

FLOOD RECOVERY NEWSLETTER



Edition 8: 3 February 2023

RFCS Drop-ins at BRIC



Would you like to know more about flood recovery grants or are wondering about your eligibility?

Anna McGee from the Rural Financial Counselling Service will be available for walk-in appointments at the Boort Resource and Information Centre on:

Monday 6 February from 9am to 3pm

Josie McKinnon, Community Recovery Officer with Loddon Shire Council, will also be available to answer questions about your community's recovery.

For more information please contact Josie on 0474 911 783.

Community Recovery Contacts

Loddon Shire Council's Flood Recovery team would love to hear from you and assist you through your flood recovery. Please get in touch if you would like to chat about flood recovery for you and your community.

Call Mal: 0499 978 145 or Josie: 0474 911 783

Rural Finance closing dates

Primary producers, small businesses and not for profit organisations across Victoria affected by the devastating floods and storms which commenced in October 2022 can apply for a package of support to help kickstart their recovery effort. This support is also available to primary producers impacted by the hailstorms late in 2022.

The Victorian Primary Producer Flood Recovery Grant of up to \$75,000 is available to support clean-up, relief and recovery. **Closing 4pm, 13 July 2023.**

The Victorian Rural Landholder Grant of up to \$25,000 is available to help rural landholders who have an eligible smaller-scale primary production enterprise with clean-up, relief and recovery. **Closing 4pm, 13 July 2023.**

The Victorian Primary Producer Flood Recovery Transport Support Program is available to help pay for the transport of emergency fodder or stock drinking water, and moving stock to agistment, sale or slaughter. This program provides a subsidy of up to \$15,000 paid at 50 per cent of the total costs. **Closing 4pm, 13 July 2023.**

Primary producers, small businesses and not-for-profit organisations whose properties have been directly impacted are eligible to apply for a Victorian Primary Producer Flood Recovery Concessional Loan of up to \$250,000 to restore or replace damaged assets, and meet general expenses incurred while the clean-up is underway. **Closing 4pm, 13 July 2023.**

Victorian small businesses and not-for-profit organisations who have been directly impacted by the October 2022 floods are eligible to apply for concessional loans of up to \$250,000 to restore or replace damaged assets, and meet general expenses incurred while the clean-up is underway. **Closing 25 May 2023.**

For more information visit the Rural Finance website: <https://www.ruralfinance.com.au/industry-programs/victorian-primary-producer-flood-recovery-package>



ARE YOU BOGGED MATE?

Free night out for Blokes Only
Tuesday 7 February

BBQ from 6pm
talk by Mary O'Brien at 7pm
Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall

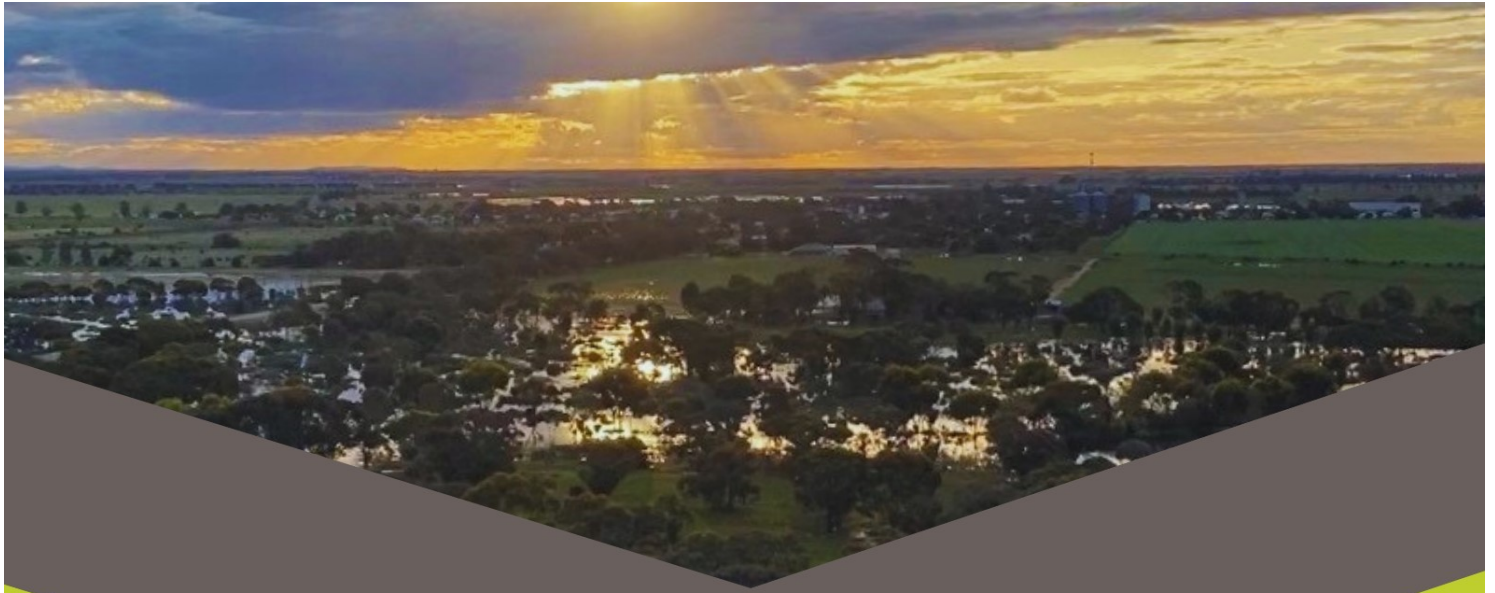
with music by Brian Watts

Are you bogged mate? is all about helping country blokes talk about mental health and suicide while spreading awareness about depression in the bush.

Supported in Pyramid Hill by these organisations



FOR RELIEF & PERSONAL HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE CALL 1800 226 226



Community Dinner

WITH SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER
DR ROB GORDON

THIS EVENT IS SOMETHING YOU DO NOT WANT TO MISS. SINCE ASH WEDNESDAY, DR ROB GORDON HAS BEEN WORKING EXTENSIVELY IN THE FIELD OF DISASTER RECOVERY. HE HAS WORKED WITH PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES AFTER FLOODS, CYCLONES, FIRES AND OTHER EVENTS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA, PROVIDING SUPPORT AND INSIGHT INTO THE DIFFERENT WAYS WE MAY FIND OURSELVES THINKING AND FEELING AS WE NAVIGATE OUR POST-FLOOD RECOVERY.

PLUS PRESENTATIONS FROM
SALLY CUNNINGHAM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR FARMER
HEALTH
AND RURAL FINANCIAL COUNSELLING SERVICE



Friday 3 March, 2023 – Boort Park

5.30 for 6pm start

THIS IS A FREE EVENT. REGISTRATION ESSENTIAL. FOR MORE DETAILS, SCAN THE QR CODE
OR GET IN TOUCH:

JOSIE MCKINNON, COMMUNITY RECOVERY OFFICER, LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL: 0474 911 783

Flood recovery and restoration work continues across the Loddon Shire

Since the October 2022 floods, Council has been busy getting its road network open and safe for use.

Over the duration of the flooding, at least 65 roads were closed for various lengths of time. Many other roads were also impacted without being closed.

There are now only two roads – Barraport-Minmindie Road and Billings Road, both near Boort, that remain closed due to inundation.

Getting the road network open and safe

In getting roads on our network open and usable again, more than 2,000 tonnes of gravel has been used on 34 locations, with many more roads requiring grading.

To get our roads useable within existing resources, Council's Road Management Plan has been suspended.

This means Council's usual road and footpath maintenance activities have been greatly reduced and we are not able to meet the repair timeframes as per that Plan. As a result, Council has seen an increase in customer requests for maintenance.

It is expected that the Road Management Plan will remain suspended for a further six months. In the meantime, we ask the community to be patient and make sure you travel according to the conditions of the networks and adhere to the warning signs.

Capturing the damage

Plenty of work remains in repairing all the damage to our road network.

Council has had a team inspecting roads and capturing the damage in line with the State Government's Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. This fund is there to help councils to restore its essential infrastructure such as roads after events such as the October floods.

To date the following repairs have been identified:

- 117 culvert repairs or replacements
- 56 floodway repairs
- 1 bridge replacement
- 273 km of gravel road re-sheets
- 47 km of unsealed road shoulders to replace
- 14.25 km of sealed road to be rebuilt

Approximately 95 per cent of the network has been assessed and as the data is reviewed over the coming weeks, the damage tally will grow.

Some damage assessments have been postponed so the impacts from harvest traffic on flood-affected roads is captured.

There has also been a need to reassess some roads as the damage has grown over time as traffic has travelled over them.

To put the situation that Council finds itself into perspective – Council's total road expenditure in the 2022-2023 Budget is \$6.7 million. The estimated repair bill for the flood damage to Council's road assets is approximately \$60 million.

Opportunities for asset improvements

The assessments are also identifying opportunities for improvements. The Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements rules only allow funding to repair assets to their original condition – it does not cover improvements. Therefore, any road improvement costs must be covered by Council.

A number of assets for potential improvements have been identified, including:

- 45 culverts
- 15 floodways
- 2 km of sealed road
- 1 bridge

The improvement components of these works will be considered for funding through Council's future budgets.

Delivery of the works

Council is in the process of developing a Panel of Contractors for the delivery of the works. The Panel of Contractors will be required to provide quotations on packets of work. The entire program is expected to be ongoing until June 2025.

Damaged assets covered by Council's insurance include:

- Bridgewater Caravan Park
- Newbridge Recreation Reserve
- Durham Ox Hall
- Fentons Creek Hall
- Bridgewater Swimming Hole
- Donaldson Park fencing
- Canoe launchers

These are at various stages – with some being assessed and others currently being repaired. Council's insurance agency is working through the details with the relevant community committees and Council staff.

Reporting issues with roads

If community members have an issue they would like to report they can contact Council directly. Council takes its responsibility to provide a safe road network seriously and appreciates the community's feedback. If you encounter an issue or wish to make a complaint about one of Council's roads or any other Council matter, you can contact the team on 5494 1200.

Health and wellbeing support

- Nurse on Call: 24 hour caring and professional health advice 1300 60 60 24.
- National Relay Service: Assistance making a phone call if you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impediment. Speak and listen number: 1300 555 727. Teletypewriter number: 133 677. SMS relay number: 0423 677 767.
- Translation and Interpreter Services: Provides access to phone and on-site interpreting services. Requests must be submitted at least 48 hours in advance. www.tisnational.gov.au
- Lifeline: 24hr crisis support and suicide prevention services: 13 11 14 or lifeline.org.au
- Beyond Blue: Information and support for anxiety and/or depression: 1300 224 636 or beyondblue.com.au
- Kids Help Line: 24hr phone and online counselling service for people aged 5-25: 1800 551 800 or kidshelpline.com.au
- Emerging Minds: Provides resources for parents, carers, and families about infant and child mental health: emergingminds.com.au
- Mind Australia-Bendigo: Call 1300 286 463 or visit mindaustralia.org.au

Local support services

Community Health / Hospitals

Boort District Health
3 Kiniry St, Boort
P: (03) 5451 5200

Inglewood and District Health Services
3 Hospital St, Inglewood
P: (03) 5431 7000

Northern District Community Health
P: (03) 5451 0200

Boort Medical Centre
2 Coutts St, Boort
P:(03) 5451 5200

Dingee Bush Nursing Centre
21 King St, Dingee
P:(03) 5436 8309

Marong Medical Centre
8 Hospital St, Inglewood
P:(03) 5438 3308

Boort and Pyramid Hill Community Health
P:(03) 5451 0200

Wedderburn Health Clinic
25 Wilson St, Wedderburn
P: (03) 5494 3511

Legal Services
Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Service
P: 1800 450 909

Neighbourhood Houses
Boort Resource and Information Centre (BRIC)
119-121 Godfrey St, Boort
P: (03) 5455 2716

Inglewood Community Neighbourhood House
Cnr Verdon & Market St, Inglewood
P: (03)5455 2716

Pyramid Hill Neighbourhood House
43 Kelly St, Pyramid Hill
P: (03) 5455 7129

Wedderburn Community House
24 Wilson St, Wedderburn
P: (03) 5494 3489

Flood affected business grants closing 7 February

Loddon Shire businesses directly impacted by the October 2022 flood can access a one-off grant of \$5,000 to cover immediate expenses.

Eligible businesses can apply for the grant to cover expenses incurred from flood damage including, for:

- qualified tradespeople to conduct safety inspections and repair premises
- equipment, materials and services needed for clean-up
- removal and disposal of damaged materials or stock
- equipment, stock and materials essential for immediately resuming operations.

For information call the Business Victoria Hotline on 13 22 15 or visit <https://bit.ly/3Yy7f47>

Animal/insect related hazards

- When returning to a flood-affected area watch for rodents, snakes or spiders that may be trapped in your home, shed or garden.
- If you have been bitten by a snake, get immediate medical attention by calling 000.
- If you have been bitten or injured by an animal or insect, seek advice from a doctor.

Beat the bite

Mosquitos can breed in floodwaters. If you're travelling through or visiting this region make sure you:

- Cover up - wear long, loose-fitting clothing.
- Use mosquito repellents containing picardin or DEET on all exposed skin.
- Limit outdoor activity if lots of mosquitoes are about.
- Use 'knockdown' fly spray, mosquito coils or plug-in repellent where you gather to sit or eat outdoors.
- Don't forget the kids – always check the insect repellent label. On babies, you might need to spray or rub repellent on their clothes instead of their skin. Avoid applying repellent to the hands of babies or young children.

Japanese encephalitis (JE)

- Free Japanese Encephalitis Vaccine (JEV) vaccination clinics are currently happening across the Shire. To find out when a clinic is in your area and how to book, please head to our website at <https://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Services/Public-health-services/JEV-Vaccination-Clinics>

Loddon Shire services

For up-to-date information regarding flood recovery and council services:

- Visit our website at www.loddon.vic.gov.au
- Call our office between 8.15am-4.45pm, Monday-Friday on (03) 5494 1200; or
- Go to our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/LoddonShire/