



Waterways Local Update 2017-18

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



EXTENSIVE
ENGAGEMENT ON
THE YARRA RIVER



14.9 KM
WEED CONTROL
ALONG WATERWAYS



THREE
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
- Merri Creek

Healthy waterways

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

0.1 km Revegetation

14.9 km Weed control

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.

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

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.

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.

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

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 occur if the river wasn't dammed. This improves water quality and habitat for native wildlife.

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 two sites 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 in Merri and Darebin creeks

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

Planning for future development

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

60 referrals for land subdivisions reviewed

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

134 development applications reviewed

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

141 flood information requests reviewed

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

10 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.

13 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

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

Continued collecting hydrological data

Worked closely with Council to complete a planning amendment with updated mapping for the municipality

Why

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.

Revising flood data provides up-to-date information to support planning applications and appropriate development.



Two 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



Working with the community

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

Funding provided

\$5,898

Grant

**Stream
Frontage
Management**

For

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

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

Who we worked with

Kids Teaching Kids Conference

Yarra River Keeper

Collingwood College

Merri Creek Primary School

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

Parks Victoria

Canoe Victoria

Community

**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**

What we did

Conducted Frog Census and frog pond workshops at the conference.

Supported the Yarra River Keeper, Merri Creek Primary School and Collingwood College (for a second year) to participate in the River Detectives program, with the loan of a water quality kit and training to enable them to take students to test water quality in the Yarra River and Merri Creek.

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.

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 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 or call 131 722.