



# Waterways Local Update 2017-18

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



**1115.3 M<sup>3</sup>**  
SEDIMENT, SILT, LITTER  
AND DEBRIS REMOVED



**MONITORING**  
WATER QUALITY  
IN WATERWAYS



**IMPROVING**  
HABITAT FOR PLATYPUS,  
BIRDS AND ANIMALS

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:

- Werribee River
- Little River
- Laverton Creek
- Lollypop Creek
- Skeleton Creek
- Kororoit 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

**3.1 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.

**66.1 km** Weed control

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

**1115.3 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.

Carried out works to control weeds e.g. blackberry, and plant native grasses, shrubs and trees along Werribee River

The work aims to provide habitat for platypus, birds and animals, prevent erosion, and improve vegetation and water quality in our waterways.

Carried out works to control weeds e.g. boxthorn, and plant native grasses, shrubs and trees along Skeleton Creek

The work aims to provide habitat for birds and animals, prevent erosion, and improve vegetation and 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 investigate conditions in Little River, and develop a strategy to reduce local flooding and the impacts of greywater discharge

This work will help protect and enhance Little River and bay health, reduce flood risk and provide greater understanding of the performance and capacity of the existing roadside stormwater network.

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 \$5,000 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 flows to the Werribee River and its tributaries**

**Worked with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Western Water and Southern Rural Water on environmental outcomes for the Werribee River**

**Worked with Council and Zoos Victoria to map and investigate wetlands in lower Werribee**

### Why

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.

Advocating for environmental outcomes for the river and its tributaries in Integrated Water Management forums improves the health of waterways.

Mapping and investigating wetlands provides understanding on environmental water requirements to develop future options and ensure healthy 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 four 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.

#### Weekly monitoring at one site to better understand recreational health risks during the summer period

We use this data to identify any pollution sources and provide information to the community.

#### Fortnightly blue-green algae monitoring at three sites in your area during the summer period

We monitor for blue-green algae because it can be a health risk to people and animals. If blue-green algae is detected, we follow state government guidance, erect warning signs, inform the public and continue to monitor the water until it clears.

#### Annual platypus surveys in the middle Werribee River

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

#### Monitored sediment along the Werribee River, Werribee River estuary and Little River estuary

Monitoring sediment improves our knowledge of contaminants and helps 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

**141** referrals for land subdivisions reviewed

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

**57** development applications reviewed

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

**183** flood information requests reviewed

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

**8** 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.

**20** 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

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.



19 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

**\$3,102**

**Stream  
Frontage  
Management**

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

**\$64,027**

**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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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**.

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

## Who we worked with

## What we did

Werribee River Association

Pinkerton Landcare

College Road Kindergarten

Friends of Skeleton Creek

City of Wyndham

Conducted citizen science sessions on platypus and to educate about platypus.

Conducted a Frog Census family workshop and a Frog Census information night.

Werribee River Association

Provided support to the monitor water quality through our Waterwatch program.

Wyndham Central College

Carranballac College

Supported teachers to participate in the River Detectives program (Carranballac College for the second year) with the loan of a water quality kit and training, to enable them to take students to test water quality in the Werribee River and Point Cook wetlands. Also supported students to present at the Kids teaching Kids Conference.

City of Wyndham

Supported the Wyndham Youth Summit with a citizen science presentation to students.

City of Wyndham

City West Water

VicRoads

Community

Williams Landing Residents Group

Greening the West

Boon Wurrung Foundation

Bunurong Land Council

Wurundjeri Tribe Council

DELWP

Netflow

Continued to progress *Greening the Pipeline* to transform the 27km Main Outfall Sewer reserve into a park, with stakeholder consultation informing the master planning of a 4km section in Williams Landing, Truganina and Laverton North, the construction of a trial community garden and collaboration on major road infrastructure projects to ensure benefits of *Greening the Pipeline* are incorporated into projects.

City of Wyndham

Reviewed the Wyndham City Council Flood Management Plan.

Victoria State Emergency Service



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.