

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 City of Hume.

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:

- Works on Blind Creek upstream of Riddell Road to complete works carried out by the local friends group and council. The works included willow control, minor erosion works and revegetation.
- Staged willow removal from Jacksons Creek within the Emu Bottom Wetlands Reserve. This will complement revegetation works that the Friends of Emu Bottom Wetlands and council have already completed.
- Weed control along approximately 4 kms of Jacksons Creek through the Holden Flora and Fauna Reserve. Future revegetation works will also be undertaken along this section.
- Weed control and revegetation along Jacksons Creek within the Organ Pipes National Park.
- Willow control, bank stabilisation and revegetation works between Racecourse and Riddell Road on Blind Creek in Sunbury. This project is being carried out in conjunction with local community groups, local schools and the Hume City Council.

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 over \$198,000 to private landowners under the *Stream Frontage Management Program*. Through these grants over 15,000 trees have been planted and 16.2 kms of fencing erected to protect waterways in the area.
- Almost \$110,000 has been provided in 18 grants to the council for *Corridors of Green* projects and community groups under the *Community Grants* program.

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



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 along 1.5kms of Jacksons Creek at Salesian College, Sunbury to compliment works carried out by the college under Melbourne Water's Stream Frontage Management Program.
- Weed control and revegetation along 800m of Jacksons Creek upstream and downstream of the Blind Creek confluence in Sunbury.
- Weed control and revegetation along 900m of Kismet Creek to compliment plantings carried out by Hume City Council under Melbourne Water's Corridors of Green grants program in Sunbury between Elizabeth Drive and Racecourse Road.
- Weed control and revegetation along 900m of Jacksons Creek at the Sunbury Pop Festival Site.
- Weed control and revegetation on crown and private land along 2km of Deep Creek, Bulla, upstream and downstream of Bulla – Sunbury Road.

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 Maribyrnong River in July 2006. The Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy allocated an additional 3,000ML/year to the environment through a number of actions including re-allocations of water within Rosslynne Reservoir, or buy-back of diversion licences. Melbourne Water is working with DSE, Western Water and Southern Rural water to implement these actions over the next seven years.
- In the short term, Melbourne Water is re-negotiating the Maribyrnong River Bulk Entitlement to allow more flexibility in providing environmental flows down Jacksons Creek and the lower Maribyrnong for improved environmental outcomes within current allocations.
- 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.

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.

- Melbourne Water has assumed responsibility for part or all of: Anderson Road Diversion Drain, Brook Street Drain, Francis Boulevard Drain, Heysen Drive Drain, Melbourne-Lancefield Road Drain, Sunningdale Avenue Drain and Sunningdale Avenue Retarding Basin.
- Structural assessment of these drains has been carried out, which included CCTV investigations to determine their condition and whether they require upgrading or repair. A maintenance program has now been developed as a result of these investigations.
- Works to a Gross Pollutant Trap on the Brook Street Main Drain have been undertaken to improve capacity and to avoid flooding downstream properties.
- Melbourne Water will continue to map floodplains to identify the extent of the areas that flood in a 1 in a 100 year storm and the associated flood risk to the community. Based on the level of flood risk identified, Melbourne Water is planning to develop Flood Management Plans in partnership with local councils. The plans will coordinate flood management activities such as flood mapping, mitigation programs, education and awareness to manage risk in the community.
- Preliminary mapping of the 100 year storm event flood extent along approximately 10 kms of Jacksons Creek from Valley View Crescent to Francis Street, in Sunbury.
- A flood Study is currently being undertaken for the Brook St Main Drain (Sunbury Main Drain) and Anderson St Diversion Drain Catchments and is due to be completed at the end of this financial year.

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



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) has been developed to ensure that urban development achieves appropriate standards of flood protection, river health and stormwater quality. Priority catchments have been identified in the City of Hume where DSS will be developed including –
 - Located south of Sunbury, the Harpers Creek catchment is approximately 1110 hectares and is bounded by the Calder Freeway to the east, Mitchell Lane to the north, Jacksons Creek to the west.
 - Located in Sunbury, the Blind and Kismet Creek catchments cover approximately 1300 hectares.

Within Melbourne Water's previous area of responsibility in the City of Hume, six schemes have been identified and are either underway or complete.

- 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.

- Several surveys and investigations of the Maribyrnong River and its major tributaries have been undertaken including:
 - Fish surveys have identified six native fish species inhabiting the region with four exotic fish species also present. Nine species of native frogs have been found to inhabit the Hume region including the national significant Growling Grass frog and the state significant Bibron's toadlet
 - High numbers of platypus have also been encountered during surveys in Jacksons Creek at Bulla and around Sunbury.
 - Investigations of water bugs and sediment surveys, general river condition surveys and water quality investigations have also been completed.
- Seven new long-term water quality sampling sites have been added within the Hume City Council area. These sites are used to measure compliance with various standards, identify changes and trends over time, identify pollution sources and continue to inform the community about the health of local waterways.

7. Community and stakeholder engagement and involvement

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

- Our Waterwatch program will be working in partnership with the council to develop a more strategic approach which focuses on agreed actions and outcomes. In practice, this is likely to include increased access to regional resources, increased monitoring sites and improved education and training services. Within the Hume City Council region, there have been 2508 participants from schools, community groups and events involved in the Port Phillip and Westernport Waterwatch program activities.
- Ongoing *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 most recent *Making Connections* event for the Maribyrnong Catchment was held in Sunbury on April 8th 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

