



PUBLIC LAND ADVOCACY NETWORK

Community members, researchers and peak environmental groups campaigning to curb excessive roadside clearances around Victoria

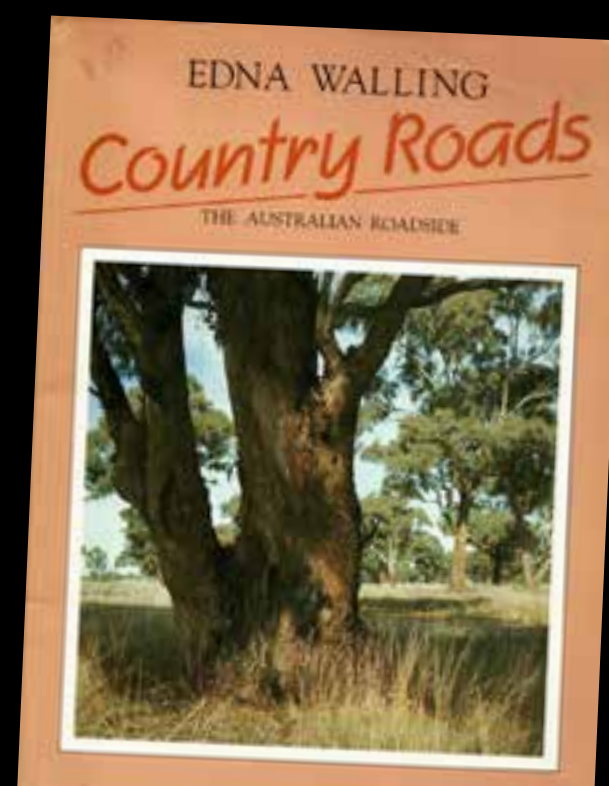


AS EARLY AS THE 1940'S, ROADSIDES WERE VALUED FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE AUSTRALIAN AESTHETIC AND OUR NATIONAL IDENTITY.

"Before much more burning off and bashing of the roadside growth with earth-moving machinery takes place we might awaken to the realisation that here on the roadsides are the most valuable and the most accessible natural reserves we have - reserves which make Australia the country we love."

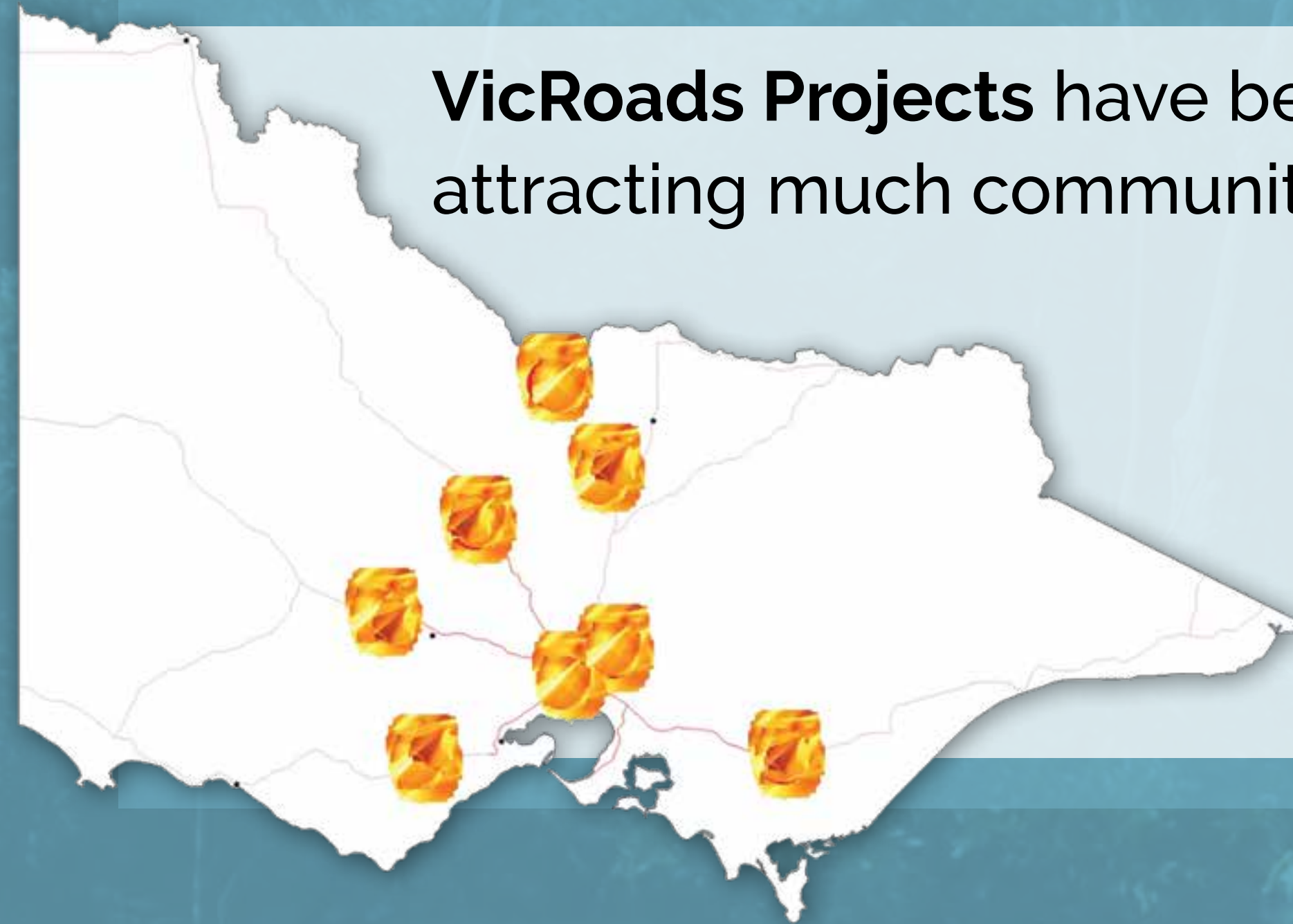
"The roadside is the front garden of a nation."

Edna Walling



THE PROBLEM

VicRoads Projects have been attracting much community angst.



Parkville lemon-scented gum tree on Flemington Road set to be chopped down
Theresa Aboua, Natalie Savino, Herald Sun July 26, 2016 3:57pm

Rushworth fights to save its old trees
June 11, 2016 12:00pm

VicRoads backflipped on decision to save 215 trees from chop along Yan Yean Rd, Plenty
Brittany Shanahan, Diamond Valley Leader July 20, 2017 12:00am

Nine hundred giant native trees felled in VicRoads planning blunder
By Adam Carey

CURRENT/RECENT PROJECTS WITH ESTIMATED LOSSES OF ROADSIDE TREES

PROJECT	ROADSIDE LENGTH WHERE CLEARING OCCURRING	TOTAL NUMBER OF TREES TO BE REMOVED	NUMBER OF LARGE TREES TO BE REMOVED
Western Highway Duplication. Trawalla to Beaufort	7km	Several thousand?	Unknown. (no EES was required) Many mature Candlebarks.
Western Highway Duplication Beaufort to Stawell	74km	Unknown. Rough estimate by community group ~ 30,000.	~2000
Rushworth-Tatura Road	3km	60	9?
West Gippsland Princes Hwy duplication	43km	25 ha of endangered woodland.	61 in addition to 25 ha.
Ravenswood Interchange		~1900	Unknown. A very high proportion.
Echuca/Moama Project		Thousands?	221? (Victorian side).

FINDING SOLUTIONS

In response, VicRoads set up its **Roadside Environment Committee (VREC)**, a "community and technical expert group to advise how to achieve best practice environmental stewardship of proposed and existing road reservations in co-ordination with other road corridor objectives." It is similar to the former highly successful Victorian Roadside Conservation Advisory Committee, although not agency-wide; and the current NSW Roadside Environment Committee

(which is agency-wide). It meets monthly and began in April 2017.



Left: A beautiful roadside at Rushworth that Edna Walling would be proud of.

Current VREC members:

- Community reps (4) • Landcare Vic (1)
- College of Engineering & Science, Victoria University (1)
- School of BioSciences Melbourne University (1)
- Local Government (Occasionally 1)
- National Trust (1 - 2) • DELWP (2)
- VicRoads - Manager Environment Practice, and others



Above: The VREC includes PLAN members.

WHAT HAS BEEN/ WILL BE ACHIEVED?

- Community campaigners are "at the table" with VicRoads and are taken seriously
- A protocol for the re-use of cut trees for all projects - eg re-snagging waterways, adventure playgrounds
- More thorough training in environmental awareness and practice on roadsides for field and office VicRoads staff and contractors
- Ensure roadside protection is an integral component during project conception, planning and management
- Facilitate the compilation of Roadside Management Plans, which included detailed roadside vegetation surveys
- Hot-spots - why is community upset still occurring and how can we help? (Yan Yean, Batesford, Mornington Peninsula...)
- Involvement of other agencies
- Presentation at ISCA (Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia) on World Environment Day
- Use an app for roadsides similar to one the National Trust uses. It can be used for information or to report issues
- Nature walk and info session with VR staff (Lots more)