

**Alpine Community Recovery Committee**

**2022**

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**Alpine Community  
Recovery Plan**

**Update on Projects  
and Progress**

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## Purpose

The Alpine Community Recovery Plan (CRP; March 2021) was developed to support the aspiration of the Alpine Community Recovery Committee (CRC):

*‘Our communities are connected, they are prepared, they have the capacity to respond and recover, they are resilient. They are self-sufficient when needed and have the capacity to create the future they want while coping with adversities.’*

This Progress Review is a snapshot of community progress that is based on activity the Alpine CRC is aware of at this time. As the Alpine CRC does not have the capacity to capture a full or up-to-date report of everything that is happening in the Alpine Shire or Alpine Resort communities, this Progress Review should be read as a guiding document only.

This Progress Review is a live document that can be continually reviewed.

The actions the Alpine CRC has taken, and the preparation of this Progress Review, are aimed at enabling the community. The intent of this Progress Review is to capture examples of initiatives that increase the capacity of community to plan and respond to emergencies, therefore increasing community and individual resilience into the future. Our objective in providing this Progress Review is to provide a reference for communities to develop their own preparedness and recovery activities and for agencies to use in the prioritisation of their programs.

We hope the CRP is a resource for community:

- to access information they may need,
- to use for broad community context when seeking implementation funding for future projects, and
- to support collaboration and partnering across community organisations.

## Structure

This Report is intended to be a reference document that captures much of the information known to the Alpine CRC. This Report contains:

- Summary of activities the Alpine CRC has undertaken in 2020 – 2021
- Outline of the Community Survey, which both identified community needs and priorities, and provided the structure for identifying projects across the region and in local areas. An update on these projects is provided in Appendices 1 & 2
- Outline of the CRP framework and the implementation pathways for the critical issues identified by the Alpine CRC, including a high-level summary of the Alpine CRC’s view on progress and future priorities, provided in Table 1. The original detail of these implementation pathways is provided in Appendix 3
- Information about related agency plans and resources provided in Appendix 4.

## **The Alpine Shire and Alpine Resort Communities**

The Black Summer Bushfires of 2019-20 strongly impacted the Alpine Shire and Alpine Resort communities, with many experiencing multiple evacuations over 22 days. Tourists were advised to leave the area and a state of disaster was declared by the Victorian Premier. Evacuees were directed to Emergency Relief Centres (ERCs) in Wangaratta and Wodonga.

29% of Alpine Shire's footprint was directly impacted by the bushfire and air quality was amongst the worst in the world at that time (Source: Alpine Shire Council (ASC) Annual Report, 2020).

Recovery was further hindered due to COVID-19.

## **The Alpine Community Recovery Committee (CRC)**

The Alpine Community Recovery Committee (CRC) was established by Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) in May 2020. The Alpine CRC is a committee made up of volunteer representatives from across the Alpine Shire and Alpine Resorts to help give a voice to the broad views and recovery goals of local communities.

The purpose of the Alpine CRC includes:

- to advocate for community recovery programs, processes, services, and activities that genuinely reflect the needs of our local communities.
- the development of a CRP that articulates recovery priorities identified by our communities.
- the CRP is an essential communication and advocacy tool to be used with ASC and other relevant government and non-government agencies.

The Alpine CRC is not an implementation body, but rather has a bridging role.

An early challenge for the Alpine CRC was in the initial set up: forming a team, understanding our purpose, and developing procedures and practices that enable us to work effectively. We have recorded some of our core activities below as a means to support the ongoing work of the Alpine CRC for future groups.

### **Core activities**

#### **Identified recovery needs through the development of the community survey and CRP:**

One of the major achievements of 2021 has been the development and distribution of the Alpine CRC CRP. The CRP came together as a result of the community survey conducted in 2020 across the localities and surrounds of Bright, Dinner Plain, Falls Creek, Harrietville, the Kiewa Valley, Mount Hotham and Myrtleford. Identified needs and priorities were placed into four key areas of focus: preparedness, response, recovery, and resilience. The CRP identifies pathways to implementation for flagship projects, including those that require coordinated regionwide response and those that occur at a community level. It is a living document that will be updated and modified as required to meet the needs of our

communities. Access the CRP on ASC's website by visiting:  
<https://www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au/alpine-community-recovery-committee>.

**Implemented the CRP through alignment with existing and new government and community projects, processes, and initiatives:** The Alpine CRC has used the CRP and the projects listed within it to advocate for the needs of our communities, to support opportunities for funding and resourcing, and to hold governments and organisations accountable to their commitments to the community. The Alpine CRC has directly advocated to the Alpine People and Wellbeing Recovery Working Group, Alpine Resilience Committee (ARC), ASC, Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV), Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Federal Government Senate Inquiry into Bushfires, the Federal Member for Indi, Inspector General of Emergency Management Inquiry, Municipal Bushfire Recovery Committee, State Bushfire Recovery Co-ordinating Committee, and Victorian Government State Legislative Council.

This advocacy has enabled agencies to act. Relevant government agencies have advised that the promotion of community needs has encouraged them to reprioritise and influenced the development of their recovery programs.

**Produced Alpine Chat, a monthly digital newsletter, highlighting key areas of concern within the community:** The Alpine CRC sought presentations and mutual dialogue from organisations responsible for the key areas of concern identified in the community survey, including progress with bushfire recovery efforts in our public lands, development of telecommunications infrastructure, available mental health programs, and bushfire preparedness initiatives.

**Advocated for successful delivery a bushfire preparedness flyer:** The Alpine CRC requested that ASC include a specific bushfire preparedness newsletter with the August 2021 rates notice, delivered to every ratepayer in the Alpine Shire. We hope this will become an ongoing ASC initiative.

**Continued advocacy to address insurance:** The Alpine CRC is continuing to seek a solution to the inadequate, exorbitant, or sometimes unobtainable insurance businesses are facing following the bushfires.

**Planned delivery of Preparedness Fair:** The Alpine CRC had commenced work with the Myrtleford Show Committee and ASC to bring a Preparedness Fair to the Myrtleford Show, which would have been an expansion on the Show's regular representation of emergency agencies. The necessary cancellation of the Show in 2021 has delayed this project but we are looking towards delivery in 2022.

**Successfully advocated for the Alpine Resorts regions to be included in state and federal government grants:** The Alpine Resorts are exclusion areas from the State LGA process, which was initially reflected in the BRV Local Economic Recovery (LER) grants program. The successful advocacy for inclusion of the Alpine Resort areas set a precedent and changed awareness and perception about these important economic and community portions of our region at government levels. We hope this change to inclusion of the Alpine Regions for broad based programs is a lasting legacy.

**Advocated for improvements and changes to the BRV LER grants process:** The state government bushfire grants programs were and continue to be welcomed by the community. However, the processes are not always aligned with achieving the intended outcome of building community and economic recovery in the disaster affected regions. While some changes have been made, the Alpine CRC continued to advocate for changes to the process to achieve better outcomes for government money and the recovery of our communities.

**Reviewed over 81 community projects for inclusion as a community recovery priority:** Community organisations and businesses seeking grant funding for projects may have sought a letter of support from the Alpine CRC, as required by some grant application processes. The Alpine CRC have prioritised and endorsed projects that are:

- local: both community and business led,
- are of benefit to the local community, and
- meet one or more of the bushfire recovery objectives outlined in the CRP.

**Distributed event funding to local communities:** With funding provided by BRV, the Alpine CRC was able to distribute funding for end-of-year activities at the local level in 2021 to promote community connectedness.

The Alpine CRC assisted ASC to develop a workplan for community events with funding provided through state and Commonwealth governments. Committee members were also involved in a community event funding program administered by ASC in 2020, enabling the delivery of community events from 2020 to 2022.

**Region-wide communication of preparedness and resilience:** The Alpine CRC identified that there is no central resource for community to refer to or to participate in bushfire preparedness and resilience actions. This is not a problem of lack of information from agencies, but rather that there are multiple sources of information and no single communication channel that is available across the region. The Alpine CRC is actively developing a project to identify options that may improve communities' access to information for preparedness and resilience.

The Alpine CRC believes that information during an emergency event is appropriately managed through the VicEmergency app.

**Committed a great number of volunteer hours:** Between May 2020 and December 2021, the Alpine CRC has held 37 two-hour meetings, numerous working group meetings, and regular agency meetings, in addition to specific advocacy presentations. The required preparation and presentation for all committee members represents a generous contribution of volunteer time.

The Alpine CRC recognises the considerable volunteer time provided by our local community groups in developing and implementing projects and the hours and resources involved in applying for grants.

## **What we would have liked to have done**

The Alpine CRC would have liked to have had more direct engagement with our local communities. We personally feel that our direct engagement with our communities during 2020 and 2021 has been informal, even ad hoc in nature, and severely restricted by COVID-19. Providing newsletters is not enough. Individual Alpine CRC members have aimed to maintain engagement with their local communities with varying degrees of success.

The Alpine CRC is aware of many examples of communities continuing to build their own recovery and resilience, which aligns with our aspiration.

## **The Alpine CRC Community Survey**

The needs and priorities of Alpine Shire and Alpine Resort communities were identified in responses to the Alpine CRC's 2020 community survey, where 337 people contributed their thoughts across the localities and surrounds of Bright, Dinner Plain, Falls Creek, Harrietville, the Kiewa Valley, Mount Hotham, and Myrtleford.

The survey investigated:

- aspects of bushfire impact and recovery
- awareness of recovery support and experiences in accessing support
- personal and community needs for future bushfire preparation
- ideas for community strengthening
- aspects of bushfire preparation, response, and recovery unique to specific localities
- the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on respondents' bushfire recovery

The survey found that nearly 4 in 10 people impacted by the bushfires were making only some or no progress in recovery. However, another 4 in 10 people who were impacted were progressing well. There are impacted people in every locality and surrounds that are not making progress, and recovery is variable across the community and across locations. The smaller communities higher in the Alpine landscape have a higher proportion of people not progressing well (approximately 1 in 4, compared to 1 in 10 for lower elevations).

The survey also found that 1 in 3 people were unaware of recovery supports on offer, although there was overall high awareness of business grants. COVID-19 restrictions have impacted individual and community recovery in multiple interacting ways including through personal and business disruption, economic loss, mental health pressures, and social isolation.

Extended key findings from the 2020 Community Survey are provided in Appendix 2 of the CRP (March 2021), which can be found on ASC's website by visiting: [Alpine CRC Community Recovery Plan.pdf \(alpineshire.vic.gov.au\)](https://alpineshire.vic.gov.au/Alpine-CRC-Community-Recovery-Plan.pdf).

## **Community needs and priorities**

Survey respondents identified a range of needs and priorities relevant to bushfire preparation, response, recovery, and building overall community resilience to future shocks

and disruptions. These needs and priorities have formed the organising framework for the projects collated in the CRP.

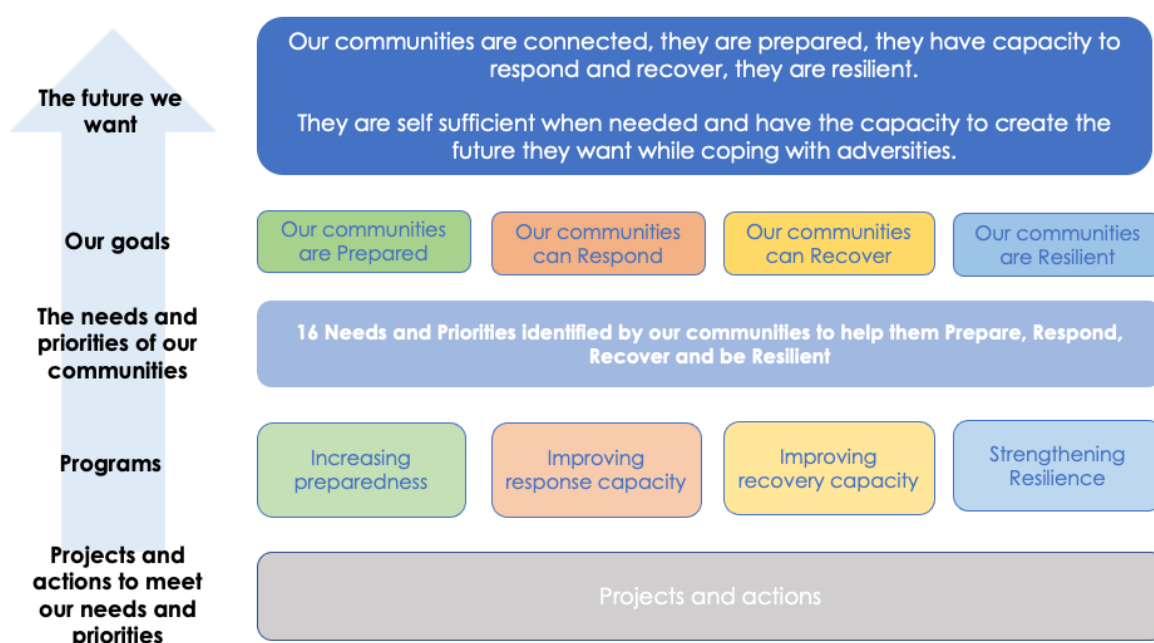
This Report has provided an updated status for these projects, identified in the CRP (March 2021) and provided in Appendices 1 and 2.

## Alpine CRC Community Recovery Plan (March 2021)

The Alpine CRC CRP (March 2021) was developed using a bottom-up approach, aligning known and proposed community projects with the priorities and needs identified in the community survey. This enabled the Alpine CRC to capture the granular detail at an individual community level. From here, the Alpine CRC developed a region-wide strategic view to identify issues of critical importance. This strategic approach led to the development of implementation pathways for recovery. Both approaches were structured around the four pillars of preparedness, response, recovery, and resilience.

The CRP (March 2021) is available on ASC's website by visiting: [Alpine CRC Community Recovery Plan.pdf \(alpineshire.vic.gov.au\)](https://alpineshire.vic.gov.au/Alpine-CRC-Community-Recovery-Plan.pdf).

**Figure 1: Framework of Alpine CRC Recovery Plan**



As the Alpine CRC is not an implementation committee, we have used the plan to advocate community priorities to implementation bodies, such as ASC, BRV, and other government agencies, with the intent to influence their planning and programs.



## **Implementation pathways**

It is important to the Alpine CRC that we advocate for action to occur. To do this we identified implementation pathways for the twelve region-wide strategic issues identified in the CRP (March 2021). For each issue we suggested flagship projects that could address the critical underlying issues that require a coordinated, region-wide response. We also targeted and advocated to agencies that we understood have responsibilities for implementation. In most cases more than one agency has carriage of addressing the critical issues, so where relevant we sought co-ordination across agencies for successful implementation. The flagship projects are intended to be catalytic, helping to create the capacity and conditions for the many smaller-scale, localised projects identified by local communities.

The Alpine CRC used the implementation pathways approach as the prime focus for advocacy into multiple implementation agencies. Further, we invited both public and private agencies to share with us their plans for addressing the key issues we had identified. We actively sought input from agencies to further our understanding of proposed action and sought their adoption of community priorities into their planning processes.

The Alpine CRC believes progressing projects that address the critical underlying issues in the near term will help our communities more rapidly towards being prepared, have the capacity to respond and recover, and have the internal capacity and resilience to cope with adversities when required.

The critical issues that the Alpine CRC believes are a priority and the Alpine CRC's Priorities for Future Action are provided in Table 1. The full detail of the implementation pathways is repeated in Appendix 3.

**TABLE 1: Alpine CRC Assessment of Progress and Priorities for Future Action**

**Goal: Our communities are Prepared**

Alpine CRC issue identified in CRP	Alpine CRC findings on outcomes to date	Future priorities
Improved environmental protection and management (including hazard reduction and initiatives such as free or reduced green waste disposal at tips)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DELWP implemented detailed fire clean-up. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> <li>• Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) and Country Fire Authority (CFA) prepare a three-year joint fuel management plan. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> <li>• ASC supported free green waste days in March 2021, in addition to their annual events in the lead up to summer. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> <li>• BRV and Zoos Victoria led nature-led community recovery grants to help bushfire-affected communities deliver projects that benefit local wildlife and biodiversity. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weed management on our public and adjoining forestry lands, especially blackberry and other woody scramblers that create severe fire risk in gullies and elevate fire into tree canopies.</li> <li>• Continued work towards a tenure-blind environmental management and hazard approach that incorporates traditional knowledge and practice from First Nations peoples.</li> <li>• Government agencies to be adequately funded to conduct weed management works throughout the year and in off seasons.</li> <li>• Advocate for further research into fuel load types and fire risk profiles particular to cool temperate Alpine/North East forest Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs).</li> </ul>
Building community wide awareness of the need to adequately prepare for future disruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Preparedness Fair planned for 2022 in conjunction with Myrtleford Show.</li> <li>• Mailout of Alpine Preparedness Newsletter with ASC rates assessment. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities that engage with communities and individuals to prepare for emergencies, annual October bushfire focus, mitigate complacency.</li> <li>• Develop a region wide communication channel for preparedness and resilience activities.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly delivery of Alpine Chat, a digital newsletter. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> <li>ASC committed to updating Fire, Flood and Emergencies webpages on their website.</li> <li>CFA deliver property assessments and Community Fireguard programs. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> </ul>	
Need for localised preparedness planning to feed into local and state emergency management processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mount Beauty and Myrtleford Neighbourhood Centres and the Dinner Plain community have commenced local preparedness plans.</li> <li>Mt Hotham and Falls Creek have completed local fire management plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage all communities in the region to remain active with local planning for emergencies in their region.</li> </ul>

### Goal: Our communities can Respond

Alpine CRC issue identified in CRP	Alpine CRC findings on outcomes to date	Future priorities
Improved communication during events that is timely, accurate, and localised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Incident Control Centre (ICC) is responsible for communications during an event, which feeds into the VicEmergency app. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> <li>ASC is working with all 30+ communities in the Alpine Shire to develop Community Profiles detailing specific localised information relevant in emergencies. These are designed to be taken into the public information unit in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communities develop local information networks to support the distribution of the formal incident information within communities.</li> <li>FFMVic identify local champions in each district to provide local intel to the ICC.</li> </ul>

	<p>the ICC during an event as a valuable resource to help resolve this issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are resources to support the community in developing and informing local information channels, such as phone trees, but these are not widely known or actively promoted.</li> </ul>	
<p>Adequate communication infrastructure is required to support communication during events and in the recovery phase.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASC is developing a Mobile and Internet Strategy to identify current gaps in infrastructure and advocate for actions to resolve issues.</li> <li>• nbn has provided nine Disaster Satellite Services across the Alpine Shire as part of the Australian Government's Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) package for improving mobile communications in the following locations: Dederang Memorial Hall, Dinner Plain Community Centre, Harrietville Community Hall, Ovens DELWP Office, Pioneer Park Pavilion in Bright, Mount Beauty Community Centre, Mount Beauty Swimming Pool and Sports Centre, Myrtleford Senior Citizens Centre, and Myrtleford Sports Stadium. These are not well advertised. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> <li>• Alpine Radio received funding for a community broadcast vehicle under the National Recovery and Resilience Agency's (NRRRA) Black Summer Bushfire Recovery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication infrastructure that meets all the needs of Alpine communities.</li> <li>• State Emergency Service (SES) to have 4WD broadcast vehicle for use in emergency events.</li> </ul>

	grants program in 2021. <a href="#">See more information here.</a>	
Small/remote communities need adequate firefighting resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mt Hotham received funding for a new water tank to increase water supply in a fire under the NRRRA's Black Summer Bushfire Recovery grants program in 2021. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> <li>Porepunkah CFA received funding to support new technologies and appliance upgrades under Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal's (FRRR) Volunteer Emergency Services fund in 2021. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is essential that local and remote firefighters have the equipment, resources, and effective training to keep them and us safe.</li> <li>More aerial firefighting equipment stationed in the region – quick response to remote outbreaks such as Abbeyard/Wonnangatta fire in steep country.</li> </ul>

### Goal: Our communities can Recover

Alpine CRC issue identified in CRP	Alpine CRC findings on outcomes to date	Future priorities
Social connection and cohesiveness are the foundations of recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social connection was severely impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. Buckland Valley, Buffalo River and the Alpine Resorts experienced the most evacuations. While local agency debriefs were held, some were more than twelve months after the event.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build local community debriefing into formal Emergency Management Plans (EMPs).</li> <li>Develop a one stop shop official support hub/information service, including social media, for online updates in affected districts and townships.</li> <li>ASC to encourage and assist communities and individuals to access any available government /other recovery funds.</li> </ul>

Mental health support is crucial in the short and long term following events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peoples' awareness of available services is low.</li> <li>• Many agencies have provided mental health services.</li> <li>• Navspace was developed from a coordinated agency response for North East Victoria: a digital guide to mental health and wellbeing services. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support the coordination and delivery of mental health services.</li> </ul>
Capacity to recover is partially determined by the degree to which individuals and communities are insured against losses. Lack or under insurance prevents people re-establishing businesses and could lead to population decreases and subsequent rate income loss for local government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In many cases, business insurance is unavailable and, for many where it can be sourced, it is unaffordable. Multiple examples of over 300% increases are known to the Alpine CRC.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address the possible market failure of the insurance industry.</li> <li>• Advocacy to higher levels of government and insurance ombudsman.</li> </ul>

### Goal: Our communities are Resilient

Alpine CRC issue identified in CRP	Alpine CRC findings on outcomes to date	Future priorities
<p>Resilient communities have diverse economies, resilient infrastructure, and cohesive communities</p> <p>Resilient businesses recover quicker, support the community, and can capture income loss for local government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Alpine Shire and Alpine Resort areas have received significant funding from state and federal governments towards facilities and activities that will contribute to the ongoing resilience of the region, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Major infrastructure e.g., Dargo High Plains Road, Mount Beauty Airport,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing the funded projects.</li> <li>• Supporting business and community projects that enable communities to be self-sufficient when needed and have the capacity to create the future they want while coping with adversities.</li> </ul>

Businesses play a key role in community cohesiveness through community inclusive spaces and events

- Porepunkah Helipad, and Mt Hotham Airport off-grid power system upgrade.
- Major tourism/events facilities e.g., Myrtleford splash park, Mt Hotham Snow Play Hub, and Dinner Plain village activation project.
- Mental health service provision
- Community facilities e.g., skateparks, sporting club upgrades, walking and bike trails, fitness stations, waterslides, and pump tracks.
- Business support e.g., Vineyard Smoke Sensor Network.

- Support community volunteer grant writing teams.
- Identify local champions to form groups in each community and support IT needs.
- Prioritise upgrades and emergency service needs at Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLRs).

## Conclusion

Since the Black Summer Bushfires 2019/20, a considerable amount of work and effort across many agencies has gone into recovery efforts.

This is presented in the numerous agency and interagency documents that are available, and more importantly in the actions, outcomes, and services that have and continue to be provided. The Municipal Recovery Plan (MRP) is a multiagency report developed by the agencies in the region with primary responsibility for implementation of recovery actions in the region. The development of the Municipal Recovery Committee (MRC) and the inclusion of the Alpine CRC on this multiagency committee enables a strong communication link between the community and local and state government at a regional level. Related agency plans and resources are provided in Appendix 4.

The grant funding has been generous and significant projects across the region are now possible. Known regional projects are provided in Appendix 1 and known local projects are provided in Appendix 2. Some of the projects in these Appendices have received grant funding and others have received agency funding.

While these Appendices have captured many projects, the Alpine CRC wish to hear of any that we have missed and you believe should have been included.

Areas the Alpine CRC believe require ongoing priority are:

- **Increasing local preparedness**—a resilient community, one that is self-reliant while coping with adversities, requires planning and awareness of what is needed before an event happens. Planning enables a community to effectively access and use its own resources and to link into agency resources as appropriate. The Alpine CRC wish to encourage all communities in the region to become active in planning for emergencies in their region. The ARC and the Alpine CRC can provide direction and support for community initiatives towards local preparedness.
- **Addressing the possible market failure of the insurance industry**—insurance premiums for businesses in the Alpine Shire and Alpine Resorts (and other fire prone areas) have increased 200% - 300%. As a result, in many cases, it is just not possible to insure the business. Business viability is essential for local economic resilience. Advocacy on this issue has been an ongoing priority for the Alpine CRC and other organisations in the region. We are still unaware of any planned action to address this critical need.
- **Addressing the communication infrastructure gaps and blackspots**—communication is lifesaving in times of emergency. The introduction of the VicEmergency app after earlier bushfires is a welcome improvement in communications, but it only works if you have reliable connectivity. It is unclear that a similar emergency today would have any improved communication outcomes. ASC is developing a Mobile and Internet Strategy that will help drive decisions and advocacy for telecommunications improvements into the future. The Strategy will look at identifying people's priority mobile and internet needs, current infrastructure, and make recommendations for improvements. The findings of this Strategy must feed into the national approach to addressing mobile and internet communication infrastructure.
- **Advocating for firefighting equipment, training, and resources at a local level**—in an emergency the local volunteers are the front line of the community's response. It is



essential they have the equipment, resources, and effective training to keep them and us safe, including aerial resources for Alpine conditions.

- **Changing the focus on preparedness from information provision to action**—the Alpine CRC is aware of considerable information and tools for improving preparedness for emergencies. The consistent challenge we have heard is that people did not access the information until too late, or during an event. We believe a change in approach is needed. Fancy communications campaigns are not enough. Activities and resources are needed to better connect people who are unaware they need the information.

The Alpine CRC hope the work and information in this Report is used by communities and agencies to help develop their actions and activities in the future. We believe that the critical issues identified should be used in the design, implementation, and funding of future projects to support the Alpine CRC's aspiration:

*'Our communities are connected, they are prepared, they have the capacity to respond and recover, they are resilient. They are self-sufficient when needed and have the capacity to create the future they want while coping with adversities.'*

## Next Steps

As the community transitions from the recovery stage of the Black Summer Bushfires 2019/20 to more business as usual, the Alpine CRC will be reflecting our ongoing role and purpose in 2022. We have current projects, including an update on the status of projects in the CRP, and a review of improving preparedness activities in a sustainable ongoing manner across the region.

This Progress Review will be made available to government agencies for reference and implementation where appropriate. It summarises what each community is doing and can be used for community strengthening, as well as a tool for community agencies to advocate for resources and support.

## Acknowledgements

The volunteers of the Alpine CRC acknowledge the ongoing actions of community groups across the region. These are the people who contribute to the vibrancy of our communities and contribute to our resilience.

We also acknowledge the considerable support we have received from local, state, and federal government organisations of our administrative processes, including ASC, BRV, NRRRA, and the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Falls Creek and Mount Hotham Resort Managements.

## Contact

This Progress Review has tried to capture activities and projects across the Alpine region, but it is beyond the capacity of the Alpine CRC for us to include everything.

We are interested in your updates and comments on additional projects the Alpine CRC should include on this list.

Please forward any updates to [info@alpinecrc.org.au](mailto:info@alpinecrc.org.au).

If you wish to receive ongoing information from the Alpine CRC, please register for Alpine Chat, our monthly digital newsletter, by visiting <https://eepurl.com/hwZJYz>.

Find out more about the Alpine CRC by visiting <https://www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au/alpine-community-recovery-committee>.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: List of regional scale projects by program and community needs and priorities

(Current: February 2022)

#### A. Our Communities are Prepared

<b>A.1. Improved environmental protection and management (including hazard reduction and initiatives such as free or reduced green waste disposal at tips)</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities and community update</b>
Vouchers for hard rubbish and green waste removal	ASC provides free green waste days generally in March and November and free kerbside pickup of green waste in July and August.
<b>A.2. Fire preparation assistance (practical help for people who need it)</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities and community update</b>
Natural Disaster Recovery & Climate Change Adaptation leadership program delivered by Alpine Valleys Community Leadership Program (AVCLP)	Supported by Alpine CRC.  Funded through the NRRRA Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grants totalling \$217,775. <a href="#">See more information here.</a>
<b>A.3. Information on community and home and property preparation as well as on-site assessment and guidance</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities and community update</b>
Emergency storage crates for pets	Focus is on after fires.  Refer to <a href="#">Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service (WIRES) Wildlife Rescue</a> and <a href="#">Royal Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)</a> .

	<p>Temporary fencing has been purchased to assist with housing pets in emergency relief centres across the Alpine Shire.</p> <p>Animal owners should refer to Animal Welfare Victoria advice for planning for pets in emergencies. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></p>
Alpine Visitor Information Centres (VIC)	<p>Emergency and preparedness information is accessible to community and visitors.</p> <p>Alpine VIC (Bright), Myrtleford VIC and Mount Beauty VIC have a CFA display and collateral every year, including Total Fire Ban Day signage.</p> <p>VICs are closed during bushfire emergencies if there is a threat to safety of staff. VICs are closed during bushfire events.</p> <p>ASC recently updated the Alpine Shire Residents Guide to include expanded information on Emergencies and Preparing for them. A flyer is being created and can be displayed in VICs and other businesses in town. <a href="#">View the Alpine Shire Residents Guide here.</a></p>
Advice on vegetation management, including what and where to plant	<p>Falls Creek Resort Management Board (RMB) has a vegetation management system in place. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></p> <p>Buffalo River CFA are planning a demonstration garden for plants suitable for bushfire.</p> <p>The CFA have developed their Landscaping for Bushfire: Garden Design and Plant Selection guide. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></p> <p>Landcare Victoria has a comprehensive set of fire recovery resources. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></p> <p>DELWP is delivering a priority weed program in fire-impacted area in partnership with Taungurung Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (TLaWAC).</p> <p>DELWP's Good Neighbour Program also offers management of pest weeds and animals. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></p>

	<p>DELWP is delivering the Strategic Fuel Breaks program. <a href="#">See more information about the Strategic Fuel Breaks program here.</a></p> <p>DELWP oversees the network of remote Emergency Water Supply Points (EWSPs). <a href="#">See more information about EWSPs here.</a></p> <p>DELWP has presented engagement opportunities with Alpine CRC on relevant environmental protection and management and planning with ASC is underway.</p>
Community-led fire plan and individual/property scale fire plan.	<p>ASC is developing Community Profiles for all communities in the Alpine Shire and is available to support communities to develop whole-of-community emergency plans.</p> <p>ASC has engaged Practical Ecology to conduct a Fire Management Framework for Dinner Plain. <a href="#">See more information about Practical Ecology here.</a></p> <p>Mount Beauty Neighbourhood Centre has developed a Community Resilience Advisory Group (formerly Keep Calm Committee) and a RediCommunities resilience plan focusing on individual household preparedness. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></p> <p>Myrtleford Neighbourhood Centre has successfully submitted an expression of interest (EOI) to FRRR to develop a whole-of-community approach to preparing for emergencies through their Disaster Ready: Future Resilient program. This will start in early 2022. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></p> <p>Red Cross is running RediCommunities and RediPlan training for communities. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></p> <p>CFA offers Preparing Your Property and Practical Bushfire Planning training workshops. <a href="#">See more information here.</a></p> <p>CFA will visit Dinner Plain in September 2022 to provide advice to homeowners on property preparation.</p> <p>DELWP Hume has a number of engagement staff who are available to discuss DELWP involvement in community activities. The main point of contact is the Community Partnership Support Officer in Ovens District. Contact Ovens by calling 03 5731 1222 between 9am – 4:30pm on Monday to Friday.</p>

Annual bushfire preparedness month (Resilience Month)	ARC and ASC will be participating in emergency preparedness activities each October during Resilience Month. Consider having trivia nights ongoing, with Emergency Management personnel attending to have a fair and help people while there.
Bushfire/Disaster Fair	<p>Myrtleford Show was to be held on the last weekend of October with a plan to include a dedicated a preparedness fair. Due to COVID-19, this was cancelled for 2021. Funding can be made available for 2022.</p> <p>For future funding, community may need to consider resilience grants and other ways of making it more sustainable in the future (post 2022).</p>
Encourage people to develop an emergency plan	<p>This is ongoing.</p> <p>ASC raises awareness of organisations who provide these resources through the <a href="#">Alpine Shire Residents Guide</a>, their <a href="#">Facebook page</a> and their <a href="#">website</a>.</p> <p>Red Cross offers a guide and toolkit for their RediCommunities program. <a href="#">View the RediCommunities guide and toolkit here</a>.</p> <p>ASC's Alpine Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) outlines local preparations for future emergency events, including development of local fire management plans for local communities. <a href="#">View the Alpine Shire MEMP (2021–2024) here</a>.</p>
Encourage people to take responsibility for their personal welfare and community preparedness	<p>Community and Resilience Education Program for Emergency Management with emphasis on fire planning – funding available (until June 2022) ASC</p> <p>Fact sheets on ASC website.</p>

## B. Our Communities can Respond

B.1. Improved local safe places and/or evacuation facilities/capacities	
Project	Activities and Community Update
Blackspot workarounds	ASC engaged and funded a consultant to develop a strategic document as an advocacy tool and to guide future mobile and internet projects.

	Telstra has provided nine STAND mobile communication equipment across the Alpine Shire. <a href="#">See more information here.</a>
<b>B.2. Increased firefighting resources (including subsidies for/knowledge of firefighting resources)</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Enable access via private property where relevant.	
Small / remote communities need adequate firefighting resources	Grant funding opportunity through Volunteer Emergency Services Fund Grant Program <a href="https://frrr.org.au/funding/disaster-resilience-and-climate-solutions/volunteer-emergency-services-fund-grant-program/">https://frrr.org.au/funding/disaster-resilience-and-climate-solutions/volunteer-emergency-services-fund-grant-program/</a>
<b>B.3. Better coordination of services</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
CFA Cluster Youth Crews	The CFA run junior volunteer programs for 11 years of age upwards, including a Cadets Pilot Program for 16 to 17 year olds. <a href="https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/volunteers-careers/volunteer-with-cfa/junior-volunteers">https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/volunteers-careers/volunteer-with-cfa/junior-volunteers</a>
Activate and authorise a volunteer register	<p>Opportunity for a system to be developed that matches volunteers and donations with community needs e.g., emergency food relief, accommodation, fuel vouchers, family violence – also refer to GIVIT (<a href="http://givit.org.au">givit.org.au</a>) for resources/supplies. GIVIT is an organisation supported by State Governments and working in partnership with local government. It connects donations and people in need. ASC is about to become a partner with GIVIT ahead of any future emergencies.</p> <p>Local service providers such as neighbourhood houses, food relief organisations. Alpine Health and NEMA have access to volunteers.</p> <p>Albury Wodonga Volunteer Resource Bureau can assist with volunteers and Volunteer Management Training (Way2Go). The Centre in Wangaratta also has access to volunteers through Skillsbank.</p>
<b>B.4. Information about evacuation procedures and places</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>

Encourage and support people to be ready to evacuate	<p>CFA have preparation, emergency plan and kit – details can be found here:</p> <p><a href="#">Alpine Community Recovery Newsletter - October 2021.pdf (alpineshire.vic.gov.au)</a></p> <p>Utilise community radio (i.e., Alpine Radio) and ABC Radio as a communication tool</p>
Process to inform and manage tourists during an emergency	<p>Bushfire Places of Last Resort BPLRs have been identified around the Shire and new signage has recently been installed.</p> <p>The EMC will be doing an audit of all BPLRs with CFA in February 2022. An audit of all ERCs will be carried out to ensure they are fit for purpose and if required, identify more suitable spaces.</p>
<p>Identify places of last resort:</p> <p>Opportunity to develop a map of locations across the Shire on website, and flyers located at Neighbourhood Centres and Information Centres</p>	<p>New signs have been put in place at the front of each BPLR</p> <p>Incorporated in Community Profile documents to be placed on ASC website– ASC.</p>
<b>B.5. Accurate, localised information (clear reliable info pre, during and post fire)</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Emergency messaging from local towers	<p>The ASC have commissioned a consultant to develop a strategic document that outlines telecommunications issues, and internet and blackspot workarounds. ASC</p> <p>The MEMPC can identify and raise the issue to the REMPC</p>
Advocate for transparent communication	<p>During an emergency ASC can only disseminate information produced by the Incident Control Centre Public Information Unit. ASC EM staff inform the PIU of community needs. Community Profiles will support more efficient dissemination of communications to affected communities.</p> <p>Timely and effective local information is available on ASC website and social media updates.</p>
Request changes to emergency app.	<p>ASC made large submissions and were interviewed for both State and Federal enquiries regarding the Vic Emergency App and website. ASC cannot request changes.</p>



## B.6. Improved communication during a bushfire event

Project	Activities and Community Update
Encourage people to listen to and comply with advice (don't be a hero or complacent)	EMV lead the state-wide policy on evacuation messaging. Key emergency response agencies to raise this issue collectively with EMV
Help assist with emergency communication between agencies and the committee	<p>Promote use of phone trees for areas not already covered by local phone trees</p> <p>DELWP community liaison will support any local initiatives to provide the 'one source of truth' and enable increased communication channels from the incident control room to community.</p> <p>EMV lead the state-wide policy on evacuation messaging. Key emergency response agencies to raise this issue collectively with EMV</p> <p>Transparent communication with affected community and emergent groups - Timely and effective local info available on ASC website, social media updates, for consideration in the MEMP – ongoing – ASC</p>
Develop register of 'who is there'	NEMA is applying for funding to skill new cultural advocates to connect with multicultural residents during emergencies

## C. Our Communities can Recover

### C.1. Assisting vulnerable people

Project	Activities and Community Update
Arrange to check on vulnerable people during an emergency	NEMA has Cultural Advocates Program that checks on multicultural individuals and families
Identify and support vulnerable people in the community	<p>Opportunity for a project to determine how community initiatives can share access to vulnerable people in their networks and activities</p> <p>Mt Beauty Neighbourhood Centre Keep Calm Committee is working on identifying and supporting vulnerable people.</p>

	For vulnerable people in emergencies policy and vulnerable persons register – see  <a href="https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/vulnerable-people-emergencies-policy-guideline-2-vulnerable-persons-register">https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/vulnerable-people-emergencies-policy-guideline-2-vulnerable-persons-register</a>
<b>C.2. Providing/continuing post fire recovery support</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Australian Centre for Rural Entrepreneurship (ACRE)	Project proposal supported by Alpine CRC  Australian Centre for Rural Entrepreneurship –
SBE & Agri Business Recovery & Resilience (Shine at Business)	Project proposal supported by Alpine CRC  Shine at Business Pty Ltd
Project Connectivity (Agbiz Assist)	Project proposal supported by Alpine CRC  Agbiz Assist
Ensure recovery information for community is both accurate and informative	Improve collaborative communication between services to support recovery across broad community networks – ASC/BRV - ongoing to June 2022
	Schedule regular community recovery updates during recovery phase to inform community of resources, events and successes – ASC – ongoing to June 2022
	Ensure shared information is timely, accurate and localised across all elements of social recovery are supported by systems and processes – ASC/BRV - ongoing to June 2022
	Reporting structure for insights from working group participants on emerging strengths, need and priorities to inform planning reporting – in place, needs identified and included in the Plan through the Municipal Recovery Committee – ongoing quarterly to June 2022
Provide training for community leaders (that has a defined purpose)	Application for funding submitted to FRRR by AVCLP – funded
Prepare a progressive adaptable response plan	Map and coordinate information about recovery related meetings, purpose and membership – ASC/BRV

	Identify a common platform for information sharing, data gathering and communications, and skill participants to use this new platform effectively MPH/BRV
	Commit to common goals and review effectiveness of collective effort – workshops late 2020 began exploration of ways of working – BRV/PMHN/DET
Support pivoting businesses	Tourism Northeast conducted Economic Impact Reporting. Results to inform Council's Economic Dev Strategy. To include agriculture sector. Three of six surveys and reports delivered (halted due to insufficient sample size).
	ASC working with small business and Chambers of Commerce to identify business needs and training opportunities to upskill and for greater resilience. Costing/project proposal prepared. Economic Dev Strategy.
	Diversification of product offerings and paths to market for existing businesses – ongoing ASC
	Regular updates and advice for businesses in ASC Bushfire Recovery Newsletter
	ASC worked with regional Councils (Benalla, Towong, Wangaratta, Indigo, Wodonga, Mansfield) and Start-up Shake-up to establish 'Buy from the Northeast', a free-to-use ecommerce platform for local businesses. The aim of the program was to assist businesses who did not have an ecommerce shop to get online easily and quickly and sell directly to customers
	ASC supporting businesses through internet marketing and website development workshops. These workshops will assist businesses with limited social media and ecommerce experience. \$15,000 in grant funding has been allocated for workshops in 2022
	ASC has a dedicated Business Concierge to assist local businesses to connect to State and Commonwealth government businesses services
	ASC participates in regular regional meetings with the North-East Business Recovery Advisory Service – Bushfire, to identify regional trends and to advocate policy changes to support local business recovery

	Identification of solutions to address economic recovery barriers – ongoing focus on resilience and recovery - ASC
Identify key community groups and community connectors	Community Profiles documents being produced by ASC to be placed on ASC website
Facilitate or enable community communication and consultation	Alpine CRC project to develop a relevant programme. Plan for implementation in 2022
Supply financial, mental and health support	Communication plan to direct affected people to mental health support – available on ASC website and Facebook page (includes financial counselling, mental and health support) Ongoing monthly to June 2022 Includes monthly recovery newsletter distributed broadly and feed through to BRV hotline. ASC
	Coordinated mental health and wellbeing services to provide an integrated and timely response to changing needs – TOR developed, ongoing to June 2021 – Re-establishment required to June 2022. ASC
	Web-based interactive recovery service directory in progress ASC
	Refer to NavSpace <a href="https://navspace.org.au/">https://navspace.org.au/</a>  NavSpace is an online guide to mental health and wellbeing support services in the Northeast region of Victoria. This website has been developed to support ongoing community recovery and service response particularly relating to local disasters and COVID-19.
	Post-vention programme re suicide prevention – mental health experts attend Falls Creek once a week. Postvention plan is for the community to know what to do if a suicide occurs and how the community can recover. Now expanding with Alpine Health and ASC.
Organise/encourage community social get togethers	Facilitate community-led recovery through supporting activities, events, information, and access to resources to build connections. ASC/BRV - Active April, farmers markets, Redi-Community planning, grants to access pathways to support community events (ongoing to June 2022)

	<p>Culturally diverse activities that enable safe participation funded</p> <p>Financial Support for local end of year get togethers across the Alpine Shire</p> <p>Opportunity to connect with other communities who have developed approaches:  <a href="https://www.emeraldcommunityhouse.org.au/">https://www.emeraldcommunityhouse.org.au/</a></p>
Advocate for Community facilities	<p>Multiple community facilities projects supported by Alpine CRC. Inc:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffalo River community facilities at CFA shed</li> <li>• Mongans Bridge Caravan Park Inc</li> <li>• Myrtleford Men's Shed</li> <li>• Myrtleford Lawn Tennis Club</li> <li>• Bright Bowls Club</li> </ul> <p>Freeburgh Community Centre</p>
Robust telecommunications including portable infrastructure	<p>Funding available for consultation to develop strategic document</p> <p>Telstra has provided nine STAND mobile communication equipment across the Alpine Shire</p>
Foster community empowerment, strong community leadership and development of community leaders	<p>CRC and ASC supportive of community leadership and development projects and activities</p>
Undertake community succession planning around community leadership and leadership of community groups and clubs to ensure they are ongoing and sustainable	<p>Application for funding submitted to FRRR by AVCLP – funded</p>
Develop response communication targeted at tourists	<p>Response communication is the role of the Incident Controller.</p> <p>The MEMPC have flagged the need for development of communication planning to support the IC during an emergency for both tourists and locals</p>

## D. Our Communities are Resilient

### D.1. Community cohesiveness, participation and community building initiatives to build shared resilience

Project	Activities and Community Update
Foster development or designation of multi-use facilities to improve provision of safer places and last resort evacuation centres	There needs to be community education on the meaning of the words to create greater understanding so that community can make wise and informed decisions. This could be part of the MEMP and the Alpine Resilience committee
Advocate for improvements in services and facilities	Improvements to relief centres across the Shire  New signs have been put in place at the front of each BPLR
Develop an overarching masterplan for regional resilience (Alpine & Resorts)	The MEMPC would be involved but this is the work of Councils and RMBs. ASC has the ARC to support this process. Alpine, Indigo and Towong shires have formed a collaboration to increase capability and capacity - they are involving Wangaratta, Wodonga and RMBs in their collaboration work and have sought funding to work on projects. The collaboration is currently working on Emergency Relief Centre Planning. See EMC for further info  Mt Beauty has set up Community Resilience Action Group.

### D.2. Identification of the need to diversify income potential

Project	Activities and Community Update
Murray to Mountain Rail Trail	Requires funding to proceed – ASC  Bright to Harrietville extension implemented. To be completed March 2022 Newly opened bike track has had impact on number of bike riders/tourists in Harrietville. Revegetation work to occur on the bike path in April/May – ASC and NECMA
Dargo High Plains Road Upgrade	Supported by Alpine CRC ASC – funded from LER process

Tourism Northeast Demand Stimulus Strategy	Strategy document 2019-20 to 2021-22
Foster the potential of the 'Great Alpine Road' to create and expand multiple forms of tourism (including nature-based, recreation, food and wine) along the Great Alpine Road to better diffuse the tourism benefits and promote the region's diverse attractions ('what's your journey?') and stimulate economic activity	Alpine Events Strategy and Action Plan completed  Destination Marketing plan – funded – to take in consideration the ED Strategy – ongoing to June 2022 ASC

### **D.3. Improved internet, telecommunications, electricity, and water supply**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Backups for water, sewerage, and power	Indigo Power - Northeast Victoria Battery Powered Recovery  Mt Hotham RMB - Hotham Water Storage Capacity Expansion

### **D.4 Mental health support**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Build awareness of mental health supports	Monthly Recovery Newsletter developed by ASC, BRV and CRC – monthly until June 2022 - on ASC website
	Psychological welfare support available for staff – Agency Employee Assistance Programs for most organisations – ongoing All agencies
	Coordinated mental health and wellbeing services – TOR developed with ASV, BRV, Alpine Health and Albury Wodonga Health – ongoing Re-establishment required. Suicide postvention planning work commenced, led by Alpine Health

	Development and sharing of practical desk-top tools to support ready referral pathways for young people – due June 2022 - Headspace
	Development of interactive recovery service directory = navigation to service options based on location and need – June 2021, web-based design in progress (Nov 2021) - BRV/MPHN.DET/AH
	Data gathered and collated about service referral rates and review for potential gaps – six weekly reports to Municipal Recovery Committee - ASC
	Complete a whole of life health and wellbeing industry/services gap analysis to ascertain public needs or private business



## Appendix 2: Full list of known local-scale projects by goal and need/priority

Current (February 2022)

Please note, known **local-scale** projects are organised by the main organising goals (prepare, respond, recover, resilient) that they contribute to or build towards and then by the relevant needs and priorities. These categories are not mutually exclusive, and many projects overlap, including with some region-scale projects. However, categorising the projects by their 'best fit' provides a framework for thinking about and organising these relevant to the overall plan aspiration.

### Our Communities are Prepared

Improved environmental protection and management		
Project	Locality	Activities and Community Update
Vegetation Management Hazard reduction FCSC village area	Falls Creek	Supported by Alpine CRC  Falls Creek Ski Lifts P/L (FCSL)
Fuel load reduction (private land)	Dinner Plain	In early Dec the DP community had a meeting with DELWP, Parks and ASC (CFA were an apology) to discuss fuel reduction and clarify issues arising from the 2019/20 fires. The next meeting has been scheduled for Feb with the inclusion of CFA t support community planning  ASC engaged specialist consultants to develop a Dinner Plain Fire Management Plan early 2022.
Fuel load reduction (public land)	Dinner Plain	
Fire preparation assistance (practical help for people who need it)		
Project	Locality	Activities and Community Update
Community-led fire planning with CFA/Neighbourhood Centre	Kiewa Valley	Ongoing for the next three years– Mount Beauty Neighbourhood Centre
Information on community and home and property preparation as well as on-site assessment and guidance		
Project	Locality	Activities and Community Update

Alpine VIC Entry Upgrade*	Bright	
Bright SES Facility Upgrade	Bright	Requires funding to proceed
NE Victoria Vineyard Smoke Sensor Network	NE Wine Zone	Project supported by CRC  \$870k funding approved LER (Wines of the King Valley for NE Wine Zone)

### Our Communities can Respond

Improved local safe places and/or evacuation facilities/capacities		
Project	Locality	Activities and Community Update
Bright Alternative Route	Bright	ASC to look at seeking funding to conduct feasibility study, and if viable, include in project pipeline for future delivery
Myrtleford Evacuation Centre Upgrade/McNamara Park, etc.	Myrtleford	Project supported by CRC  \$34,767 funding approved LER (RC McNamara Reserve)  Full project development applied for grants  The EMC will be carrying out an audit of the BPLR with CFA in February to ensure it is fit for purpose or identify a more suitable space. This will also work with any community planning to ensure that work is collaborative.
Richardson Pavilion (Myrtleford Showgrounds-recreation reserve) upgrades including seal building, toilets/amenities.	Myrtleford	Project supported by CRC  \$470k funding approved LER (Myrtleford Recreation Committee)  AJ Richardson & Cattle Pavilion Upgrade funded – Black Summer Fires - \$440,500
Pioneer Park Criterion Circuit, Road Upgrade	Bright	Requires funding to proceed – Alpine Cycle Club
Tawonga Hall Upgrade to facilities	Kiewa Valley, Tawonga	Supported by Alpine CRC. Funded. Due for completion 2023

Dargo High Plains Road upgrade	Alpine Shire	Project supported by CRC \$2.8m funding approved Reg Economic Stream (ASC) - due June 2023
<b>Increased firefighting resources</b>		
<b>Project</b>	<b>Locality</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Mt Higginbotham Water Supply	Mount Hotham	Requires funding to proceed
CFA Firefighting Equipment	Mount Hotham/ Dinner Plain	Mt Hotham Water Storage Capacity Expansion project has been funded
Mount Beauty Airport Upgrade	Kiewa Valley	Funding obtained - progressing  Supported by Alpine CRC  Mt Beauty Airport Management Association
Tree removal and safety barriers	Dinner Plain	DP community met in December with DELWP, Parks Vic and ASC (CFA were an apology) to clarify issues arising from the 2019/20 fires.  Follow up meeting held Feb 18 with the inclusion of CFA and plans in place for CFA to support homeowners to develop individual fire preparation and response plans.
Protection of water assets and implementation of the fire protection plan	Dinner Plain	
Fire defence system feasibility study	Dinner Plain	
Relocation of CFA station – design/costings	Dinner Plain	Land should be secured by early 2023 for a new three bay facility.
<b>Better coordination of services</b>		
<b>Project</b>	<b>Locality</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>

Improved fire management	Dinner Plain	ASC has engaged 'Practical Ecology' to conduct an assessment and develop a fire management strategy for Dinner Plain.
CFA Cluster Youth	Alpine Region	
<b>Improved communication during a bushfire event</b>		
<b>Project</b>	<b>Locality</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Buffalo River Scrolling LED Display Project	Buffalo River	\$12, 400 funding approved FRRR Country Fire Authority

### Our Communities can Recover

<b>Assisting vulnerable people</b>		
<b>Project</b>	<b>Locality</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Community Volunteer Emergency Response Template Proposal	Kiewa Valley	

### Our Communities are Resilient

<b>Community cohesiveness, participation and community building initiatives to build shared resilience (including community hubs, fostering co-operation, and action on climate change)</b>		
<b>Project</b>	<b>Locality</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Bright to Harrietville Trail	Bright/ Harrietville	Completed
Porepunkah Ovens River Trail	Porepunkah/ Bright	
Main Street Christmas decorations	Porepunkah/ Bright	
Fitness Stations for Walking Tracks	Bright	CRC supported project

		Grant Funding requested to proceed - Community
Fitness Stations	Harrietville	Funded – due December 2021 – Community. Complete. Launch to occur Feb 2022. Equipment installed, and now have a request to move it from Bush Kinder. ASC is endeavouring to negotiate an outcome to suit all members of the community.
Bright skate park upgrade	Bright	Requires funding to proceed - Community
Bright Pool Quest	Bright	
SES facility upgrade	Bright	
Freeburgh Community Centre Upgrades	Freeburgh	Completed
Shared trail extension in Wandiligong	Wandiligong	Scoping and trail design by Feb 2022 Funding obtained for trail design (BFR Grant Funding). Seeking funding for trail development.
East Ovens Pedestrian Bridge	Harrietville	Funding obtained (LER Round 1) - due June 2022 Project is on pause due to delays with regard to Native Title issues – refer Parks Victoria
Bright Courthouse Murals	Bright	Complete
Harrietville walking track fitness equipment tables	Harrietville	Installation of fitness equipment complete.
Upgrades Lions Park	Bright	Upgrade of BBQ shelter in Lions Reserve. Improvements to Lion's Park to improve community and visitor amenity
Buffalo River CFA Station Upgrade/Community place at CFA	Buffalo River Myrtleford	Project supported by CRC and funding approved
Myrtleford Splash Park	Myrtleford	Design/ scoping complete  Grant Funding received for construction
Lake Buffalo Facility Upgrade	Lake Buffalo	
Walking Trails/Reform Hills Walk	Myrtleford	Complete

Mountain Bike Trails	Myrtleford	
Alpine Active Outdoor equipment	Alpine region: Myrtleford, Mount Beauty, Bright	Supported by Alpine CRC  Alpine Health & 5 partners  Being installed
Pebble Beach Walking Track	Kiewa Valley	Extension complete
STAR Program *(sustainable tenancies at risk)	Alpine Region	
FAIR Feed Program	Alpine Region	
Murals Mount Beauty	Mt Beauty/Kiewa Valley	Complete
Strengthening our Community Foundations (Communities that care)		Supported by Alpine CRC
Harrietville skatepark (Harrietville Board riders)	Harrietville	Supported by Alpine CRC  Harrietville Board Riders  \$35k funding approved BRV Community Facilities Grant.  Work progressing.
Tawonga Hall upgrade (Tawonga and District Community Association)	Tawonga	Project supported by CRC  \$850k funding approved LER (ASC). Completion 2023
Mongans Bridge Caravan Park Inc	Kiewa Valley	Supported by Alpine CRC  Mongans Bridge Caravan Park Inc
Mount Hotham Shared Trail Network - Alpine Nature Experience	Mount Hotham	Project supported by CRC and funding approved
Myrtleford Men's Shed roofing of open area	Myrtleford	Supported by Alpine CRC and Grant funding received

Upgrading iconic walks	Dinner Plain	<p>Parks Vic have begun work on upgrading the Carmichael Falls Track.</p> <p>DP community to seek grant funding for additional winter signage on tracks suitable for snowshoeing and for improved signage on cross-county ski tracks for the Winter season</p>
Recreation projects (funded)	Dinner Plain	<p>Stage 1, - bus shelters to be completed before Winter, Scrubbers End and Peashooter facilities delayed, completion by June 2023. Path connections planned and review of best options for separation of depot.</p> <p>Stage 2, – Village Centre and recreation area – Enlocus have been engaged to develop plan. Initial site visits and community consultation have taken place. Completion by June 2013. Community to seek additional funding for replanting in entrance gardens as part of upgrade.</p> <p>Stage 3, – Snow making – Foresight Engineering have been engaged. Site visits conducted and community consultation of options in early stage. Project to be completed for 2024 winter.</p> <p>All three stages received grant funding</p>
Replacement of water slide	Bright	Project supported by CRC, funding approved and facility complete
Harrietville Community Hall upgrade	Harrietville	Project supported by CRC and grant funding received.
Bright Bowls Club Facilities upgrade – heating and cooling	Bright	Project supported by CRC and grant funding received
Myrtleford Church Hall Renovation	Myrtleford	Completed
Disaster Resilience Program – SES and Bright P-12 College (grades 5 and 6)	Bright	Under development
Rotary Club of Myrtleford - Facility Extension to	Buffalo River	

Buffalo River Fire Shed for Community Use		
<b>Identification of the need to diversify income potential</b>		
<b>Project</b>	<b>Locality</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Tawonga Caravan Park Upgrade	Kiewa Valley	Funding obtained
Rocky Valley Dam Foreshore	Falls Creek	Requires funding to proceed
Gateway to Alpine Adventure	Dinner Plain	Project supported by CRC and grant funding received
Tennis Court Upgrade	Dinner Plain	Tennis court upgrade may be included in recreation area redevelopment – options being explored. Will require additional funding.
Snow play hub	Mount Hotham	Project supported by CRC and grant funding received
Public Safety access and amenity upgrade	Mount Hotham	
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing	Mount Hotham	Partial funding obtained – ASC
<b>Improved internet, telecommunications, electricity supply</b>		
<b>Project</b>	<b>Locality</b>	<b>Activities and Community Update</b>
Harrietville television, radio, telecommunication and Internet services	Harrietville	
Solar Panels & Batteries for Alpine Radio/ Auditorium/ Information Centre	Mt Beauty/ Kiewa Valley	Requires funding to proceed
Strengthen telecommunication links	Dinner Plain	Gravel Road Group conducting survey of shire.
Strengthen electricity supply	Dinner Plain	



Greater access to local water resources		
Project	Locality	Activities and Community Update
Dinner Plain Activation	Dinner Plain	<p>Phase 1 and 2 – included snowmaking. Curb and channel, bus shelter, Scrubbers Hut upgrades.</p> <p>Phase 3 Snow Making will require additional water storage which may also provide water for firefighting.</p>

### Appendix 3: Implementation Pathways – Extract from Alpine CRC CRP (March 2021) Tables 2–5

**Table 2. Implementation pathway – Goal: Our communities are Prepared**

Program: Increasing Preparedness

What is the underlying issue we are trying to address?	Flagship initiatives	Who should lead?	ACRC immediate role	Alignment with other plans, processes or initiatives.
Improved environmental protection and management (including hazard reduction and initiatives such as free or reduced green waste disposal at tips)	Developing a coordinated, tenure blind, integrated environmental protection and hazard management approach, including incorporation of traditional knowledge and practices.	FFM DELWP ASC	<i>Advocate – reflect community concerns regarding the need for improved environmental management (including hazard reduction, weed management).</i>	ASC Emergency Management Plan  FFM/CFA Planning processes
Building community wide awareness of the need to adequately prepare for future disruptions	Preparedness or Resilience Month – a month long focus on preparedness, specific events in individual locations, one large 'Disaster Fair' to bring together providers	ASC  With support from  EMV  CFA/SES	<i>Advocate – for the need for a focused period of community awareness raising regarding preparedness</i>  - To ASC - Likely that the ASC Resilience Committee is best place to coordinate	ASC Emergency Management Plan  ASC Resilience Committee Resilience Plan

		BRV NBRA	- To agencies for the need to support this community initiative	Municipal Recovery Plan  ASC Community Plan
Need for localised preparedness planning	Community led resilience planning, with emphasis on fire planning	Local communities – Neighbourhood Houses or equivalent community organisations	<p><i>Advocate</i> – for locally led planning to agencies and ASC</p> <p><i>Connect</i> – communities undertaking planning</p> <p>- Key message is that community are best placed to drive this type of local planning and decide on most appropriate approach for their community</p>	<p>Some communities have already undertaken various forms of community led planning.</p> <p>Red Cross process for local scale planning</p>

**Table 3: Implementation pathway – Goal: Our communities can Respond**

Program: Improving response capacity

What is the underlying issue we are trying to address?	Flagship initiatives	Who should lead?	ACRC immediate role	Alignment with other plans, processes or initiatives.
Improving communication – there is a need for information during events that is timely, accurate and localised	Developing fewer but more accurate, trusted sources of information during an event.  Build awareness about hierarchy of information sources and what they provide during events	Incident Control Centre should be the primary sources of information during an event.  Responsibility for improving information flow sits with the agencies that form the ICC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Advocate</i> – for timely, accurate and localised information</li> <li>- <i>Communicate</i> – with communities the need to understand the communication hierarchy</li> <li>- <i>Advice</i> – to ASC and Resilience Committee - preparedness month offer a chance to build community awareness about the information hierarchy.</li> </ul>	Incident Control procedures  Municipal Emergency Plan
Adequate communication infrastructure is required to support communication during events and in the recovery phase.	Building understanding of communication options for communities	ASC – the current communications audit and options process provides the key opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Advocate</i> – to ASC for a human-needs centred approach, not a market centred approach.</li> <li>- <i>Inform/Advocate</i> – with local politicians of the</li> </ul>	ASC Strategic Plan  BRV have a ‘black spots’ project underway – ensure they connect this with ASC project.

What is the underlying issue we are trying to address?	Flagship initiatives	Who should lead?	ACRC immediate role	Alignment with other plans, processes or initiatives.
		to progress communication infrastructure issues across the region	need to address the long-standing communication challenges in the NE using a human-needs centred approach.	
Small/remote communities need adequate firefighting resources.	Understanding the current provision and distribution and future plans for firefighting resources across the region	ACRC to request information from CFA and FFM	Advocate – for fairness and strategic placement of firefighting resources within the region	

**Table 4: Implementation pathway – Goal: Our communities can Recover**

Program: Improving recovery capacity

What is the underlying issue we are trying to address	Flagship initiatives	Who should lead?	ACRC immediate role	Alignment with other plans, processes or initiatives.
Social connection and cohesiveness are the foundation of recovery	Community cohesion and empowerment	ASC – this is core business for Local Government	<i>Advocate</i> – the importance of community cohesiveness and connection as a valuable 'asset' that should be	<i>All</i> Council planning and functions influence

	Investigate an 'incident control room' style approach to supporting community cohesiveness and recovery	<p>as the interface between communities, individuals and institutions.</p> <p>There are numerous other relevant organisations in each community (e.g., Victorian Council of Churches played an important role following the Black Saturday and Black Summer fires)</p>	<p>invested in via ASC planning and activities.</p> <p><i>Learn</i> – document the most effective recovery actions/activities and support those becoming standard best practice.</p>	cohesiveness and connectedness
Mental health support is crucial both in the short- and long-term following events	Increased coordination of services	BRV Health Services	<i>Advocate</i> – to BRV for increased coordination.	DHHA regional mental health planning provides important context for event-based support.

	<p>Increased communication of availability of services in the short and long term</p> <p>Learning from the recent events – what should we do next time?</p>		<p><i>Endorse and Support</i> – the important work done by the health service provides and the need for ongoing support and funding</p>	
<p>Capacity to recover is partially determined by the degree to which individuals and communities are insured against losses. Lack or under insurance prevents people re-establishing businesses and could lead to population decreases and subsequent rate income loss for local government</p>	<p>Awareness raising about insurance coverage.</p> <p>Advocacy to decision makers and industry of the need for affordable insurance to drive regional investment and recovery</p>	BRV	<p><i>Advocacy</i> – building awareness of the link between insurance, recovery and resilience</p>	

**Table 5: Implementation pathway – Goal: Our communities are Resilient**

Program: Strengthening resilience

What is the underlying issue we are trying to address?	Flagship initiatives	Who should lead?	ACRC immediate role	Alignment with other plans, processes or initiatives.
Resilient communities have diverse economies, resilient infrastructure and cohesive communities	Regional Resilience Master Plan to bring together economic, infrastructure and community resilience thinking and initiatives.  Develop a set of regional resilience principles to embed in all planning, particularly the ASC Vision	ASC  Regional Development Victoria  Ovens and Murray Regional Partnership	<i>Advocate</i> – to ASC for the need for a wholistic, integrated approach to resilience building across all areas of our community	ASC Community Plan  Land use planning  Infrastructure planning  EMP  MEMP
Resilient businesses recover quicker, support the community to recover and can capture opportunities in the recovery phase	Resilient business initiative to ensure businesses are 'disruption ready'	ASC  Oven and Murray Regional Partnership	<i>Advocate</i> – to ASC, OMRP and BRV for a 'Disruption Ready' approach to business planning	ASC Economic Development Plan
Businesses play a key role in community cohesiveness	'Inclusive' business and communities support and planning guide – to provide	ASC economic development	<i>Advocate</i> – for the role of inclusive businesses in	ASC Community Plan



through community inclusive spaces and events	advice on how to be inclusive to increase business opportunities and provide community cohesiveness spaces and events.		economic development and building resilience  <i>Suggest – models or approaches that have proven successful</i>	
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## **Appendix 4: Related Agency Plans and Resources**

The Alpine CRP is only one of many recovery plans developed for our region. The following agency plans and resources are provided as a reference for community on other resources available.

### **Alpine Municipal Recovery Plan (MRP) 2019-2020**

The Alpine Municipal Recovery Plan (MRP) 2019-2020 highlights the impacts and consequences, and provides strategic direction, goals and actions, to enable a community-led recovery in the aftermath of the fires. The MRP is a multiagency plan identifying specific agency actions and plans across five lines of recovery:

- Social (People and Wellbeing) – the emotional, social, spiritual, financial, and physical wellbeing of affected individuals and communities
- Cultural (Aboriginal Culture and Healing) – Aboriginal culture is valued, and respected, Aboriginal trauma is addressed, and healing is supported, Aboriginal cultural safety is promoted, Aboriginal participation and ownership is promoted
- Built (Buildings and Infrastructure) – the restoration of essential and community infrastructure
- Natural (Environment and Biodiversity) – the rehabilitation of the affected environment
- Economic (Business and Economy, and Agriculture) – the revitalisation of the affected economy

### **Alpine Resilience Committee (ARC)**

Borne out of the 2006 Alpine bushfires, the role of the Alpine Resilience Committee (ARC) works to inform people of the need to be aware of the risks they face where they live and to better prepare and plan for an emergency, in order to allow them to enjoy living in the Alpine Shire. ARC is central to the Council's long-term commitment to working together to build individual and community resilience, thus enabling all residents and visitors to look to the future with hope. In 2021, ARC was reviewed and is undergoing a revitalisation process.

[The new Terms of Reference state:](#)

- The Alpine Resilience Committee (ARC) is a Committee of Council with a focus on preparedness and planning.
- ARC is the forum for government and non-government agencies and community representatives to develop strategies and frameworks to support coordinated resilience planning for the municipality.
- ARC will support communities to understand the nature of shocks and disasters and to actively prepare, plan for and mitigate against the impacts of emergencies.
- ARC is the conduit between community, resilience groups, and the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC).
- ARC will help identify community issues and concerns, and where appropriate, advocate and lobby, in conjunction with the community, government departments, other agencies and council to implement programs and initiatives to address these concerns

## **Alpine Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) 2021-2024**

The [Alpine Municipal Emergency Management Plan \(MEMP\) 2021-2024](#) complements and supports emergency planning strategies developed at state, regional, and national levels by providing local knowledge and expertise, as well as documenting capacity and responsibilities within the Alpine Shire. The preparation of the MEMP involves identifying and mitigating the risks specific to the geographic area, outlining capability and capacity of local agencies. The MEMP also documents relief and recovery strategies that can be delivered at a local level to help communities to become safer and more resilient in the face of an emergency. The Alpine Resorts have their own MEMPs, which can be found below.

Addressing the three stages of emergency management (preparedness and planning, response, and recovery), the broad objectives of the MEMP are:

- Identify and analyse the risks that pose the most significant threat to our communities
- Implement measures to prevent or reduce the causes or effects of emergencies
- Frame all planning, preparation, response, and recovery activities around the needs of the community and their ongoing continuity
- Assist the effected community to recover following an emergency
- Complement other local, regional, and state planning arrangements.

[Access the Falls Creek MEMP here.](#)

[Access the Mt Hotham MEMP here.](#)

## **Regional and State Plans**

Other plans that inform the emergency management sector include the [Hume Regional Emergency Management Plan \(REMP\)](#) and the [Victorian State Emergency Management Plan \(SEMP\)](#).

## **Inspector General for Emergency Management (IGEM) Inquiry**

The [Inspector General for Emergency Management \(IGEM\) Inquiry into the 2019-20 Victorian Bushfire Season – Phase 1 Report](#) recommends:

- Reviewing preparedness arrangements
- Improving fuel management and community understanding of fuel management
- Expanding the Safer Together Program
- Clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Reviewing and enhancing evacuation plans and processes
- Emergency management planning
- Improving the dissemination and understanding of emergency information

As a result of findings of the IGEM Inquiry, the Victorian Government has committed to long-term actions, addressing all of IGEM's recommendations. [See more information here.](#)

## Appendix 5: Snapshot of Activities to Date for the Alpine Region

### Our Aspiration for the Alpine Region:

*"Our Communities are connected and resilient. They have the capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from adversities, are self-reliant when needed, and can create the future they want."*

#### Increasing Preparedness

##### Environment

Resources developed and available for individual property vegetation management, garden landscaping (including demonstration garden at Buffalo River CFA) and fire recovery

Work carried out on vegetation management hazard reduction and fuel load reduction on public and private land

##### Community

Community-led fire preparation and resilience projects in Mount Beauty and Myrtleford

Red Cross and CFA delivering preparation planning training for communities

##### Infrastructure

Upgrades to evacuation centres and community halls across the Alpine Shire

Mount Beauty Airport Upgrade is in progress

#### Improving Response Capacity

##### Infrastructure

Nine STAND mobile communication equipment installed across the Alpine Shire to improve connectivity

Consultant funded to develop a plan to guide future mobile and internet projects

Bushfire Places of Last Resort identified across the Shire, and new signage installed

##### Community

Information about BPLRs incorporated in Community Profiles documents developed for each community

### Snapshot of Activities to Date February 2022

#### Improving Recovery Capacity

##### Community

Localised and Shire-wide community activities to identify and support vulnerable people during emergencies e.g. Mount Beauty Neighbourhood Centre and North East Multicultural Association's Cultural Advocates

Shire-wide training for community leaders eg Natural Disaster Recovery and Climate Adaptation Leadership Program, community succession planning

Regular community recovery updates from ASC to inform community of resources, events and successes

Coordinated mental health services and resources eg Nav Space, Post-vention (suicide prevention)

Organised and supported community activities and events

##### Business

Business support services and resources including business concierge to access government business services

#### Strengthening Resilience

##### Business

Alpine Destination Marketing Plan funded

##### Infrastructure

Major tourism/events facilities eg splash parks, snow play hub, adventure tourism

Community facilities such as skateparks, sporting club upgrades, walking and bike trails, fitness stations, waterslides

Major infrastructure eg Dargo High Plains Road, Vineyard Smoke Sensor Network, Murray to Mountain Rail Trail extension, Mt Hotham Water Storage Capacity Expansion

The intent of this graphic is to provide a snapshot of the range of activities that have occurred across Alpine shire since the bushfires. The CRC has supported and advocated for many of these actions that have been undertaken by local government, business, and community organisations.

## Appendix 6: Abbreviations Used in this Progress Review

Alpine CRC	Alpine Community Recovery Committee
ARC	Alpine Resilience Committee
ASC	Alpine Shire Council
AVCLP	Alpine Valleys Community Leadership Program
BPLR	Bushfire Place of Last Resort
BRV	Bushfire Recovery Victoria
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
DET	Department of Education and Training
DP	Dinner Plain
ED	Economic Development
EMC	Emergency Management Committee
EMP	Emergency Management Plan
ERC	Emergency Relief Centre
FFMVic	Forest Fire Management Victoria
FRRR	Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal
ICC	Incident Control Centre
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Plan
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Plan Committee
MPHN	Murray Primary Health Network
MRC	Municipal Recovery Committee
MRP	Municipal Recovery Plan
NECMA	Northeast Catchment Management Authority
NRRA	National Recovery and Resilience Agency
PIU	Public Information Unit
RMB	Resorts Management Boards
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
SEMP	State Emergency Management Plan
TLaWAC	Taungurung Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation
VIC	Visitor Information Centre

WIRES

Wildlife Information, Rescue and Emergency Service