



The benefits of recovering additional water for the Werribee River

The Werribee River and its key values

The Werribee River valley has been home to the Wurundjeri, Wadawurrung and Bunurong peoples for at least 40,000 years, and they continue to care for and have a deep connection to the lands and waterways of the region. The Werribee River is the largest waterway on the long plain west of Port Phillip Bay. It flows southeast from the Wombat State Forest near Ballan, through the Werribee Gorge to Bacchus Marsh and then into Port Phillip Bay at Werribee.

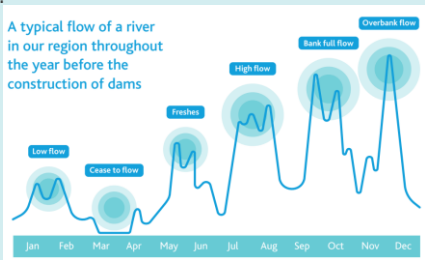
The Werribee River supports a range of native fish, including Black Bream and the endangered Australian grayling, several species of frogs, a diverse waterbug community and platypus. It also offers unique access to Victoria's volcanic plain outcrops, bedrock, and gorges as well as beautiful areas of native grasslands and river red gums.



What is "water for the environment" and why does the Werribee River need it?

"Water for the environment" is water managed to improve or maintain the health of rivers and wetlands – including the plants and animals that depend on them. This includes ensuring that water is released at the right location, volume, timing, frequency, duration and quality.

There are a range of types of flows present in a natural flow regime which we try to replicate through the use of "water for the environment". However, because water is taken out of the river for drinking and farming, there is not enough water at the right time for native animals and plants to be healthy.



How much water does the Werribee River need now and into the future?

The Werribee River is currently entitled to a small amount of water per year to protect, maintain and enhance environmental values. However, it needs more water now, and it will need even more water into the future due to the impacts of climate change.

The Victorian Government's target by 2032 is to recover an additional 12 gigalitres of water (or 5,000 Olympic sized swimming pools) to use each year to benefit the Werribee River's values. This will be a step in the right direction towards ensuring that the health of the Werribee River and its social, cultural and economic values are protected to support and enhance liveability for future generations to come.

What are the environmental benefits of additional water for the Werribee River?

The following table shows what will happen to key environmental values of the Werribee River in the future. With no additional water, these values will not be protected from climate change. However, with an additional 12 gigalitres per year, fish, frogs and plants can be protected from the worst of climate change, and platypus and waterbugs can be maintained in their current condition.

What will happen to these values in the future with...	No additional water for the Werribee River	An additional 12 gigalitres per year for the Werribee River
Fish	Not protected from climate change	Protected from the worst of climate change
Platypus	Not protected from climate change	Maintained in its current condition
Frogs	Not protected from climate change	Protected from the worst of climate change
Waterbugs	Not protected from climate change	Maintained in its current condition
Plants	Not protected from climate change	Protected from the worst of climate change

Smaller volumes of water also benefit the Werribee River. For example, just 2 gigalitres can deliver enough flow to prevent drying of refuge habitat for platypus during summer, and 4 gigalitres can provide freshes in summer to allow fish to move downstream past barriers. However, more than 12 gigalitres of water is needed now and into the future.

To find out more about Water for the Environment visit:
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