

# Media Release

**The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP**  
Minister for Jobs and Industry  
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples  
Minister for Women



Wednesday, 5 June 2024

## SAFEGUARDING ABORIGINAL HERITAGE ACROSS VICTORIA

The Allan Labor Government is supporting Traditional Owners to protect Victoria's rich Aboriginal cultural heritage for future generations, with funding through the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Fund.

Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins today joined the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA) at Lake Boort to announce more than \$5 million for project funding through the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Fund.

The funding will support Traditional Owners to undertake initiatives to protect and manage Aboriginal cultural heritage across the state. This might include protection of significant Aboriginal cultural landscapes, or sacred and archaeological places.

The independent Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council will manage the fund, ensuring Victorian Traditional Owners decide how the money is used in the spirit of self-determination.

Applications from Traditional Owner organisations for the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Fund will be open in the coming months.

Aboriginal cultural heritage is a vital part of Victoria's history and identity, and the Labor Government is ensuring its protection for all Victorians.

Lake Boort is one of the many culturally important places protected by Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage system. Home to a significant collection of scarred trees, as well as occupation mounds, stone artefact scatters, and Aboriginal Ancestral Remains, the area highlights the deep relationship Traditional Owners hold with the landscape.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins

*"We are proud to support Traditional Owners to undertake this incredibly important work to preserve and celebrate culturally significant and remarkable places, like Lake Boort. The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Fund will ensure Traditional Owners are empowered to manage and protect this cultural heritage for all Victorians."*

*"Many Victorians may not be aware of the wealth of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage in their local areas. Whether that's rock art that is thousands of years old, or fish traps and scar trees like those found at Lake Boort. We encourage all Victorians to learn more about Aboriginal cultural heritage in their region."*

### Quote attributable to Chairperson of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council Uncle Russell Mullett

*"The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council looks forward to working with Traditional Owners, as custodians and managers of their cultural heritage, to decide on how we best use this fund to protect cultural heritage for future generations."*

### Quote attributable to Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter

*"At a time when processes to protect Cultural Heritage are under pressure and facing challenges, this is a welcome step, which will enable Traditional Owner Corporations to determine how Cultural Heritage is protected."*

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