

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001

CENTRAL WEST INVESTIGATION

Pursuant to section 15 of the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*, the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change hereby requests the Council to carry out an investigation into public land in the vicinity of the Wombat, Wellsford, Mount Cole and Pyrenees Range Forests within the area shown on the accompanying map.

The purpose of the Central West Investigation is to:

- (a) identify and evaluate the condition, natural and biodiversity values and cultural, social and economic values and the current uses of public land in the specified area; and
- (b) make recommendations for the balanced use and appropriate management arrangements to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural values.

In addition to the considerations in section 18 of the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*, the Council must take into account the following matters:

- (i) relevant State Government policies and strategies, Ministerial statements and reports by the Victorian Auditor-General; and
- (ii) relevant regional programs, strategies and plans.

The Council must also consult with the relevant Traditional Owner Group Entities and any other relevant Traditional Owner groups in the specified area, particularly where the area is subject to an agreement under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*. This includes the area covered by the Dja Dja Wurrung Recognition and Settlement Agreement.

A draft proposals paper and a final report are to be prepared, allowing for two public submission periods during the investigation.

The Council must report on the completed investigation within two years from the commencement date.

*The date for completion of the investigation was extended to 7 June 2019.