

Community Update

Plenty Gorge Park Fire Recovery

15 April 2020
Issue 5

The recovery of Plenty Gorge Park is continuing following the December 2019 bushfire. Some park closures remain in place to allow plants and animals to recover and to ensure the safety of visitors.

The road to recovery

Although many plants and animals are slowly returning to their former beauty, the task for park rangers continues to be repairing fire damaged tracks and infrastructure. This includes complex assessments and recovery work on the park's extensive Aboriginal heritage values.

Tree safety works on walking and mountain biking trails are nearing completion, with specialist staff now available following their work to support the significant bushfire season across Victoria.

Next steps

A key next step to reopening the park is to rehabilitate the six kilometres of bulldozer-built containment line that was constructed during the fire suppression effort. This will require heavy machinery access and works. Because of the potential impact this will have on Aboriginal heritage, Parks Victoria is working closely with the Wurundjeri Tribe Council to undertake detailed assessments and obtain the necessary permits prior to this work commencing.

An important home for plants and animals

Parks Victoria manages a variety of threatened and significant plants and animals within the park and conducts regular monitoring programs, especially after the fire, to ensure appropriate protection and management measures are in place.

Recent rainfall and cooler weather has encouraged new growth within the fire affected area. This growth has encouraged the return of wildlife. Animals such as kangaroos and wallabies have returned to find new shoots to eat and echidnas to look for re-establishing colonies of ants.

Unfortunately, post-bushfire is also a great time for new weeds to establish. The burnt ground creates the perfect place for weed seeds to germinate. Park rangers are prioritising their weed control work to increase the focus on the fire affected area. Weeding is

also a great activity for the community to help with when the closed area is safe to access again.

How can you help?

The local community has been supportive during the recovery process by observing and calling out illegal access to closed areas. Report illegal access to Parks Victoria via info@parks.vic.gov.au or 13 1963.

Parks Victoria recognises how important this area of the park is to the community and is working to have it reopened as soon as possible.

Volunteer and community groups have continued to express interest in helping with the recovery effort in the park. Opportunities to help with recovery works will be communicated once fire affected areas are open again and COVID 19 restrictions are lifted.

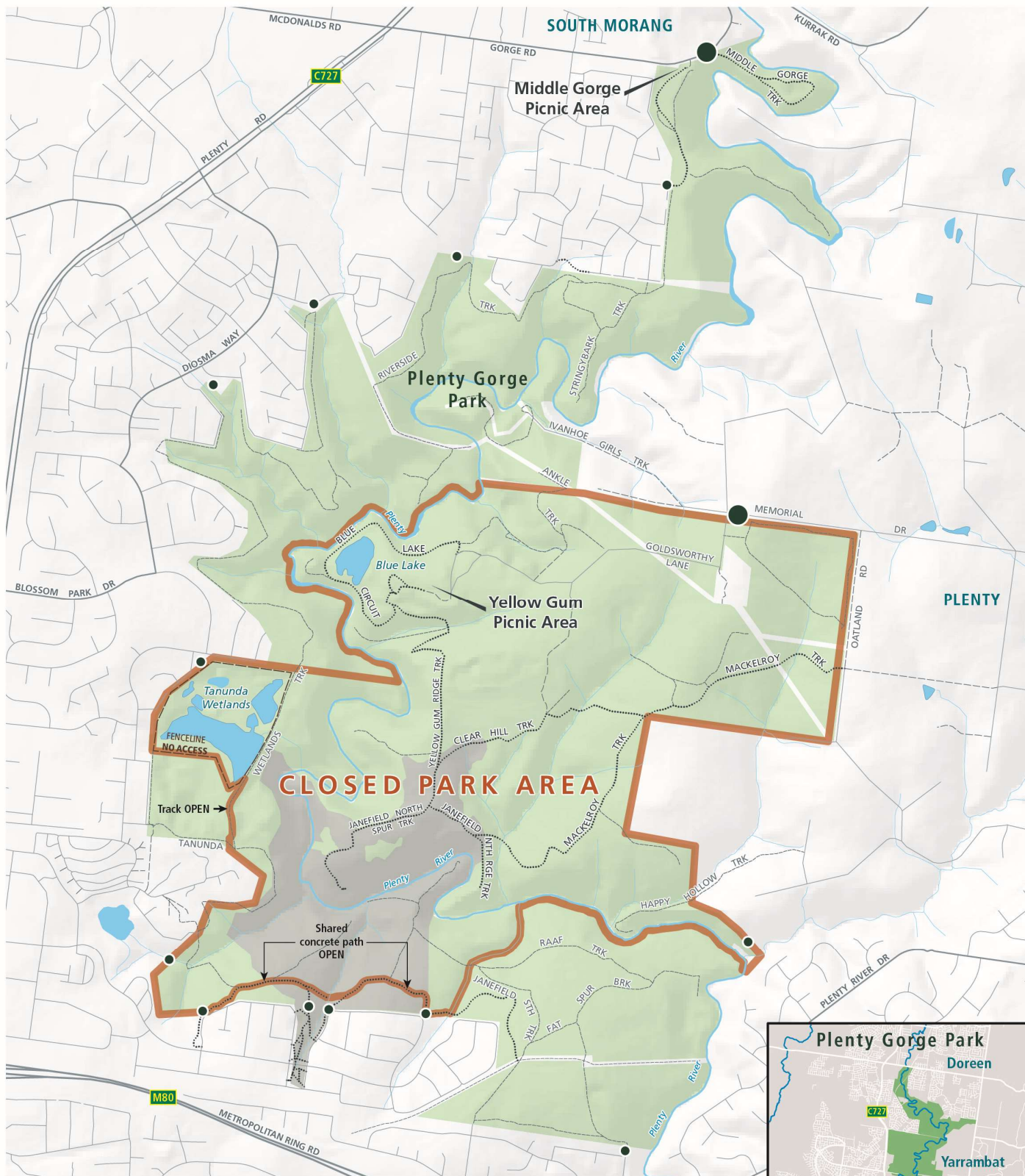


More information

For information on past and future planned burns and the location of our annual slashing program in Plenty Gorge visit the interactive map at ffm.vic.gov.au/jfmp (turn on 'fire history' and 'mechanical works' layers).

Visit the Plenty Gorge Park page at www.parks.vic.gov.au for information about fire management activities in the park or call 13 1963.

Plenty Gorge Park South - Closed Park Area



- | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|---------------|
| | Plenty Gorge Park | | Fwy/Hwy |
| | Closed Park Area | | Main road |
| | Burnt Area | | Sealed road |
| | Vehicle Entry Point | | Unsealed road |
| | Pedestrian Entry Point | | Walking track |

