



Friends of Treaty Pledge – Geelong One Fire Reconciliation Group, September 2024

We, Geelong One Fire Reconciliation Group Acknowledge Wadawurrung people as Traditional Owners of the lands where we meet and live. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and remember that sovereignty was never ceded, and we acknowledge also the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community living on and caring for Wadawurrung Country.

Geelong One Fire Reconciliation Group was established over thirty years ago, by both First Nations people and allies. We believe that effective change requires allies walking, talking and acting together with First Nations peoples. As an organisation firmly committed to advancing social justice and equity, we want to play our part in truth-telling about the wrongs of the past and be part of creating a stronger society together. With profound respect for the Sovereignty, Culture, and Rights of First Peoples, we commit to walking with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria on the journey to Treaty. As part of this we also commit to engaging with and promoting the truth telling work being undertaken by Yoorrook Justice Commission to build understandings around the impacts of colonisation, to promote healing and also to support the shape and scope of Treaty commitments. We recognise that when it comes to First Peoples communities, Cultures and lands, the experts are of course First Peoples. The past can't be changed, but we can choose to take steps today that will help heal the ongoing pain caused by the injustices of yesterday and remedy the ongoing injustices of today. We believe a better tomorrow is possible and Geelong One Fire Reconciliation Group pledges our unwavering support to the First Peoples' Treaty process in Victoria.

We will take action to help build support for the shared journey to Treaty. This will include:

- Supporting initiatives that facilitate meaningful dialogue and collaboration between First Peoples and non-Indigenous stakeholders, as guided by Wadawurrung and other First Nations people living on Wadawurrung Country and the First Peoples Assembly of Victoria,
- Continuing to keep One Fire members updated on the developments of the Truth Telling and Treaty process and supporting them to educate others in their workplaces, families and communities on the importance of these things,

- Improving our ability to be effective allies during the Treaty process by continuing to undertake our own learning about Wadawurrung and other First Nations History and Culture; reflecting on our own unconscious biases and diverse peoples' histories; and educating ourselves and our communities to better recognise and challenge systemic and structural racism and bias.
- Supporting and promoting educational initiatives that celebrate Wadawurrung and other First Peoples Cultures, Traditions, and Knowledge Systems, and promote cross-cultural understanding and respect, and Truth Telling to fostering a culture of inclusivity and appreciation, such as the local initiatives that One Fire supports: Wangala Balit Ngarra ('Making knowledge strong') run in collaboration with the Koori Engagement Support Officer team on Wadawurrung Country to educate local school students and teachers about Wadawurrung and other First Nations peoples culture to build reconciliation leaders; and Reconciliation in the Park, programmed by local First Nations leaders and planned in collaboration with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation and Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative.
- Publicly endorse and advocating for the negotiation and implementation of Treaty with the state government; raise awareness about the importance of Treaty and the rights of Wadawurrung and other First Peoples through Geelong One Fire's communication channels and networks; and help promote relevant Treaty events.
- Advocating, via letters to Members of Parliament, Government Ministers, and other elected representatives at all levels of government for policy reforms and legislative changes that promote the recognition of Wadawurrung and other First Peoples' rights and facilitate the implementation of Treaty commitments.

By making this pledge, we affirm our commitment to the self-determination of Wadawurrung and other First Peoples in Victoria as they assert their rights, tell their truths, and chart a path towards healing through Treaty-making. Together, we will create a future where Wadawurrung and other First Peoples' voices are heard, rights are respected, and justice is realised for generations to come.

Approved by First Peoples' Assembly Victoria, in September 2025.