson Brian Hine said the audit is part of the Victorian Government's Sustainable Hunting Action Plan 2016 – 2020 (SHAP) and is the second major piece of work delivered by the GMA in accordance with its responsibilities under SHAP. This follows on from the recent release of the new manual "Game Hunting in Victoria – A manual for responsible and sustainable hunting".

The release of the Audit was announced by the Chairperson during a visit by the GMA Board to the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve where they are hearing about some of the issues associated with the management of the reserve from a number of local and committed stakeholders.

The GMA works with the community as an effective, independent regulator and as a facilitator of sustainable game management and quality hunting opportunities for future generations.

Enquiries on the management of State Game Reserves should be directed to Parks Victoria via email to info@parks.vic.gov.au or by phone **13 1963** within Australia or +613 8427 2002 internationally

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