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MAYOR INVITES WORLD TO EXPERIENCE REAL STORM BOY COORONG

Today marks an exciting new chapter for the Coorong, as the remake of Colin Thiele’s famous 1964 classic Storm Boy hits the screens, and the Coorong District Council Mayor is encouraging the world to visit the authentic side of the Coorong.

Growing up on a local farm within a short drive of the Coorong itself, Mayor Paul Simmons has fondly recalled his own early childhood memories of family fishing trips and school excursions to the unique environment - which from today, will be in the global spotlight.

His interest now focusses on the potential positive tourism impacts on the local economy, as the film will soon be shown to millions of potential visitors across the world in the coming months (and years).

“While we don’t have the giant hotel chains or fancy restaurants, we do have the wild side of the Coorong right on our doorstep. We can give people the fair dinkum Storm Boy experience here,” Mayor Simmons says.

“With this in mind, I’m expecting those people who love getting back to nature, bird watchers and environmentalists, as the types who will be coming to visit. They’ll join the growing number of people who love fishing and four-wheel-driving who already spend their weekends down this way.

“Even if our new visitors are camping out in the national park, they still need to buy things like fuel, food and other supplies to see them through – I believe this is where the initial impact could be seen on the local economy, especially in Meningie and Salt Creek.”

The new Storm Boy retelling shows beautiful visuals of the untouched Coorong’s wild natural elements. It’s vast wildlife, ecosystems and culture are a feature of the film.

“The film represents an opportunity for a new audience to fall in love with the Coorong, in the way that many of the locals and regular visitors already have,” Mayor Simmons says.

“Sometimes when you live so close to a remarkable environment (like the Coorong), you take it for granted, and I’m certainly guilty of that.

“But this film has given local people like me a reminder of just how lucky we are to have the Coorong in our backyard, and now we need to prepare to embrace potential opportunities as they come our way.”

Council’s Senior Community and Tourism Officer, Kellie Jaensch said that already across the Coorong District Council there were some tourism operators stepping up to deliver new experiences or improved products and service for the expected influx of visitors seeking their own ‘Storm Boy experience’.
These include new hands-on fishing and boating experiences, increasing boutique accommodation, small-craft paddle hire, upgrades to local cabin/caravan parks, growth in holiday realty and more.

“From a Council perspective, we have also been preparing for this with some great existing and new facilities which visitors to the Coorong can enjoy,” Ms Jaensch says.

“In Meningie alone, we’ve helped deliver the Pelican Path, a new fenced dog park, free bike hire, a lakeside nature playground, public art and sculptures, including some from local Ngarrindjeri artists, improved RV and caravan facilities and more.

“On top of this, we’ll soon be launching the second complete section of the Murray Coorong Trail, which provides a recreational walking and cycling trail from the Meningie township directly to the edge of the Coorong at Noonameena. The timing for this couldn’t be better!

“The third section of the trail, which we hope will begin construction later this year, will be within the Raukkan Aboriginal township – another small community which will also be able to capitalise on cultural and eco-tourism opportunities related to the release of Storm Boy.”

For more information on the release of Storm Boy, visit your local cinema website, or see the trailer here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jaUpQ2EkL4. Or to find out more about Coorong country, visit the website: https://coorongcountry.com.au/.

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