

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Community Sport
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Thursday, 6 June 2024

KOONDROOK ON TRACK FOR TIMBER TRANSITION

Koondrook in the state's northwest is the latest community being empowered by the Allan Labor Government to plan their transition away from native timber harvesting.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence today announced an investment of \$500,000 for the town of Koondrook to develop a Local Development Strategy as a part of the Government's Forestry Transition Program.

The Local Development Strategy grants program supports communities to diversify where native timber harvesting was a significant source of jobs and employment and to map out their future.

The program is designed to be community led and reflect local priorities and ambitions. This approach will enable the community to plan their own future and take advantage of local skills and knowledge.

Gannawarra Shire Council will enlist the support of experts to engage with locals, community groups and businesses to identify Koondrook's strengths, assets, challenges and opportunities for innovation and economic development.

This grant will enable Koondrook to undertake long-term diversification planning to support the local economy and adapt to new industries – increasing job opportunities for workers and ensuring the long-term prosperity of the community.

Koondrook joins ten other Victorian towns and communities including Benalla, Noojee, and Nowa Nowa receiving support to transition and implement new strategies in their local economy.

Noojee was one of towns that have received the Local Development Strategy Grant early in the program to help support the community and develop the local economy as they transitioned away from native forest timber industry.

The Noojee Local Development Strategy has also received \$38,500 from the Forestry Transition Program's Community Development Fund to progress the town's strategy work including a feasibility study for a Forestry Therapy Centre.

The Local Development Strategy grants are key to the Allan Labor Government's Forestry Transition Program, ensuring businesses, workers and communities can transition successfully away from native timber harvesting.

For more information on the transition visit vic.gov.au/forestry.

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

"We identified 11 priority communities where native timber harvesting and processing has been an important source of jobs and economic activity and they have all taken up the opportunity to develop a plan for their future."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes

"This is a chance for Koondrook to shape their future and build an economy that plays to their strengths and supports its community members. I look forward to seeing what great ideas come from them."

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