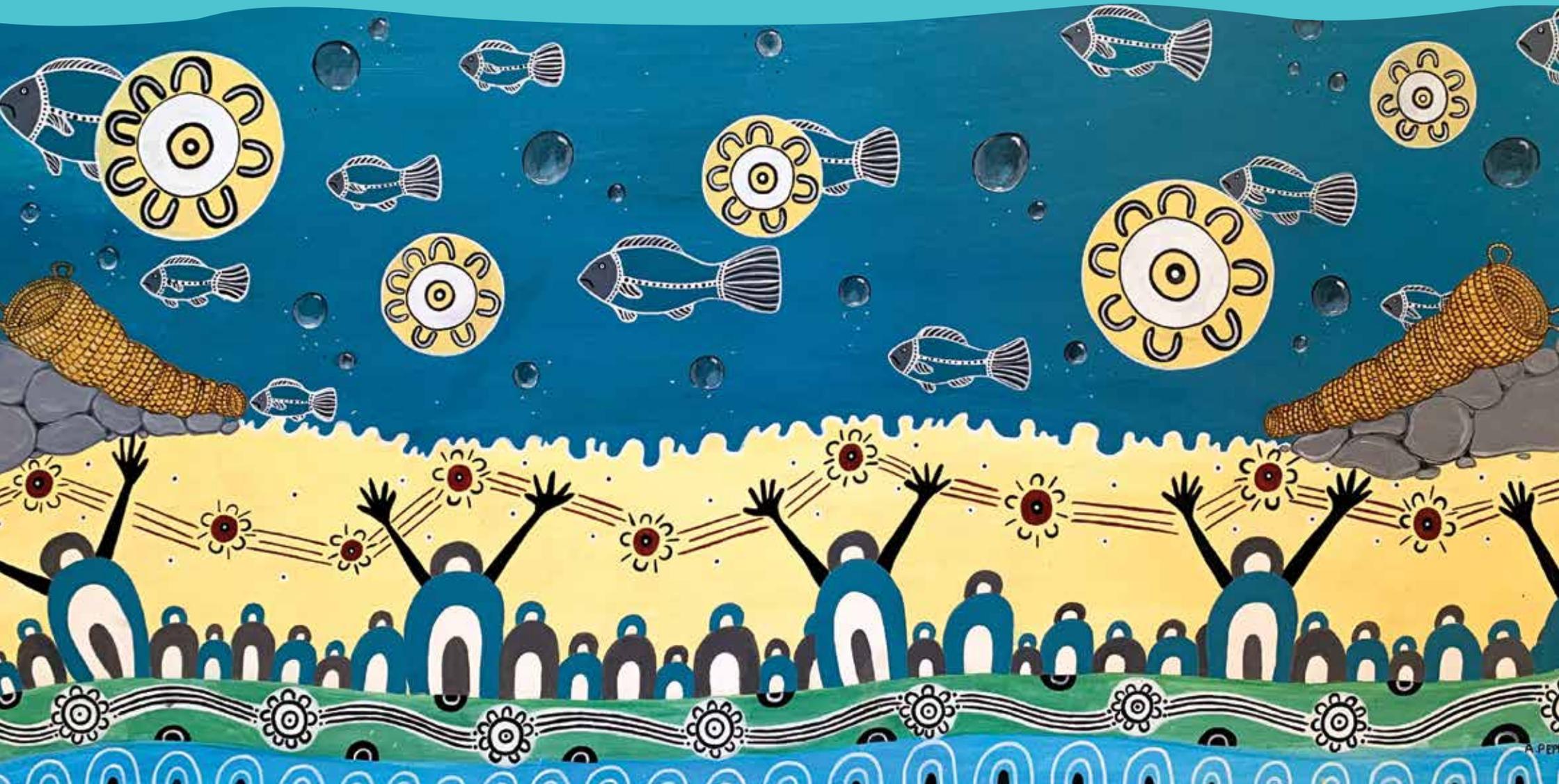


Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and Melbourne Water Corporation Partnership Agreement



Purpose

GLaWAC and Melbourne Water commit to work together towards the shared objectives and opportunities that meet our respective goals for the Thomson River. Together we have agreed to progress the following objectives:

- Advance Gunaikurnai objectives toward self-determination
- Improve the cultural competency of Melbourne Water Corporation employees
- Recognise GLaWAC as a respected partner in natural resource management
- Build a sustainable partnership through collaborative and professional relationships.

Progress toward these objectives will be measured by the Delivery of Commitments (Appendix) which will be reviewed regularly to ensure that our actions are working for the shared benefit of both organisations.

Guiding Principles

- Melbourne Water recognises the sovereign rights and cultural responsibilities of Gunaikurnai Traditional Owners to care for Country.
- Melbourne Water recognises the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) as the recognised Traditional Owner Corporation to speak for Curran Curran, the Thomson River, in West Gippsland.
- Melbourne Water recognises that the management of the Thomson Reservoir, and its associated closed catchment, is critical to the Gunaikurnai community.
- To meet its legislative obligations and contribute to restorative justice, Melbourne Water has identified a formal co-developed agreement, implemented with respect and integrity with GLaWAC, as a high priority.
- This agreement forms a commitment to address the important issues for Gunaikurnai Traditional Owners regarding water and management of Country.



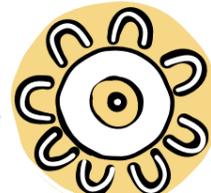
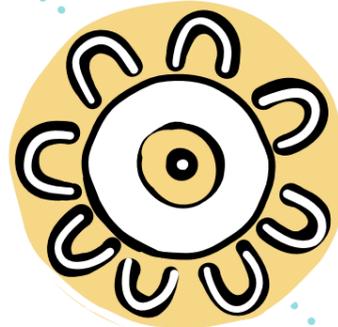
Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation

The Gunaikurnai people are recognised by the Federal Court and the State of Victoria as the Traditional Owners of a large area of Gippsland spanning from Warragul in the west to the Snowy River in the east, and from the Great Divide in the north to the coast in the south, approx. 10% of the state.

GLaWAC is the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the Gunaikurnai, the Traditional Owners of our Country, as determined by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council under the Aboriginal Heritage Act, 2006.

Gunaikurnai community is proud of the way that we represent and include the mob in achieving broad respect for our Culture, for the protection and healing of our land and to gain genuine economic independence.

The GLaWAC Board and staff are committed to connecting with and healing Gunaikurnai land and waters.



Partners

Melbourne Water Corporation

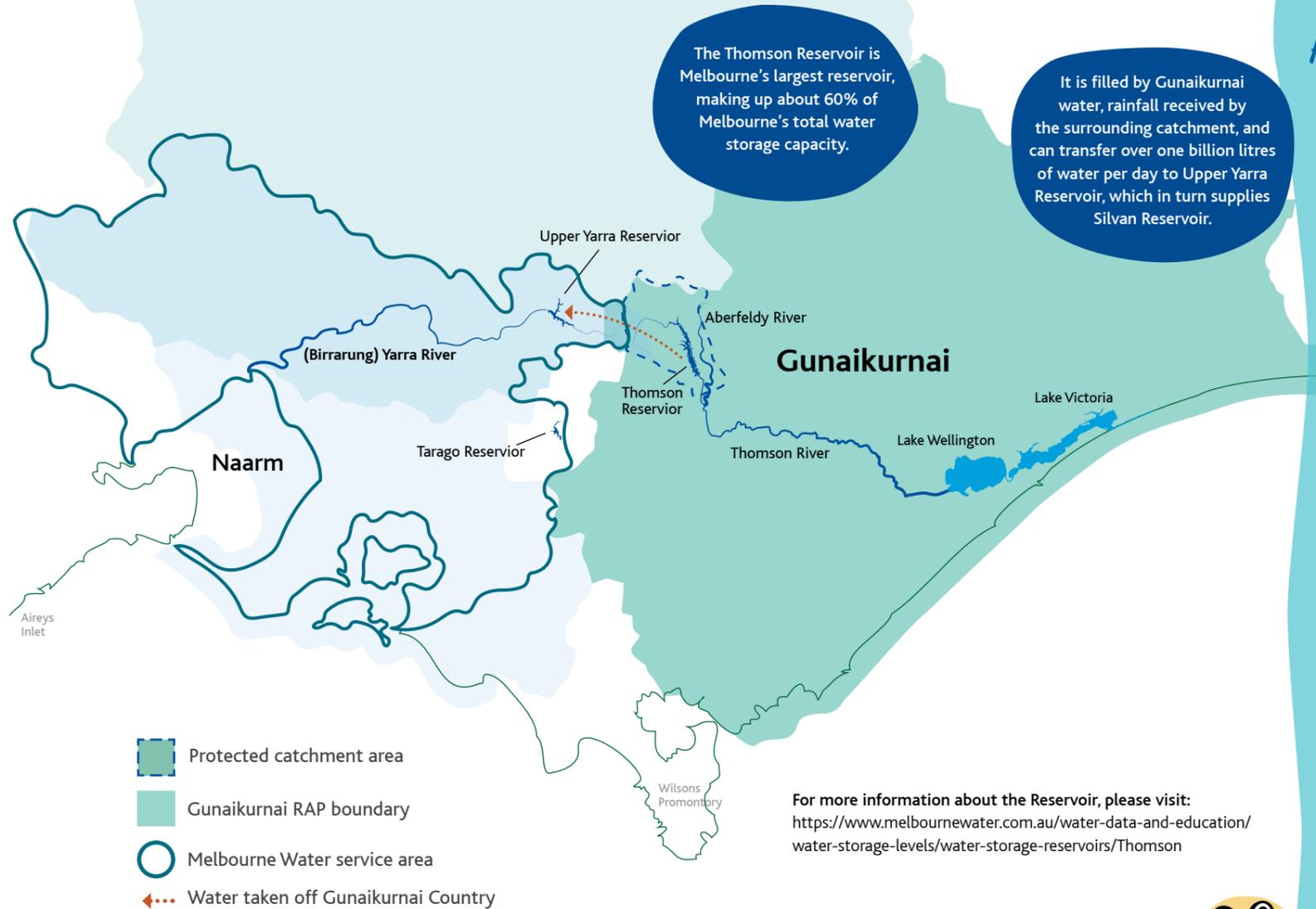
At Melbourne Water, we are driven by a powerful strategic vision that informs everything we do: Enhancing Life and Liveability.

We work on behalf of the community to manage and protect major water resources, which in turn underpins life and liveability in the greater Melbourne region.

On any given day we:

- manage water supply catchments
- treat and supply affordable and high-quality drinking water and recycled water
- remove and treat most of Melbourne's sewage
- manage over 25,000km of waterways and major drainage systems in the Port Phillip and Westernport region
- provide integrated drainage and flood management services
- manage parks, gardens, and open spaces for people to gather, exercise, relax and connect with nature and each other
- create and manage outstanding natural community spaces.

Melbourne Water supports Traditional Owners and communities in the region to enhance the health and resilience of its land, water and biodiversity through collaboration, community education and awareness and project delivery.



Current roles and responsibilities for the Thomson Reservoir

- GLaWAC represents the Native Title rights and interests over this area, on behalf of all Gunaikurnai people.
- MW is the resource and reservoir manager – operating the reservoir and supporting DELWP fire management to primarily protect water supply.
- DELWP is the NRM land manager, including fire management.
- Metropolitan retail corporations and regional urban water corporations hold bulk entitlements for urban supply.
- Southern Rural Water manage take and use licenses (i.e. Section 51).
- WGCM manages Thomson River environmental flow releases.

Agreed priorities

1. Development and signing of a formal Agreement outlining a shared commitment to a mutually beneficial relationship where we meet regularly and discuss and deliver on priorities.
2. GLaWAC will establish cultural and operational objectives for the Thomson River, including the Reservoir and catchment area. MW and GLaWAC will advocate with the land and water managers to progress these objectives.
3. GLaWAC cultural awareness training is available for MW staff working on Gunaikurnai Country, and more broadly, to develop shared understanding of Gunaikurnai water being moved off Country.
4. Melbourne Water will support opportunities for GLaWAC to undertake NRM activities on Gunaikurnai Country, and support the concept of GLaWAC having a formal management role.
5. Melbourne Water will include GLaWAC in all future mob meetings for cultural fire management on MW managed land.
6. Melbourne Water will support GLaWAC cultural heritage mapping - tangible and intangible - including analysis, predictive modelling and a cultural report on Thomson catchment. A version of this will be available for MW.
7. Melbourne Water will support the identification and establishment of a meeting place for activity with GLaWAC within the Thomson Reservoir area.
8. Melbourne Water will support capacity building activities for GLaWAC as waterway co-delivery partners, including training and development opportunities in waterway and land management.
9. Melbourne Water will offer GLaWAC opportunities for cultural water assessments and research opportunities.
10. GLaWAC & Melbourne Water will start the discussion on water leaving Gunaikurnai Country.



As signatories of this agreement, the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and the Melbourne Water Corporation commit to work together towards the shared objectives and opportunities that meet our respective goals for the Thomson River.

GLAWAC

Chairperson

Tracy M' Donald

Print Name

Tracy M' Donald

Signature

Chief Executive Officer

Daniel Miller

Print Name

Daniel Miller

Signature

Agreed by all parties on the 24th day of June 2022

Terms of Partnership Agreement

The Term of the Agreement is 5 years, unless terminated by either party in accordance with its terms.

During this Term it is expected that a meeting take place every 6 months as an update with an annual review of progress in accordance to the included table of priorities.

It may be updated as required if proposed changes/updates are agreed to by both parties.

It may be ceased by either party by notifying the other in writing.

MWC

Chairperson

JOHN THWAITES

Print Name

John Thwaites

Signature

Managing Director

MERINA DI LORENZO

Print Name

Merina Di Lorenzo

Signature

About the Artist

Alice Pepper

Alice Pepper lives in Lakes Entrance with family and cultural connections to the Gunaik, Yorta Yorta/Mutti Mutti, Gunditjmarra and Arrernte peoples.

This painting is representative of our waterways, our rivers and waterholes where our people have always gathered for seasonal ceremonies, sharing of knowledge & cultural traditions.

In this painting our Ancestors and people are depicted in the shape of rock formations sharing the knowledge that we have always been connected to the land & waters on many levels for thousands of years. Our stories and knowledge are embedded in the landscapes of country and hold many messages and learnings left there for us on our journeys.

There are also many meeting places depicted around our rivers where our people gathered food in traditional ways by fishing with fish & eel traps on the rock pools, and baskets made from weaving grass (*Lomandra longifolia*) to share. Sharing and making sure to care for land & waters our way by only taking what we need to drink and provide for our people, making sure to preserve and protect the waterways and their natural flow and cultural flow so it will always be there for future generations.

