Reimagining Your Moonee Ponds Creek

May 2023

We're transforming part of your Moonee Ponds Creek into a more natural looking waterway and enjoyable community space.

Melbourne Water is leading the delivery of the project on behalf of the Chain of Ponds Collaboration Group, and in partnership with Merri-bek City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Department of Energy, Environment & Climate Action (DEECA), and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.

Project update

We're gradually removing the concrete walls along both sides of the creek and replacing them with rockwork. So far, we've completed more than 300 metres of rockwork along the northern side of the creek, and just over 300 metres on the southern side.

Once this is complete, the concrete base of the channel will also be covered with rockwork to create a meandering creek, to slow down flows and give it a more 'natural' look and feel.

Rockwork upstream of Margaret Street bridge

Rockwork downstream of Margaret Street bridge

What's next?

We're excited that the planting of more than 43,000 native trees and shrubs is commencing from 19 May 2023! This is a significant milestone in the delivery of the project.

The Brosnan Crescent shared path works (Moonee Valley Council side) will start from 18 May 2023 and will take approximately three weeks to complete (weather permitting).

From 23 June to 10 July 2023 (school holidays), an additional detour will be in place via Odin Street and Mascoma Street while we renew a small section of Moonee Ponds Creek Trail next to Strathmore North Primary School.

Thank you for your patience and understanding of these short-term inconveniences as we work to improve your shared path network.

Melbourne Water | Reimagining Your Creek

Merri-bek City Council

City of Moonee Valley

CHAIN OF PONDS

VICTORIA State Government

Frequently asked questions

Why is only a 360 metre section of creek being naturalised?

The naturalisation of large concrete channels like Moonee Ponds Creek can unfortunately be very costly, as we are learning along the way. This is mainly due to the amount of excavation required to remove the concrete and reshape the waterway into a more natural form. After an extensive collaborative design process for this project, the community chose to transform a smaller length of creek but include a deep pond and more open space for people to better enjoy the creek and its surrounds, rather than focusing on a longer section of creek with no ponds or community spaces.

Why can't the concrete be completely removed?

Due to low levels of PFAS in the soil beneath the concrete base of the creek channel (something we've always known about), a decision was made to leave the concrete base in place, essentially locking the PFAS in place. A further reason for not removing the concrete base is because of the significant additional costs associated with the transport and disposal of the concrete, and we wanted to make the best use of the funds we have.

By installing rockwork on top of the concrete base, rather than removing the concrete, a similar 'naturalised' look can still be achieved.

What is PFAS – is it harmful?

PFAS (per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a group of manufactured chemicals. All of us are exposed to small amounts of PFAS in everyday life. This is through exposure to dust, indoor and outdoor air, food, water, and contact with consumer products that contain PFAS, such as clothing, carpets and non-stick cookware. In the past, fire-fighting foams also contained PFAS. There are low levels of PFAS in soil, sediment, water and animals across most of Victoria. Low levels are unlikely to be harmful to human health, and recent studies show people's exposure to PFAS in the general environment is reducing. However, there are still many unknown factors about how PFAS affects human health. This is why the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) takes a precautionary approach and advises people to take care and reduce their exposure to PFAS.

What's being done with the concrete that's removed?

The concrete is being taken to a recycling facility where it will be crushed and then undergo a process called 'thermal desorption', which removes the PFAS through heat. The resultant clean concrete will then be able to be re-purposed and used for other projects that need concrete.

What about asbestos?

Upon testing, it was revealed that soil in the project area contains fragments of non-friable asbestos. Non-friable asbestos is lower risk compared to other types of asbestos as it is more difficult to become airborne. In line with contamination handling guidelines, a licenced contractor wearing recommended safety equipment will undertake the removal to ensure that the risk remains negligible. While not required by regulations, Melbourne Water will take a conservative approach and engage a health and safety consultant to monitor air quality in the area to ensure that it remains at safe levels to the public.

Keep up to date with what's happening

For more information about this project, visit the project web page at:
www.melbournewater.com.au/RYMPC

Contact the project team: Email mooneeponds.creek@melbournewater.com.au or call 1800 952 911.

Interpreter

For an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 13 14 50

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