

Community Bulletin

May 2011

Yarra River Weed Control Project, Dights Falls to Plenty River – Project Update

In early 2010 the Waterways Alliance, on behalf of Melbourne Water, started a three year, \$1.9 million project to improve the environmental health of the Yarra River in Viewbank, Bulleen, Heidelberg, Eaglemont, Ivanhoe East, Kew, Alphington and Fairfield.

The project involves works to control over 60 regionally significant weeds – including invasive trees – along a 19.9 kilometre stretch of the Yarra River between Plenty River in Templestowe and Dights Falls in Abbotsford.

Following is an update on our progress to date and what's ahead in the remaining months of 2011.

What's happened during the project so far?

Crews have been working in a staged manner throughout the project extent from boat, four wheel motorbike and on the river's bank.

Significant progress has been made to reduce the abundance of target species including Blackberry and invasive trees such as Willows and Sweet Pittosporum that have been treated and left in situ.

Crews are using a number of methods to control these weeds – cut and paint with herbicide, injection with herbicide or simply spraying with herbicide. The herbicides that are being used have been carefully chosen to ensure they are appropriate for use along waterways. Some invasive trees have also been removed where it was not safe to leave them in situ.

A highlight in year one was the completion of weed control works along a 450 metre wide steep escarpment within Yarra Bend Park.

What's ahead in 2011

Crews will continue to work in a staged manner throughout the project extent using the same methods as in year one.

There will however be additional large tree removal works between Burke Road in Ivanhoe East and Plenty River in Templestowe. Invasive trees to be removed include Poplars, Hawthorn and Robinas.

The majority of the large trees to be removed will be felled by hand using a chainsaw. Others will require heavier machinery.

What weeds are we targeting?

Over 60 regionally significant weeds and invasive trees including Willow, Blackberry and Elm are being targeted as part of the project. For a complete list visit the project's information page at www.melbournewater.com.au.

Temporary disruptions to paths

Some temporary disruptions to shared paths may be necessary during tree removal works in 2011 in the interest of public safety. More information will be provided about specific locations and timing on the project's information page at www.melbournewater.com.au. Appropriate signage will also be in place. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused.

Why is Melbourne Water doing this project?

Melbourne Water is the caretaker of river health and designated waterway manager for the Port Phillip and Westernport region.

Controlling weeds will allow native plants such as gum trees, wattles and bottlebrush to regenerate more successfully helping to protect and improve significant areas of vegetation.

In time, the project will help improve water quality and increase local numbers of native fish, platypus and birds.

Call Kirsten Lingard on **9235 1409** for information about this project.

For general information about other projects to secure a sustainable water Melbourne Water on 131 722 or visit melbournewater.com.au.