East Gippsland’s Black Summer

2019-2020
East Gippsland in overview

- 20,931 square kilometres
- 75% public land
- 46,818 people (as at 30 June 2018 – profile.id)
- Operating income of $101M
- Capital Expenditure / Landfill Rehabilitation Program of $52M
- Infrastructure assets of $838,833
- Economy heavily reliant on retail, tourism and agriculture

*Drought, industry transition, fire, COVID*
Impact on Council and its communities

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No community has been spared in East Gippsland’s largest-ever disaster – the 2019-20 East Gippsland Bushfires. It’s a summer no one will forget, and an event that has directly or indirectly impacted every one of our 46,000 residents and tens of thousands of visitors. Many of our directly-affected localities are small and isolated. The community-led recovery will be significant and will take time.

The fire
- 1.2 million hectares.
- 21 November – fires first reported.
- Late November – active fires around Bruthen and Great Alpine Road.
- 27 December to 10 January – significant fire activity.
- Late January to early February – significant fire activity.
- 19 February – Tanbouli District fires contained after 91 days.
- 20 February – Snowy District fires remain going, including 73 ho pest fire near Cape Conran.

Roads
- Extended closures of major roads: Princess Highway, Great Alpine Road, Monaro Highway and Genoa-Mallacoota Road.
- Significant impacts on secondary access roads and National Parks and State Reserves roads and tracks (some remain closed or have restricted access).
- Ongoing intermittent closures due to landslips
- Over 1,000 guided tours and 70 curve alignment signs damaged.
- 663 kilometres of Council roads impacted.

Princess Highway East – closed 37 days
- Bairnsdale to Genoa closed 30 December
- Bairnsdale to Orbost reopened 5 January; Orbost to NSW remained closed. Progressively reopened between Orbost and Cann River.
- Orbost to Monaro re-opened 12 January.
- Monaro to Cann River re-opened 1 February.
- Cann River to Genoa re-opened 4 February.
- Genoa to NSW border closed 31 December and reopened 4 February.

Mallacoota Road – closed 39 days
- Genoa to Mallacoota closed 30 December and reopened 6 February.

Monaro Highway – closed 35 days
- Cann River to NSW border closed on 29 December and reopened 1 February.

Great Alpine Road – closed 25 days
- Bairnsdale to Doctors Flat/Ensay closed 31 December and reopened 24 January.
- Doctors Flat/Ensay to Cobungo closed 14 January and reopened 24 January.

Bunyip to holders close: December 2019
- Various degrees of closure from 25 November before being fully re-opened 18 February.

Natural environment
- Burn footprint: 11,766 km² – 5% of the total municipal area (20,940 km²).
- Council roadside: 1,310 km (conservation value: high 615 km; medium 196 km; low 196 km; unclassified 319 km).
Impact

Sunny Point Bridge, Buchan

Bastion Point, Mallacoota

Sarsfield

Timbarra Road, Buchan
• Where we are in the journey

Graphic courtesy of Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience 2018
Community-led Recovery