

Fact Sheet

2010 to 2012

Yarra River Weed Control Project, Dights Falls to Plenty River – A Healthy Waterways initiative

The Waterways Alliance, on behalf of Melbourne Water, is completing 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.

What does the project involve?

The project involves works to control over 60 regionally significant weeds along a 19.9 kilometre stretch of the Yarra River between Plenty River in Templestowe and Dights Falls in Abbotsford – an area often referred to as the 'middle Yarra'.

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.

In November 2007 Melbourne Water commissioned *Ecology Australia* to report on the condition of vegetation along the Yarra between Wonga Park and Abbotsford and to develop a suitable management plan for the area.

The report* identified nine endangered or vulnerable vegetation communities along the Yarra and highlighted a need to control weeds to ensure their protection and improve the river's health.

How will the project benefit for the Yarra?

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.

How will the weeds be controlled?

Crews will complete staged works over three years. The target weeds will be controlled using a number of methods – they will be cut and

painted with herbicide, injected with herbicide or simply sprayed with herbicide. The herbicides that will be used have been carefully chosen to ensure they are appropriate for use along waterways.

Due to the nature of the project, much of the weed spraying will be completed using a customised four-wheel motorbike. A small boat will also be used to access difficult to reach sections of the bank.

The majority of the larger trees that need to be removed will be felled by hand using a chainsaw. Some tree removal in year two may require heavier machinery.

What weeds are we targeting?

The common names of the trees and plants the project will target are listed below. Melbourne Water's River Health team will review target species throughout the project and they may change.

African Boneseed	Elm	Large-leaf Cotoneaster	Sweet Pittosporum
African Box-thorn	English Ivy	Pampas Lily-of-the-Valley	Syrian Ash
African Buddleia	European Privet	Locust Tree	Tortured Willow
Ash	Firethorn	Lombardy Poplar	Tree Of Heaven
Blackberry	Flax-leaf Broom	Madeira Winter-cherry	Velvet Cotoneaster
Box-elder Maple	Giant Reed	Mirror Bush	Water Figwort
Blue Morning-glory	Golden Rod	Montbretia	Watsonia
Canadian Poplar	Golden Weeping Willow	Montpellier Broom	Weeping Willow
Cape Ivy	Gorse	Olive	White Arum-lily
Cherry Plum	Grey Sallow	Pepper Tree	White Bladder-flower
Chinese Wormwood	Hackberry	Poplar	White Poplar
Common Dipogon	Hawthorn	Prunus	Wild Tobacco Tree
Cotoneaster	Honey Locust	Purple-leaf Cherry-plum	Willow
Crack Willow	Indian Fig	Pussy Willow	
Desert Ash	Japanese Honeysuckle	Red-flower Prickly-pea	
Drooping Prickly-pear	Jasmine Nightshade	Rice Cut-grass	

Will the project impact wildlife along the Yarra?

There are a number of significant bird and mammal species that call the Yarra home. Melbourne Water is aware of the need to keep adequate structure and canopy for wildlife and this was carefully considered during the planning for this project. To reduce habitat loss, many of the trees that will be poisoned will be left standing.

How much will the project cost and how is it funded?

The project is expected to cost about \$1.9 million over three years.

Melbourne Water's waterway improvement, regional drainage and flood protection works are funded through the Waterways and

Drainage Charge paid by property owners. The charge is collected by retail water companies, such as South East Water and Yarra Valley Water on Melbourne Water's behalf.

Who's delivering the project?

The project is being delivered by the Waterways Alliance on behalf of Melbourne Water.

The Waterways Alliance is a partnership between Ecodynamics, Fulton Hogan, SMEC and Melbourne Water created to deliver a five year \$75 million program to improve stormwater quality and the health of Melbourne's rivers and creeks.

Working with stakeholders

Melbourne Water works closely with the City of Banyule, Boroondara, Yarra and Manningham, as well as with Parks Victoria and community groups that have an active interest in the middle Yarra region.

As well as completing its own projects along the Yarra, Melbourne Water supports community and private river health improvement works through its Stream Frontage Management Program and grants.

For more information about Melbourne Water's Stream Frontage Management Program and other available grants visit melbournewater.com.au .

How can I get more information about the project?

You can call Melbourne Water on 131 722 or visit melbournewater.com.au for more information about this project. The website also contains general information about other projects to secure a sustainable water future.

Fast facts

Kilometers of weed control	19.9 km
Location	Plenty River, Templestowe (Mel: 32, H2) to Dights falls, Abbotsford (Mel: 44, F3)
Number of species targeted	Over 60
Cost of project	\$1.9 million
Project duration	3 years
Expected completion	2012

** 2009, Middle Yarra Riparian Vegetation Management Plan Plenty River to Dights Falls, Ecology Australia*