

Outcomes of the Melbourne Water Making Connection Program

As part of the 2006/2007 Making Connections program, four catchment based events were conducted in Maribyrnong, Werribee, Western Port, and Mornington Peninsula / Dandenong.

Participants at each of the events highlighted a number of localised actions, issues and ideas. The outcomes from across all four events were then reviewed, with five key themes emerging.

THEMES	STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK FROM EVENTS
Building Trust Improving Relationships	Participants described this as the need for clarifying roles and responsibilities while also building trust between parties. Participants identified a desire for increased transparency in decision making processes, increased action to deliver commitments and greater opportunities for community input and information sharing.
Improving Support and Coordination	Participants felt that Melbourne Water needs to form more effective partnerships with the community and agencies while also providing consistent funding for relevant activities in the region. Participants also highlighted a need for improved technical and advisory support for community groups and other stakeholders.
Connecting and Involving People	Participants identified the need to develop greater opportunities for collaboration between stakeholders in the region. The need to celebrate successes was highlighted with requests for recognition of achievements.
Building Knowledge and Awareness	Participants felt that Melbourne Water is in a position to lead by continually building community knowledge about the health of the waterways. Melbourne Water is in a position to help change community expectations and perceptions about how water is owned and used.
Valuing Cultural Heritage	Participants identified the need to raise awareness of cultural heritage, learn from indigenous experience and improve relationships with indigenous groups in the region.

Melbourne Water Making Connections Maribyrnong 2006

The feedback listed below was generated at the Maribyrnong event. The feedback has been grouped under the five key themes that emerged.

Building Trust / Improving Relationships

- Develop a matrix of who does what
- Clarify responsibilities of government agencies and give a first point of contact to everyone.
- Gather info and key contacts from agencies
- Create a hotline

Improving Support and Coordination

- Develop a strategy which outlines funding, waterway works/projects, time spans, how funding is used
- Melbourne Water to coordinate and organise a Maribyrnong Waterways Strategy
- Conference to review existing plans, set a vision, set objectives, agree on priorities, develop action plans, assign responsibilities, review and fund projects
- Leadership from agencies to help the community generate action
- Education program at a catchment scale - urban and rural
- Create a natural vegetation zone along all watercourse in the catchment
- Supporting facilitation involving government agencies and councils working together with community groups
- Education incentives
- Ensure plans match vision
- Planning issues to acquire land
- Funding to construct and maintain
- An annual festival - food, music, info, displays, entertainment, activities, media, show bags, marquees and recognise indigenous values
- Media - to promote events and recognition of works
- Award night - recognise successful groups and individuals, schools, environ projects
- Tours - trips to sites where work has been done as a showcase

Connecting and Involving People

- Media - to promote events and recognition of works
- Award night - recognise successful groups and individuals, schools, environ projects
- Tours - trips to sites where work has been done as a showcase

Valuing Cultural Heritage

- Consult widely and honestly on revegetation for all cultural values

Other's

- Consult widely and honestly on revegetation for all cultural values
- Shared trails along entire river and tributaries
- Increased importance placed on trail development

Melbourne Water Making Connections Werribee 2006

The feedback listed below was generated at the Werribee event. The feedback has been grouped under the five key themes that emerged.

Building Trust / Improving Relationships

- Changeover of staff needs to be handled sensitively. E.g. Introduce new officers and contacts. Otherwise, indicates that the agency doesn't value the relationship
- Develop protocols and Memorandum Of Understanding with various parties
- Internal protocols within agencies to communicate the value of stakeholders
- Key Performance Indicators on customer relations
- Amend laws and planning schemes to better reflect community values around waterways and appropriate development
- Create a document setting out what everyone does (responsibilities for waterway management), including contact names and numbers etc.
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities
- Regular (6 monthly) communication forums
- Partnership projects between various stakeholders to get runs on the board and establish working relationships
- Involve and educate local members
- Authorities backing / supporting community groups e.g. at VCAT
- Assisting community to direct their enquiries to the appropriate bodies
- Having confidence that the agencies understand the issues and that they have the technical skills and capacity etc
- Delivering works - demonstrating action
- Behave with openness and transparency
- Disagreement vs. mistrust - find ways to disagree but still respect views
- A culture of commitment to real consultation
- Follow through commitments
- Give and take

Improving Support and Coordination

- Terminology - use waterway names for 'catchments' e.g. Little river catchment.
- Directory/database of all stakeholders (Human touch!) Melbourne Water
- Melbourne Water supports community through education programs
- Melbourne water provides project management support to groups
- Planting plans/orders
- Mud map plans: keep it simple
- Overall plans
- Information exchange
- Some sort of structure that holds all the works and project details across agencies.
- Clarity of roles of various management agencies and of officer's roles
- MW to provide proactive relationship through effective action and support to actual on ground groups
- Regional facilitator coordinators
- Names of waterways on bridges - Raise the profile!
- Industry is not included in this forum - Engage industry - Industry associations - Community Liaison Committees -

Neighbourhood Environment Improvement Plans

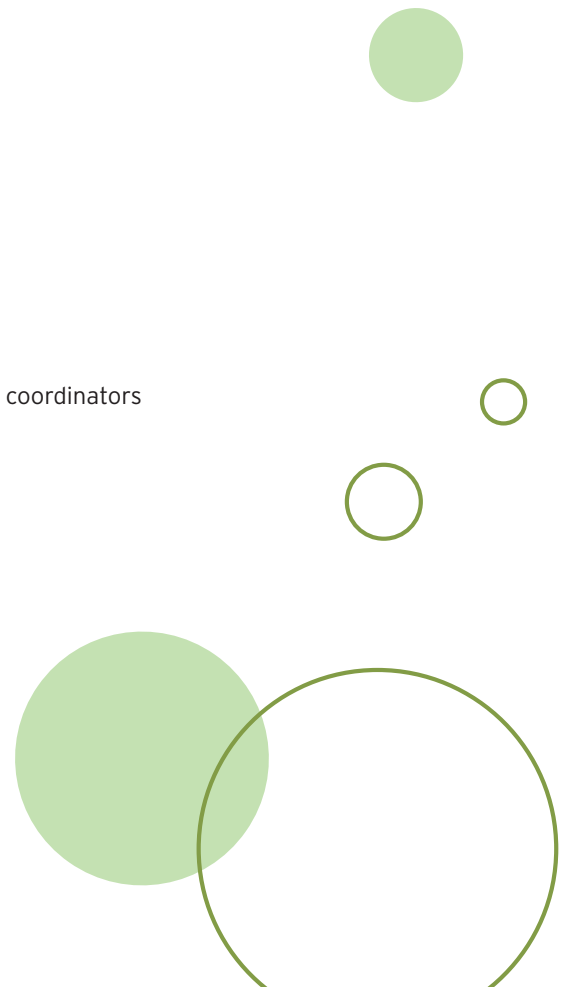
- More support for networks of groups e.g. local government areas, friends groups
- More support to groups to complete funding applications and reporting, or Make the process easier to start with
- Work with groups to 'plan and develop' projects

Connecting and Involving People

- With small property owners through the Councils Rural Rebate Schemes and Incentives programs via Council (or CMA & MW)
- With specialist farmers through Agri West
- With broad acre farmers through personal annual visits and relationship building
- Develop linkages with the education department - to break down barriers - to develop and promote educational resources
- Develop educator networks and supporting agency
- Develop linkages with VAEE
- Develop student support networks
- Facilitators for network development and group support!
- Form catchment cluster networks
- Form partnerships with broader community development officers and social workers
- Social research to ID largest community network and tap into
- Engage non environment groups
- Celebrate successes - fun and achievable
- Reward involvement - media etc.
- Stop sending 'stuff' (to schools etc), send people!
- Celebration and promotion of completed works
- Werribee catchment festival to celebrate the rivers

Building Knowledge and Awareness

- Identification of the key people within schools and groups
- Personal Development Days - Environment education teachers
- Adult environment education
- Curriculum (school) evolves
- Community forums focussed on technical topics
- Accreditation (as educators and experts)
- Regular media publicity
- Educate through U3A
- Accessible information - share knowledge
- Education offer standardised framework - councils/Melbourne Water/ cluster coordinators
- Facilitated planning in schools
- Sponsored Vox Pop - involving young people - what do you think.....
- MW fund media release for school environment ECOMAC
- Make better use of historical society
- Planning process needs to ask - how does this affect our heritage?
- Council involve indigenous groups in projects
- Enforce learning in school curriculum (VELS)
- Valuing the good and learning from the lessons of the past



Valuing Cultural Heritage

- Have a festival - walk with the elders • Indigenous youth/dancers/stories • Poetry and music competitions • Barn dance • Fishing competitions • Horse trail riding • Tree planting • Indigenous flower show • Canoe and stories
- Collect / interpret / share stories around the history of the land/rivers we are living on/amongst
- Make an effort to have day-to-day relationship (so it is not an overload)
- Guidelines, protocol and training to value and protect cultural values
- Facilitate bringing together of people/groups to identify social/cultural values.
- Recognise MW role to protect social/cultural values of waterways
- Information kits
- Cultural days (visit immigration museum)
- Use advertising to raise awareness
- Werribee catchment theme as part of museum/Open Range Zoo/Immigration Museum/WTP
- Make better use of historical society
- Planning process needs to ask - how does this affect our heritage?
- Council involve indigenous groups in projects
- Enforce learning in school curriculum (VELS)
- Valuing the good and learning from the lessons of the past

Melbourne Water Making Connections Western Port 2006

The feedback listed below was generated at the Western Port event. The feedback has been grouped under the five key themes that emerged.

Building Trust / Improving Relationships

- At least have the existing level of support (not less)
- Working towards getting long term support and security of funds - staff turnover is an issue
- Being flexible and innovative and working together to get more done e.g. support for CVA teams
- Need to be better consulted in decision making (not top down)
- Corporate and business groups could have better relationships with MW and CMA as representatives of land care

Improving Support and Coordination

- Long term Support and security of resources
- Broaden support base and resources for groups and networks e.g. private, state government, levies, corporate
- MW giving support to land care and networks
- Planning with groups with long term thinking; groups need dollars to support this process
- More funds needed for example - habitat restoration, wildlife corridors, recreational facility
- Better support for Landcare to get message about weeds across
- More resources needed for new groups, landholders to undertake works on private property
- Clear and shared purpose and direction
- Groups could have a better image with support and recognition from government about achievements
- Groups as policy makers, not just implementers

Connecting and Involving People

- Group sustainability and succession planning - Involving new members and engaging other sectors (industry, schools)
- Better monitoring and education of facilities - feedback to community on what works well/not well - recognition - can MW/ CMA get that information that is from feds
- MW in 'gap' areas - start projects, get partnerships rolling in
- New generation need to be involved for future Landcare - younger farmers
- Assist to get better partnerships between groups and schools
- Getting new and younger people involved - succession planning - how?
- Better involvement in policy direction
- Land care may need to recreate itself - 'reinvent' to involve younger people
- Getting recognition for groups and telling the wider community
- Land care and groups are a social movement - that should be recognised

Building Knowledge and Awareness

- Wider community promotion
- Skills and training for volunteers and landholders
- Local papers could be better utilised - Shire news to sell the Landcare message - good investment
- Access to monitoring and evaluation reports from past projects - Reward and recognition
- Raising awareness of environmental weeds, must be increased - land care groups cannot be the only ones doing this
- Information about groups through, for example, water retailers, real estate, rates letters, brochure on the counter, new resident kits
- Using strong groups/networks to grow Landcare awareness to wider community - show successful groups - look out and up - what are the trends
- Need innovative ways to get the message out - make it more media savvy, controversial - nurseries still sell weeds!!!
- MW need to better promote their services to groups
- MW could play a key role in raising awareness of land care groups across the catchment (i.e. Getting new members)
- CMA/MW website has lists and links to groups - local, more detailed information

Valuing Cultural Heritage

- Whole community responsibility to support groups and land holders
- Support from facilitators (have facilitators) needed for groups to assist/ensure group sustainability

Melbourne Water Making Connections Dandenong / Mornington Peninsula 2007

The feedback listed below was generated at the Dandenong / Mornington Peninsula event. The feedback has been grouped under the five key themes that emerged.

Building Trust / Improving Relationships

- Communication methods/use of Jargon
- Role of agencies in pollution - who is responsible for what?
- Who to contact at Melbourne Water - publicity of who does what and contact details

Improving Support and Coordination

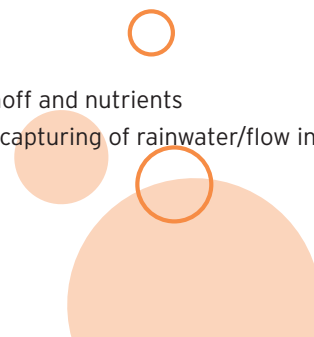
- Allow more time to spend on the creek and educate people
- Frankston network of community groups meet monthly to provide councils and other agencies with information
- Assistance with applications for grants - the who's and how's
- Yearly meeting to write works plans
- Better use of the web as a support tool
- What is done if bad behaviour/misuse of waterways is spotted - bush guardians
- Better co-ordination of works between all groups involved - Melbourne Water, Councils, Parks Vic, Friends of groups etc
- Co-ordinate works with MW and work together on RRHS
- Councils and MW to work more collaboratively to tackle storm water issues - less blame, more assistance(\$), and expertise
- Community groups to help maintain WSUD features
- Opportunities for scholarships - grant based
- Create co-ordinated and collaborative grants

Connecting and Involving People

- Educational events such as Creek festivals
- Improve communication amongst stakeholders - internal and external
- Make more visits to counterparts in neighbouring councils - get to know your neighbours
- Greater community involvement in tackling stormwater pollution - i.e. adopt a rain garden.
- Recruiting younger people to volunteer work
- Exchange visits between communities

Building Knowledge and Awareness

- Develop demonstration projects such as open garden scheme to reduce negative perceptions and decrease landholders fears
- Increase enthusiasm for protection of waterways
- Linking up schools with environmental initiatives such as protecting native flora and fauna
- Increase knowledge and awareness of the local history of the area
- More information on flora and fauna requirements
- Education is needed for the community to understand the concepts of WSUD
- Planning controls on habitat loss and catchment impacts e.g. Contaminated runoff and nutrients
- Is any work being done to understand the impact on creeks and streams of the capturing of rainwater/flow in rainwater tanks?



Valuing Cultural Heritage

- Aboriginal heritage representatives are accessible to community groups - make more use of this
- Cultural workshop training for community groups on heritage legislation (leading to understanding of cultural evidence)
- Facilitate educational walks specifically on cultural issues for schools and community groups
- One-stop shop for information on cultural heritage - requires partnerships between agencies
- Is it possible to have a resource officer based in each region

Other

- EOI of where community groups would like to work - reviewed in yearly planning meetings