



# Media Release

## Re-Opening of Australian Alps Walking Track

Immediate Release

7 February 2008

Parks Victoria is pleased to announce that the sections of the Australian Alps Walking Track that were closed as a result of the 2006-2007 bushfires in the Alpine National Park have been re-opened to walkers.

The Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT) stretches for 650km from Walhalla near Baw Baw National Park in Victoria, to Namadgi National Park on the outskirts of Canberra. The Track passes through several national park areas including the Alpine National Park and Kosciuszko National Park.

Most of the walking track was affected by the bushfires of 2003 and sections within the Alpine National Park were again burnt in the 2006-2007 bushfires. These latter fires caused sections of the track to be closed for public safety reasons.

The bushfires destroyed many of the track markers and direction posts, as well as creating potential hazards from partially burnt trees overhanging the track.

Works have been undertaken over the past six weeks to clear fallen and dead trees from the walking track, remove brush-cut regrowth from the 2003 and 2006-2007 bushfires, and replace markers and direction posts.

“We have also taken the opportunity to improve a couple of sections where navigation was a problem” said Chief Ranger Peter Jacobs. “In particular, difficult sections within the Razor Viking Wilderness, and beyond Taylors Crossing near Benambra, will be a lot easier to navigate now. It will also mean less impact on the environment from walking groups straying off tracks because of insufficient signage.”

In the eastern section of the Alpine National Park, recycled plastic direction signs are replacing the treated pine marker posts previously used. The recycled plastic posts are being trialled to see if they can withstand the extreme conditions of the alpine environment. If successful, they could be used to progressively replace other existing timber marker posts along the AAWT.

As well as clearing the regrowth and fire damage from sections of the walking track closed after the 2007-2008 bushfires, Peter Jacobs also said that Parks Victoria had extended the clearance to

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again remove regrowth from the 2003 bushfires in some sections of the eastern section of the Alpine National Park.

Mr Jacobs stressed that clearance work was an ongoing activity and walkers should be aware that some sections of the Australian Alps Walking Track will occasionally be subject to regrowth, particularly for the decade or so following bushfires.

Mr Jacobs advised walkers using the AAWT to still exercise care as it was impossible for Parks Victoria to predict which fire-affected trees might fall across the track and affect navigation.

For further information please contact the Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963 or visit [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

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