

*Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria  
Annual Report 2004/05*

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1 What happened in 2004/05

This first section sets down a description of what culminated in the banning of cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park. It includes a few assumptions that people might query and some guesswork about internal government machinations.

Parks Victoria has been opposed to alpine grazing for many years.

The mining and forestry industries gave up access to National Parks in the 80s (forestry) and the 90s (mining). Cattle grazing was the last commercial utilisation of National Parks in Victoria, outside tourism.

In the 1980s the MCAV took a political stance and opposed the ALP in the Nunawading by-election. It is now a matter of conjecture as to whether this influenced the decision by the Bracks Labor Government.

The 2003 alpine fires burnt many grazing runs and, within some sections of PV considered that it would be up to 10 years before they could be utilised for grazing.

It was suspected that PV knew that a combination of licences expiring in August 2005 and the fires could be used to remove alpine grazing.

The Victorian National Parks Association increased the profile of its campaign against alpine grazing.

The Government decided to review alpine grazing with a backbench Labor Taskforce. As it was not a bipartisan committee, and consisted of ALP members only, the Taskforce was justifiably accused of being used to rationalise the end of alpine grazing.

Arguments floated back and forth about whether the Government wanted to ban alpine grazing to strengthen the likelihood of getting preferences from the Greens or whether a ban would effectively demolish a part of the Green's platform.

The MCAV fought back with visits, papers and a sustained media campaign and it appeared that public support was swinging behind the mountain cattlemen.

Some of those newly involved in this issue, seemed to swing more in our favour as they became exposed to our arguments.

There was a significant amount of scientific argument about the adverse impacts of cattle. We had our eminent scientists but were outweighed by the sheer volume of work highlighting adverse impacts. Argument will continue about the validity of much of the scientific work and whether it too often sought to identify and measure adverse impacts. The fact is, of course, that cattle do have an impact, the same as tourism, skiing and other visitor use. Fundamentally, the issue often got down to philosophical positions about whether cattle grazing was an appropriate use of a National Park.

Throughout the long review by the Alpine Grazing Taskforce, the only political party to support the mountain cattlemen was the National Party.

In January 2005, a rally was considered but there was support for a smaller group of mounted cattlemen to come to Melbourne at the end of January for two days.

By March 2005 it seemed that the Government was wishing it had not raised the issue and had allowed the licences to be renewed.

In meetings with the Minister in April and May, it seemed that he was unlikely to completely ban alpine grazing and was looking for a compromise position. On leaving meetings with the

Minister, mountain cattlemen remarked that he did not seem to be leading up to a complete ban.

Eventually pushed to make a decision, the Government seemed to decide to stick to its earlier apparent policy, get on with it and ban alpine grazing from the Alpine National Park.

As the announcement unfolded, the amount of investment by the Government in this decision became clear. Moreover, the Government almost painted itself into a corner from which it could not compromise or change its mind. The investment included:

- The Premier was involved with the Deputy Premier in this announcement. This means the whole Government had a stake in making this decision acceptable and for it to stick.
- Full page colour advertisements in newspapers and radio advertising
- Introducing legislation on the same day as the announcement
- Support for the decision by eminent scientists and green groups
- Questions lined up for Question Time in the Legislative Assembly
- The DSE website was set up with the news
- The PV website was set up to ask for volunteers to register to help “fix up” the Alpine National Park.
- The Government had the balance of power in the Legislative Council and could pass the required legislation without hindrance.
- A sustained and obviously orchestrated blaze of letters from people supporting the ban flooded newspapers.

The investment supporting the decision could not have been put together in the last few days when we thought we were still negotiating with the Minister and his office. Clearly the decision was in prospect and the public relations investment was being put together well before the announcement. If we had been able to strike a deal, the public relations investment supporting the ultimate decision could have been switched off. That last gasp negotiation came to nothing and the decision was announced and the public relations investment was unleashed together with the scurrilous advertising and hyper-spin.

Some within the MCAV have been prepared to reluctantly accept the inevitable decision, “move on”, accept the compensation, look for a better deal in the State Forest. Even if the decision was reversed, the war about alpine grazing would continue.

Several in our community of interest proposed a major rally at Parliament House. The grazing ban became the so-called “lightening rod” to galvanise together, a group of rural people disenchanted with the Government. Country Voice and the June 9 rally was born.

The rally consisted of 500 on horseback and about 750 on foot.

The Federal Government granted emergency national heritage listing. At the time of writing, where this listing might take us is only starting to crystalize.

The Liberal Party now swung in favour of the mountain cattlemen and promised a return of

alpine grazing. This commitment was dulled by the possibility that, even if the conservative parties regained government, the Upper House might be controlled by the Greens.

The legislation sailed through both Houses in four days. The Association was able to achieve just one minor amendment. The opposition parties spoke valiantly but their lack of numbers meant they would have no impact.

## 11 Why the licences should have been renewed

A paper outlining all the reasons why alpine grazing licences should have been renewed is on the MCAV's website.

Go to [mcav.com.au](http://mcav.com.au)

Go to "News"

Go to "The case for renewal of alpine grazing licences in 2005 (pdf file 500kb)"

You can also read the MCAV's submission to the Alpine Grazing Taskforce.

Go to "2004 campaign"

## 12 Dismay at the Government's decision

The savage nature of the Government's decision to ban alpine grazing from the Alpine National Park is now sinking in. There is an overwhelming sense of bitterness, resentment and betrayal.

One supporter said that when she heard news she sat in front of the television and sobbed.

Some of our members will be forced off their farms and have been devastated. We know of one member who has already been forced to sell part of the farm. Others may well become unviable and not be able to hand their operations on to their children.

We are grateful for the many messages of strong support from associate members, from members of the public and from other groups representing people who access public land.

There is fierce anger in the country across many issues and we expect there to be several occasions when this can be expressed. The alpine grazing issue will prove to be a catalyst that will galvanise many rural people and public land user groups into action. The intense feeling is not just in the country. Many urban based people who access public land are incensed and fearful about their own activities. Clearly there is a growing list of groups disenchanted with a series of Government decisions and the name of the MCAV has now been added. As recently as November 2003, the Environment Minister said, in Parliament, "*Alpine grazing is a licensed activity and will continue as a licensed activity.*"

We have met with the Federal Government to consider national heritage issues. We know we have the strong and unequivocal support of the Australian Government. We are now waiting to see how this will translate into positive action. The main point however is that the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia supports mountain cattlemen and alpine

grazing.

Sadly the Alpine Grazing Taskforce report utterly failed to come to grips with the most perplexing issue about the grazing of cattle in the Alpine National Park. This issue is why textbook and urban based theory conflicts with on-ground experience based knowledge. Unravelling this conundrum is the key to understanding the conflict about grazing cattle in the Alpine National Park.

We have been disappointed at the continuing misrepresentation of the area of the Alpine National Park that has been grazed. Even recently, in Parliament, Labor members were talking about half the park being grazed. For the past year, and direct to the Minister and the taskforce, we have been saying that licence areas could be reviewed to give a clear indication of the actual area that is grazed. This could have resulted in a fall from a perception of 50% of the Alpine National Park being grazed to less than 20% and probably about 15%. More recently our estimates have taken this percentage down to 10%. To this extent, the decision is based on a misrepresentation.

At the end of the day, we should remember that the land was good enough, with alpine grazing, to be proclaimed as a national park.

### 13 The MCAV media release on the Government's decision

The decision to remove cattle grazing from the Alpine National Park has devastated mountain cattlemen, consigned a 170 year-old widely loved tradition to the dusty shelves of history and killed off some of the cattle industry's crucial store of post-drought breeding stock.

This decision will force some of our members off their farms. It will be the end of the generational transfer of some farming properties that have had licences in the Park area for 170 years. It will be a devastating and tragic day for some members of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria.

We are now looking to the Federal Government to honour its pre-election promise. We will be calling the Federal Government's lifeline. The Australian Government has supported alpine grazing. During the Federal election campaign, Coalition members including the Prime Minister all supported alpine grazing. After the election, Environment and Heritage Minister, Ian Campbell Minister wrote: "*The Australian Government supports the continuation of alpine grazing as the embodiment of a key element of our outstanding national heritage.*" The Federal Minister for the Environment, the Hon, Ian Campbell has said, "*I have stated publicly that if the Victorian Government does make a decision that threatens alpine grazing, I will reconsider the question of emergency listing.*"

Federal Coalition obviously saw the electoral advantage in supporting the mountain cattlemen. Mountain cattlemen were supported by the Member for Gippsland, the Minister for Environment and Heritage and the Prime Minister.

Future generations will condemn this Government for killing off living history. Minister Thwaites has plunged a knife deep into the heart of Victoria's history.

We will look forward to the day when sense prevails and cattle grazing is reintroduced to remove fire fuel and to keep a healthy and dynamic grassland.

#### 14 The Alpine Grazing Taskforce Report

The report of the Alpine Grazing Taskforce is on the Victorian Government website.

[dse.vic.gov.au](http://dse.vic.gov.au)

Go to “Parks and Reserves”

Go to “A new beginning for the Alpine National Park”

Here are some comments on the report:

- The report sometimes gives the impression that the Alpine National Park is wall-to-wall with cattle. The 650,000 hectare Alpine National Park carries less than 8000 cattle for about 16 weeks each year. This is a stocking rate equivalent of one cow per 80 hectares.
- The report sometimes reads as if the cattlemen do not think their cattle have any impact. Obviously there are impacts. The real issue is, that these impacts are acceptable.
- There is considerable reference to water quality. There are accusations that alpine grazing damages water quality. However, it needs to be remembered that if the cattle were not in the high country, they would be on their home properties, dropping the same cowpats in catchments that eventually flow into reservoirs etc. Furthermore, on their home properties, these cowpats would be dropped much closer to reservoirs. There are millions of domestic, native and introduced creatures on Victorian land, which is all part of our water catchment. Whether about 8000 cows are located on alpine pastures or their home properties would not make the slightest difference to water quality. It would be interesting to estimate the amount of water actually held in mossbeds and compare this with the amount of water held in reservoirs.
- The report contains a reasonable review of the heritage issues. However, the question still arises, if there are heritage and cultural values, why now remove alpine grazing. In Melbourne, if a building is regarded as having heritage and cultural values it is retained. It is not just photographed and then pulled down.
- The report diminishes the importance of a study that supports alpine grazing and then embraces, without substantiation, a study that opposes alpine grazing.
- The report has a curious view of the input by the Australian government. It quotes a submission to the task force from the Department of Environment and Heritage that opposes alpine grazing but does not report the comments of the Minister and the Prime Minister which are supportive of the continuation of alpine grazing.
- It is questioned in several places as to whether it is necessary to continue alpine grazing in order to maintain heritage and cultural values. The report is supportive of the cattlemen but suggests that the cultural values can be respected and displayed without a continuation of alpine grazing. In several sections it is suggested that the traditional activity (alpine grazing) does not have to continue to exist for the community to benefit from the traditions. On the other hand, how much more

valuable are the cultural and heritage values if the activity continues? In several places the report seeks to drive a wedge between cattlemen and their cattle.

- The report talks about wilderness zone being “little-modified” areas even though some of these have been grazed for more than 100 years and continue to be grazed today. The report seems to waft too easily between the damage that has been caused by cattle and the near pristine environment of the Alpine National Park.
- The report notes the emergency nomination for heritage listing. To be fair, the report should have included the statement by the Minister that indicated that an emergency nomination could be reconsidered should alpine grazing be threatened.
- The report notes the MCAV as putting to the task force that “*some individual licence areas could be reduced in size to better reflect where cattle actually grazed.*”  
Actually, the Association has put the following note to the Minister: “*Licence areas to be reviewed by PV and MCAV to give a clear indication of the actual area that is grazed. This should result in a fall from a perception of 50% of the Alpine National Park being grazed to less than 20% and probably about 15%. Boundaries need not be redrawn, just a more accurate perception developed.*”
- There are good references to the Association’s “Alpine Grazing Management Plan” and this, together with some suggested inclusions, clearly points to how alpine grazing could have been continued.

## 12 Final proposal to Government

Most of the material we put together in the course of this work is on our website. One submission not on the web is the final proposal we put to the Government. These are the main components of this submission:

- 12.1 Renew all the licences. The loss of any more alpine grazing licences would cut out the heart and soul of alpine grazing. The MCAV cannot accept any more licence reductions. This "line-in-the-sand" time.
- 12.2 PV to deal with MCAV on when burnt licence areas can be accessed again.
- 12.3 PV and MCAV develop a cattle management plan along the lines proposed by Professor David Kemp (a member of the PV Scientific Advisory Panel). It should include environmental management systems and adaptive management and draw on the management plan proposed, and widely circulated, by the MCAV. (Put simply, adaptive management involves putting some cattle on licence areas, assessing the impact and then gradually increasing numbers to the full licence allocation.)
- 12.4 MCAV to undertake administration of the licences to reduce the cost to Parks Victoria. Currently cattlemen on Snake Island collect licence fees and hand this on to Parks Victoria.
- 12.5 Selected cattlemen to become "Licence Supervisors" in conjunction with PV, to lessen need for PV to undertake supervisory work.
- 12.6 PV and MCAV to develop a plan to have mountain cattlemen take on a more formal role in monitoring the Alpine National Park, performing some "ranger" roles and being involved in the "co-operative ventures" outlined in the MCAV's management plan.
- 12.7 Licence areas to be reviewed by PV and MCAV to give a clear indication of

the actual area that is grazed. This should result in a fall from a perception of 50% of the Alpine National Park being grazed to less than 20% and probably about 15%. Boundaries need not be redrawn, just a more accurate perception developed.

### 13 Alpine grazing licences - just another campaign to the greens, but it's the heart and soul for the mountain cattlemen

Prior to the release of the Alpine Grazing Taskforce report and the Environment Minister's decision, MCAV President, Simon Turner, said the loss of any more alpine grazing licences would cut the heart and soul out of the tradition of taking cattle up onto the high plains each summer.

There is a sorry tale of licence terminations that stretches back over several decades. Each time there has been a termination, the ecological lobby group opposing us have said that is all they want. On every occasion, the new licence terminations have been the starting point for their next campaign.

The mountain cattlemen have had enough of this death by a thousand cuts. We cannot accept any more licence reductions. This is "line-in-the-sand" time.

Past experience makes it very clear that the ecological lobby groups will never be satisfied. We doubt the current issue is of great importance to those opposing us. It is just another part of the long campaign by the VNPA to maintain their relevance and funding. Remember, there has already been a series of terminations of licences over the past 40 years, at least, and each time the greens have said that is all they want.

The greens are already lining up their next battle along the Murray and in the Barmah forest. They live for these battles and the alpine grazing licence issue is just another stoush along the way. This is becoming increasingly obvious to the community.

The community is turning away from the carping of the strident greens. A recent poll has shown that people now regard 'jobs' as more important than the 'environment'. This is a significant reversal on recent years.

The Australian Government was awake to the greens in the Federal Election and saw the obvious electoral advantage in supporting the mountain cattlemen. Mountain cattlemen were supported by the Member for Gippsland, the Minister for Environment and Heritage and the Prime Minister. They knew what the community wanted and were re-elected despite the worst protestations of the greens.

### 14 Strengthening the hold on State Forest licences

Mountain cattlemen are now moving to strengthen their hold on State Forest licences. At the time of the Government's decision, the Minister said, "*...some areas of state forest in the general vicinity of the park that are currently unlicensed or may be under allocated may be able to accommodate additional cattle. The Department of Sustainability and Environment*



*will work with licensees to assess areas which licensees may consider to be suitable to their needs.” (Second Reading Speech)*

We expected that this would be virtually impossible because on several previous occasions such as following the 2003 fires, the State Forest licence area was scoured for more grazing areas.

Since July, mountain cattlemen have been making inquiries about cattle grazing issues and the availability of State Forest licences.

There have been requests for:

- meetings on the containment of cattle on State Forest licences
- information regarding location of current licences
- clarification of changes to occur with expiration of Alpine National Park licences and impacts on managing forest licences

Outcomes from the inquiries had resulted in:

- A state forest licensee agreeing to accommodate expired Alpine National Park licence within his forest licence allocation.
- Provision of information to licence holders regarding boundaries.
- Distribution of Expressions of Interest forms to licensees.
- Facilitate resolution of specific licence issues by providing links to other DSE staff.

Some licensees have indicated an interest in new licences or changes to boundaries or allocations.

Members have been urged to make application for State Forest licences or send expressions of interest to DSE for new licence areas.

5        10,000 cattle in State Forest licences?

The Government’s statement included the following statement regarding the supposed 10,000 cattle on State Forest licences. Clearly the Government considered this important in gaining the community’s support for its decision.

*“Mr Thwaites said high country grazing was a significant part of our history but those heritage values would not be lost with cattle grazing to continue outside the boundaries of the Park.*

*There will still be high country grazing in State forests, with licences continuing for about 10,000 cattle, covered by about 150 licences, ” he said. "Many of those who hold licences for the Alpine National Park also hold licences to graze in State forests."*

Closer examination of this statement revealed that the number of cattle might be substantially less than 10,000

## 5.1 Licences adjacent to the Alpine National Park

The following sets out the manner in which many mountain cattlemen are left with State Forest licence area adjacent to the Alpine National Park

- Before the proclamation of the Alpine National Park, a licence holder had a run with an allocation of, say, 100 cattle.
- The licence area under consideration here is not in an iconic area such as the Bogong High Plains. The licence area is in a relatively “out of the way” area which has low visitation levels. There are four-wheel-drive tracks in the area, but no major tourist roads.
- The Alpine National Park was proclaimed and the boundary went through the pre-existing run.
- The pre-existing single licence was split into a licence for the Alpine National Park and a licence for the remaining State Forest licence area.
- There was some movement of cattle between the licence areas but, in general, the numbers allocated to each run (Park and Forest) were approximate enough for no-one to worry about head counts.
- The Alpine National Park licence will not now be renewed.
- Naturally, the remaining State Forest licence area abuts the Alpine National Park.
- The boundary between the State Forest licence area and the Alpine National Park, might be 20 kilometres long and not on a cattle proof geographical feature such as an escarpment or river.
- Cattle are likely to wander into the Alpine National Park.
- The individual State Forest licenceholders could not afford to fence the boundary, even if this was acceptable to the Government.
- It would be routine to inspect the cattle several times during a 20 week season and any straying cattle could be moved back onto the State Forest licence area. In a general sense, cattle would gradually learn to stay on the State Forest licence area but this could take 10 years.
- Salt could be used hold cattle on the State Forest licence area but would not prevent, absolutely, any cattle from straying into the Park.
- What will the attitude of the Government be to cattle wandering into the Park?

The Alpine Grazing Taskforce itself admitted that some licence areas abutting the Alpine National Park would become “unmanageable”.

#### 5.1 Some State Forest licences carry no cattle

Local on-ground knowledge indicates that some landholders hold State Forest licences but do not use them for a range of reasons including the fact that the area that might have been grazed has become unpalatable to cattle because there has been too little fuel reduction burning.

#### 5.2 Some State Forest licences are not alpine runs

It is difficult to get a clear picture on which runs are generally in alpine locations. There are a significant number of bush runs in lower altitudes and it is suspected that these runs have

been included in the Government's claim of 10,000 cattle on "high country grazing in State forests".

### 5.3 Not 10,000, more like 2,000 cattle

In considering the Government's statement that mountain cattlemen are running 10,000 cattle on State Forest licences, we need to:

Deduct 3,000 cattle that will not be able to graze on State Forest licences adjacent to the Alpine National Park unless boundary issues are resolved in a favourable and permanent manner.

Deduct another 3,000 cattle which are allocated to State Forest licences in mountain areas that are not used because of their poor quality following years of inadequate fuel reduction burning.

Additionally, many of the State Forest licences are not suitable for summer grazing because they have no water and are too fire prone.

The MCAV estimates that this brings the number currently on State Forest licences in mountain areas down to about 2,000.

### 14 National heritage

This is the media release issued by Australian Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator the Hon. Ian Campbell, on 26 May 2005

*"The man from Snowy River - a unique heritage under threat*

*The Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator Ian Campbell, has agreed to initiate an emergency listing assessment of the Alpine National Park under the National Heritage Act.*

*Senator Campbell today met representatives of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria to discuss the Victorian Government's decision to unilaterally end 170 years of grazing in the Victorian high country.*

*"In light of the decision by the Bracks Labor Government to tear up the grazing licences held by these Australian families for six generations, I will be asking my department to provide an assessment on the emergency listing within 10 days," Senator Campbell said.*

*"I intend to hold the Victorian Government accountable for the protection of this unique part of our Australian heritage."*

*Under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, the Minister must make a decision on emergency listing within 10 working days.*

*"The Man from Snowy River is deep in the Australian psyche. This legend is part of Australia's heritage that simply cannot be lost. It should be noted that these 'men from Snowy River' work just 7900 cattle over an enormous high country area of 340,000 hectares - the equivalent of just one animal every 23 MCGs.*

*"We need an outcome that fully protects both the natural and cultural heritage values of the park," Senator Campbell said.*

We have discussed the nomination and what might flow from it on several occasions with the Minister and his staff. We are monitoring developments in this area.

## 15 Government's announcement banning alpine grazing

For the sake of the record, the following is the Government's statement ending cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park

*"High country grazing continues outside national park*

*Cattle grazing will no longer be permitted in Victoria's Alpine National Park, but will continue elsewhere in the high country, Premier Steve Bracks, said today.*

*Mr Bracks said the Government had made the decision to protect one of Victoria's most significant natural assets and important water catchments.*

*The Government will now work with the NSW and ACT Governments to seek World Heritage listing for the National Park.*

*"The decision on grazing will benefit future generations who wish to experience the beautiful Alpine areas," Mr Bracks said. "At the same time the cultural and heritage values of cattle grazing will be preserved with grazing continuing in high country State Forests.*

*"The Alpine Park has high tourism potential, high conservation value and is home to 300 rare and threatened flora and fauna species, as well the headwaters to many of the State's major rivers – including tributaries to the Snowy and Murray.*

*"There is overwhelming scientific evidence that cows as hard-hooved heavy animals are damaging the sensitive Alpine environment."*

*The Alpine Grazing Taskforce established last year to investigate cattle grazing in the National Park found it damaged soil, with cattle trampling mossbeds and watercourses, threatening rare native flora and fauna and spreading weeds.*

*There are 61 cattle grazing licences in the Alpine National Park held by 45 nominated licensees. Most expire in August and will not be renewed, with the remaining four expiring in June next year. At present, it costs \$5.50 per head of cattle per season to graze in the Park.*

*Mr Bracks said while the expiry of licences meant there was no obligation to buy them out, the Government believed it was fair to provide payments to allow licensees to make any transitional arrangements required, such as grazing cattle in other areas.*

*The Government detailed a \$5.4 million package to accompany the announcement, including \$1.8 million for transitional payments to graziers of up to \$100,000 per operation\* over three years.*

*The Government will also contribute toward the \$6.5 million upgrading and sealing of the Bogong High Plains Road, creating a vital link between Omeo and Falls Creek.*

*"There is currently a 31 kilometre unsealed stretch and this upgrade will ensure it becomes an all year all weather road," Mr Bracks said.*

*"The Alpine Shire Council will contribute \$2.5 million and the State Government will seek to share the balance of the funding with the Commonwealth Government."*

*The Minister for the Environment, John Thwaites, said the findings of the Alpine Grazing Taskforce supported previous research showing the damage cattle grazing caused to Alpine environments.*

*"It seems incongruous while the National Parks Act provides fines of up to \$2000 for people caught removing or damaging vegetation, cattle have still been free to roam over*

*these areas and destroy vegetation," he said.*

*"The maximum number of cattle allowed to graze in the park is 7914, or about one per cent of the State's cattle. Last season, because of the 2003 bushfires, only about 740 grazed in the park."*

*The Taskforce also considered a Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) report into the damage caused by the Alpine fires in 2003. The report found grazing should not return to high elevation and burnt areas for at least ten years.*

*Mr Thwaites said high country grazing was a significant part of our history but those heritage values would not be lost with cattle grazing to continue outside the boundaries of the Park.*

*"There will still be high country grazing in State forests, with licences continuing for about 10,000 cattle, covered by about 150 licences, " he said. "Many of those who hold licences for the Alpine National Park also hold licences to graze in State forests."*

*On top of the transitional assistance, the Government announced a range of supporting initiatives:*

- additional weed and pest animal control programs in the park (\$2.2 million);*
- rehabilitation of damaged areas of the park, particularly mossbeds (\$650,000);*
- support for cultural heritage events and festivals in the high country (\$200,000);*
- signage and information on the history of the high country, including grazing (\$240,000);*
- support for historic hut maintenance by volunteers (\$60,000) and*
- implementation of aspects of the Omeo Tourism Destination Plan (\$265,000).*

*Mr Thwaites said Victoria would now work with the NSW and ACT Governments, to pursue listing the parks in the three jurisdictions covering the Alpine area on the National and then World Heritage lists.*

*"There has been no grazing in ACT Alpine Parks since 1908, and all grazing licences in the Kosciuszko National Park in NSW were phased out by 1972," he said.*

*(\*operation referring to a single licence or set of licences for which there is a common group of licencees with one nominated contact person.)*