



Media release

The Hon Ryan Smith MP

Minister for Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Youth Affairs
Friday 27 April 2012

Celebrating champions in coastal conservation

A group of everyday Victorians were awarded at the Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence 2012 last night.

The winners were announced at a gala event held at the Melbourne Museum, hosted by the Victorian Coastal Council.

Minister for Environment and Climate Change Ryan Smith presented nine awards to individuals, groups and organisations for their volunteer work.

“Victoria has an incredible network of dedicated people who work hard to protect and enhance our beautiful coastal and marine environments,” Mr Smith said.

“Award winners should all be extremely proud of their endeavours.”

Mr Smith presented awards for seven projects across five categories. Individual awards were also presented to recognise the achievements and commitment of two Victorians who have made ongoing contributions to coastal management.

Bernie McCarrick won the Lifetime Achievement award for his passion for wetland birds and achievements in land management and preservation, and Rosemary Birney won the Outstanding Volunteer award for her volunteer work in protecting and restoring the Somers foreshore over the past 12 years.

“These awards provide some insight into the enormous contribution made by so many Victorians for the benefit of everyone who enjoys our coast,” Mr Smith said.

The Victorian Coastal Council – the peak body for strategic planning and management of the Victorian coast – has been running the awards event for 13 years.

Mr Smith took the opportunity to thank outgoing Council Chairperson Libby Mears for her leadership in the role since 2007, and announced newly-appointed Chairperson Jon Hickman.

“Mr Hickman has a strong background in senior management and a strong record in leadership roles and brings valuable skills in conservation, tourism, business, community affairs, public sector governance and corporate planning,” Mr Smith said.

“As the new Chairperson until June 2013, Mr Hickman will lead initiatives to best respond to challenges impacting on Victoria’s coast, including the important task of preparing the next iteration of the Victorian Coastal Strategy, due next year,” Mr Smith said.

For more information about the Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence 2012 and to see a description of the winning entries visit <http://www.vcc.vic.gov.au/page/awards/victorian-coastal-awards-for-excellence>

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