

From: Peter Mayhill < >

Sent: Monday, 18 June 2018 9:12 PM

To: projects dhelkunyadja

Subject: Submission to the Draft Joint Management Plan For the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks

Dear members of the Dhelkunya Dja Land Management Board,

I would like to take up you invitation and make the following submission on the Draft Joint Management Plan for the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks.

Please find my submission attached.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your proposal.

Kind regards,

Peter Mayhill

Submission to the Draft Joint Management Plan For the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks

Dear members of the Dhelkunya Dja Land Management Board,

I would like to take up you invitation and make the following submission on the Draft Joint Management Plan for the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks.

I am frequent visitor to the Victoria bush including the areas covered by this plan and this is largely due to my interest in fossicking.

Fossicking or recreational prospecting gives you that reason to be out in the bush and to experience it. You may stand at you camp fire, looking up at the stars with their silver light silhouetted against the darkness of the trees and listen to the animals call from the greater darkness. As a fossicker you see the early morning mist on the water, you feel the tug of the flow as you stand in the creek, shovel in hand, listening to the bird calls. If nothing draws you to the bush these events occur beyond your consciousness and your experience is limited to a life lit by electronic screens in a more man-made, urban environment.

Fossicking encourages all members of the community to get out into the bush. However it is of particular value to those who are seeking company and social activities as an escape from spending large amounts of time on their own. It improves their mental well being and contributes to a healthier community. Fossicking encourages individuals to link up and experience the outdoors with like-minded individuals. In contrast many find a solo visit to the bush a little daunting and uncomfortable, but visiting with fossicking friends or family provides confidence, inspiring them to visit again and develop an interest in the environment and the Dja Dja Wurrung people who came before them.

The opportunity to fossick also encourages healthy physical activity, much walking, some digging (and hole filling), in a refreshing outdoor environment. In addition, this experience often leads to new activities and opportunities. This may be volunteering for a committee position or joining a working group to help with a bush clean-up day, all of which provide the individual with greater confidence & sense of purpose.

Fostering an existing outdoor activity, like fossicking, which encourages people to visit parks, creates a significant returning visitor population. This represents an opportunity to introduce visitors to the Dja

Dja Wurrung people, their culture and history. However if bush-based activities are suppressed or discouraged, there would be much fewer visitors, less engagement and a much slower spread of Dja Dja Wurrung cultural awareness into the greater Victorian community.

I would like to encourage Dja Dja Wurrung people to support existing bush activities, like fossicking, as part of their move toward greater community awareness of their culture and role as traditional custodians and land carers. But please remember, a new gateway visitors centre with it's glowing screens while valuable, is best complemented by the opportunity to experience the bush, to stand by your camp fire and look up at the stars.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your proposal.

Kind regards,

Peter Mayhill

Note: Personal Contact details redacted for on-line publishing.