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Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre celebrates 20 years of water excellence

20 years ago an unusable wetland was transformed into what is now one of the country's most iconic precincts for water sports and events.

Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre is celebrating 20 years in true style at the 151st Associated Public Schools (APS) Heads of the River Rowing Regatta on Saturday 24 March.

Patrick McNamara, the then Member for Benalla and Deputy Premier of Victoria, was instrumental in sourcing funding for the construction of the Regatta Centre.

"I always thought there was potential to have a 2000m course at Nagambie," Mr McNamara said.

The Regatta Centre has hosted an estimated 250 major events since it was established, including rowing, canoeing, triathlons, dragon boating and paddle boarding.

Mr McNamara said the APS Heads of the River, which has been held in Nagambie for the past 12 years, is the largest sporting event in country Victoria and the oldest continuous 'schoolboy' rowing event in the world, attracting up to 17,000 people to the region.

"These sorts of events are a great chance for people outside the region to see our town, our wineries and our horse studs and how close we are to Melbourne."

"The Regatta Centre has been a game changer for Nagambie," he said.

Council are anticipating around 40,000 people will attend events at the Regatta Centre this year, which will bring an estimated total combined expenditure of \$4.7 million to the region.

In addition to this, for every dollar, there will be an extra \$0.30 of activity generated within the broader community through indirect spending.

Mayor Amanda McClaren said "Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre forms a huge part of the town's identity and brings so much activity and excitement to the region."

The development a White Water Rafting Centre at Lake Nagambie is currently being considered by private enterprise, and if pursued, would be one of two courses in Australia and establish Nagambie as an International Water Sports Centre of Excellence.

Council are also advocating for a number of key infrastructure projects for Nagambie and the lake, including a new boat ramp, course deepening, peninsula extension, boardwalk and redevelopment of the main street.

"We envisage the Regatta Centre as a venue for international water and water-related sports, establishing Nagambie as a year-round tourism destination," Cr McClaren said.

You can see all the action at the Heads of the River from 9am to 3.20pm on Saturday.

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Media contact: Clare Allen- 0418 336 078

Key Spokesperson: Mayor Amanda McClaren- 0409 700 958