



# Waterways Local Update 2018-19

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



**RELEASED WATER**  
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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.



**EXTENSIVE**  
COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT

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.



**79**  
REFERRALS FOR LAND  
SUBDIVISIONS REVIEWED

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

- Yarra River
- Koonung Creek
- Back Creek
- Glass Creek
- Gardiners 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

**16 sites** Grass cutting

We cut grass along waterways and pipe tracks to manage flood and fire risks, protect assets and maintain areas for community use. The grass cutting program assists in managing stormwater quality and quantity, and maintaining healthy waterways.

**3 sites** Weed control

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

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

Silt, sediment, litter and debris removal improves drainage and flood protection and reduces 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 and stormwater 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

**Provided funding to complete the design and documentation required to tender and construct a system for stormwater harvesting and raingarden in Macleay Park**

This will help Council refine the stormwater harvesting system to improve the health of waterways and Port Phillip Bay, reduce flooding, stormwater pollution and water consumption, and provide education on stormwater harvesting and water saving initiatives.



The Clearwater program supports Council and water-sector organisations with sustainable water management and development. It offers knowledge-sharing, skills-development and network-building through a range of public and specialist training, guided tours and networking events. Find out more at [www.clearwatervic.com.au](http://www.clearwatervic.com.au) or call 131 722.



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 \$47,500 to projects in your area. Find out more at [melbournewater.com.au/livingrivers](http://melbournewater.com.au/livingrivers)

## Environmental water

We work with government agencies, councils, water authorities, landowners and the community to ensure that water that has been set aside for the environment is provided to rivers and wetlands, to keep environments healthy for plants and animals.

### What we have done

**Worked with the Victorian Environmental Water Holder to release water from upstream reservoirs (Upper Yarra and Maroondah reservoirs) to mimic flows that would naturally be there before it was dammed**

**Worked with Council, Wurundjeri Land Council, the Victorian Environmental Water Holder and the Friends of Burke Road Billabong to ensure long term solutions for healthy billabongs**

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

### Why

Releasing this water for the environment helps improve water quality and provides habitat for native wildlife.

Released water into Burke Road and Willsmere billabongs to support the environment.

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

### Why

**Developed a Monitoring Evaluations, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) framework for the Healthy Waterways Strategy**

The framework outlines plans for monitoring key values and the environmental conditions that support them, as well as how we report on progress against objectives so we can evaluate in the middle and end of the strategy.

**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)

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.

## Planning for future development

As Melbourne grows to support our increasing population, we work with developers, councils, agencies and communities to ensure that new developments do not increase flooding risks or damage the environment.

### What we have done

### Why

**79** referrals for land subdivisions reviewed

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

**104** development applications reviewed

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

**270** flood information requests reviewed

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

**7** 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.

**4** 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

### 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.

#### Working towards a planning scheme amendment to help reduce flooding to properties

Reviewing flood information is important in ensuring it supports planning applications and development.

#### Undertook a flood mitigation study on the Hawthorn main drain in collaboration with Council

The study considers innovative opportunities for reducing flooding after previous studies have been unsuccessful in producing modelling outcomes.



Six 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

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

**\$982**

**Stream Frontage Management**

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

**\$23,180**

**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.

**\$29,921**

**Corridors of Green**

Councils and public land managers for projects such as weed control, fencing and creating management plans.



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/community-and-education/use-our-land/land-community-projects](http://melbournewater.com.au/community-and-education/use-our-land/land-community-projects) 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

### Community

### Environment groups

### Interest groups

### Traditional Owners

### Council

Worked with more than 220 organisations across greater Melbourne to co-design the new Healthy Waterways Strategy, which provides the framework for protecting and enhancing the waterways of our region. The strategy prioritises improvements to waterway condition, recreation, community connection and amenity, including provision for 1888 kilometres of new vegetation canopy and improving access to 179 kilometres of waterways.

### Frogs Victoria

Presented on the Frog Census program.

### Friends of Wilson Reserve

Undertook the Yarra Frog Census with the community to monitor frogs at Willsmere Billabong, Burke Rd Billabong and Wilson Reserve.

### Warringal Parklands Association

### Council

### Swinburne University

Collaborated with Digital Media Design students to develop three digital frog experiences.

### Council

Collaborated with Council to run a tour for the state Waterwatch team on frogs and environmental water at the Willsmere Billabong.



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.