

# 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 Melton 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, woody weed control and revegetation at the Western Water Recycle Water Plant at Melton for approximately 1.5 kilometres downstream of the Melton Reservoir. This project commenced in 2006 in conjunction with Western Water and the Pinkerton Landcare and Environment Group and the site will have ongoing weed control and vegetation enhancement.
- Woody weed control and revegetation at the future Toolern Creek Regional Park: this project extends approximately 6.5km from Bridge Rd in Melton South down to Exford Road. The works have been scoped in consultation with Council and Parks Victoria and the local landholders on the opposite bank. Weed control started in December 2007 and will be staged over a two year period with revegetation to commence in late autumn and spring 2008.
- Channel reconstruction works have been carried out on a tributary of Kororoit Creek at Plumpton following flood damage in the February 2005 flood event.

*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;

- Woody weed control and revegetation will be completed along approximately 4kms of Toolern Cree from Western Freeway to Bridge Road and from Nixon Street to Tullidge Street.
- Woody weed control and revegetation will be completed along Little Blind Creek from Centenary Ave to Yullie Street.
- These works will complement existing *Stream Frontage Management Program* works undertaken by two adjacent landowners and the Friends of Toolern Creek and Melton Environment Group.
- Weed control and revegetation will be completed along Toolern Creek, upstream of Federation Drive in the township of Melton.

### **River Health Incentives Programs**

- There have been 40 grants totalling approximately \$158,000 to private landowners under the *Stream Frontage Management Program*. Through these grants almost 18,000 trees have been planted and 6.7kms of fencing erected to protect waterways in the area.
- Over \$307,000 has been provided in 25 grants to the council for *Corridors of Green* projects and community groups under the *Community Grants* program.

## 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 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.

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



## 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: Arnolds Creek East Branch, Arnolds Creek West Branch, Cambrian Way Drain, Mowbray Crescent Drain, Rees Road Drain, Tame Street Drain and Victoria Avenue Drain. Structural assessment of drains, 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..
- 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 Shire of Melton and schemes are proposed for:
  - Brookfield Creek – this catchment is approximately 560 hectares draining down to the convergence of the Werribee River and the Melton Reservoir in the suburb of Exford.
  - The Toolern Creek – this catchment is bounded by Cabbage Tree Hill and Flagstaff Hill to the north, Graigs Road at the Werribee River to the south, Kororoit Creek catchment to the east, and Coburns Road and Arnolds Creek catchment to the west.
  - Arnolds Creek – investigations are under way with the size and scope of this scheme to be finalised.
  - The Eyensbury development strategy is also under review – this development is located at the boundary of Melton and Wyndham municipalities on the banks of the Werribee River.
- 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, investigation and research to develop a comprehensive base to support our activities and report on progress.***

- Completion of surveys and investigations on the Werribee River and its major tributaries, including macroinvertebrate and sediment surveys, investigations for fish and frogs and water quality investigations.
- A new long-term water quality sampling site has been added within Melton Shire Council. This will allow us to gather long-term data while also providing the opportunity to measure compliance with various standards, identify changes and trends over time, identify pollution sources and continue to inform the community about local water quality.

## 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*

