



Waterways Local Update 2018-19

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



11 VOLUNTEERS
PROVIDED RAINFALL DATA



\$346,239
IN COMMUNITY
FUNDING



IMPROVING
INTEGRATED WATER
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:

- Monument Creek
- Riddells Creek
- Jacksons Creek
- Emu Creek
- Toolern Creek
- Deep 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

7 sites

Weed control

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

1 m³

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 investigate and report on opportunities for integrated water management and water sensitive urban design within the Shire

The report will guide future projects and provide recommendations for planning to support current policies and guidelines, such as the Healthy Waterways Strategy and Victorian Environmental Legislation.



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 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 \$20,000 to projects in your area.

Find out more at 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 Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, and Southern Rural Water on environmental outcomes for waterways in Integrated Water Management forums

Why

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

Worked with a range of stakeholders and partners to monitor groundwater and surface water levels in Deep Creek and Jacksons Creek

Monitoring helps understand the role that groundwater plays in drought refuge areas and informs us on enhancing and managing groundwater dependent ecosystems.

Worked with land holders through the Mitigating Catchment Impacts Program to develop whole-farm water plans

Working with land holders to identify opportunities and access grants helps implement water savings, and improves water for the environment by improving low flows within streams.

Monitoring and research

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

What we have done

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

Why

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 three 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.



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

30 referrals for land subdivisions reviewed

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

26 development applications reviewed

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

29 flood information requests reviewed

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

1 application 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.

5 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

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.



11 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

\$259,896

**Stream
Frontage
Management**

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

\$22,910

**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.

\$43,433

**Rural Land
Program**

Landholders in specific catchments for projects that reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients entering waterways from agricultural land.



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 or call 131 722.

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

Who we worked with

Community

Environment groups

Interest groups

Traditional Owners

Council

Deep Creek Landcare

Stanley Park Management Committee

Newham Primary School

Greening of Riddell

Newham and District Landcare

Deep Creek Landcare

What we did

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.

Provided support for monitoring water quality and the Waterbug Census through our Waterwatch programs, and delivered Waterbug Census training on Garden Hut Creek as part of the National Waterbug Blitz.

Worked together on emergency watering to protect the Yarra Pygmy Perch population and habitat.



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.