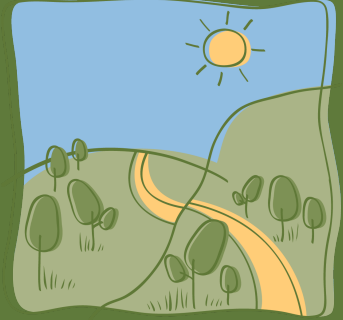


G R O W



W E S T



2024-25 SNAPSHOT

Established in 2003, Grow West is one of Victoria's most ambitious programs of landscape restoration. With a vision to rejuvenate 10,000 hectares across the Upper and Middle Werribee Catchment, west of Melbourne, the program is transforming degraded land through sustainable land management practices such as revegetation and the protection and enhancement of remnant vegetation.

In 2024-2025, Grow West ran a very successful community planting day at Telford Park, Bacchus Marsh; worked with landholders to protect and enhance grassland on their properties; started works to rehabilitate a degraded Grey Box woodland in Eynesbury; and facilitated round table collaborations with a wide range of partners.

The success of the program is due to the strong collaboration between the community and Grow West partners. The Committee currently includes Melbourne Water, Moorabool Shire Council, Southern Rural Water, Greater Western Water, Parks Victoria, Moorabool Landcare Network and community members.

Melbourne Water hosts Grow West on behalf of these partner organisations.



2024-2025 Grow West achievements



3 hectares
revegetated

65 ha being
rehabilitated



4,000 seedlings
planted



Partner
contributions of
\$45,000 to support
the coordination of
Grow West.



15
organisations
and groups
involved



7 landholders
engaged



152
volunteers.

Stewardship of grasslands

The Victorian Volcanic Plains (VVP) once stretched across vast areas of south-western Victoria, forming one of the most extensive temperate grassland ecosystems in Australia. Today, less than 2% of this critically endangered ecosystem remains. This ecosystem represents a biodiversity hotspot as it is home to over 1,000 native plant species and vital habitat for pollinators, reptiles, birds, and insects. It is a threatened species refuge, supporting unique and endangered species like the Plains-wanderer and the Fat-tailed Dunnart.

This ecosystem faces ongoing threats from invasive species, soil disturbance, land clearing, fragmentation, and isolation of remaining patches. To combat these challenges, Melbourne Water is collaborating with private landholders in a grassland stewardship project aimed at safeguarding this invaluable ecosystem. Five properties have joined the initiative, actively controlling pest plants and animals, to enhance and protect the grasslands.



This project is funded by the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust and delivered by Melbourne Water, a member of the Regional Delivery Partners panel.

Grow West roundtable

The Grow West round table is an opportunity for organisations and community members to come together to share and learn about projects occurring in the Grow West landscape.

Held twice a year, it provides a great opportunity to collaborate, plan, and work towards better outcomes for this region. It's always exciting to see proposed projects transition to an active stage and it presents a great opportunity to explore 'blue sky' projects.



We have a wide range of attendees representing Friends groups, community groups, council, water authorities and Parks Victoria.

Rehabilitating a degraded Grey Box woodland



This project in Eynesbury aims to rehabilitate a patch of degraded remnant Grey Box Woodland - an ecosystem that is now rare, making protecting and improving what remains vital. This site is especially significant because it connects key habitats across the landscape: a larger Grey Box woodland to the north, Coolibah Creek to the east, and the Werribee River to the south.

Projects like this thrive through collaboration with other organisations and the community. Because of this we're working closely with Traditional Owners and the Eynesbury Environment Group to develop a shared vision and create a pathway for positive outcomes at this site. Works have already commenced and will include pest plant and animal control to encourage natural recruitment of the remnant vegetation. We will also conduct some revegetation through community planting days,

This project is part of Melbourne Water's Our Catchments, Our Communities Vital Landscapes project supported by the Victorian Government.

Community Planting Day

This year's planting day was run in partnership with Moorabool Shire Council at Telford Park, Darley. 152 volunteers helped to plant 4,200 seedlings. The focus was undertaking in-fill planting and providing good mid story habitat for birds and insects. This planting day will provide necessary habitat linkages in the landscape, with the Lerderderg River and other patches of vegetation nearby.



Looking ahead

The focus for the coming year will be:

- A revegetation project along the Korjamnunnip Creek, Ballan. This is an important site in the landscape, as this creek runs into the Werribee River and contributes to connectivity through the landscape. The iconic platypus is one of many animals that is known to frequent this site.
- Continuing to support landholders to maintain Natural Temperate Grassland of the Victorian Volcanic Plains and seeking new landholders to join the program.
- Continuing to rehabilitate the section of degraded woodland in Eynesbury, working with Traditional Owners and the Eynesbury Environment Group.



Photo credits: Melbourne Water, unless otherwise stated.

For more information on Grow West:

Lindy MacRaild

Grow West Program Coordinator

Email: servicepartnerships@melbournewater.com.au

www.growwest.com.au

