



Member for Eastern Victoria, Harriet Shing, with the Gippsland Lakes coordinating committee co-chairs Dr Peter Veenker and Angus Hume at the announcement of the first \$3.15 million in funding for 16 projects on the Gippsland Lakes on Tuesday. (PS)

Funding to aid the Lakes

The first \$3.15 million in funding from the Victorian Government was on Tuesday afternoon announced for 16 projects to help improve the Ramsar-listed Gippsland Lakes.

Victoria's world famous Gippsland Lakes are home to native and migratory birds, seals and rare fauna including the burrunan dolphin.

A Victorian Auditor General's report last September found there was a lack of oversight and accountability in the management of Ramsar-listed sites, including the Gippsland Lakes.

The Ramsar Convention or 'Convention on Wetlands of International Importance' aims to promote and protect wetlands throughout the world.

Member for Eastern Victoria, Harriet Shing, on Tuesday visited the Lake Wellington Yacht Club at Marlay Point to announce the successful projects.

The \$3.15 million is part of

\$10 million in funding from the State Government over four years to support work to protect and improve the health of the Gippsland Lakes. The funding was allocated in the 2015-16 Victorian Budget as part of statewide funding to improve the health of waterways and catchments.

"Funding has been allocated to a range of projects that will make a real and ongoing difference to the health of the Gippsland Lakes and the abundance of flora and fauna that can be found here," Member for Eastern Victorian region, Harriet Shing, said.

"We all have a role to play in a healthy Gippsland Lakes, and this funding builds on past works as well as investigating emerging environmental issues such as monitoring of the Northern Pacific Sea Star."

Funding has been allocated to projects to protect wildlife, maintain and re-

store habitats, manage nutrients and sediments and manage water regimes. These projects align with the Gippsland Lakes Priorities Plan and the Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan.

East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority chief executive officer, Graeme Dear, said the funding would benefit the Lakes in a number of ways.

"EGCMA welcomes the announcement of \$1.3M funding, which will provide grants to several groups and agencies who work together to help manage the Lakes and their surrounds," he said.

"For example, local Landcare Groups who receive money to do on-ground works on the Lakes, shores and wetlands.

"Parks Victoria will also receive funding to complete works on pest and weed margins on the Lakes."

More details about the funding in a future edition.