

MEDIA RELEASE



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Larni Yirrip 'Home of the Ironbark' Campground to open near Bendigo

A brand-new campground, **Larni Yirrip**, is opening soon in the Bendigo Regional Park on **Djandak** (Dja Dja Wurrung Country), designed and built by DJAARA, the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, and its enterprise DJANDAK, in partnership with Parks Victoria.

Meaning 'Home of the Ironbark' in Dja Dja Wurrung language, **Larni Yirrip** is nestled among red ironbarks within the iconic box-ironbark forest that is synonymous with much of **Djandak**.

Larni Yirrip Campground was celebrated in a cultural gathering with Dja Dja Wurrung Elders and community members, DJAARA, DJANDAK, and partners including Parks Victoria, Coliban Water and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

DJAARA Chair, Rebecca Phillips highlighted the significance of the campground.

"This is the first DJAARA campground designed by and for **Djaara** (Dja Dja Wurrung People) since colonisation," Ms Phillips said.

"But, importantly, it is a campground built for the whole community. It's based around Dja Dja Wurrung values and is designed to create a space for community and sharing.

"It gives everyone an opportunity to connect with nature, and connect with **Djaara** Culture," Ms Phillips said.

The campsite was designed through a collaborative process with a group of **Djaara** knowledge holders called a **wartaka**, which means 'come together with purpose'.

The design of the campground is infused with Dja Dja Wurrung cultural elements – from the inclusion of ceremonial spaces and frog ponds to the shape of the shelters, which takes inspiration from traditional **Djaara** designs.

As well, interpretive signage featuring **Djaara** art and cultural stories has been installed within the campground and at the nearby Big Hill walking trail.

Parks Victoria Chief Executive Officer Lee Miezis said the new **Larni Yirrip** Campground will make spending time in nature and experiencing the health and wellbeing benefits of getting outdoors easier for everyone.

"This beautifully designed new campground, with fantastic facilities, is the gem of Central Victoria's parks. Parks Victoria is proud to work in partnership with DJAARA to deliver projects like this and jointly manage parks across Central Victoria," Mr Miezis said.

Larni Yirrip Campground features 12 campsites (some with raised platforms), toilet and picnic facilities, two shelters, fire pits and frog ponds. Located off the Calder Highway in the Bendigo Regional Park the campground serves as the gateway to the Greater Bendigo National Park, one of six joint-managed Aboriginal-title parks on **Djandak**.

With its proximity to No 7 Park and Crusoe Reservoir, the Big Hill lookout, and walking and cycling trails, **Larni Yirrip** offers ready access to a range of recreational activities, including swimming and birdwatching.

The campground was built around existing tracks and previously disturbed land to minimise the need to remove trees. Through the development of the campground, DJAARA and DJANDAK have been able to remediate a degraded area, turning it back into a place of value for the community.

Larni Yirrip Campground is the outcome of a \$2 million investment through the Victorian Government's Victoria's Great Outdoors program. It has been delivered by DJAARA and DJANDAK, in collaboration with Parks Victoria, Coliban Water, DEECA, City of Greater Bendigo and North Central Catchment Management Authority.

Parks Victoria will continue to manage the site. Bookings will be required to enjoy **Larni Yirrip**. To find out more go to www.parks.vic.gov.au

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