



Waterways Local Update 2017-18

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



REVEGETATED
AND CONTROLLED WEEDS
ALONG TARAGO RIVER



\$393,567
IN COMMUNITY
FUNDING



IMPROVED
SUSTAINABLE STORMWATER
MANAGEMENT

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:

- Tarago River
- Bunyip River
- Lang Lang River
- Musk Creek
- Labertouche Creek
- Minnieburn 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

3.7 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.

5.7 km **Weed control**

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

2 m³ **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.

Revegetated and controlled weeds along Tarago River

Controlling weeds (including willows) and planting native trees, shrubs and grasses along the Tarago River improves habitat for birds, platypus and fish, prevents erosion and improves water quality in our waterways.

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 engage a facilitator to assist the Integrated Water Management working group to identify opportunities and strategic objectives for integrated water management in the shire

Improved understanding across the region in best practice stormwater management improves waterway health.

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.



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 \$4200 to projects in your area.

Find out more at 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 three environmental water releases from Tarago Reservoir, along the Tarago and Bunyip Rivers

Why

This helps to support habitat for native plants and animals, including the Australian Grayling.

Worked with Victorian Environmental Water Holder to update the Tarago and Bunyip Rivers Environmental Flow study, and provided a copy to Bunyip and Tarago Environmental Advisory Group

Updating the study with the current science and working with stakeholders helps to improve river flows.

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 seven 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.

Annual platypus surveys in upper Tarago River

Improved knowledge of platypus population health and distribution allows us to nurture this important species.



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 providing advice to assist future development.

What we have done

Why

23 referrals for land subdivisions reviewed

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

48 development applications reviewed

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

24 flood information requests reviewed

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

2 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.

1 stormwater connection application 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

Why

Prepared for a planning amendment

Reviewed flood modelling for the shire in preparation for a planning amendment.

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.



Five 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	Grant	For
\$179,763	Stream Frontage Management	Private land owners and managers for works that protect or enhance riverbanks, such as weed control, fencing and planting native trees.
\$9,686	Corridors of Green	Councils and public land managers for projects such as weed control, fencing and creating management plans.
\$204,118	Rural Land Program	Landholders in specific catchments for projects that reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients entering waterways from agricultural land.

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

Who we worked with

Labertouche Landcare

Tarago Robin Hood Reserve

Agriculture Victoria

Westernport Catchment Landcare Network

What we did

Provided support to monitor water quality through our Waterwatch program.

Supported Agriculture Victoria to facilitate a nutrient management workshop for grazing properties land holders.



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**.