



# Waterways Local Update 2017-18

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



**TRANSFORMING**  
MOONEE PONDS CREEK



**26.5 M<sup>3</sup>**  
SEDIMENT, SILT, LITTER  
AND DEBRIS REMOVED



**EXTENSIVE**  
ENGAGEMENT ON  
THE 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
- Maribyrnong River
- Moonee Ponds 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

**0.3 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.

**2.5 km** Weed control

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

**26.5 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

**Living Rivers provided funding to determine the cleaning regime for permeable pavement and recommendations for ongoing maintenance and monitoring**

Using permeable pavement will improve stormwater quality, and reduce the risks of minor flooding and water used to clean pavements.

**Living Rivers provided funding to develop a strategy and tools to guide the delivery, maintenance and funding of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and greening projects on streets**

WSUD helps improve the quality of stormwater entering waterways, increase urban cooling and greening, and reduce flood risk, pollution and stormwater quantity to enhance the health of waterways.

**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.

**Living Rivers provided funding for holistic water management as part of the new local Environmental Sustainable Design policy, and for water sensitive urban design practices through a collaboration with Moreland, Moonee Valley, Melbourne, Yarra, Brimbank and Greater Geelong councils**

Greater understanding of best practice stormwater management and sharing information across the region improves waterway health, amenity and liveability. It reduces the risk of flooding, and stormwater and pollution entering waterways and bays.



The Living Rivers program offers councils funding, expertise and guidance to build their understanding, skills and commitment to manage stormwater within an integrated water management approach. We contributed \$95,000 to projects in your area.

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

## 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

**Worked with the Victorian Environmental Water Holder to deliver environmental water releases**

### Why

Releasing water from upstream storages mimics flows that would naturally be there if the river wasn't dammed. The releases help to support the habitat for native plants and animals.

**Worked with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, and Southern Rural Water on environmental outcomes for river systems in Integrated Water Management forums**

Advocating for environmental outcomes for river systems and tributaries improves the health of waterways.

## Monitoring and research

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

### What we have done

**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)

### Why

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.

**Monitored sediment at Moonee Ponds and Chinaman creeks, and the Yarra River estuary**

We monitored sediment to improve our knowledge of contaminants and help guide our management of waterways.

# 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

**68** referrals for land subdivisions reviewed

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

**45** development applications reviewed

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

**239** flood information requests reviewed

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

**18** 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.

**3** stormwater connection applications reviewed

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



# 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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### Worked collaboratively to map flooding in the Arden Macaulay area

Updated flood information supports better development and emergency planning.

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Four 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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# \$18,568

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

## What we did

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**Swinburne University**

Supported the installation of an animated Growling Grass Frog call visualisation at Melbourne Knowledge Week.

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**Friends of Royal Park**

Provided support to monitor water quality through our Waterwatch program.

**RMIT University**

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**Friends of Westgate Park**

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

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.

**Parks Victoria**

**Canoe Victoria**

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**Community**

**Friends of Merri Creek**

Provided a Corridors of Green Grant for works on Aitken Creek.

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**Melbourne, Moonee Valley, Moreland, Hume councils**

The Moonee Ponds Catchment Collaboration pilot project established a governance group with stakeholders who are collaborating to transform the creek into an iconic waterway for Melbourne.

**Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek**

**Friends of Upper Moonee Ponds Creek**

**Kensington Association**

**Living Colour Studio**

**Swinburne & RMIT universities**

**Parks Victoria**

**Yarra Valley Water**

**Conservation Volunteers Australia**

**Greening the West/City West Water**

**Victorian Planning Authority**

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**Moonee Bicycle Users Group**

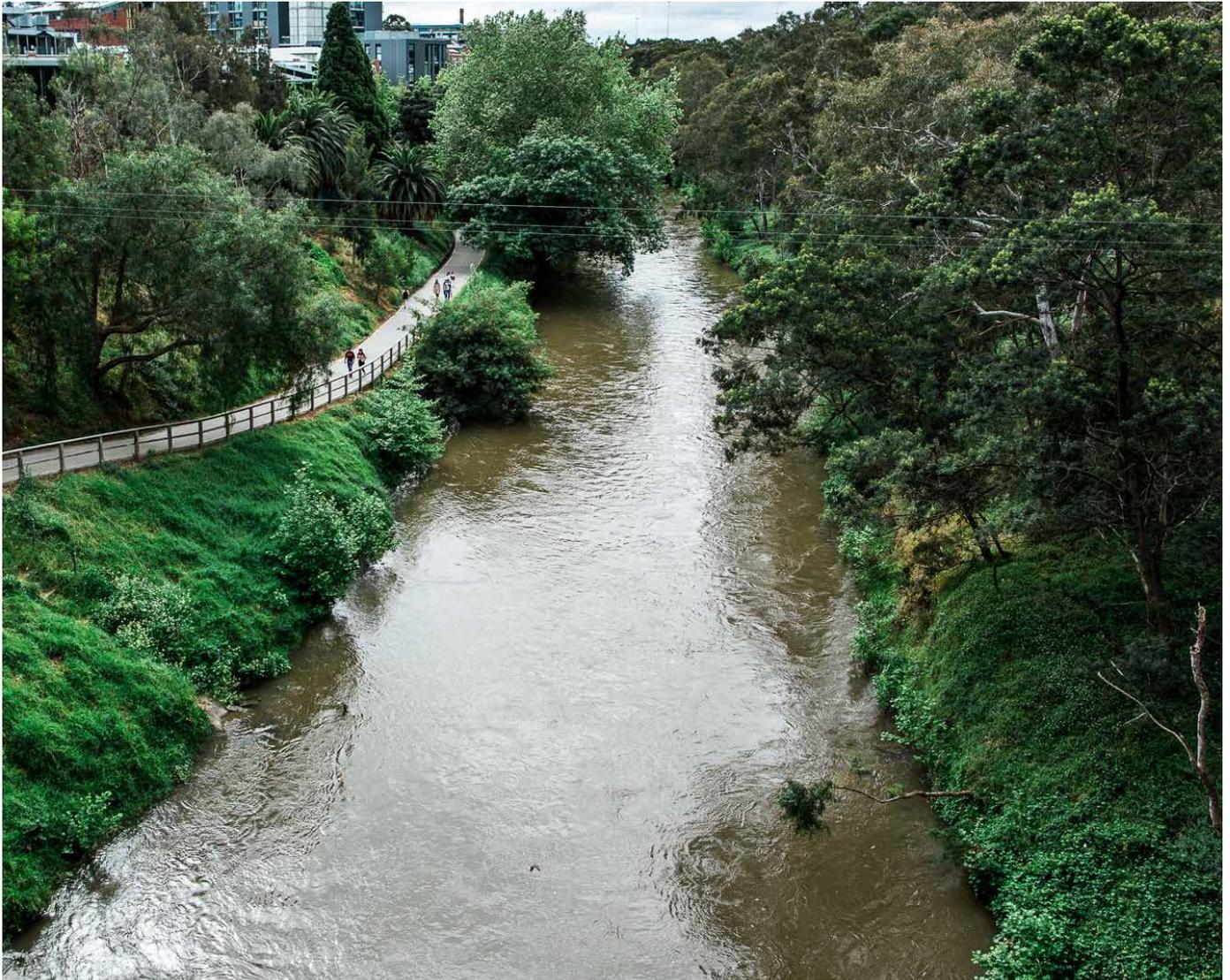
**Community, Wurundjeri Council, Parks Victoria, Transport for Victoria, Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, VicRoads, Victorian Planning Authority, Banyule, Boroondara, Manningham, Melbourne, Nillumbik, Stonnington, Yarra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

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.



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.