

Draft Climate and Environment Strategy 2026 - 2036 SNAPSHOT



The draft Climate and Environment Strategy 2036 sets a shared direction for Council, partners and the community to care for Country and work towards a climate-ready, nature-positive and resilient Yarra Ranges. It responds to the interconnected challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation, with the future of Yarra Ranges shaped by what we choose to protect, restore and change today.

In the face of more frequent extreme weather, increasing bushfire and storm risks, urban heat, rising living costs and growing pressure on resources, Council has a responsibility to act with courage and care. Acting now has never been more important.

The Strategy supports the Yarra Ranges Council Community Vision 2036 and is the lead strategy for Council's strategic objective Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment.

Community Consultation

This Strategy has been shaped by more than 2,400 community members of various ages who care deeply about the future of Yarra Ranges.

Community input has directly influenced the Strategy, including strengthening priorities relating to climate adaptation, waterway health, biodiversity protection, local food systems, renewable energy, emergency preparedness and community participation.

Caring for Country Together

This Strategy adopts a Country-centred approach that connects climate action, biodiversity, waterways, land management and community resilience. Building on the foundations established through Council's previous Environment Strategy, Reconciliation Action Plans and ongoing partnerships with Traditional Owners, we continue our commitment to supporting the long-term healing of Country and the wellbeing of everyone who lives on Country.

Caring for Country is a shared commitment between Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, Yarra Ranges Council, communities, landholders, agribusinesses, businesses and partner organisations.



"In 2036, we strive to make Yarra Ranges a place where native habitats and animals thrive alongside people, homes, and streets: protected and cared for through Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

Our community is climate-ready, with landscapes and neighbourhoods designed to stay safe and liveable through heat, fire and flood. This means more cool, green spaces that are powered by renewable energy.

We are living sustainably with thriving community gardens, electrified transport and clean waterways. There's easy access to low-impact environmental choices and everyone feels they belong. We connect, have opportunities to learn and are able to help shape a sustainable future."

Yarra Ranges Council
Youth Ambassadors

A Changing Climate and Environment

This Strategy is based on climate science, environmental data, Traditional Owner knowledge and local evidence. Together, these show that Yarra Ranges is facing growing climate and environmental pressures. These pressures affect our communities, infrastructure, water, biodiversity and the natural systems we all depend on.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has made it clear that greenhouse gas emissions need to fall quickly this decade to help keep global warming as close as possible to 1.5°C and avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Yarra Ranges is already experiencing the impacts through hotter temperatures, more heatwaves, bushfires, storms and other extreme weather. These events can damage homes and infrastructure, interrupt power, communications and services, disrupt businesses, and affect people's health and wellbeing.

Climate and environmental change does not affect everyone in the same way. This Strategy aims to help all communities prepare for future challenges, with a focus on supporting people and places that are more vulnerable.



1980's

- 1980  Upwey, Mt Dandenong
- 1983  Dandenong's, Upper Yarra (Ash Wednesday)

1990's

- 1991  Yarra State Forest, Mt Little Joe
- 1992  Warburton
- 1995  Lilydale
- 1996  Belgrave, Mt Dandenong Tourist Road
- 1997  The Basin, Dandenong Ranges, Montrose

2000's

- 2005  Kalorama, Tremont, Kallista, Olinda
- 2009  Steels Creek, Chum Creek, Dixons Creek, Yarra Glen, Coldstream, Yering, Gruyere, Upwey, Belgrave, Belgrave South, Healesville, Tarrawarra, Toolangi (Black Saturday)

2010's

- 2015  Wandin North
- 2016  Dandenong Ranges
- 2019  Upper Yarra Catchment

2020's

- 2021  Yarra Ranges
- 2022  Lilydale, Belgrave, Kallista, Kilsyth, Monbulk, Upwey, Tecoma, Yarra Junction
-  Upper Yarra Dandenong Ranges
- 2024  Yarra Valley, Lilydale
- 2025  Montrose



Fire



Flood



Landslide



Storm

Themes and Goals

Informed by science, community priorities and an ongoing partnership with Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people, this strategy responds to these challenges through five aspirational goals. The five goals work together as a connected system to support long-term resilience and environmental wellbeing. Progress in one area often supports progress in another.



Climate Ready Goal 1

Yarra Ranges is a climate-ready, net zero emissions community

People are empowered with the knowledge, resources and systems, to lead climate action, mitigate emissions, adapt to changing climate and be prepared in extreme weather events.



Water Futures Goal 2

Yarra Ranges has protected, healthy water systems

Water shared fairly and managed to restore and improve ecosystems, sustain culture and communities, with waterways respected as living entities.



Nature Positive Goal 3

Yarra Ranges has a thriving natural environment

Ecosystems and biodiversity are regenerating, guided by Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Our natural environment is protected and strengthened by shared responsibility and connection.



Resilient Place Goal 4

Yarra Ranges has resilient, connected and inspiring places

Places to live and visit are thoughtfully designed, built and adapted, supporting liveability, adapting to climate change and celebrating distinctive landscapes.



Resource Wise Goal 5

Yarra Ranges is leading circular economy action

Products and materials are designed for a circular lifecycle and are kept in use for as long as possible, with communities and businesses reducing their impact on the environment.