



Gunbower-Koondrook-Perricoota Storylines

1. About the project

Environment Victoria is searching for people to share their personal, and perhaps unique, connection to the stunning wetland forests of Gunbower-Koondrook-Perricoota. In an all-expenses-paid digital storytelling workshop, participants will enjoy a wonderful opportunity to script and produce their own digital story (short film).

No technical or creative skills required – all you need is to feel passionate and connected to this place. Over four days you will be guided through each and every step of the process by documentary filmmaker Malcolm McKinnon and his team. Digital storytelling combines still images, music and narration - your voice and memories are all that's needed.

GKP is a remarkable place of work and play, a safe haven for a vast array of native animals and plants, and home to our beloved River Red Gums. It also holds special meaning and memories for many people. Your story might be about a local legend, family holidays, working life, natural wonders, or just a brief, but memorable experience - the Storylines project seeks to explore and celebrate these personal connections. Whoever you are and whatever your story, we're keen to hear it.

The stories will feature on a special DVD collection to be screened to the public and distributed in the creators' local communities and amongst various educational, environmental, cultural and community organisations to promote awareness of the area and its significance. Participants will help ensure the survival of this amazing place by showing the world why it is worth protecting and restoring.

To watch the digital stories from the previous Hattah Lakes Storylines project go to the Healthy Rivers section of www.environmentvictoria.org.au

2. Application process

Anyone with a connection to Gunbower-Koondrook-Perricoota forests is invited to apply. Whether you're an avid birdwatcher, a traditional custodian or a professional educator, a bushwalker or irrigator, student, artist or nature-lover – we're keen to hear your tale of what makes GKP special to you.

Stories will be selected to reflect a range of connections to GKP and the diversity of people who recognise the special values of this site.

Applications are due by 27 February 2009. [Click here](#) to download the application form.

Once all applications have been received, a short-list will be determined from which eight participants will be selected by a judging panel. The judging panel will be made up of representatives from: the Murray Darling Basin Authority, North Central Catchment Management Authority, Murray Catchment Management Authority, Forests NSW, NSW Department of Water and Energy, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Gannawarra Shire Council, Geography Teachers Association of Victoria, Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, and Environment Victoria.

All participants will be notified in writing as to whether they were selected, by Friday 20th March (two weeks before the beginning of the workshop).

If you would like the form emailed, faxed or posted, or have a question about the application process or just want to discuss your ideas for a story, please contact Verity McLucas on verity.mclucas@evict.org.au or phone (03) 9341 8109 or fax (03) 9341 8199.

3. About the workshop

Filmmaker Malcolm McKinnon will guide workshop participants through the process of creating and editing their own digital story, focused on a personal connection to the stunning wetland forests of Gunbower-Koondrook-Perricoota. These stories may encapsulate recollections of a meaningful project or an inspiring outing, a significant discovery or a cultural practice, a personal milestone, or singular moments woven together.

Over the course of the four-day program, participants will script and produce their own short digital story with user-friendly computer software and digital media equipment. We understand that everyone will have varying levels of skills and experience, which is why each participant will be carefully guided through every step of the process by

documentary filmmaker Malcolm McKinnon and his three assistants. The workshop environment also provides participants with an excellent interactive space whereby ideas and stories can be shared and new perspectives uncovered and explored.

The GKP Storylines digital storytelling workshop supports the learning of:

- **Personal storytelling skills**
- **Creating a digital story, involving:**
 - Storytelling elements
 - Scripting and storyboarding
 - Photo manipulation, film editing
 - Narration, sound and music
- **Basic multi-media production techniques**

Participants will be invited to join a celebratory launch of their final production on DVD, and provided with their own copy. The DVD will also be distributed amongst various educational, environmental and cultural organisations to promote awareness of the area and its significance.

The workshop will run from Saturday 4th April to Tuesday 7th April 2009 (during school holidays) at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE. Travel, meals and accommodation will be provided.

No previous technical skills or creative experience is required to participate - all you need is a story!

4. What is digital storytelling?

Digital storytelling is the modern-day form of capturing and sharing memories and legends. It offers a powerful way to celebrate and share the personal moments, memoirs, and connections that make a place unique.

Digital storytelling combines the entrancing tradition of oral storytelling with new technologies, enabling the creation of short, autobiographical video-clips that showcase the authors' own story and experience. The production process allows for strong, interdisciplinary learning, bringing together photos, music, voice-over narration, text and video.

5. GKP: a landscape under threat

For generations, people have been drawn to GKP's natural beauty, tranquility and abundant wildlife, and it continues to provide explorers opportunities for bushwalks, kayaking trips, bird watching, boat rides and catching fish to cook on the camp fire.

Gunbower Island, the largest inland island in Australia, is more than 50 kilometres in length, stretching from Koondrook in the west, to Torrumbarry Weir in the east. Here on the island, kangaroos, possums, emus and goannas thrive, along with 160 species of birds.

Gunbower forest is designated as a Wetland of International importance under the Ramsar Convention and Koondrook-Perricoota forests are included in the NSW Central Murray State Forests Ramsar site. It is an important breeding ground for colonial water-birds and houses threatened plant and animal species. These wetland forests are also visited by migratory birds listed under the international treaties with Japan ([JAMBA](#)) and China ([CAMBA](#)).

But the forests and their river desperately need our help. Since the early 1900s the River Murray has been increasingly regulated to provide secure supplies of water for irrigation and a range of other uses. This has led to a change of natural flooding regimes and a significant decline in the health and productivity of the forest and river ecology.

Continuing low water levels in the Murray have put this delicate ecosystem under great stress. Many of its plant and animal species face an increasingly doubtful future: huge numbers of magnificent Red River Gums are dying, native fish are failing to breed, and once-abundant water-birds are disappearing.

To support and ensure their survival, GKP desperately needs our help as much as it needs water. By sharing a personal story about this precious and extraordinary place, you will join with others to provide your own personal message to inspire, celebrate, protect and restore the natural beauty and unique character of the Gunbower-Koondrook-Perricoota wetland forests.

Inspired by the personal memories and meanings of GKP, storytellers will help ensure the survival of this amazing place by showing the world why it is worth protecting.

6. The Living Murray: one river, one life, our future

The Living Murray initiative is Australia's most significant river restoration program. This long-term set of collective actions aims to improve the health and vitality of the Murray River system, and to protect its environmental, cultural, economic and social values.

In June 2004, an agreement to guard the future health of the Murray River was jointly signed by the Australian Federal Government, and State and Territory ministers from Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, and the ACT.

GKP is one of six 'Icon Sites' identified within [The Living Murray](#) initiative, which aims to recover 500 gigalitres of "new" water to support restoration of the Murray Rivers' ecosystems.

The other five Living Murray Icon Sites are:

Barmah-Millewa Forest;
Hattah Lakes;
Chowilla Floodplain and Lindsay-Wallpolla Islands;
Lower Lakes, Coorong and Murray Mouth;
River Murray Channel.

7. Project partners

Environment Victoria has joined forces with, and is grateful for support from the following organisations that are helping to realise GKP Storylines project:



[The Murray Darling Basin Authority](#), through [The Living Murray program](#)

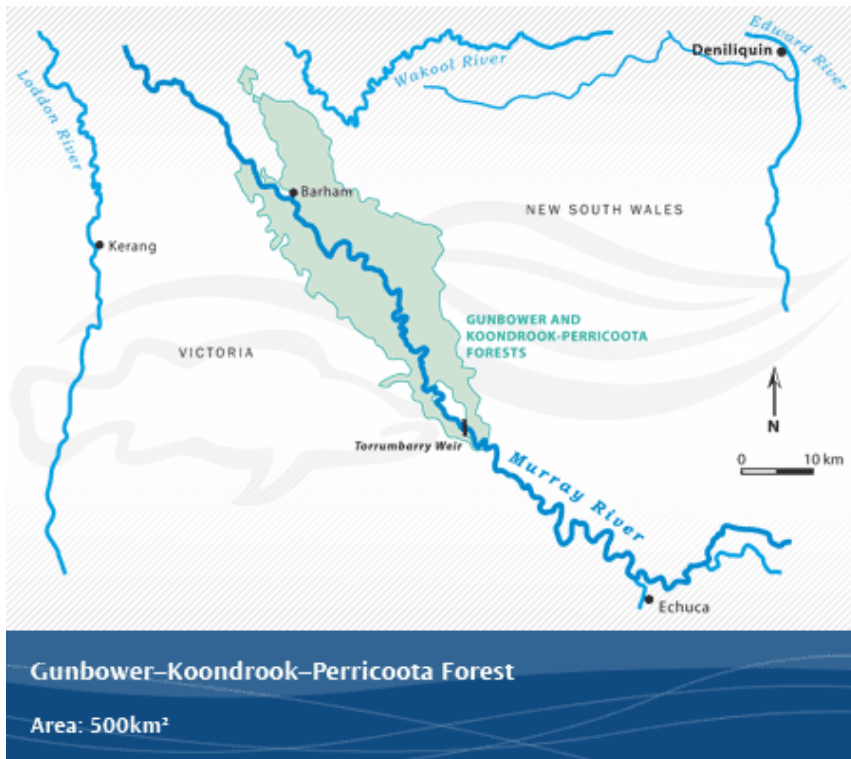
[The North Central Catchment Management Authority](#)
[Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE](#)
[Department of Sustainability and Environment](#)

8. Contact us

Do you have a query, suggestion or story idea you'd like to discuss relating to the GKP Storylines Project?

Email verity.mclucas@envict.org.au at Environment Victoria or phone (03) 9341 8109.

See next page for a map of the GKP site...



(Map: The Living Murray initiative – <http://thelivingmurray.mdbc.gov.au/>)