

MEDIA RELEASE



Monday, 13 October 2008

VICTORIANS URGED TO NOMINATE COASTAL CHAMPIONS

With Victoria's coast stretching 2,000km and nearly 9 out of every 10 Victorians visiting the coast each year, those championing and protecting the state's greatest natural asset deserve to be seen and heard.

The Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence provide just that opportunity and today Libby Mears, Chair of the Victorian Coastal Council, announced that nominations for the 2009 awards are now open.

"These prestigious awards are Victoria's highest recognition of the remarkable contribution thousands of individuals and organisations make to our coast each year," Ms Mears said.

This year is the 10th anniversary of the Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence, an initiative jointly hosted by the Victorian Coastal Council and Coast Action/Coastcare.

"The past decade has seen rapid change on our coast," Ms Mears said.

"The emergence of the 'Sea Change' phenomenon has seen many Victorians choose to live by the sea.

"We now have a system of Marine Protected Areas in place and there is now a much stronger appreciation of our coastal values.

"These awards are all about recognising the extraordinary efforts of ordinary Victorians helping to secure our coastal and marine environments for future generations, whether it's by going beyond the call of duty in their job, by community action or by displaying corporate responsibility."

Awards for the 2009 Coastal Awards for Excellence will be presented in 10 categories:

- Outstanding Individual Achievement
- Community Action
- Coastal Management
- Innovation
- Education
- Biodiversity Conservation
- Coastal Planning
- Coastal Culture
- Integrated Coastal and Catchment Management
- Coastal Building & Design

Last year, the awards honoured a primary school, a Committee of Management, a local Council, an architecture firm, and community members, among others.

For general media enquiries: Coast Action/Coastcare's State Coordinator Matt Fox on (03) 9637 9742 or VCC Project Officer Erin Nash on (03) 9637 9236.

For interviews: VCC Chair Libby Mears on 0400 570 287.

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“No one group, government or organisation can manage Victoria’s coast alone but together, the wider community and government can make a real difference,” Ms Mears said.

“We encourage everyone who values our coast to nominate individuals, organisations and projects helping to protect and enhance our unique marine and coastal environments and communities ... it could even be your own group or initiative.”

More information and nomination forms are available by following the links at www.vcc.vic.gov.au or by calling (03) 9637 9776. Nominations close 5:00pm Friday, 12 December, 2008.

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