

# PARKS 2025



*Our parks future*



Government of South Australia  
Department for Environment  
and Water

# A new era for our parks

*Parks 2025 is a collection of investment initiatives designed to help build the capacity of parks across our state to conserve our natural landscapes and wildlife, boost the state economy and strengthen local communities.*

*This investment at a statewide level will also help build resilience for nature-based tourism and broaden the attraction of South Australia to visitors from around the globe.*

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**85%**

of our marine species are found nowhere else in the world



We're home to over **450** bird species with more than **250** recorded species within 1.5 hours drive of our capital city



Parks in South Australia cover **21.1** million hectares an area about the size of the UK

**In South Australia**



**1.8** million people visit parks each year, with as many as **12** million total visits

(9% international visitors + 91% domestic visitors)



More than **163,000** visitor nights in camping and accommodation in parks in 2017



More than **150** businesses are licensed to operate tours in national parks

# Our parks

**South Australia has nature like nowhere else, and we want to share it with the world. We have 360 parks covering a fifth of our vast state, and a network of 19 marine parks covering nearly half of our marine waters.**

Parks are central to the lives of South Australians and the experience of our visitors. They provide significant social, economic and health benefits to our communities, and improved landscape resilience in the face of a changing climate.

Our parks network includes internationally-recognised tourism destinations such as Seal Bay and the Flinders Ranges. These make a substantial contribution to the state's \$7.8 billion tourism industry.

Many of our parks are cooperatively managed with Aboriginal people and protect places that help to sustain the cultural heritage of Aboriginal nations.

Our parks range from small pockets of precious native vegetation in urban areas to large parks that cover thousands of hectares. They conserve a diverse range of habitats and landscapes, home to our many unique plants and animals including heathlands, woodlands, deserts, beaches, coasts, marine ecosystems and places that conserve our distinctive Aboriginal cultural heritage.

We have undertaken world-leading work in threatened species recovery and species reintroduction, such as with the yellow-footed rock-wallaby and western quoll. We work with local communities to ensure that the government's efforts reflect community desires and expectations, and that community effort helps manage our national parks.

We are committed to ensuring that our parks continue to conserve special places and natural values, while also enabling people to enjoy the benefits they bring.

***Parks 2025 represents a once-in-a-generation investment in conserving our unique natural environment, activating nature-based tourism and stimulating regional economies in South Australia.***

# The opportunity

*In South Australia we enjoy a great lifestyle – surrounded by national parks, beautiful beaches and impressive landscapes. Our parks are the cornerstone of conservation, bolster regional economies, and help to make South Australia one of the most liveable places in the world.*

Parks 2025 will create more places for people to connect with nature, spend time with family, relax, walk, ride, explore, drive, fish and camp. It will also strengthen the conservation of our unique natural values for future generations.

The Parks 2025 initiative is designed to conserve parks for future generations, boost the state economy and strengthen local communities.



## Partnering to realise the conservation dividend

Increasingly visitors are searching for world class nature-based tourism experiences. We will seek to boost this offering by partnering with businesses to progress ecologically sensitive developments in ways that are complementary to the state's park management efforts.

Through such partnerships, the use and enjoyment of parks will be increased, and revenue generated can be reinvested into conservation programs.

Tourism operators to contribute to conservation programs in their local area such as restoring damaged habitats, revegetation and rewilding projects.

Shark cage diving is a great example of how this is already happening in South Australia. The South Australian Government together with tour operators and research partners have established the Neptune Islands as an international focal point for white shark research and have helped to raise awareness about white sharks and their conservation. The three licensed tour operators through their tourism business contribute to the shark research program and the success and growth of white shark tourism illustrates the positive relationships that can be achieved between nature-based tourism and the environment.



# Community at the heart

We know that local communities are often the strongest advocates for parks, and many are actively involved in volunteering and park management. Our goal is to deliver long-term and sustainable benefits to our parks, communities and regions through fostering ongoing relationships with traditional owners, local, regional and community groups. We are committed to working in partnership to bring Parks 2025 to life.

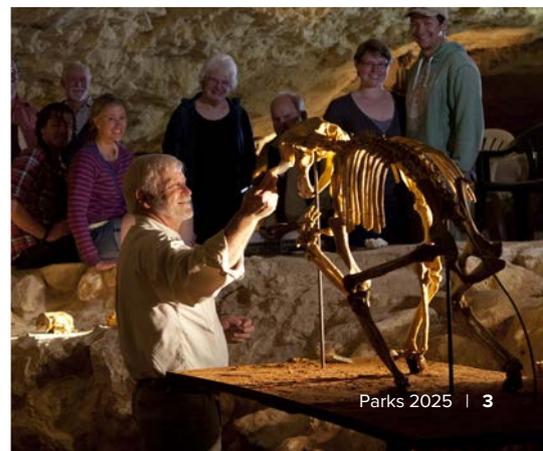
Our natural environment plays a vital role in the health and wellbeing of our communities – access to nature is especially important for children and young people, but everyone benefits from immersing themselves in the outdoors.

We will make parks more accessible and inclusive. Improvements to parks will embrace a universal design approach - increasing access to people regardless of their age, cultural background or level of ability.

# Creating jobs and boosting tourism

South Australia has an established competitive advantage and is a safe destination that provides value for money as well as a sense of awe on account of our natural environment, wild places, coastal experiences and wildlife.

Parks 2025 will help make sure that our parks and tourism experiences equal or surpass those on offer in other states. Nature-based tourism is a high-value and labour-dependent industry – Parks 2025 will contribute to the creation of 4000 new jobs by 2030.



**99%**  
of South Australians say parks are important to them



**7 in 10**  
South Australians have visited a national park in the last 12 months

# The plan

*Parks 2025 heralds a turning point for our national parks.*

Investment in regional parks has a direct impact on local economies – most immediately through procurement of local materials and labour. The flow-on effects – through increased visitation and related spending – can be many times greater. All of this helps create and sustain regional jobs.

**Parks 2025 will take a similar approach in key locations across the state.**

Working closely with the industry and tapping into its market knowledge and experiences will see our money go further with greater impact. A central plank of Parks 2025 will be to connect experiences thematically, within particular geographies or precincts, to ensure visitor experiences are compelling, diverse, sustainable and immersive. We want to create destinations that attract people to stay longer and spend more. As part of this, we will also seek to identify opportunities to activate heritage sites. A major emphasis will be placed on identifying the infrastructure required in regional areas to stimulate private sector investment in, and the operation of, guest services, including food, beverage, accommodation, tours and other value-added experiences.

**Stage one of the Parks 2025 initiative includes a range of regionally diverse projects.**



**Southern Flinders Ranges precinct**  
\$10 million



**Ediacara fossil Experience**  
\$3 million



**Nature-Based Tourism Co-investment Fund**  
\$5 million



**Ikara–Flinders Ranges National Park**  
\$1 million

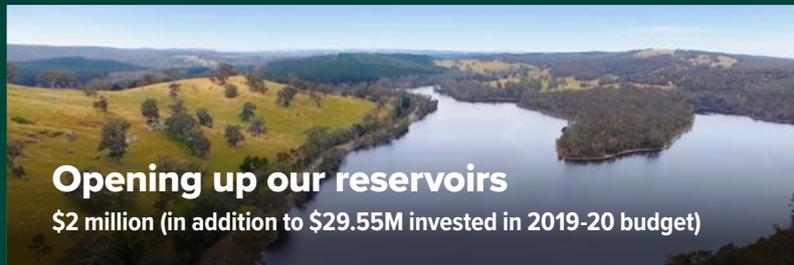
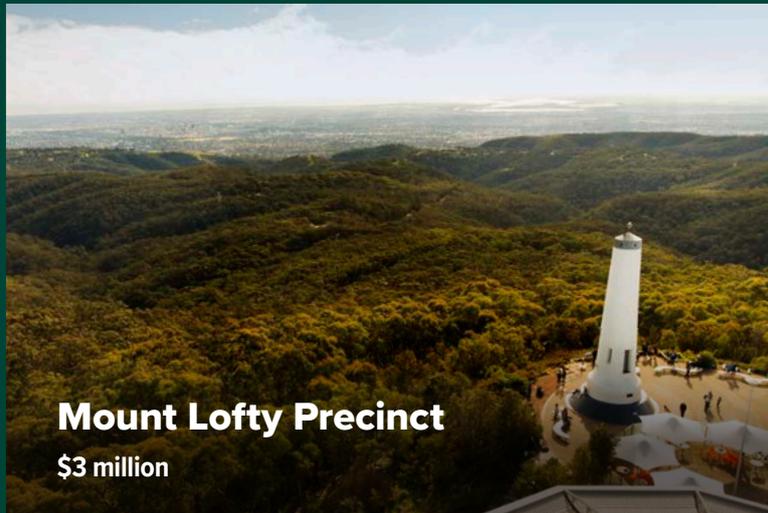


**Reinvigorating Cleland Wildlife Park**  
\$1 million



**Kangaroo Island Tourism Activation**  
\$7 million

## PARKS 2025 STAGE 2



### *Additional parks projects since 2018-19*





**PARKS 2025 STAGE 2**

# Mount Lofty precinct

**Government investment:** \$3 million

Visitors flock to the Mount Lofty precinct all year round to enjoy scenic vistas and the diverse flora and fauna of the Adelaide Hills. This project will enhance this tourism destination and support rapidly expanding visitation within the precinct.

Nestled within the heart of the precinct in a dramatic hillside setting, Mount Lofty Botanic Garden features spectacular cool climate plant collections from across the world. Changing with every season, this garden draws diverse visitors to its outstanding floral displays. A range of upgrades will revitalise infrastructure in this botanical attraction, improving accessibility and the overall visitor experience.



**PARKS 2025 STAGE 2**

# Dhilba Guuranda-Innes National Park

**Government investment:** \$3 million

The Dhilba Guuranda-Innes National Park makes a critical contribution to nature-based tourism on offer in the Yorke Peninsula and is a much-loved holiday destination for South Australians. New investment in the park will drive more visitors to the region and encourage them to stay longer, resulting in significant benefits to the local economy.

The project will deliver improvements to several popular visitor sites and services, enhancing the appeal of this iconic coastal park renowned for its surf breaks, fishing, and rugged coastal scenery.

This project links to other government initiatives including the rewilding program, the Nature-based Tourism Co-investment Fund, and the newly established co-management of the park.





**PARKS 2025 STAGE 2**

# Fleurieu Peninsula mountain biking and hiking

**Overall project investment:** \$3 million

The Fleurieu Peninsula is well known for its mountain biking and multi-use trails, although not all are formal or within current parks or reserves. This project will create more opportunities for the local and wider community to enjoy the beautiful landscape and formalise recreational activities such as mountain biking, and hiking opportunities.



**PARKS 2025 STAGE 2**

# Northern Flinders Ranges

**Overall project investment:** \$2.5 million

The northern Flinders Ranges are home to a range of unique world-class experiences. Some areas are currently being considered for World Heritage status. Improve infrastructure will transform these areas into iconic tourism destinations in preparation for World Heritage listing.

Regional park facilities will be expanded to include, new and improved campgrounds and amenities.





## PARKS 2025 STAGE 2

# Eyre Peninsula parks

**Government investment:** \$2 million

The goal is to continue to build the profile of the Eyre Peninsula region as a distinctive destination, underpinned by the character of its local communities and coupled with the conservation and protection of its pristine environment.

Regional partners have done significant work to develop a view of the future for the entire Eyre Peninsula, developing an extensive program of works. This investment will draw on this work and other park based initiatives with the aim of diversifying the experiences on offer for visitors to the region.

Working with Regional Development Australia Eyre Peninsula Inc. and other stakeholders, the first stage of the project will include installing wayfinding signage, improving coastal access, and upgrading camping sites on parks throughout the region.



## PARKS 2025 STAGE 2

# Opening up our reservoirs

**Government investment:** \$2 million in 2020-21  
(in addition to \$29.6M already being invested)

This new investment into the government's commitment to open reservoir reserves will see improvements to the South Para, Barossa and Warren reservoir precinct such as new kayak access, walking trails and day visitor infrastructure.

This project has already seen significant success as reservoir reserves have opened for recreational activities including walking, cycling, picnicking, fishing and kayaking while ensuring the ongoing safety and security of drinking water supply. This has already seen social benefits for local communities as well as tourism and economic benefits through the boost of thousands of visitors to the reservoirs.

South Australian families can now enjoy these picturesque landscapes and look forward to further recreational opportunities to enjoy them.

[www.reservoirs.sa.gov.au](http://www.reservoirs.sa.gov.au)





## PARKS 2025 STAGE 2

# Community access to national parks

**Government investment:** \$1.5 million

2020 has seen many South Australians rediscovering their own back yard, resulting more visitors to a number of parks close to Adelaide. This initiative will expand visitor facilities such as carparks and toilets, directly benefiting park users and their surrounding communities.



## PARKS 2025 STAGE 1

# Southern Flinders Ranges precinct (Beetaloo to Wilmington)

**Overall project investment:** \$10 million  
(\$5 million State Government investment)

This project will create a new nature-based tourism destination for South Australia. It will connect the natural landscapes of the region and draw people into local communities.

The project will link well established national parks with land recently acquired for conservation and opened reservoirs, to create a vast, connected park of national significance. Local communities will have a key role and strong relationship with the park, which will demonstrate active community participation in park management.

The area is linked by the Heysen (hiking) and Mawson (cycling) trails and includes sites of outstanding natural beauty such as Mount Remarkable, Alligator Gorge and Telowie Gorge. It is these expansive natural landscapes and their intact and accessible wildlife that are key to attracting visitors to the region.





**PARKS 2025 STAGE 1**

# Ediacara fossil experience

(Nilpena: Ediacara Conservation Park)

**Government investment:** \$3 million

This project will create a world class fossil experience in the northern Flinders Ranges with Nilpena becoming an iconic visitor precinct within the new Ediacara Conservation Park.

Ediacara fossil fields in the Flinders Ranges are the single most important site on the planet for the rise of early animal life.

The precinct will include an immersive fossil experience in Nilpena’s blacksmith shop, while the shearer’s quarters will be developed for accommodation. The woolshed will become a venue for functions and events.

This project is central to the proposed Flinders Ranges World Heritage application and will create an interpretive experience of a quality rarely seen in regional Australia.



**PARKS 2025 STAGE 1**

# Nature-Based Tourism Co-investment Fund

**Government investment:** \$5 million

The NBT co-investment fund will support businesses and organisations to activate sustainable and ecologically sensitive tourism experiences and products in South Australia’s nature, parks and places.

This in turn will support regional jobs and growth, conservation outcomes and the delivery of sustainable visitor experiences in South Australia.

The conservation dividend – tourism operators will contribute to conservation programs in their local area such as restoring habitats, revegetation and rewilding projects.





**PARKS 2025 STAGE 1**

# Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park

**Government investment:** \$1 million

This project will revitalise South Australia’s most iconic landscape and significantly boost regional tourism and employment. It will renew and expand visitor infrastructure and experiences in partnership with traditional owners.

The Heysen Trail, drive routes, visitor sites and other trail experiences will be transformed into iconic tourism experiences that drive tourism and link visitors to accommodation and service providers in adjacent properties and townships.

In partnership with Adnyamathanha people, this project will generate an opportunity for local Aboriginal communities to develop businesses that provide tours and cultural experiences.



**PARKS 2025 STAGE 1**

# Reinvigorating Cleland Wildlife Park

**Government investment:** \$1 million

Through experiences and interpretation designed to engage visitors on a deeply emotional level, Cleland Wildlife Park can play an integral role in increasing people’s sense of connection to the natural environment.

This project will create an exceptional nature-based experience at one of South Australia’s iconic tourist destinations with a new purpose built koala hold facility.





PARKS 2025 STAGE 1

# Kangaroo Island tourism activation

**Government investment:** \$7 million

Fires on Kangaroo Island burnt about 210,000 hectares of land – almost half the island – when they broke out in December 2019.

This project ensures that a visit to Kangaroo Island stays on the bucket list of interstate and international visitors by enhancing and upgrading experiences and facilities at Seal Bay and other must-see locations on the eastern side of the island.



ADDITIONAL PARKS PROJECTS SINCE 2018-19

## Statewide park renewal

**Government investment:** \$7.1 million (including \$1 million annually)

To assist in activating nature-based tourism in South Australia, a program of upgrades and improvements to existing park facilities and infrastructure has commenced. The funding will improve the foundational elements of what visitors really want from our parks. The planned work will focus on day visitor sites, signage, campgrounds, toilets, trails, roads and carparks as well as improved accessibility for park visitors.





ADDITIONAL PARKS PROJECTS SINCE 2018-19

# Creating the Wild South Coast Way on the Heysen Trail

**Government investment:** \$6 million

The Fleurieu Peninsula has some of South Australia’s most diverse and dramatic landscapes. The creation of the Wild South Coast Way will attract more visitors, promote accessibility for all, and provide opportunities for private sector investment in nature-based tourism.

It will connect the parks that run along our breathtaking southern coastline and become a beacon for locals and tourists alike, driving sustainable economic growth in the region.

This exciting project will upgrade sections of the iconic Heysen Trail from Cape Jervis to Deep Creek Conservation Park. The visitor experience at Deep Creek will be enhanced and expanded with the construction of a new day visitor facility and a universally accessible walking trail, and existing campgrounds and amenities will also be upgraded.



ADDITIONAL PARKS PROJECTS SINCE 2018-19

# Creating Glenthorne National Park-Itymaitpinna Yarta

**Government investment:** \$12.5 million

We’ve seized a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to preserve and revitalise a large area of existing open space in Adelaide’s southern suburbs and turn it into a thriving environmental and recreational precinct for the whole community.

The creation of Glenthorne National Park-Itymaitpinna Yarta will bring together several important parcels of land – a total area of more than 1,500 hectares – to create and expand wildlife and vegetation corridors, supporting native plants and animals to survive and thrive.

Local communities and groups have been provided with an unprecedented opportunity to shape and manage this community asset.



