



# Waterways Local Update 2017-18

Melbourne Water's work to enhance waterways and build resilience to flooding in the **City of Banyule**.



**EXTENSIVE**  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
ON THE YARRA RIVER



**173.6 m<sup>3</sup>**  
SEDIMENT, SILT, LITTER & DEBRIS  
REMOVED FROM WATERWAYS



**ENVIRONMENTAL**  
FLOWS TO YARRA RIVER

Melbourne Water plays an active role in the daily lives of Melburnians. We contribute to Melbourne's famous lifestyle by protecting and enhancing over 25,000 km of rivers and creeks, and more than 479 stormwater treatment systems and wetlands in the Port Phillip and Westernport region.

The Waterways and Drainage Charge, which is paid by property owners and collected by retail water companies on our behalf, funds this work. It is an important part of ensuring a thriving natural environment.

Melbourne Water cares for many waterways. Some in your local area include:

- Yarra River
- Plenty River
- Darebin Creek

# Healthy waterways

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## Maintenance and new projects

We are the caretakers of waterway health in the Port Phillip and Westernport region. Each year, we create and maintain healthy waterways by removing litter, debris and excess sediment. We remove and spray weeds, cut grass and plant native trees and shrubs.

### What we have done

### Why

**0.13 km** Revegetation

We plant native trees and shrubs along waterways to provide habitat for birds and animals. Revegetating waterways and replacing weeds with native plants prevents erosion and improves water quality.

**31.5 km** Weed control

Introduced and noxious weeds can choke waterways and take over from plants that provide healthy habitats for birds and animals.

**173.6 m<sup>3</sup>** Sediment, silt, litter, debris removal

Silt, sediment, litter and debris is removed for drainage and flood protection, and to prevent pollution building up in our waterways and wetlands. An excess of these can impact the habitat for platypus, fish and other animals, as well as native plants.

## Stormwater

Rainwater, stormwater and recycled water are valuable resources. We work closely with Council and local communities to protect our rivers, creeks and bays, provide alternative water sources and improve the stormwater that flows into local waterways by integrating stormwater into the urban landscape.

### What we have done

### Why

Through the Clearwater program, we supported Council to take a whole-of-water cycle approach by providing a wide range of tools and resources, and opportunities to participate in a variety of activities

This work helps to improve skills, increase knowledge and foster better networks across councils to change the way we manage water for healthy, connected communities.



## Environmental water

Working with government agencies, councils, industries, landowners and the community ensures we provide the allocated water needed in rivers to maintain healthy natural ecosystems.

### What we have done

### Why

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**Worked with the Victorian Environmental Water Holder to deliver three environmental flows to the Yarra River**

Releasing water from upstream storages mimics flows that would naturally be there if the river wasn't dammed. This improves water quality and habitat for native wildlife.

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**Worked with Council, Parks Victoria and the Victorian Environmental Water Holder to seek a long term solution for watering Banyule Billabong**

Studying the billabong to understand the water it needs to be healthy and engaging with the community to develop a strategy for all billabongs through this area of the Yarra River helps to plan a long term solution for the billabong.

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**Worked with the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning and Southern Rural Water to advocate for the Yarra River**

Advocating for the Yarra River and its tributaries in Integrated Water Management forums improves environmental outcomes.

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## Monitoring and research

We improve local waterways by undertaking regular and extensive monitoring, investigations and research to better understand them.

### What we have done

### Why

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**Monthly monitoring of water quality at one site within your area. These tests measure:**

- water temperature
- dissolved oxygen
- salinity (conductivity)
- pH level
- nutrients (nitrate, nitrite, ammonia, Kjeldahl nitrogen, soluble reactive phosphorus and total phosphorus)
- indicators of faecal contamination (*E. coli*)
- metals (arsenic, cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, nickel and zinc)

Our water quality monitoring program is designed to assess broad-scale, long-term trends in water quality (typically over 8 - 10 years). We use this data to help identify pollution sources and inform the community about local water quality.

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**Undertook fish surveys at Diamond Creek**

The surveys helped evaluate the benefits of new vertical-slot fishways installed in 2012 and complemented another monitoring program on fishway performance.

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**Monitored sediment at Mullum Mullum Creek**

This monitoring improves our knowledge of contaminants and guides our management of the waterways.

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# Planning for future development

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We ensure local waterways aren't threatened by growing communities and that new developments do not increase flood risk through planning, and by providing advice to assist future development.

## What we have done

## Why

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**135** referrals for land subdivisions reviewed

Ensure proposed land subdivisions meet current standards for drainage and stormwater quality.

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**40** development applications reviewed

Ensure that growing communities don't contribute to an increase in flood risk.

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**164** flood information requests reviewed

Provide flood information to property owners and people interested in purchasing or redeveloping property.

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**3** applications for works near Melbourne Water assets and works such as bridges, shared pathways and jetties reviewed

Ensure waterways, and the plants and animals that live there, are protected from the potential impacts of building works.

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**8** stormwater connection applications reviewed

Ensure waterways and the plants and animals that live there, are protected from the potential impacts of construction works.

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# Flood protection

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While floods are natural and we can't stop them all from occurring, we can build our resilience to them and minimise the damage they cause to people, places and communities.

We manage the regional drainage system and work with Council, the Victorian State Emergency Service, the Bureau of Meteorology, property owners and developers to make sure flood information is up to date. We provide flood warning services, prepare flood response plans, and identify and construct new flood protection projects in areas with the greatest need.

## What we have done

## Why

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### Continued collecting hydrological data

Data is used to analyse flood warning during emergency situations, as well as for such things as development referrals and projects to reduce the risk of flood.

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### Collaborated with partners to update flood information

Updating flood modelling for the municipality helps with emergency planning, ensuring appropriate development and preparation for the many large infrastructure projects currently being undertaken in Victoria.

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9 volunteers in your area provide us with rainfall data by recording information from a rain gauge in their backyard. These figures and the data from our automated gauges provides us with valuable rainfall information.

Find out more at [melbournewater.com.au/communityrainreaders](http://melbournewater.com.au/communityrainreaders)

# Working with the community

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Working collaboratively with community groups, volunteers, land managers and farmers allows for better management of local waterways, natural environments and regional drainage systems. It protects the environment and promotes conservation. If you'd like more information about funding opportunities, please call 131 722 or email [river.health@melbournewater.com.au](mailto:river.health@melbournewater.com.au)

## Funding provided

## Grant

## For

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**\$16,119**

**Stream  
Frontage  
Management**

Private land owners and managers for works that protect or enhance riverbanks, such as weed control, fencing and planting native trees.

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**\$1,595**

**Community  
Grants**

Volunteer and community groups for works that protect or enhance riverbanks on public land, raise awareness, and provide training and education to protect local waterways.

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We also worked with the local community on several events and initiatives throughout the year.

## Who we worked with

Community, Wurundjeri Council, Parks Victoria, Transport for Victoria, Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, VicRoads, Victorian Planning Authority, Banyule, Boroondara, Manningham, Melbourne, Nillumbik, Stonnington, Yarra Ranges and Yarra councils

Yarra Ranges, Nilumbik, Manningham, Boroondara, Stonnington, Melbourne, Yarra and Banyule councils

Parks Victoria

Canoe Victoria

Community

Community

Canoeing Victoria

Manningham, Nillumbik and Banyule councils

Parks Victoria

Sport and Recreation Victoria

Victoria State Emergency Service

Community

City of Banyule and flood risk communities

## What we did

Developed and launched the Yarra River 50 Year Community Vision for the Yarra Strategic Plan, providing the basis for future planning and management of the river corridor. More than 2000 people provided input into the vision through an engagement process designed to capture what people value about the Yarra River. The Yarra Strategic Plan will be released in 2019 and will help ensure the protection and improvement of the Yarra for future generations.

Through extensive engagement as part of the Yarra Recreational Paddling Investigation, developed a 5-year implementation plan to improve recreational paddling e.g. canoe/kayak, encourage more passive recreational users of the Yarra River and provide safer infrastructure that is sensitive to river environments.

Partnered to develop the Westerfolds Regional Paddle Sports Centre Plan for Westerfolds Park.

Undertook targeted flood risk activities e.g. community meeting, door knocks of residents and mail outs.

Partnered to deliver flood information to flood risk communities.



Our Space Your Place is an app that helps you find land managed by Melbourne Water to use for projects that benefit the wider community, such as community gardens. We encourage communities to apply to use the land. Find out more at

[melbournewater.com.au/ourspaceyourplace](http://melbournewater.com.au/ourspaceyourplace) or call 131 722.



Our citizen science programs harness the power of community through Waterwatch programs. They support people to collect and analyse data on platypus, frogs, waterbugs and water quality in their local river or creeks and advocate for waterways to help protect them and promote conservation.

Find out more at [melbournewater.com.au/waterwatch](http://melbournewater.com.au/waterwatch) or call 131 722.