

# Community Update

## Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing



November 2024

Welcome to the November 2024 edition of the Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Community Update.

The Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing is a proposed 52 kilometre walk through the Alpine region of Victoria, combining and upgrading an existing track network. The walk is planned to be a multi-day hiking experience through the unique alpine environment, from Falls Creek to Mount Hotham.

This newsletter provides information on changes to the project, environmental and cultural assessments and approvals and project timelines.

### Detailed designs available for the Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing project

Parks Victoria has progressed financial, environmental and cultural heritage assessments for the Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing. Based on new information, there are planned changes to what is being delivered.



Artist impression of shelter at High Knob

Work will now focus on an end-to-end experience connecting the two Alpine Resorts through a four day - three night experience. Overnight campsites are proposed at Cope Hut, Westons Hut and High Knob.

The project will:

- include track works to improve existing trails and install boardwalk sections to protect sensitive vegetation.
- include new tent platforms and new toilets (where not currently existing) at overnight campsites and the addition of a shelter at High Knob.
- improve signage along the trails and at campgrounds.
- not include overnight accommodation huts as part of the construction. They do remain in the master.

The aim of the Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing is to support more people with varying hiking ability, interest and experience to walk in this iconic and special place and support the regional nature-based tourism sector.

### Why changes were made

Feedback from the community and stakeholder engagement has been considered as part of these changes, including concerns regarding over-visitation and potential environmental impacts. Other factors that have helped plan the changes include:

- Environmental assessments
- Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments
- Non-aboriginal cultural heritage assessments
- Financial and budgetary considerations
- Visitor experience.

### Completed detailed designs

Detailed designs have been completed for each overnight node, including locations for tent platforms, new toilets and a new shelter at High Knob.

Based on these designs, final detailed assessments will be undertaken in the upcoming months. This will include targeted flora and fauna surveys, cultural heritage assessments and heritage impact assessments.

The detailed designs can be found on the [project's webpage](#).

## Traditional Owner engagement and site visits

Managing and protecting cultural heritage is essential and requires the input of Traditional Owners.

Traditional Owner involvement will continue throughout the final assessment and approval stages, including through the development of the cultural heritage management plan.

The environmental assessments and approvals being undertaken for the project are detailed and complex.

## Environmental assessments and approvals

The environmental assessments and approvals for the project are detailed and complex. An [infographic](#) has been prepared to outline the steps in the environmental compliance process and what has been completed so far.

### Community information sessions

We will be hosting a series of information sessions in the local community on Friday 29 November and Saturday 30 November to share project changes.

Come and chat anytime between the allocated times. You do not need to register to attend these sessions, come whenever suits you best.

### Mount Beauty Pop Up:

**Date:** Friday 29 November

**Time:** anytime between 4pm and 6pm

**Location:** nearby Mount Beauty Foodworks, Kiewa Crescent, Mount Beauty.

### Harrietville Pop Up:

**Date:** Saturday 30 November

**Time:** anytime between 8am and 10am

**Location:** nearby Dolly's Coffee Van, 194 Great Alpine Road, Harrietville.

### Bright Pop Up:

**Date:** Saturday 30 November

**Time:** anytime between 1pm and 3pm

**Location:** nearby Ritchies IGA, 16 Ireland Street, Bright.

We will also be holding an online **community information session** on Wednesday 4th December 2024 from 5.30-7pm. Please fill out a [registration form](#) to attend.

## Project timelines, scope and next steps

Environmental and cultural assessments are continuing and will influence the final route and design of the overnight campgrounds.

We anticipate that the project will be completed in late 2025. The timing will depend on environmental and cultural heritage assessments, project costings and possible changes to what can be delivered with the allocated \$15 million budget for the Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Project.

Project costings are constantly being revised based on current information, and the relevant statutory approvals are being sought.

## Stay up to date

Parks Victoria will provide updates and information as the project progresses. To stay updated you can:

- [Subscribe](#) for email updates
- Phone 13 1963 or email [engage@park.vic.gov.au](mailto:engage@park.vic.gov.au)
- Visit [engage.vic.gov.au/falls-to-hotham](https://engage.vic.gov.au/falls-to-hotham)