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## Media Release

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19 December 2018

### MORE AND MORE SCHOOLS BECOME RESOURCE SMART

Over the decade 2008-2017, Gippsland's ResourceSmart Schools saved of over \$1.7million through a focus on purposeful sustainability practices that make learning fun, practical and rewarding.

Savings of close to \$90,000 throughout 2018 have set the program's second decade up for a great start and 2019 will be even more effective with over 83 schools signed-up to work with ResourceSmart Schools Gippsland.

ResourceSmart Schools is an award-winning Victorian Government program and is delivered by the Gippsland Waste and Resource Recovery Group. It provides practical support to schools to reduce resource use and make cost savings by integrating sustainability education into the curriculum and sharing learnings beyond the school gate.

Alison Taylor, ResourceSmart Schools Gippsland coordinator said, "Each year our program goes from strength to strength; we work directly with schools in developing fun, hands-on sustainability programs that produce real benefits for students and real cost savings for schools."

Combined savings generated in 2018 by Gippsland's ResourceSmart Schools have been considerable. Improvements in energy use, through school energy audits and strategies to reduce energy use, during 2018 have saved over 205,100 kWh of energy, equating to 284 tonnes of greenhouse gas for the region.

Other achievements included water audits and the wise use of water resulting in 2,400 kL of water conserved; gardening and biodiversity activities resulting in around 4,900 trees being planted; and, 268 m<sup>3</sup> of waste diverted from landfill through recycling, composting and reuse activities.

"ResourceSmart Schools Gippsland encourages schools to actively engage with their community when it comes to sustainability in action; from tree planting days to selling or donating garden produce, from harvest lunches to clean-up waste activities," explained Alison.

Many environmental restoration programs exist across Gippsland that are student-led and an increasing number of schools are forming strong connections with their local Landcare groups. Schools actively participate in a range of activities including National Schools Tree Planting Day, the Great Aussie Backyard Bird Count and National Recycling Day.

"Gippsland schools are reaping the benefits of being part of the program and we also want them to be inspired by best practice sustainability and give them a platform through which they can share their expertise and learnings with others," Alison confirmed.

"The coming year will showcase a number of great opportunities for all teachers and students; we're planning for teacher training on climate change and, importantly, two student leadership sustainability conferences."

For further information about ResourceSmart Schools visit [www.gwrrg.vic.gov.au](http://www.gwrrg.vic.gov.au) or contact Alison Taylor on 5633 2744.

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