



# NATURE LOCATOR UPDATE

A LIVE NATURE WISE INITIATIVE

APRIL 2021

The **NATURE LOCATOR** is a data rich, interactive web-based platform that makes nature accessible like never before. The People and Parks Foundation is developing the Nature Locator as part of our Live Nature Wise suite of initiatives.

The Nature Locator provides detailed, accurate and up-to-date information on nature places, spaces, activities and groups across tenures within a geographic region. It federates data from existing sources and provides a platform for new data creation and collaboration.

## GOALS of Nature Locator Project:

1. Everyone is able to easily find, access, learn about and actively enjoy nature and nature-based experiences, care for nature, and share their experiences with others.
2. People and organisations have a deeper understanding and appreciation of the value of nature.
3. Everyone regularly connects with nature, near and afar – including connecting with themselves and with others in nature.

## We will do this by:

- Designing and building a user-friendly tool, including the associated infrastructure and processes, to become the 'go to hub' for nature-places and spaces, and nature-based activities and experiences.

## DATA PARTNERS:

Land and water asset managers will gain access to enhanced federated data, including GIS mapping where relevant, that can provide a baseline for measuring the effects of climate change, fires, floods and developments as well as conservation investments. Nature Locator aims to enable unobtrusive and collaborative monitoring and reporting of an area's biomass, fuel load, biodiversity and cultural values.

## PUBLIC USERS:

Nature Locator users get unprecedented access to user-friendly information on nature places and spaces, and what occurs there, drawn from a range of sources including other users. The Nature Locator enables people to research, plan, share, coordinate and review their nature-based experiences with others including:

- Holiday-makers discover new regional places, and new ecotourism and Indigenous heritage tourism experiences they had never encountered before
- Schools find nature-based curriculum and excursion opportunities for their students near and afar
- City dwellers find health and wellbeing escapes and nature-restoration volunteering activities in regional areas
- See 'example user stories' on the last page for further user scenarios

## ACTION 1 DEMONSTRATION PROTOTYPE - ALMOST COMPLETE!

With so many potential partners across sectors, we've engaged Visualise Now to engage our key stakeholders in a 'rapid interactive prototype' design process. Representatives from government departments, land and water management authorities, tourism, conservation organisations, health and active recreation bodies, and philanthropy are currently contributing their perspectives and ideas through multiple workshops and one-on-one meetings.

**The stakeholder co-designed demonstration prototype will be ready for unveiling mid 2021.**



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## **ACTION 2** **MINIMUM VIABLE PRODUCT (MVP)**

Our vision for the Nature Locator is to be a national – potentially international – web-based tool, federating a wide range of information sources and addressing multiple needs. Key to success is developing and trialing a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) that is most likely to attract funding.

The MVP will be influenced by two key pieces of research:

- Data source research undertaken by data federation experts at the Centre for e-Research and Digital Innovation (CeRDI) at Federation University. This research will identify potential data partners, confirm data that is already available, its condition and requirements for federation.
- Market research focusing on multiple potential user groups of the Nature Locator.

**A pilot location in Victoria will be determined within the strategic parameters of the MVP.**

## **ACTION 3** **SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**

The Nature Locator will be rich with reportable place-based data, comparable across time and place. This federated data will have unique value for land and water managers, tourism operators and government agencies. Breaking down data silos and enhancing data quality will enable improved decision making across asset planning, investment and maintenance. By providing access to this enhanced data on a fee for service basis, the Nature Locator can cover the costs of maintenance and future development across functionality and geography.

**A social enterprise business model will be developed to ensure long term financial sustainability and growth.**

## **PARTNERSHIPS ARE KEY**

Partnerships are key to the People and Parks Foundation, and to every stage of the Nature Locator's development and implementation. We are currently engaging with a wide range of stakeholders – potential partners and social enterprise customers – in our prototype design process.

We welcome new partners to support the Nature Locator with expertise and/or funding for:

- Market research across potential user groups
- Data source research
- Social enterprise business model development
- Program management capacity
- Nature Locator promotion and distribution

## **ABOUT THE PEOPLE AND PARKS FOUNDATION**

The People and Parks Foundation was established in 2004 by Parks Victoria as a *Healthy Parks Healthy People* initiative. We are an independent, national charity with the driving purpose of connecting people with nature to benefit the health and wellbeing of individuals, the community and our environment – *particularly where those benefits are needed most.*

We respectfully acknowledge both the living, ancient wisdom of Traditional Owners, and the evidence of modern science, that both inform our programs.

### **Unique charitable status**

The People and Parks Foundation has two Trusts, both with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) 1 status.

We are a Health Promotion Charity (HPC) and on the Register of Environmental Organisations (REO).



# LIVE NATURE WISE

## HEALTHY HUMANS NEED HEALTHY HABITATS

Live Nature Wise is an innovative, evidence-informed program that:

- connects people to nature for health, wellbeing and social connection outcomes
- supports people to better value and care for nature

An Australian first, Live Nature Wise aligns with global trends, recognising nature assets as health and wellbeing assets, and access to nature as a health equity issue.

People and Parks Foundation has established Live Nature Wise to progress our vision of **a world where everyone understands that a healthy environment is essential to human life.**

Live Nature Wise encourages and supports people to get out of the house and into nature places near and afar, starting from where each person is at now. The Nature Locator is central to delivery of Live Nature Wise.



**NATURE  
 LOCATOR  
 WEB TOOL**



**#NATURE  
 PACT  
 CAMPAIGN**



**NATURE  
 SCRIPTS  
 PROGRAM**

**Data-rich, interactive web platform – enables people to learn about, share and find nature and nature-based activities across tenures**

- Helps people find nature places and spaces, and nature-based activities and experiences
- Links to nature-based groups and organisations
- Data-rich, interactive web-based platform and application
- Federates existing and new data across land tenures, breaking down data silos
- Involves citizen science and community feedback
- Assists land and water asset planning, management and reporting

**Social media and community engagement campaign – to get people from all walks of life outside and into nature**

- Encourages people to make a #NaturePact to spend more time in nature, noticing nature, caring for nature
- Rewards user generated content and sharing
- Community engagement reaches and supports targeted groups
- Promotes nature-based partners and events
- Promotes and supports delivery of Nature Locator and Nature Scripts

**Green social prescribing intervention – targeting preventable disease, mental ill-health and social isolation**

- Nature-based, community-based health and wellbeing intervention for vulnerable cohorts
- Clinical results for non-communicable chronic disease and mental health
- Supports social connections
- Supports community volunteering and peer support
- Multi-year, multi-site pilot and evaluation in regional Victoria
- Research opportunity into the Nature Dose



## **EXAMPLE NATURE LOCATOR SCENARIO AS DEVELOPED WITH VISUALISE NOW.**

### **SCENARIO 1: Rani – new migrant (health, wellbeing, social isolation)**

Rani is a new migrant to Australia escaping family violence. She has three young children, one who has undergone treatment for cancer. Rani and her children are socially isolated, Rani suffers from anxiety and depression, and her children are at risk of obesity. She and her children spend much of their time inside their home, usually on screens. Rani's GP refers her into the local Nature Scripts program, where she learns how to use the Nature Locator to build her and her family's 'Nature Dose'.

Rani uses the Nature Locator to learn more about her local nature spaces, what's there, how she can get to them, what to expect, what to bring. She also learns about different nature-based activities and groups, including nearby, safe nature walks and learning about Australian birds she finds there, and joining groups of interest to her and her family.

Their health, wellbeing and sense of social connection and belonging has increased significantly. Rani's confidence has blossomed.

### **SCENARIO 2: Linda – science teacher and nature-based learning**

Linda teaches year seven students at an inner-city secondary school. A large proportion of students live in high-rise commission housing and don't have gardens or pets. Linda wants to integrate nature-based learning and excursions across the curriculum to better engage her students.

Linda uses the Nature Locator to find all nature spaces within a walk or public transport trip from the school and then reviews the information provided on each space. The Nature Locator also provides her with helpful ideas and suggestions. She selects a nature space that is connected to a 'Friends of' group to run an outdoor science classroom within easy walking distance from the school. The Nature Locator provides pre-, during and post-excursion materials. The 'Friends of' group asks the students to get involved in citizen science and conservation projects as part of their nature-based learning.

### **SCENARIO 3: Joe – works for a land/water manager – (green/blue infrastructure and community engagement)**

Joe has a KPI to increase the community use of a particular piece of 'lazy land'. His research tells him the local community wants more community-friendly green space. The local 'Friends of' group is campaigning for increased biodiverse space. The local business community wants increased economic activity.

Using the Nature Locator as a key tool for project measurement, communication and engagement he: reviews and contributes to information about the land areas across tenures, seeks project-specific engagement and input from interested parties and people, promotes the final plan to develop an attractive, biodiverse nature-space useful for community activity, seeks community involvement in realising the plan.

A year later he uses the Nature Locator to measure and demonstrate the before and after values of this 'once-lazy land'.

### **Scenario 4: Ben – planning a family holiday in nature (economic development/tourism)**

Ben loves getting out into nature, especially organising family holidays in nature places with a few other families. In the new COVID normal, he'd love to discover new, less crowded, nature places to plan a holiday. He visits the Visit Victoria website and comes across a link to the Nature Locator.

Ben and his wife use the Nature Locator to search and plan their ideal holiday experience – i.e. within four hours' drive from Melbourne, mountainous with mountain bike riding trails, cultural heritage experiences, and swimming opportunities for the children. Ben uses the Nature Locator to share the holiday idea with friends. They then all use the Nature Locator together to agree their criteria and explore options.

While on the trip they continue to use the Nature Locator as it provides useful information (including safety considerations, emergency information, educational information, as well as other places to visit while there).

The Nature Locator made it easy for them to have a wonderful time and they share their experience of their newfound holiday destinations with all their friends.