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Cover: Alpine snow gums, Perisher Valley, Kosciuszko National Park (Photo: T Scanlon/EES)

Published by:
Environment, Energy and Science
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PO Box A290, Sydney South NSW 1232
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Report pollution and environmental incidents
Environment Line: 131 555 (NSW only) or info@environment.nsw.gov.au
See also www.environment.nsw.gov.au
ISBN 978-1-925974-44-7
EES 2019/0302
July 2019

Resort Round-up Newsletter Summer 2018–19
Early opening for the snow season

Autumn openings

This year Selwyn and Perisher resorts both opened over a week before the traditional June long weekend. This was possible due to three days of snow to low altitudes throughout the region.

Several of the resorts recorded over 60cm of snow over a 4-day period leading up to 30th May. Snow was also recorded in Jindabyne on the 27th and 29th May.

No doubt a bit of a scramble for the resorts and businesses to have workers ready to go; but also, for sightseers and those staying at the lodges who were caught out by the sudden snow dumps. Consequently, several car rescues were required throughout the Park, including 20 cars that became stuck within Perisher village.
Ski resorts from across Australia and New Zealand came together for the first Australasian ski resort environmental forum at Thredbo in March.

The forum was hosted by National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and sponsored by the Australian alps national parks.

The focus of the forum was to share new and innovative solutions between resorts across Australia and New Zealand to help manage important issues.

Thirteen issues were discussed ranging from threatened species management, energy use, cultural heritage to social issues.

Examples of some of the presentations included design, implementation and monitoring of fauna crossings, small-scale hydro-electric power, solar street lighting, biosolids as agricultural fertiliser and community education initiatives.

These were followed by questions and discussions as to how to increase the up-take of these initiatives and work collaboratively together.

Mick Pettitt, NPWS Southern Ranges Branch Director stated that “The five to ten minute presentations by the representatives provided great examples of innovation and best management practice”.

On the final day, a field trip was conducted around the Thredbo resort. To save time, a “virtual” tour was also conducted of Perisher with Perisher Blue and NPWS staff delivering a PowerPoint presentation and short films to highlight various issues and their possible solutions.

Participants were enthusiastic and committed in sharing their experiences and ideas; and there was a joint desire to work together on collaborative projects in the future and to meet again in 2 years time.

For more information contact Tim Scanlon, NPWS Resorts Environmental Liaison Officer on (02) 6450 5616 or email Tim.Scanlon@environment.nsw.gov.au
Leichhardt mega reveg

Perisher commenced construction of the Leichhardt Chairlift at the end of winter 2018, and with it, kicked-off the Resort’s most intensive revegetation project to date. The disturbance under the lift alignment required revegetation with native species, so approximately 8,000 native heath and many bags of native grass seed were applied over the summer.

Every planting included compost, water crystals, biodegradable weed mats and pins, and straw mulch to ensure the best chance of survival. The construction was also located within known habitat for the endangered Guthega Skink, so to ensure habitat connectivity was restored for the species, this area was revegetated first and included construction of a rocky fauna crossing across the site.

Planning for Perisher’s Epic promise goal of ‘Zero Waste to Landfill by 2030’ has proved a large task over the two years since its announcement. In 2018, Perisher brought on a full-time Environment and Waste Officer, Amber Gault to help promote and assist moving towards the goal.

Waste initiatives that have been implemented recently, or that are to be rolled-out over winter 2019 include:

- Removing plastic straws from Perisher-owned venues;
- Removing some single-use items from Perisher-owned venues i.e. salt and pepper sachets, sauce packets, and sugar sachets;
- Improving staff education on waste recycling in work areas and within staff accommodation;
- Expanding staff access to organic waste collections;
- Improving access to recycling streams, including increasing collection points for e-waste, mobile phones and batteries for staff.
- Implementing a ‘No Desk-bin Policy’ to promote better sorting of waste and reduce plastic bin-liners used in desk bins. To replace desk-bins, waste sorting stations have been set up in common areas of offices.
- Establishing a Strategic Waste Committee to oversee the program.

For more information on Perisher’s waste initiatives or to contact the Environment and Waste Team at Perisher, please email environment@perisher.com.au

Solar for Bullocks Flat

In May this year, Bullocks Flat Skitube Terminal saw the installation of 30kw of solar panels on the building’s north-facing roof. This system will be used to generate electricity to power most of the summer operations at the site, with any excess being fed back into the grid. The system will also continue to generate energy throughout winter, powering part of Perisher’s operations at the Skitube terminal.

Bins (Photo: Amber Gault/Perisher Ski Resort)
EarthCheck Silver Certification award

Thredbo best practice

In 2017, 2018 and 2019 Thredbo was awarded Silver certification through EarthCheck’s destination standard. The latest review recognised best practice in three areas of operation; social impacts, chemical store/training and use of a mobile paintbrush washing system. Their target is to achieve gold certification by 2021.

Thredbo has been working with the scientific benchmarking certification and tourism advisory group EarthCheck since 2012 to help measure their environmental performance. Their primary focus has been on resource conservation, renewable energy use, recycling, waste reduction, lowering emissions and increasing awareness of sustainability actions.

Thredbo regularly provides data to EarthCheck on fuel, water and energy usage, visitation numbers and the products purchased. An EarthCheck auditor visits the resort annually to view operations and verify that documentation accurately reflects what is happening on the ground. The audits give the Environmental team at Thredbo an opportunity to learn and share ideas on how they are tracking and how they can continue to improve their performance.

Thredbo understands the unique nature of the environment it operates in and the importance of operating sustainably. By working with residents, guests and local businesses, Thredbo aims to preserve, protect and prioritise the mountain environment that everyone loves so much.

The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) Leisure Centre installed a 99.96kWh solar system in May 2018 (Photo: Thredbo Resort)

Roof top view of Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) Leisure Centre’s solar system (Photo: Thredbo Resort)
2019 Award winners

The Perisher Range Resorts Environmental Management System (PRREMS) operational committee presents awards to acknowledge the performance of lodges in meeting the PRREMS targets. The lodges with the best combined efficiency for water and energy per visitor night as determined from the 2018–19 EarthCheck data were selected as winners. This year, Peer Gynt Lodge was the recipient of the commercial operator award and Mulubinba Lodge received the club lodge award.

Commercial lodges/hotels

Winner: Peer Gynt Lodge

Peer Gynt Lodge has consistently maintained the lowest water usage per visitor night (116.9L/VN) of the commercial lodges over the last 3 years and has reduced energy usage per visitor night over the last 2 years.

Highly commended:
- Altitude
- Barrakee Ski Lodge
- Barina Milpara Lodge
- Chez Jean Apartments
- Corroboree Lodge
- Guthega Inn
- Smiggins Chalet
- Sundeck Hotel
- Swagman Chalet
- The Lions Lair

Club lodges

Winner: Mulubinba Lodge

Mulubinba Lodge made significant improvements in efficiency over the 12 month period, including 15% reduction in energy usage per visitor night and 20% reduction in water usage per visitor night compared with the previous year.

Highly commended:
- Alexandra Ski Club
- Aurora Ski Club
- Beachcombers Alpine Retreat
- Blue Cow Ski Club
- Christina Ski Club
- Doorack Lodge – Snowy River Ski Club
- Gunuma Lodge
- Guthega Ski Club
- Highway Alpine Club
- Jagungal Lodge
- Kandahar Ski Club
- Kyilla Lodge – Brindabella Ski Club
- Mirrabooka Ski Club
- Muniong Ski Club
- Rugby Ski Club
- Southern Cross Alpine Lodge
- Tarrawonga Alpine Club
- Tate Ski Club
- Technology Ski Club
- Telemark Ski Club Lodge
- Tiobunga Lodge – Brindabella Ski Club
- Trissana Ski Lodge
- Turnak Co-op Ski Club
- Windarra Ski Lodge
More adventures

New x-country trails

Three new trails have been developed by NPWS in the Perisher area. Two are off the Valley Trail and the Outgoing 2.5km trail. One links the Outgoing 2.5km trail with the Ingoing 2.5km trail. The trails are named after local ski community identities.

Ross’ trail is named after Martin Ross, a former Australian cross-country team representative who is remembered as one of the great Australian cross-country skiers. Ross was instrumental in developing cross-country skiing as a sport in NSW. In addition, to representing Australia at the Grenoble Winter Olympics in 1968 and the world championship in 1970. Ross was responsible for entrenching a culture in the cross-country skiing community of mentoring and assisting promising skiers.

Ted’s trail is named after Ted Winter, a keen cross-country skier, poet and walker. In the 1970s, Ted helped restore many of the wooden huts in Kosciuszko National Park. Paddy Pallin, the outdoor adventurer, believed Winter knew the Snowy Mountains better than just about anyone. Ted is well known for his poetry and being a man of the mountains.

Carl’s trail is named after Carl Melvey, who was a driving force in the improvement of many elements of skiing. Carl held many roles from Ski Team Manager through to sitting on many committees and boards at both club and international level. At the same time, his passion for cross-country was matched by a genuine interest in and enthusiasm for all the athletes and activities within snow sports.

For more information on the cross-country ski trails, drop into the NPWS Perisher Centre.
Mountain biking news

Thredbo Valley Track update

The Thredbo Valley Track (TVT) extension from Bullocks Flat to Gaden Trout Hatchery is on schedule for opening in Spring this year. The track will not be completed beyond Gaden Trout Hatchery until further funding is received.

It is anticipated that the track works to the Gaden Trout Hatchery, as well as tree risk works and the bridge across the Thredbo River will all be completed in time for the opening. Until this time, the lower TVT (below Bullocks Flat) will be closed to walkers and bike riders, however between Thredbo and Bullocks Flat the track will remain open to walkers but closed to bike riders until the Spring opening.

Snowy Monaro Regional Council has undertaken planning work to link the TVT with Jindabyne via the existing track networks and the Lake Jindabyne Shared Trail. This work included an assessment on the safe access to pedestrians via the Kosciuszko Road.
What?

Clean water

National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) coordinates a general water sampling program for Perisher Range and Waste Point with the sampling frequency determined by population numbers as outlined in the document “Drinking Water Monitoring Program” (NSW Health, 2011). Thredbo, Mt Selwyn and Snowy Hydro coordinate their own drinking water monitoring programs with these results made available to NPWS.

NPWS has a duty of care to comply with the Public Health Act 2010 and the Public Health Regulation 2012 in relation to the parks and reserves it manages; with specific reference to the provision of drinking water. A suitable drinking water supply is one that is free of pathogenic organisms causing illnesses and in addition, should be aesthetically pleasing i.e. without odour or colour defects.

In Kosciuszko National Park, NPWS provides water from an independent water supply (not town water) and this is where the duty of care applies as there is a requirement to ensure that either: the water is safe to drink (potable) or, the public are adequately warned the water may not be fit to drink. The sampling parameters of a water supply include microbiological and chemical analysis referenced to the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2011 to determine acceptable water characteristics. The sites monitored provide a verification management system with the primary focus being to protect public health.

Can I cut down or trim that tree?

In short; maybe… but speak to National Parks and Wildlife Service first. All resort leases have clauses relating to the cutting of living or dead native trees that state “not… without the prior written consent of the Relevant Authority.”

If you need to trim or remove dead or potentially dangerous trees growing near buildings, contact Tim Scanlon, NPWS Resorts Environmental Liaison Officer on (02) 6450 5616 before you cut. He can arrange an inspection, or for minor jobs, may even be able to approve the works through viewing photographs and obtaining a description of the location.

Activities information

From walking tracks, bike rides, winter activities, drives, alpine safety to tours in Kosciuszko National Park, you’ll find all the information you’re looking for in one of the new NPWS brochures via: https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/visit-a-park/parks/kosciuszko-national-park/visitor-info#Maps-and-downloads.

Planning any kitchen changes?

Just a reminder to commercial food premises (a premise where the Food Act 2003 applies and consequently, is inspected by NPWS’s Health Officer) who may be considering internal building alterations of a kitchen/store/bar; that these are building works likely to require the approval of the Department of Planning and Environment. The State Environmental Planning Policy (Kosciuszko National Park – Alpine Resorts) 2007 Schedule 2 S.5 outlines exempt development and it has delineated that the following does not constitute exempt approval:

- any kitchen used for commercial purposes
- any area, within premises, that is used for skin penetration procedures within the meaning of Part 3, Division 4 of the Public Health Act 2010
- any hairdressing premises
- any swimming or spa pool within the building.

If you are considering an internal building modification and this has an association with the Food Act 2003 or the Public Health Act 2010 contact NPWS prior to commencement of the building works.

Contact Peter McCarthy, NPWS Environmental Health Officer on (02) 6450 5546 or email Peter.K.McCarthy@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Rock Creek upper weir (Photo: P McCarthy/EES)
Charlotte Pass Snow Resort update

All go at Charlotte Pass

Charlotte Pass Snow Resort has experienced a lot of activity last summer with renovations of the Hotel and resort lodges; the new external cladding of buildings; and with the requisitioning of more oversnow transporters and snow groomers.

This year the Kosciuszko Chalet Hotel has commenced room upgrades in a style that reflects the 80-year history of the hotel. The rooms have been fitted with shutters to enhance their appearance as well as increase their energy efficiency.

This season will also see the grand opening of the new Stillwell Hotel and restaurant. The restaurant will be Mexican themed and include a Tequila Bar, as well as après entertainment on the deck during the winter season. It is also intended that the Hotel will be open year-round in the future.

The transport fleet has been augmented by the addition of a new transport vehicle; a 26 seat Tucker imported from the United States. It is anticipated this will enhance the experience for day trippers by moving more people, faster. There will also be an additional snowgrooming machine; with a Pisten Bully 400 Park Pro acquired for this winter. This completes the modernisation of the fleet of snow groomers, enabling the grooming of more snow terrain.

The Pulpit T-Bar has been upgraded using the latest technology including a new drive motor. This flux reluctance style of drive is up to 40% more efficient than the old drive. A new haul rope has been installed on the Guthrie’s high-speed Poma lift.

Other improvements have included the cladding of Lucy Lodge and the Sewerage Treatment Works; a new waste transport system that is expected to lower diesel usage – this is a single trailer holding all four types of bins at once, enabling there to be less trips with multiple trailers resulting in a more efficient and environmentally friendly service.

So, overall an exciting year of works under the Charlotte Pass Snow Resort 10-year master plan has occurred. It is expected the benefits will not just be confined to winter, with the resort well placed for its summer activation which will make it Australia’s highest operating summer Snow Resort.
Thredbo news

Thredbo Historical Society happenings

Thredbo Alpine Museum is celebrating 30 years since it held Australia’s only Ski World Cup event in 1989. This was only the second time a World Cup event had been held in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Museum is also celebrating 50 years since the first World Cup win by an Australian; Malcolm Milne’s win at Val d’Isere in France in 1969.

The celebrations include: new exhibitions, short films, clippings, and of course a display of the fashion at the time.

The museum is open 1pm-5pm Tuesday to Sunday during the ski season and January, and weekends and public holidays at other times.

For more information visit:
www.thredboalpinemuseum.org.au

Skade Award for Thredbo history book

Randy Weiman accepts the Skade Award on behalf of the author Chas Keys (Photo: D Burns)

The International Ski History Association (ISHA) announced earlier this year that the book “Thredbo Pioneers Legends Community” by Chas Keys was to be presented with the Skade Award 2018. The Skade Award is presented by ISHA for an outstanding work on regional ski history, or for an outstanding work published in book form that is focussed in part on ski history.

Thredbo Historical Society committee member Randy Weiman accepted the Skade Award on behalf of the author Chas Keys and the Thredbo Historical Society team during the ISHA annual conference dinner in Park City, USA, held in early April.

Mr Alan Fredericks, president of the Thredbo Historical Society, said he would like to acknowledge the Society’s pride on receiving the award as well as acknowledging those on the committee who have significantly contributed towards the book’s publication by Halstead Press, 2017.

“Thredbo, Pioneers, Legends, Community” costing $50 together with a bonus gift of “Thredbo 50 Years” by Jim Darby or “Starting Thredbo” by Geoffrey Hughes, can be purchased from the:
- Thredbo Alpine Museum
- Snowy Region Visitor Centre (NPWS Building)
- Snowy Hydro and Cooma Visitor Centres
- Thredbo Newsagency
- Larry Adlers and
- Nuggetts Crossing Newsagency in Jindabyne.
Plant more natives

Runaway reveg

Thirroul Ski Club have been undertaking revegetation works at Maranatha Lodge, Perisher since 2009. Tom Hazell from the lodge said “we started planting because we were being overrun by soil erosion and exotic grasses following some lodge extensions. The weeds were a blight on the beauty of the natural bushland surrounding the lodge”.

Ten years later, Thirroul Ski Club volunteers have now planted hundreds of local native trees, shrubs and groundcovers. In fact, they’ve been so successful that their planting area now extends well beyond their lease area; as they continue to transform degraded weedy areas into colourful and diverse subalpine woodland.

Tom said “the results have been spectacular; in spring we are greeted with a display of dusty daisies along with others.”

“This year we continued an experiment with seed head removal from Timothy and cocksfoot grasses that dominated around the access road. This is reducing the occurrence hugely and we are getting about 40% reduction each year, so we are hoping to win out soon and have a great coverage with native poas”.

National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) provided help along the way by supplying the plants, compost, mulch, undertaking follow up watering and weeding as well as undertaking infill plantings.

“It is a great way to immerse yourself in the wonders of the National Park, and we always manage a decent walk to the Porcupines or on the Main Range to reward us” Tom said.

If you would like advice about revegetation or weed management on your lease contact Tim Scanlon, NPWS Resorts Environmental Liaison Officer on (02) 6450 5616 or email Tim.Scanlon@environment.nsw.gov.au.
Did you know...

Thredbo Sustainability Team
Kosciuszko Thredbo recently held their fourth Sustainability Team meeting, with the group excitedly sharing ideas and enthusiasm for implementing new initiatives.

The Sustainability Team consists of Kosciuszko Thredbo staff, Thredbo Chamber of Commerce members, residents, business owners and NPWS staff.

The team has been created to give Kosciuszko Thredbo and the local resort community an opportunity to discuss Environmental Management. The goal is to work together to increase the uptake of current and new environmental initiatives within Thredbo; share ideas, knowledge and to continue to improve.

Some topics recently covered are increasing environmental awareness through media, marketing and environmental events, recognising Aboriginal Heritage, increasing recycling rates throughout the village and our continued work with EarthCheck.

Together we can all make a difference.

CCA treated timber – use restrictions
Copper chrome arsenate treated timber (CCA) is a former commonly used building product that now has some restrictions on its use. NPWS have a State-wide Policy Directive that extends to all parks stakeholders and encourages the consideration of alternatives to CCA timber treated products.

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) advised in 2004 that CCA must not be used in Australia for high-contact structures, including playgrounds, household buildings and renovations, garden furniture, picnic tables, exterior seating, patios, domestic decking and handrails. From July 2012, CCA was declared a restricted chemical product.

The main issue with this product is the arsenic which can be harmful to people, animals and the environment in certain circumstances i.e. via skin absorption whilst working with CCA; by inhaling or swallowing excessive amounts of sawdust; due to exposure to the ash if CCA treated timber is burnt; via frequent contact with soil mulched with CCA treated timber; and with the leaching of arsenic into the surrounding environment which is accelerated in wet conditions. Alternatives that should be considered include hardwood, recycled plastic, steel, aluminium, and wood treated with natural preservatives, such as Calitrol or ACQ.

The APVMA also advised that existing structures made from CCA treated timber do not need to be removed. If there are concerns over children having contact with the arsenic in CCA products, then you can paint the surfaces with an oil based polyurethane product or paint.

CCA treated timber must be labelled appropriately in Australia. It may be marked as H3, H4 or H5 treated timber. You should check the labelling with your supplier prior to purchase.

For further information please see:


NSW-based companies were recognised for their efforts in improving the sustainability of their businesses at Sustainability Advantage Recognition. Minister Upton and Euan Diver from Kosciuszko Thredbo Pty Ltd (Silver Partner) at the Sustainability Advantage Event held in Sydney on 13 June 2018. (Photo: EES)

Non-CCA treated timber retaining wall (Photo: DPE)
Yeti Ski Club

Environmental Champion – David Heffer (1953 – 2019)

This year, Yeti Lodge were the first and only lodge to achieve a 5/5 leaf rating for their ‘EarthCheck’ report. An achievement that was due to David Heffer’s passionate commitment to the environment.

In 2010 he signed his lodge up to the ‘Energy Efficiency for small business program’ sponsored by NPWS. This was the start of Yeti’s energy journey. An auditor identified areas for energy savings and the government provided $ incentives to implement the recommendations.

In May 2012 the lodge replaced the old electric hot water heater with a quantum air sourced heat pump. There were initial problems with the pump cutting out at low temperatures; however, this was resolved by placing the external evaporator inside the lodge basement. Hot water energy consumption was reduced by 57% resulting in a saving of $1,300 per annum. The ‘Heat Pump’ also qualified for STC (small scale technology certificate) rebates. So, with incentives and $ savings the system had paid for itself within 3 years.

Energy used for heating was also reduced by 14% per annum by installing thermostat controls on underfloor heating, removing old bar heaters, putting timers on those remaining and installing a humidity controller in the lodge drying room.

David’s focus wasn’t limited to energy. In response to a burst water pipe in 2011, a solenoid cut off valve was installed to prevent future water losses. Other significant water saving measures included installation of efficient shower heads, dual flush cisterns and replacement of an old washing machine and drier with coin operated commercial grade equipment resulting in a 30% reduction in water use per visitor night.

In consultation with NPWS, David developed a rehabilitation plan for the Yeti lodge lease area. Exotic grasses and weeds were regularly controlled, native tubestock were planted in 2013 and replacement plantings undertaken in 2015-16.

David’s commitment to the environment was recognised in 2016 when Yeti received the club lodge PRREMS environment award. Highlighting the consistent achievement of environmental targets and implementation of initiatives resulting in improved environmental performance and outcomes.

Before his untimely death on the 6th June, David was enthusiastically exploring more energy-efficiency options for his lodge. He attended the ‘smart energy’ expo in Sydney to gather the latest information on heat pumps and smart energy solutions for the lodge’s hydronic heating system. He was also investigating the possible integration of a PV Solar power system.

Rest in peace David (1953 – 2019). Our condolences go to David’s partner Alessandra, family and friends. He will be remembered as a true environmental champion.

If anyone would like further information about Yeti’s modifications please contact Philip Moss, Chairman, Yeti Ski Lodge via email philip.moss@yetialpineskiclub.com.au
‘Back to Perisher’ success

New route back to Perisher

The Back to Perisher fun run, held as part of the annual SLOPES Back to Perisher event at Easter, has a new route.

This year’s run (ok… for some it’s more of a walk in the park), the 11th to be held, ran (ok again… ran/walked) from Perisher carpark along Perisher-Blue Cow Link Road and up the steep hill to the base of the Terminal and Summit Chairlifts.

The 125 participants (especially those silly enough to run) said the new route was quite a challenge, but organisers were mostly forgiven by the time they reached the finish back at the carpark via Burramys Road and its hills.

The new route was chosen due to the safety concerns of running the event along Kosciuszko Road from Perisher to Charlotte Pass. Those concerns were certainly valid when you consider this Easter was one of the busiest weekends ever for the main range walking tracks.

Other activities held over the weekend included the Great Perisher Duck Race which as usual was lots of fun; and in addition, raised over $700 for the Burns Unit at Westmead Children’s Hospital. The Easter Egg Hunt, another running activity, held on Sunday morning also attracted a good crowd. Note: no birds or their babies were harmed during this activity.

Trim your bin

Want to reduce your business costs? Streamline your processes? Enhance your reputation? Help the environment? Then Bin trim is for you.

Bin Trim is a free service to businesses to help them improve the way they manage waste; leading to cost savings, improved market image and increased staff morale.

Not only is the Bin Trim service free but there are opportunities under the program to gain financial support for useful equipment and to be publicly recognised for doing the right thing.

The Southern Region Business Enterprise Centre (SRBEC) Bin Trim team has made several visits to NSW resorts, Jindabyne and the surrounding areas in recent months.

Engagement with the Bin Trim program is very simple and takes little time. After registration with the SRBEC, a specialist advisor comes to you and audits your waste streams then produces an action plan for your consideration. The Bin Trim team assessor is there to take your calls and answer your queries. Progress is reviewed and monitored, and it is likely that the initial plan morphs into a 2nd Action Plan, used thereafter by the company to guide its activities.

Interested? All you need to do is:

- Fill in a form found on the SRBEC website www.srbec.com.au
- Email or ring us and we will assist you.
  Contact Geoff Pryor on 0428 930 196 or email geoff@srbec.com.au

A business where cardboard and plastic was managed so it is diverted from landfill following a rebate application for equipment. (Photo: G Pryor/SRBEC)
Why is this happening?

Snow gum dieback

Substantial dieback of alpine snow gums *Eucalyptus niphophila* has expanded rapidly in recent years around alpine resorts in Kosciuszko National Park; particularly between 1600 and 1800m.

The vast majority of dieback is linked to impacts from the native longicorn (or “longhorn”) beetle *Phorocantha* sp. Longicorn beetles prefer to lay their eggs on moisture-stressed trees; and in warmer weather the longicorn beetle can hatch faster and grow faster, completing its life cycle as much as 75% faster.

Reduced snowfall, high summer temperatures such as January 2019 where temperatures at Thredbo Top Station were 4.4°C above average, and a reduction in autumn rainfall mean that snow gums are under much greater moisture stress than in the past.

Areas most impacted are around Guthega – a west facing slope highly exposed to westerly winds and the warmer drier afternoon sun. Impacts are also severe around Perisher and parts of Thredbo.

The population of weeping snow gum *Eucalyptus lacrimans* in the Long Plain area also appears to be significantly impacted by the beetle.

There are many unknowns about the species and its impacts/interactions, however, with increasing climate change it is expected that the longicorn beetle will continue to increase in numbers and its associated impacts on snow gums will also increase.

NPWS is working closely with researchers to try and obtain more information about the species and its impacts on native species. For more information contact Tim Scanlon, NPWS Resorts Environmental Liaison Officer on (02) 6450 5616 or email Tim.Scanlon@environment.nsw.gov.au
Stay safe

Back country safety

Kosciuszko National Park in winter is a great place to explore, but not a place to take lightly. Please…

Be Prepared

• Always travel with others
• Have the right equipment for the conditions
• Include clothing for wet and cold weather
• Take spare food
• Take maps and a compass and know how to use them

Get advice

• Check the Bureau of Meteorology weather forecast
• Ask Rangers, Police or Visitor Centre about conditions
• If you are advised not to go – DON’T!

Use Personal locator beacons (PLBs)

• Backcountry mobile phone coverage is usually poor
• Even experienced travellers should take a PLB
• PLBs can save your life if you’re in danger
• Hire PLBs from Visitor Centres and outdoor shops

Trip intentions

Tell someone who cares for you your:
• Planned route
• Number in group and experience level
• Equipment
• Planned return date

Tell them when you are back safely or change plans

If you get caught out or someone is injured

• Stay calm, assess your situation and consider options
• Stay warm and dry
• Find shelter
• Get out of the wind
• Make your location as visible as possible
• If you need to, call for assistance – call 000 if you can
• If you need assistance, call early – it may take many hours for help to arrive

Brochures and handy pocket guides to backcountry safety are available by contacting Tim Scanlon, NPWS Resorts Environmental Liaison Officer on (02) 6450 5616 or email Tim.Scanlon@environment.nsw.gov.au