

# Melbourne Water's services and works in your local area

Melbourne Water has seven key service areas for the management of waterways, drainage and floodplains. The following outlines our long-term aims with local examples of works in the Moorabool Shire.

*Over the next five years, Melbourne Water will undertake works to improve our rivers and creeks, which includes over 1,000 kms of revegetation and over 2,000 kms of weed control along our waterways*



## 1. Managing waterways

***Melbourne Water works in partnership with landholders, Government agencies, industry and the wider community to protect and improve rivers, creeks, estuaries and floodplains in the Port Phillip and Westernport region.***

### **Past and Current projects:**

- Willow removal is being done in the Werribee Gorge State Park in partnership with Parks Victoria and Friends of Werribee Gorge.
- Woody weed removal and revegetation has been undertaken on a number of properties downstream of the Werribee Gorge State Park with the Pentland Hills Landcare Group.
- Willow, woody weed removal and revegetation has been undertaken along the cemetery frontage of the Werribee River in Ballan, to build on works by council in Caledonian Park.
- Willow and woody weed removal along Werribee River in Ballan has been carried out upstream of the Ballan Golf Course. This was undertaken with three *Stream Frontage Management Program* participants.

### **River Health Incentives Programs**

River Health Incentives Programs provide grants to the community, council and private landowners for river health improvement works.

- There have been 51 grants totalling approximately \$210,000 to private landowners under the *Stream Frontage Management Program*. Through these grants over 23,600 trees have been planted and 14.45 kilometres of fencing erected to protect waterways in the area.
- Almost \$53,000 has been provided in 8 grants to the council for *Corridors of Green* projects and community groups under the *Community Grants* program.

*The Port Phillip and Westernport Region covers 12,800 square kilometres with over 8,000 kms of rivers and creeks*



### **Future Projects**

A range of waterway works, mainly focused around weed control, bank stabilisation and revegetation have been scoped and are programmed to be delivered or commence in 2008/09. Some examples include;

- Weed control and revegetation will be instigated along Yaloak Creek to complement *Stream Frontage Management Program* works in the Rowsley Valley.
- Weed control and revegetation will be completed along the headwaters of the Werribee River north of Ballan to complement existing *Stream Frontage Management Program* projects undertaken by adjacent landowners.
- Weed control and revegetation will be completed along the Werribee River south of Ballan to compliment existing *Stream Frontage Management Program* project works undertaken by the adjacent landowners.
- Weed control and revegetation will be completed along the Werribee River on the Moorabool Shire Council Reserve near Hogans Road in the township of Ballan.
- Weed control and revegetation will be carried out along the Lerderderg River on the Moorabool Shire Council Reserve adjacent to the Bacchus Marsh Golf Course in the township of Bacchus Marsh.
- Large Scale willow removal and revegetation will be carried out along a section of the Lerderderg River downstream of the Western Freeway near Bacchus Marsh. This project will assist landholders on Melbourne Water's *Stream Frontage Management Program*. It is envisaged that further willow control will be undertaken through a staged approach over coming years.
- Weed control and revegetation will be undertaken along the Lerderderg River at the Avenue of Honour to compliment previous works undertaken by Moorabool Shire Council and the Coimadai Landcare group, in the township of Bacchus Marsh.
- Weed control and revegetation will be completed along the Werribee River to compliment previous works undertaken by the council on the Moorabool Shire Council Reserve at Grant Street in the township of Bacchus Marsh.
- Weed control and revegetation will be completed at two sites along the Myrniong Creek within the W. James Whyte Island Reserve, which is adjacent to the Werribee Gorge State Park.
- Weed control and revegetation will be completed along Korkuperrimul Creek at Moorabool Shire Council's Bald Hill Reserve, in the township of Bacchus Marsh.

*Waterways and floodplains in the Port Phillip and Westernport region support 1,800 species of native plants and 600 species of native animals*



## **2. Managing environmental flows**

***Melbourne Water aims to ensure waterways are managed to provide sufficient environmental flows to support river health and protect beneficial uses.***

- An Environmental Flow Study was completed on the Werribee River in 2006. The Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy allocated an additional 6,000ML/year to the environment; however this will only go part way to alleviating the flow stress within this catchment. The majority of water to be re-allocated to the environment is from long-term infrastructure upgrades, such as piping the Werribee Irrigation District.
- During the current drought, Melbourne Water is also working with community Waterwatch groups in order to monitor the critical habitat regions within the catchment for drought impacts.

## **3. Managing Water Quality**

***Melbourne Water works to improve the quality of stormwater and catchment runoff entering rivers, creeks and bays.***

- Melbourne Water has completed its *Waterways Water Quality Strategy* that outlines the priorities, approaches, and investments Melbourne Water will take to improve water quality for the Port Phillip and Westernport region. The strategy will also inform the *Better Bays and Waterways Water Quality Improvement Plan* for the Port Phillip and Westernport region, which is due in late 2008. This is a joint project with EPA Victoria and the Federal Department of Environment and Heritage aimed at creating an integrated water quality plan for Western Port, Port Phillip Bay, and the rivers and estuaries within the catchment.
- An outcome of this strategy is the development of our Rural Land Management Program in which we have \$5 million to develop and implement a rural water quality program across our extended boundaries in the Port Phillip and Western Port Region.
- The rural water quality program will include the construction of regional water quality wetlands to capture and treat water pollutants and manage flows. These wetlands filter water prior to it ending up in our rivers and creeks, and eventually the Bays.
- The rural water quality program will also work with other government agencies, rural industries and land holders to help prevent rural water pollution at source through adoption of agricultural and land best management practices such as pasture, soil, crop and stock management.
- Melbourne Water has undertaken the collection and analysis of rainfall data across our extended operating area to develop Mean Annual Rainfall distribution across the Port Phillip and Westernport region. This rainfall data will be used to investigate potential water quality opportunities across the extended operating area.
- As part of our *Living Rivers Program* we are working with Moorabool Shire Council to design a sediment trap at Lerderberg Road to protect both council drains and local waterways.

## 4. Flood management and drainage

***Melbourne Water maps floodplains and works to reduce the risk of flooding and provides flood warning services for the community.***

- Within Moorabool Shire Council Melbourne Water now has responsibility for part or all of: Cairns Drive Drain, Fiskens Street Drain, Gosling Street Drain, Grey Street Drain, Lerderderg Street Drain, Links Road Outfall Drain, Maddingley Park Drain, Masons Lane Drain and Robertsons Road Drain.
- Structural assessment of these drains has been undertaken using CCTV investigations to assess their condition and works to upgrade or repair these assets has been prioritised.
- Flood Mapping of the Drainage System within the Ballan Area is currently underway. This project commenced in March 2008, and is due to be completed by mid 2009. This information will be used to determine appropriate flood mitigation programs, provide education and awareness and to manage flood risk in the community.
- Flood Mapping of the Maddingley and Fiskens Street Drains in Bacchus Marsh is underway. In addition, mapping through Bacchus Marsh is also being updated using new Lidar survey information and is likely to be completed during late 2008.
- Melbourne Water has assumed management responsibility for the *Werribee Hydrologic Data Collection Network*, which monitors rainfall and flows in waterways in the Werribee catchment. The network has required upgrade and extension works which will provide near real-time water level and flow data that will be used to inform flood response plans developed in conjunction with council.

## 5. Managing Urban Growth

***Melbourne Water aims to ensure urban development is protected from flooding and provides infrastructure in new growth areas to protect water quality and the environment.***

- Development Services Schemes (DSS) are catchment based plans developed to ensure that urban development achieves appropriate standards of flood protection, river health and stormwater quality. Priority catchments have been identified in the Moorabool Shire where DSS will be developed including –
  - the Cairns Drive Drain and the Masons Lane Drain catchments in Bacchus Marsh that drain to the Lerderderg River,
  - three local catchments in west Bacchus Marsh that drain to the Upper Werribee River,
  - three local catchments in Ballan that drain to the Upper Werribee River.

These schemes are currently under investigation and will be implemented in 2008/09.

- Melbourne Water in conjunction with Moorabool Shire Council has prepared drainage survey and floodplain data to be included in the Moorabool Planning Scheme. This information will be shown as overlays on maps in the Scheme, called a Floodway Overlay (FO) or a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO). Inclusion of the LSIO will ensure that drainage issues are addressed at the outset of the development process and that proposals are designed accordingly.
- Melbourne Water is a referral authority in the planning system and receives applications for urban subdivisions and other developments from local councils. This allows Melbourne Water to comment on applications and, if necessary, place conditions on town planning permits. These ensure that urban development achieves appropriate standards of flood protection, river health and stormwater quality.
- Melbourne Water processes more than 24,000 town planning referrals, applications to subdivide land, flood level requests and related items of business each year.

## 6. Monitoring, investigations and research

***Melbourne Water undertakes extensive monitoring, investigations and research to develop a comprehensive base to support our activities and report on progress.***

- Five new long-term water quality sampling sites have been added within Moorabool Shire Council allowing Melbourne Water to gather long-term data and to measure compliance with various standards, identify changes and trends over time, identify pollution sources and continue to inform the community of local water quality measurements.
- Surveys and investigations have been completed on the Werribee River and its major tributaries, including water bugs and sediment surveys, investigations for fish and frogs, general river condition surveys and water quality investigation
- Completion of a helicopter survey of the Werribee River and its major tributaries, primarily to assist in the identification and location of large woody weed species such as willows, with the added benefit of identifying potential fish barriers and major erosion points

## 7. Community and stakeholder engagement and involvement

***Melbourne Water works with the community and other stakeholders in managing our waterways, drainage and floodplains.***

- A new Waterwatch program has been established in Werribee Plains to contribute to the long-term protection, conservation and management of water resources in the region. Supported by Melbourne Water, local councils, the Natural Heritage Trust and the Victorian Government, Waterwatch groups can help to identify pollution sources, determine the major issues facing their local river, creek or wetland, and establish what needs to be done at a local level to help improve its health.
- We have held *Making Connections* events throughout our major catchments to ensure we continue to improve our communication methods and develop stronger more meaningful relationships with our community. Our last *Making Connections* event for the Werribee Catchment was held in 2006. The next proposed *Making Connections* event is to be held in late 2008.

The events provide a forum for building trust and an opportunity to strengthen our working relationships with the community. As a result, the exchange of information and ideas inform and influence Melbourne Water's programs and capital works with regard to waterways, drainage and flooding.

***Melbourne Water monitors rainfall and streamflow data at 180 sites in the Port Phillip and Westernport region and collects daily rainfall observations from 360 volunteer rain gauge operators***

