



AUSTRALIAN ALPS NATIONAL PARKS

Australian Alps Traditional Owners meet in Bright

The Australian Alps have always been a place of great significance to Australia's First People and on March 22 and 23 the Australian Alps Traditional Owners Reference Group met with national park managers in Bright.

Peter Jacobs, Chief Ranger of the Alps District with Parks Victoria, says: "One of the real benefits of the meeting was to engage further with the Traditional Owners in discussions about management of the alps and how to meet the aspirations of Aboriginal People in protecting and presenting cultural heritage and gaining social and economic benefits ,

Vicki Nicholson-Brown, a Wurundjeri person added: "The gathering brings together many of whom no longer live close to the mountains, back to their beloved country to re-connect with the mountains as well as with Traditional Owners from other parts of the landscape."

The Traditional owners visited Mount Buffalo National Park where the first of a series of totems was placed across the Australian Alps which will serve as a reminder to visitors of the ongoing link between the Australian Alps First People and the Australian Alps landscape.

Increased public awareness of the connection between Aboriginal People and the mountains is a focus of this group. Ways this will be achieved include providing more educational material and film clips on the internet to highlight this important relationship. Also, plans are underway to further study the significance of the Alps landscape to Aboriginal people through an independent report.

Stretching from Namagdi National Park near Canberra to Baw Baw National Park near Melbourne, the Australian Alps are a place of spectacular snow capped mountains, remote river valleys and unique plants and animals.

To the Aboriginal People of South Eastern Australia they are a place to meet, trade and participate in rituals and ceremony.

For more information, visit the Australian Alps website:

<http://www.australialps.environment.gov.au/index.html>