

Natural Resource Agreement (NRA)



What is a Natural Resource Agreement?



A Natural Resource Agreement (NRA) provides a framework for how Traditional Owners can carry out agreed activities, including to take, use and manage natural resources, consistent with 'sustainability principles'.

The Taungurung people have managed natural resources within their Country over thousands of years. They have ongoing rights and cultural obligations to continue to participate in the management of those resources.

What does the NRA mean for the Taungurung people?

The agreement provides for Taungurung people to access public land within the agreement area to hunt, fish, camp, and gather natural resources. This includes accessing and using vegetation or stone for commercial purposes, subject to some limitations.

Taungurung people will not have to pay for or hold a licence or permit, but will be required to demonstrate that they are a member of the Taungurung Traditional Owner group to access and carry out the agreed activities through use of an identity card. The agreement does not affect the access of existing users, such as recreational fishers and hunters.

How will Taungurung people participate in the management of natural resources?

The State of Victoria and TLaWC work together to develop strategies for the participation of Taungurung people in the design and monitoring of Natural Resource Management (NRM) initiatives in the agreement area.

The Natural Resource Agreement gives recognition to the special association Taungurung people have with the Goulburn River, and includes provisions for the state to support the Taungurung people to help manage the river's oversight and protection.

A Procurement Strategy will also support TLaWC to access procurement opportunities and achieve employment outcomes in natural resources management within the agreement area.

Traditional Owner Land Natural Resource Agreement

The Taungurung settlement package includes a Traditional Owner Land Natural Resource Agreement. This agreement extends the operation of the Natural Resource Agreement to freehold land that is owned by TLaWC, or by a Taungurung person.



Components of the Natural Resource Agreement (NRA)



Take and Use Rights

The NRA sets out the rights and responsibilities of Traditional Owners in relation to hunting, fishing, taking plants and plant products, taking forest produce, taking water and camping.

The NRA allows Traditional Owners to do the following, for traditional purposes:

- Hunt/fish for animals, including those classed as protected.
- Take all plants, flora and stone – but not protected flora.
- Camp on Crown land where it is safe/appropriate to do so.

All of these activities may be done for free, without charge, and without a permit. Instead of a permit, TLaWC issues an identity card that must be carried at all times. However, there are some rules that still apply:

- Many rules and regulations that are for public safety will still apply.
- All rules and regulations around cruelty to animals will still apply.
- When camping within a designated campground, the campground rules and allocation systems must be followed (but you remain exempt from any payment).

The NRA also sets up a Partnership Forum where Traditional Owners and the State can meet and discuss any Natural Resource issues, and if necessary, set new rules, or amend current rules.



Participation Rights

Where the State has Natural Resource Management (NRM) functions or responsibilities in the Agreement Area, the strategies will include, at a minimum, that the State will:

- Provide the opportunity for active participation in the design, decision making, development, review and monitoring of all Natural Resource Management policies, programs, projects, strategic plans, management plans, action plans, research, assessments, investigations and reviews.

Creation of Taungurung Land Management Strategies are key to influencing the State into the future. Developing strategies with direction from the Taungurung community is a priority.

NRM works and related services

- Restoration and regeneration of landscapes
- Establishment of biodiversity corridors
- Landscaping and maintenance activities (including development of walkways, buildings, roads and access tracks, signage, fencing and interpretation and other infrastructure that protects and enhances cultural values)
- Environmental management plans (including setting cultural objectives and setting management actions that include cultural practices)
- Managing the impact of feral animals and pest plants
- Environmental consulting (including assessment of health of Country, development of culturally directed management plans and healing Country, community education, Welcome to Country).

