



Waterways Local Update 2016-17

Melbourne Water's work to improve waterways and provide flood protection in the **Shire of Baw Baw**.



PLATYPUS
SURVEYS IN UPPER
TARAGO RIVER



\$386,119
IN COMMUNITY
FUNDING



21.7km
WEED CONTROL
ALONG WATERWAYS

Melbourne Water makes a vital contribution to the famous Melbourne lifestyle by underpinning human health, enhancing community well-being, supporting economic growth and balancing the natural and man-made environment.

Together with our partners, we look after 8,400 km of rivers and creeks, 428 wetland treatment systems and more than 1,400 km of regional drainage systems in the Port Phillip and Westernport region. This work is funded by the Waterways and Drainage Charge, which is paid by property owners and collected by retail water companies on our behalf.

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

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

4.8 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.

21.7 km Weed control

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

Surveyed weeds and rare or threatened vegetation along the Tarago River to develop an inventory

These investigations reveal areas that may need to be addressed as future works to improve vegetation quality along tributaries of the Tarago River in the Latrobe State Forest.

Worked with landowners along the Tarago River in Drouin West

This work involved removing woody weeds, revegetating and improving fencing to enhance the health of the Tarago River.

Stormwater

We work closely with Council and local communities to better manage stormwater to protect the environment, provide alternative water sources and improve the stormwater that flows into local waterways.

What we have done

Why

Living Rivers co-funded the feasibility and concept designs of water sensitive urban design and drainage improvement in central Longwarry

These works help improve environmental water quality and amenity, and reduce flood risk.

Through the Clearwater program, we supported Council to take a whole-of-water 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.



Through our Living Rivers program, we worked with Council and contributed \$14,500 to projects that assist waterway health and create sustainable stormwater management solutions in your area.

Find out more at melbournewater.com.au/livingrivers

Environmental water

We work with government agencies, councils, industries, landowners and the community to provide the allocated water needed in rivers to maintain healthy natural ecosystems.

What we have done

Why

Worked with landholders to complete whole-farm water plans and implement recommendations

Implementing water plans across farms will improve streamflow from rural properties.

Worked with the Victorian Environmental Water Holder to deliver three environmental water releases from Tarago Reservoir, along the Tarago and Bunyip Rivers

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

Worked with Bunyip and Tarago Environmental Advisory Group (includes Council, Landcare, landowners and others) to develop the Bunyip and Tarago Environmental Water Management Plan

This 10-year plan outlines the management of environmental water in the catchment by looking at values and threats, and seeking opportunities.

Worked with Victorian Environmental Water Holder to develop an animation of the Australian Grayling

The animation helps to create awareness of the Australian Grayling when environmental flows are released.

Undertook a fish survey of the Bunyip and Tarago Rivers with landowners

The survey helps to inform future management of the waterways.

Monitoring and research

We regularly undertake extensive monitoring, investigations and research to help us better understand how we can improve local waterways.

What we have done

Why

Undertook monthly monitoring of water quality at nine 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.

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 plan for future development to ensure growing communities do not threaten local waterways. We provide advice and assist new developments to ensure they do not increase flood risk.

What we have done

Why

40

referrals for land subdivisions reviewed

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

51

development applications reviewed

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

12

flood information requests reviewed

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

13

applications for works near Melbourne Water assets and works such as bridges, shared pathways and jetties reviewed

To ensure waterways, and the plants and animals that live there, are protected from the potential impacts of building works.

6

stormwater connection applications reviewed

To 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 aim to 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

Worked with stakeholders to review plans and hydraulic reports to create a grade separated freeway interchange - Sand Rd Interchange

Ensure proposed works will not impact the floodplain, path of over-land flow, assets and waterways, and that the project is feasible, safe and possible for community use.

Undertook drainage investigations in the Koo Wee Rup and Longwarry Flood Protection District

Helps to guide flood improvement works and provide protection from floods.

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.



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

Working with the community

The involvement of community groups, volunteers, land managers and farmers supports our management of local waterways and regional drainage systems. If you'd like more information about funding opportunities, please call 131 722 or email river.health@melbournewater.com.au

Funding provided	Grant	For
\$32,863	Stream Frontage Management	Private land owners and managers for works that protect or enhance riverbanks, such as weed control, fencing and planting native trees.
\$1,540	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.
\$337,216	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

Neerim and District Landcare Group

GippsDairy

Westernport Catchment Landcare

Department of Economic Development,
Jobs, Transport and Resources

What we did

Provided support through our water quality monitoring program.

Delivered a talk at the group's annual general meeting.

Supported around 30 dairy and beef farms through two nutrient management programs.



Our Space Your Space is an app that helps you find land managed by Melbourne Water that you can use for community projects, 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.



Waterwatch is a citizen science program that encourages communities to monitor platypus, frogs, waterbugs and water quality in their local river or creeks. We empower our volunteers to collect data, protect the waterways environment and share their knowledge.

Find out more at melbournewater.com.au/waterwatch or call 131 722.

