



VICTORIAN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES'
ACTIONS & ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT

2018/2019

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WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS
OF THE COUNTRY ON WHICH WE WORK
AND PAY OUR RESPECTS TO THEIR ELDERS
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

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FRONT COVER: BELLARINE HILL, LACHLAN MANLEY

FOREWORD

THE 2018-19 VICTORIAN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES HOW OUR 10 CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES (CMAs) ARE CONTINUING TO MAKE AN IMPACT IN OUR REGIONAL COMMUNITIES.



Partnerships between the CMA and government agencies, Traditional Owner groups and Aboriginal Victorians, land owners and volunteer groups are integral for managing our catchments to benefit our environment, our community, and our economy. Last year there were 1,310 partnerships across Victoria, which saw 2,854 hectares revegetated, 262,981 hectares of weed control and 630,273 hectares of pest animal control. Highlighting the importance of community engagement, CMAs galvanised more than 50,000 volunteers in natural resource management activities, and hosted events attended by over 75,000 participants.

It is encouraging to see the benefits of our integrated catchment management approach, which recognises that land, water and biodiversity are all part of a connected environment that spans from the top of a catchment down to the coast and related marine environments.

Integrated catchment management also responds to what is important to communities. It involves many partners working together collaboratively to plan and deliver outcomes for our catchments.

There have been some great collaborations between CMAs and Traditional Owner groups to incorporate aspirations for Country into planning, work to achieve shared benefits and support the right for self-determination of Aboriginal Victorians.

There are some wonderful examples in this report of all these outcomes, outlined in case studies from across the state.

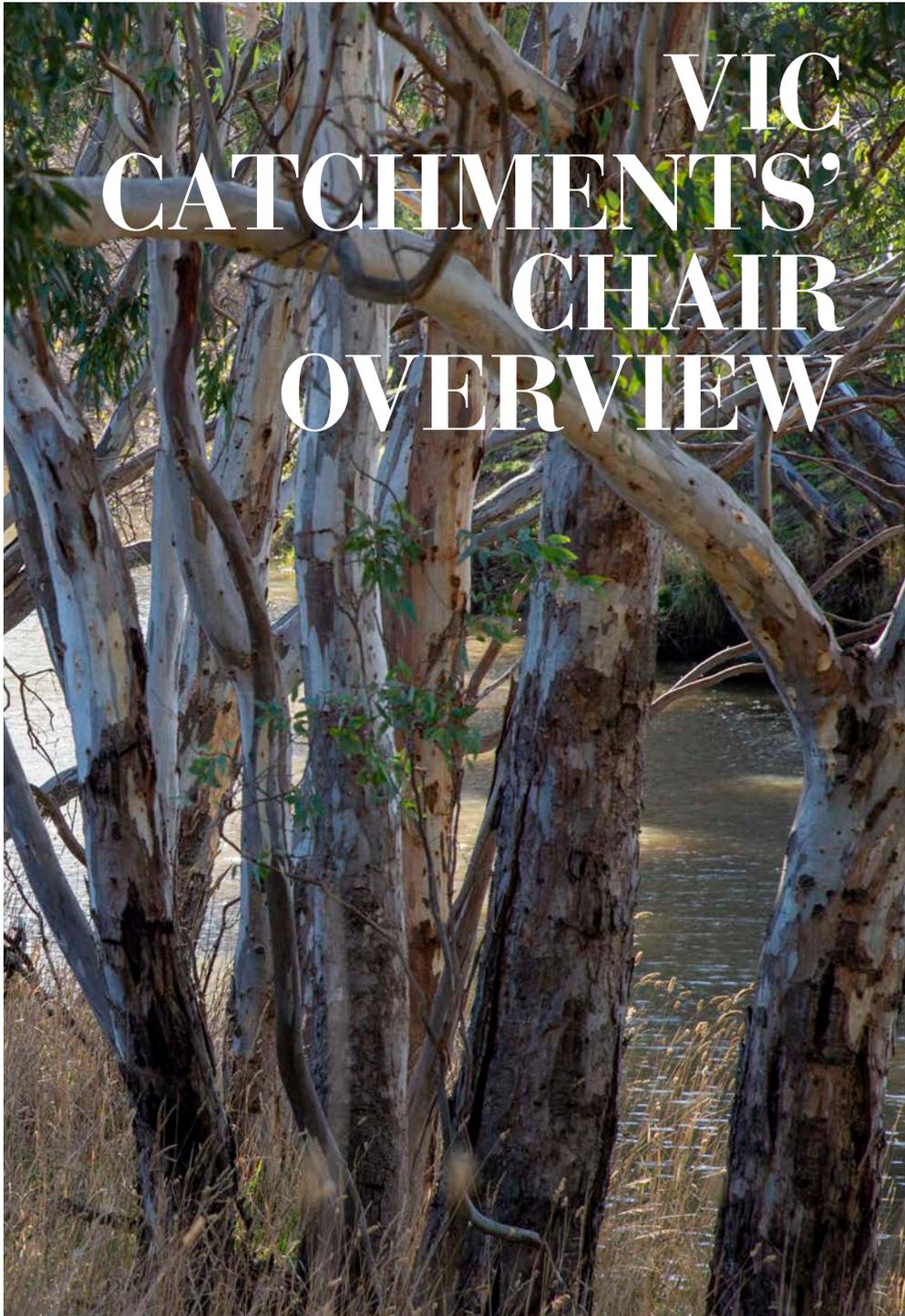
Importantly, the work the CMAs are undertaking across Victoria to realise Victoria's directions for water, biodiversity and climate change, not only meet current environmental needs, but also addresses emerging challenges for the future.

LISA NEVILLE

This latest report details how their incredible achievements, which now span over 22 years, have made a clear difference to the health of the rivers and landscapes that we love and use.

Our CMAs continue to deliver exceptional outcomes for healthy, sustainable and productive land, water and biodiversity. As you will read throughout this report, these results are achieved through activities and programs that are community based, regionally focused and collaborative.

It is pleasing to see the planning, investment, and on-ground activities co-ordinated by CMAs to deliver the Water for Victoria plan, and a record \$222 million investment over four years for healthy waterways and catchments. Showcasing how government and community can build positive partnerships to deliver shared benefits, the Our Catchments, Our Communities program has delivered great outcomes and built wonderful partnerships with local communities on 19 major projects across Victoria. This report also highlights the environmental and community outcomes from progress on the nine CMA-managed Flagship Waterways, the initial projects of 36 identified priority waterways.



VIC CATCHMENTS' CHAIR OVERVIEW



VICTORIA'S 10 CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES (CMAS) ARE PROUD OF ALL THAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED TO DATE THROUGH THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT'S FOUR-YEAR \$222 MILLION WATER FOR VICTORIA INITIATIVE, OUR CATCHMENTS, OUR COMMUNITIES.

With this initiative due to be completed by mid-2020, it is pleasing to see the many fantastic results delivered in each region showcased within the 2018-19 Actions and Achievements report. Importantly, this report highlights what can be achieved through strong collaboration between CMAs, Traditional Owners and communities.

The case studies highlighted in this report illustrate the tangible and lasting outcomes generated by supporting Traditional Owners and communities to protect and improve land, water and biodiversity on private and public land, through funding from State and Federal Governments.

During 2018-19, some of the important work delivered by CMAs in partnership with Traditional Owners and communities included protecting iconic threatened species; planting native trees and shrubs

to provide shelter for stock, attract pollinators, improve soil health and filter run-off into streams and rivers; managing pest plants and animals; coordinating estuary openings and environmental water deliveries; providing flood advice; and hosting field days and events that encourage sustainable practices and build social networks. None of this would have been possible without strong working partnerships.

Genuine Traditional Owner engagement has been critical to the successful delivery of projects that achieve shared benefits. CMAs have a demonstrated ability to collaborate meaningfully with Aboriginal Victorians, with several examples outlined in this report. It's important to note that we don't just talk the talk - 3.5% of our workforce are Indigenous, compared to 0.5% in the broader Victorian public sector.

The resilient partnerships between CMAs, communities and Traditional Owners will continue to be significantly enhanced over the next 18 months as the CMAs work closely with stakeholders to renew the Regional Catchment Strategies. The strategies are the guiding framework for the management of land, water and biodiversity in each region of Victoria. The knowledge, advice and input of Traditional Owners, community and partner agencies will be critical to successfully planning what needs to be done at a regional scale to continue to protect and enhance our environment. Most importantly, as we head towards what looks like a dry 2019-20, it's clear all CMAs will continue to partner with Traditional Owners and communities to build resilience.

SHARYON PEART

CMA REGIONS

VICTORIA'S INTEGRATED CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK IS WORKING TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE OUR RIVERS AND LANDSCAPES WHILE SUPPORTING PRODUCTIVITY FROM OUR LAND AND WATER RESOURCES.

NORTH CENTRAL

The North Central region covers 30,000 square kilometres (13% of the state). It is home to 250,000 people, is valued for its internationally recognised environmental assets and supports a diverse agriculture sector.

MALLEE

The Mallee region covers almost 40,000 square kilometres making it the largest catchment area in Victoria. It runs along the Murray River from Nyah to the South Australian border and south through vast dryland cropping areas and public reserves.

WIMMERA

The Wimmera region covers 30,000 square kilometres straddling the Wimmera River. Agriculture is the dominant land use, economic driver and employment sector. A quarter of the 50,000 people who live in the region depend directly on agriculture for their income.

GLENELG HOPKINS

The Glenelg-Hopkins region covers 26,000 square kilometres and is characterised by flat volcanic plains in the south, with the Grampians, Dundas Tablelands and Central Highlands dominant in the north. With 80% of the region cleared for agriculture, it is one of the most productive farming areas in Australia.

CORANGAMITE

The Corangamite region extends across 13,000 square kilometres of which 78% is in private ownership. The region has rich and diverse landscapes ranging from expansive volcanic plains to coastal environments and the Otway Ranges.

GOULBURN BROKEN

The Goulburn Broken region covers over 24,000 square kilometres of which two thirds is under private ownership. It extends north from the outskirts of Melbourne to the Murray River. It yields 11% of the Murray Darling Basin's water despite making up only 2% of its area.

NORTH EAST

The North East region extends across 19,000 square kilometres between the Murray River in the north, Victorian Alps in the south and the Warby Ranges in the west. The region is home to 100,000 people, provides 38% of the Murray Darling Basin's water and is 55% public land.

EAST GIPPSLAND

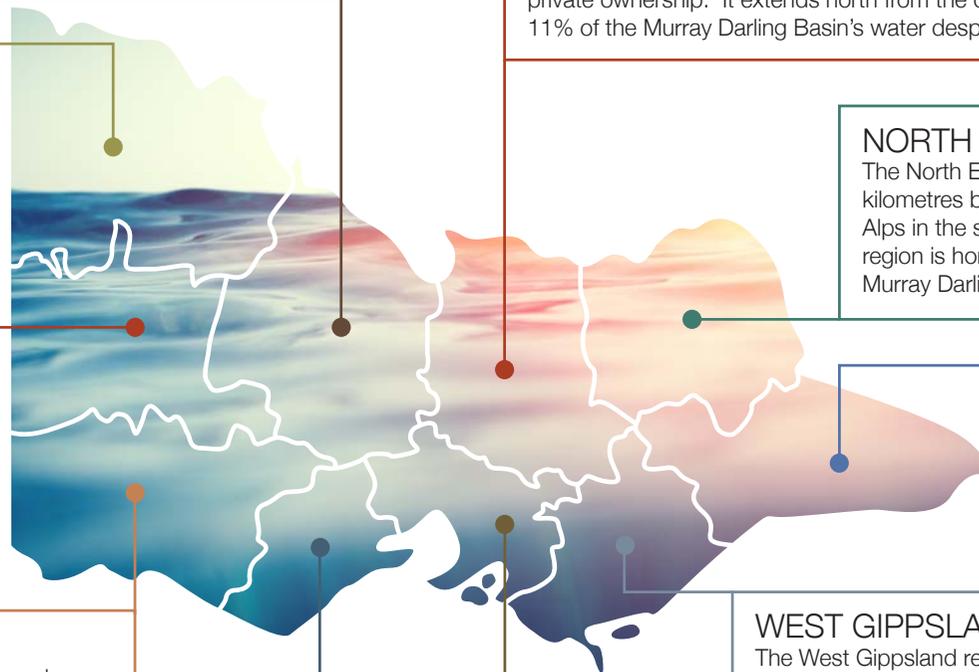
The East Gippsland region covers 22,000 square kilometres and is approximately 80% publicly-owned land mainly as significant State forests, national and coastal parks.

WEST GIPPSLAND

The West Gippsland region covers 18,000 square kilometres from Warragul to the Gippsland Lakes and from the Great Dividing Range to Wilsons Promontory. It provides the majority of Victoria's electricity, 60% of Melbourne's water storage and 20% of Australia's milk production.

PORT PHILLIP & WESTERNPORT

Spanning 13,000 square kilometres that feed into Port Phillip Bay and Western Port, this region has a resident population of over 5 million whilst also boasting some of Victoria's most productive farming lands and spectacular parks that are home to all four State flora and fauna



CMA CHAIRS

EACH CMA HAS A MINISTERIALLY-APPOINTED BOARD OF LOCAL PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR SETTING STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR REGIONAL LAND, BIODIVERSITY AND WATER MANAGEMENT, AND MONITORING AND EVALUATING ITS PERFORMANCE.



CORANGAMITE
ALICE KNIGHT



EAST
GIPPSLAND
DR PETER VENKEER



GLENELG
HOPKINS
ANTONY FORD



GOULBURN
BROKEN
ADRIAN WESTON



MALLEE
SHARYON PEART



NORTH
CENTRAL
JULIE MILLER MARKOFF



NORTH EAST
LEANNE MULCAHY



PORT PHILLIP &
WESTERNPORT
TANIA FOSTER



WEST
GIPPSLAND
PETER JENNINGS



WIMMERA
PETER HILBIG

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES



FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS CMAs HAVE EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY DELIVERED LAND, WATER AND BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT MANY OTHER COMMUNITY PRIORITIES AND GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES TO PROTECT AND IMPROVE OUR LANDSCAPES, LIVELIHOODS AND LIFESTYLES.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Genuine engagement with regional communities is at the heart of all CMA work. Each year, CMAs work actively with over 50,000 landholders and an additional 75,000 people participate in hosted events. CMAs are also engaging through social media and showing how #CMAsGetItDone, with a combined Facebook following of 43,780, Twitter following of 9,786, and a reach of over 700,000 people per month (based on June 2019 figures).

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

CMAs play a critical role in building communities' resilience to cope with drought, fire and flood. Northern and eastern regions have experienced prolonged dry conditions, including areas declared partially or fully in drought. The CMAs are continuing to work with communities to prepare and support them during what is forecast to be a drier than average 2019-20.

PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURE

CMAs support agricultural industries to be productive and profitable. CMAs have partnerships and projects with the dairy, beef, sheep, grains, fruit, vegetable, wine, equine, apiary and other industries improving production and efficiency, boosting farmer profit and supporting the long-term future of agriculture. The regional case studies on page 20 and page 32 showcase many of the benefits of this collaborative effort.

INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION

CMAs provide a model for others to follow, employing 14 Indigenous people (3.5% of our workforce), having direct partnerships with Indigenous organisations and steering funding into Indigenous projects. Successful collaborations feature in the regional case studies on pages 21, 41 and 57.

LANDCARE SUPPORT

The partnerships between Landcare and CMAs are deep and crucial for Victoria. CMAs support the delivery of Landcare grants, networking, training and planning assistance. The case study on page 16 provides further detail.

LEVERAGE & CO-INVESTMENT

CMAs add value to Government investment and bring multiple funding sources together to deliver integrated on-ground works. Each \$1 of Government funding is complemented by more than \$3 of co-investment. In addition, the community contributes over \$5 of in-kind and their own investment for every \$1 of government funding on-ground.

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT

CMAs are significant employers with a total of 401 people (352 FTE) directly employed by these regional organisations (95% based in regional Victoria). Further, the vast majority of CMA revenue goes out to projects involving landholders, contractors and partner organisations, generating significant employment and economic activity.

MANY INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE HEALTH OF OUR RIVERS AND LANDSCAPES. PARTNERSHIPS ARE VITAL TO EFFECTIVELY SUSTAIN OUR ENVIRONMENT, UNDERPIN OUR ECONOMY AND PROVIDE A RANGE OF SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL BENEFITS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES.



PARTNERSHIPS

LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Local communities make a significant contribution to catchment management. Many community members volunteer their time to participate in activities such as planting days, clean up days, Landcare and monitoring programs such as Waterwatch and EstuaryWatch.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND VOLUNTEERS

Significant contribution is made by volunteers and organised community groups including Landcare, conservation management networks, 'Friends of' groups and committees of management.

VICTORIAN AND AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

A range of government agencies and statutory bodies implement strategies, policies and programs for the management of landscapes and resources. They provide investment to deliver and support vital on-ground action.

UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Universities and other institutions undertake research and produce information to improve understanding of natural systems and support adaptive management approaches to enable continued improvement.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES

Agricultural industry groups support extensive networks of land managers through research, development and extension programs. Supporting best practise, agricultural industry are vital for the networks and access to improve natural resources.

TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Aboriginal people have a strong and continuing connection with the land. Traditional Owners have important cultural obligations to manage traditional lands and waterways. Their knowledge, experience and practices are being increasingly incorporated into planning and management of natural resources.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Victoria's 79 local councils are significant contributors to catchment management through the regulation of land use and development, public land management, strategic planning including environmental strategies and urban stormwater plans, and support to landholders and community groups.

LAND OWNERS

CMAs work with land owners and managers to support sustainable management of their land. Thousands of land owners across Victoria make a significant contribution to protecting and improving the health of natural assets, ecosystems and significant places.

WATER CORPORATIONS

Victoria's 19 water corporations lead urban and rural water supply, sewerage disposal and treatment, recycled water and drainage services. They deliver water to entitlement holders including working with the Victorian Environmental Water Holder and CMAs to deliver environmental water.



IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMS

REGIONAL CATCHMENT STRATEGIES

The 10 Regional Catchment Strategies covering Victoria are key documents that integrate State and National policies and strategies with local community knowledge and priorities. They are the regional roadmaps for healthy and sustainable catchments. Looking ahead to 2019-20 each CMA will be commencing work with communities to renew their Strategies.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S REGIONAL LAND PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

The Australian Government will invest \$97.5 million dollars over 5 years into Victoria as part of their Regional Land Partnerships program. The program supports vital on-ground environmental and agricultural projects that offer benefits to our environment, farms and communities.

ABORIGINAL PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

CMAs acknowledge and respect Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities and organisations. We recognise the diversity of their cultures and the deep connections they have with Victoria's lands and waters. The guidelines being implemented by CMAs promotes engagement and work with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to manage, improve the health of our lands and waters.

OUR CATCHMENTS OUR COMMUNITIES

The Our Catchments Our Communities strategy for integrated catchment management in Victoria was launched by Minister for Water Hon. Lisa Neville MP. CMAs are leading implementation of many of its actions including 19 major on-ground projects involving many partners and using \$22 million of Government's Water for Victoria investment to leverage much more from partners and communities.

WATER FOR VICTORIA

The Water for Victoria plan was launched by the Premier Hon. Daniel Andrews MP and Minister for Water Hon. Lisa Neville MP. As Victoria's waterway management authorities, CMAs are delivering great outcomes from this \$222 million-dollar program.

VICTORIA'S ENVIRONMENT - BIODIVERSITY 2037

The Biodiversity 2037 plan was launched by Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP. CMAs are important contributors to its implementation, bringing regional communities and partners into project planning and integrating funding from the Victorian Government with various other investments to achieve optimum and efficient on-ground results.



IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMS

VICTORIAN CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION PLAN

The Climate Change Adaptation Plan was launched by Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP. CMAs are supporting its implementation through region-scale planning.

MARINE & COASTAL PLANNING

CMAs are assisting with the implementation of the new Marine and Coastal Act and preparing for an increased role in strategic planning, advice on coastal erosion risk and monitoring. CMAs also continue to support implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy with various coast enhancement projects in partnership with community groups and others.

MURRAY DARLING BASIN PLAN

CMAs are important contributors to the Basin Plan by implementing Sustainable Diversion Limits projects and on-farm irrigation efficiency works, developing a constraints management strategy for the Goulburn River and engaging northern Victoria communities to better understand the implications and opportunities of the plan.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

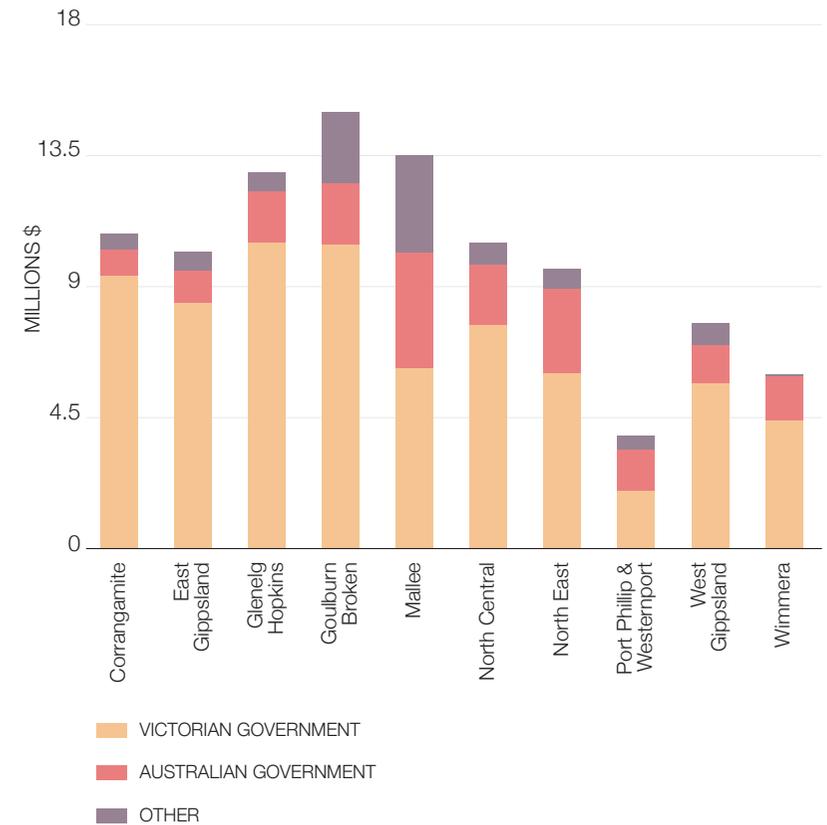
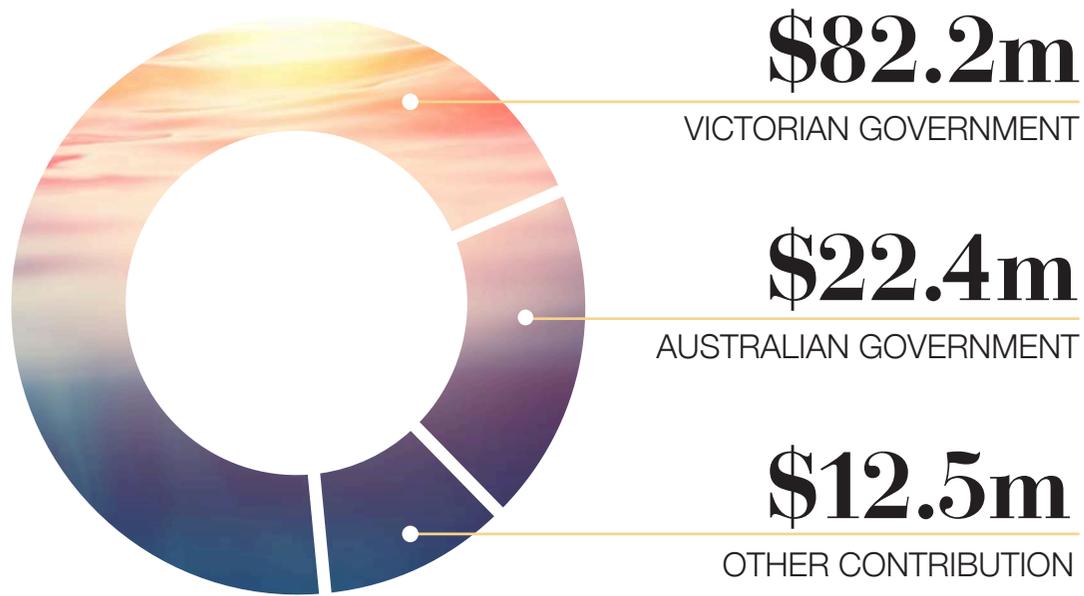
CMAs embrace diversity and inclusion and are model organisations influencing the public sector and the broader community. For example, a majority of CMA Board members and CMA staff are female, and 14 CMA staff are Indigenous. CMAs are now each implementing actions for continued improvement.



INTEGRATED CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

INVESTMENT

DURING 2018/2019 THE FOLLOWING INVESTMENT WAS MADE THROUGH VICTORIA'S 10 CMAs:



OUTPUTS

- CMAAs are at the front-line of natural resource management and side-by-side with regional communities.
- CMAAs convert revenue to action, spending more than 80% of their revenue on direct service delivery.
- CMAAs leverage other funding and in-kind contributions so each \$1 of Victorian Government funding is complemented by almost \$3 of additional support.
- CMAAs get it done in project delivery including:
 - 262,981 hectares of weed control undertaken (188% of the target)
 - 630,273 hectares of pest animal control undertaken (120% of the target)
 - 6,208 hectares with improved agricultural practices (221% of the target)
 - 9,902 approvals and advices issued (154% of the target)
 - 76,859 participants in engagement events (184% of the target)

OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL			
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER	TOTAL
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS					
1.1 Channel (km)	100	119			119
1.2 Water storage (no.)	154	149	11	7	167
1.3 Pump (no.)	9	4			4
1.4 Irrigation structure (ha)	1,211	1,247		73	1,320
1.5 Waterway structure (no.)	520	754	59	27	840
1.6 Terrestrial structure (no.)	10	7	1		8
1.7 Terrestrial feature (no.)	237	361			361
1.8 Monitoring structure (no.)	349	169	159	1	329
1.9 Fence (km)	525	513	96	30	639
1.10 Visitor facility (no.)	100	106			106
1.11 Road (km)	68	64			64
1.12 Crossing (no.)	44	5	2		7
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS					
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	2,409	2,108	739	7	2,854
2.2 Weed control (ha)	140,161	245,726	17,140	115	262,981
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	525,671	413,242	211,031	6,000	630,273
2.4 Over-abundant wildlife control (ha)					0
2.5 Threatened species response (no.)	7	1	18		19
2.6 Emergency species response (no.)					0
2.7 Soil treatment (ha.)					0
2.8 Earth works (no.)	60	47	33	36	243
2.9 Rubbish removal (ha)		242			3,873
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES					
3.1 Grazing (ha)	2,436	3,356	457	60	3,873
3.2 Agricultural practices (ha)	2,805	3,788	2,419		6,208
3.3 Water (no.)	252	302	1		303
3.4 Fire regime (no.)	8	6	3		9
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION					
4.1 Approval and advice (no.)	6,444	9,766	12	124	9,902
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	748	591	187	117	895
4.3 Assessment (no.)	7,296	6,148	2,510	87	8,745
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	41,848	61,722	13,425	1,712	76,859
4.5 Partnership (no.)	1,496	1,125	130	55	1,310
4.6 Plan (no.)	1,001	611	411	61	1,083
4.7 Publication (no.)	1,897	1,651	1,020	188	2,859
4.8 Information management system (no.)	53	52	2	1	55



STATEWIDE CASE STUDIES

THESE CASE STUDIES ILLUSTRATE
COLLABORATION BETWEEN CMAs IN 2018/2019.



ANGLER RIPARIAN PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

“It’s wonderful to see all the work that has been done. At last we can enjoy the river like we used to. Last night we noticed people going down to the river with a kayak and canoe. So many thanks for cleaning the area up.”

Warrnambool resident, talking about the Merri River urban restoration project

The health of Victoria’s waterways has benefited greatly thanks to recreational fishers who are repairing riparian land as part of the Angler Riparian Partnerships Program.

Riparian land is the land that runs along rivers, creek, estuaries, lakes and wetlands. Healthy riparian land is critical for healthy waterways and fish populations by improving water quality, buffering water temperatures, filtering nutrients and sediments from catchment run-off, stabilising river banks, reducing erosion, and providing shade, food and shelter for fish.

The four-year \$1 million Angler Riparian Partnerships Program allows recreational fishers to partner directly with Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs), landholders and local communities and deliver works to improve riparian land along waterways that are important to them - for fish in their favourite fishing streams.

The Angler Riparian Partnerships Program is funded through the \$30 million Regional Riparian Action Plan and is part of the Victorian Government’s \$222 million Water for Victoria initiative to improve the health of waterways and catchments across regional Victoria.

Many projects within the Angler Riparian Partnerships Program have leveraged extra funding, for example, from Victorian Recreational Fishing Licence Fees and other state funded programs. This has enabled additional activities to be completed to rehabilitate instream and riparian habitat, improve angler access and complement water for the environment. These partnerships have resulted in broader and better outcomes for waterways, fish and communities.

- 1** Renae Ayres (Arthur Rylah Institute) at the Curdies River Planting Day. *VR Fish*
- 2** Tarwin River Angler Planting. *WGCMA*
- 3** Members of the Victorian Fly-Fishers’ Association fitting tree guards to new plantings beside the Little River, Goulburn Broken. *Dermot O’Brien*



OUTPUTS 2018/2019

Outputs over the first two years of the program include: 51 Angling and Community groups involved, over 330 people have participated in programs, 17 projects on 14 waterways, 21 km of riparian land improved, 16,000 native trees and shrubs planted, 7 kilometres of fencing, 60 hectares of weed control.

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian Government’s \$1 million Angler Riparian Partnerships Program, from the \$222 million Water for Victoria initiative

VICTORIAN LANDCARE PROGRAM



Victorian
Landcare
Program

“Landcare is not just about the trees – it is about the people.”

Melissa Ainsworth, Merriman Creek Landcare Member



FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS LANDCARE HAS PLAYED A LEAD ROLE IN SHAPING VICTORIA'S APPROACH TO SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, SALINITY MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

1 Paul Speirs, with Minister D'Ambrosio, Dave Bateman (Bass Coast Landcare Network), and Jordan Crugnale, Member for Bass, in the temperate rainforest that regenerated from plantings on Paul's property 28 years ago, at the Minister's launch of the 2019/20 Victorian Landcare Grants at Paul's Archies Creek property, near Wonthaggi.

In partnership with Catchment Management Authorities, Landcare and other environmental volunteer groups and networks receive support through the Victorian Landcare Program to undertake environmental protection and sustainable land management activities. The Victorian Landcare Program includes three main components:

1. The Landcare support program includes five DELWP Victorian Landcare Program staff in Melbourne, and 10 Regional Landcare Coordinators based within Catchment Management Authorities. Together this group form the Victorian Landcare Team, who are responsible for undertaking the coordination, communications, management and strategic activities to support Landcare in Victoria.
2. The Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program (VLFP) funds 78 part-time Landcare facilitators across Victoria, most of whom are employed directly by Landcare networks or groups who are recipients of the VLFP funding.

The VLFP-funded Landcare facilitators' role is to enable the effective participation of Landcare groups and networks, landholders and the wider community in natural resource management activities that protect, enhance and restore our natural environment, and improve agricultural productivity. The Landcare facilitators also have a strong focus on building group and network capacity to enable groups and networks to become self-sustaining.

3. The Victorian Landcare Grants is an annual grants program for Landcare and environmental volunteer groups and networks that care for our landscapes. The grants provide funding for on-ground projects, education and capacity building projects and activities, as well as start-up and support funding for groups and networks. The Victorian Landcare Grants are delivered by the 10 Catchment Management Authorities.

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

600 Landcare Groups, 61,328 volunteers
473,000+ volunteer hours for on-ground works, 1,000+ community events,
837,000 plants established, 65,00ha of weed control, 291km of fencing, 575 on-ground projects delivered.

This output data is derived from Victorian Landcare 2017/18 Achievements Report. Note the 2018/19 output data for the Victorian Landcare Program will be available in February 2020.

FUNDING

The Victorian Government in 2017/18 invested more than \$9 million in Landcare through the Victorian Landcare Program.

REGIONAL ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

THIS SECTION PRESENTS OUTPUTS DELIVERED BY EACH CMA IN 2018/2019, INCLUDING KEY INSIGHTS OR SIGNIFICANT EVENTS FOR THE YEAR. CASE STUDIES FROM EACH REGION PROVIDE A SNAPSHOT OF THESE OUTPUTS, HIGHLIGHTING THE BROAD RANGE OF ACTIONS THAT WERE UNDERTAKEN IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY, AND DEMONSTRATING THE TANGIBLE ON-GROUND IMPACTS OF CMA PROJECTS, PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES.





CORANGAMITE

HOPETOUN FALLS. *LACHLAN MANLEY*

CORANGAMITE

KEY EVENTS AND INSIGHTS

- The Corangamite CMA successfully completed and reported on their four-year project commitments under the Australian Governments National Landcare Program Phase 1. The projects were all independently evaluated early in the 2018-19 financial year. The evaluation found the projects contributed to longer term NRM outcomes and all people engaged across the projects spoke positively of their involvement.
- The Corangamite CMA facilitated the Catchment Partnership Agreement (CPA), which is a partnership between government agencies to strengthen coordination, collaboration and accountability, reduce duplication, and provide clarity on roles and responsibilities. The CPA identifies and works on priority projects that address integrated catchment management priorities across the region.
- The Corangamite CMA contributed technical information on a variety of topics to the Barwon Ministerial Advisory Committee, which was established to provide the Minister for Water Hon. Lisa Neville MP with advice on actions needed to ensure the long-term health of the Barwon River, particularly in the face of high level of development in the Geelong area. This contribution included the management of water infrastructure, environmental water, site tours and community engagement.
- The Great Ocean Road Action Plan is a commitment from the Victorian Government to protect the iconic coasts, parks and scenic landscapes along the Great Ocean Road. The Corangamite CMA has contributed to the development of long-term objectives that reflect a shared vision for the future of the Great Ocean Road region that will form the strategic framework for the region.

OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL			
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER	TOTAL
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS					
1.1 Channel (km)	77	69			69
1.10 Visitor facility (no.)	46	56			56
1.11 Road (km)	26	14			14
1.12 Crossing (no.)	30				0
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS					
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	242	148			148
2.2 Weed control (ha)	673	2,359			2,359
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	325	353			353
2.8 Earth Works (no.)	8				0
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES					
3.1 Grazing (ha)	243	234			234
3.2 Agricultural practices (ha)	1,715	3,788	615		4,403
3.3 Water (no.)	25	27			27
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION					
4.1 Approval and advice (no.)	1,591	1,388		16	1,404
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	72	59	6		65
4.3 Assessment (no.)	662	563	55	4	622
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	6,721	10,398	52		10,450
4.5 Partnership (no.)	665	298		2	300
4.6 Plan (no.)	124	38	15		53
4.7 Publication (no.)	404	45	32		77
4.8 Information management system (no.)	16	8			8



SUSTAINABLE DAIRIES



LOCATIONS

Gellibrand River

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

1,525ha of nutrient management
25 soil assessments
35 engagement events
2 partnerships
25 property plans

PARTNERS

Central Otway Landcare Network
Heytesbury District Landcare Network
Wannon Water
Agriculture Victoria
WestVic Dairy

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy
Corangamite Waterways Strategy

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian Government's Our Catchments, Our Communities initiative

“The program helped me to understand effluence and how it should be managed, especially the amount of water we use and how effluent can be used efficiently and not run-off into waterways.”

-Paul Hodgson

The Sustainable Dairies project engaged dairy farmers to participate in integrated catchment management activities to enable whole of farm management of nutrients for environmental benefits to high value catchments.

Nutrient run-off from dairy farms in the form of fertiliser and dairy effluent are a well-known source of nutrients entering waterways, and is a major challenge for the agricultural sector in south west Victoria.

The dairy industry in the Corangamite region operates in areas of high rainfall, with connection to high value waterways and significant environment areas.

Nutrient sources from dairy farms such as fertilisers rich in nitrogen can cause waterway degradation through effects such as eutrophication. Whilst there has been a strong focus on keeping livestock out of creeks and to a lesser extent effluent management (point source management), a holistic approach to the threatening practices has been lacking.

Dairy farmers in a localised area along the Gellibrand River were initially targeted to participate in the project due to the significance of the river, being a water source for Wannon Water. Landowners attended workshops to learn about integrated catchment management practices, so they could make informed decisions to improve productivity and achieve environmental outcomes. Industry experts from Agriculture Victoria and WestVic Dairy were at the workshops to provide specialist advice.

One-on-one farm visits were conducted by experienced personnel to assess farm nutrient management, waterways and effluent management systems. They worked with the landholders to consider opportunities for enhanced water management by identifying practical and cost-effective mitigation and improvement strategies for the farm; including opportunities for co-investment for works from the project.

One landowner used the funding to contribute to the cost of a new effluent dam on higher land above the Gellibrand River floodplain. The effluent from this dam will be used to improve the nutrients in the surrounding sandy loam soil. Using the new dam means the landowner will reduce the risk of their existing effluent dam overflowing into the river. The new larger dam also means they have greater storage capacity, so they now have more options regarding how and when they use the stored effluent.

In 2019-20 the Sustainable Dairies project will be engaging dairy farmers in the Curdies catchment. So far, there have been 25 properties involved in the project who have all implemented works to improve on-farm nutrient management.

1 Gene Gardiner and Paul Hodgson talking about the project. *CCMA*

2 Gellibrand dairy farmers attend an on-farm workshop. *WestVic Dairy*

3 Dairy cows. *CCMA*



WATER OUTCOMES FOR WADAWURRUNG COUNTRY



LOCATIONS

Moorabool River

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

3 engagement events with 470 participants

PARTNERS

DELWP
Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation
Victorian Environmental Water Holder
Central Highlands Water
Barwon Water

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy
Corangamite Waterways Strategy
The Living Moorabool Program - Flagship Waterway

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian government's \$4.7 million Aboriginal Water Program and \$222 million Water for Victoria initiative.

1 Wadawurrung's Melinda Kennedy, Tammy Gilson and Zade Kennedy pictured with the Buniya Binak (traditional eel trap). *CCMA*

2 Smoking ceremony. *CCMA*

“Wadawurrung people have a deep connection and a long history with the Moorabool River. This additional water is vital for maintaining healthy, thriving populations of culturally significant species.”

Melinda Kennedy

Corangamite CMA have developed a strong partnership with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners to incorporate Aboriginal values into waterway management.

The Moorabool River Environmental Entitlement was established in 2010 to manage flow-dependent ecological values along the river. The outcomes that can be achieved are restricted as the amount of water allocated to the environment in Lal Lal Reservoir is only a quarter of what the river requires for basic ecological function.

2018-19 was shaping up as one of the driest on record in the Moorabool catchment. The Corangamite CMA partnered with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners to develop a bid for additional water for the river through the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH) and local water authorities.

The joint bid, developed with Melinda Kennedy from the Wadawurrung, built on existing environmental knowledge gained from the Moorabool River FLOWS study and work Melinda had done with the Corangamite CMA, on the Upper Barwon, Yarrowee and Leigh FLOWS study update.

The FLOWS work identified cultural values significant to the Wadawurrung on the rivers that flowed through their country. This included species that were traditionally used for meat and pelt such

as the Wad-durring/Peridak (platypus), or plants that were used for weaving such as Toolim (Pale Rush). Deep habitat refuge pools and confluences, that have significance for living spaces, meetings, ceremony and clan boundaries, were also identified.

What became obvious through the FLOWS work was the alignment between environmental values and cultural values, and that the benefits of environmental water delivery could be shared.

The bid for additional water was successful and the Moorabool River received an additional 500 megalitres of water obtained by the VEWH from Central Highlands Water, which was delivered over the summer and autumn period by Barwon Water. This freshened water quality, scoured and deepened refuge pools, and supported a range of species including migration of environmentally threatened and culturally significant fish.

This additional water for the Moorabool River was celebrated through a traditional eel fishing day on the river. Wadawurrung's Tammy Gilson shared her weaving knowledge to weave the traditional Buniya Binak (eel trap). Project partners and the broader Wadawurrung community were in attendance.



https://youtu.be/nv_fGVHBy-k



EAST GIPPSLAND

GUNAIKURNAL LAND AND WATERS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION NRM CREW, EGCM

EAST GIPPSLAND

KEY EVENTS AND INSIGHTS

- Supporting our communities during the drought has been a priority of the Authority. The relationship the Authority has with community members is trusted and respected. Community turn to our people for help and support during these tough times.
- There are currently 40 partner groups and agencies directly involved in the Gippsland Lakes program, delivering on ground works and providing consistent up to date messages to the community. All projects are aligned with the priorities described in the Gippsland Lakes Priorities Plan and the Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan.
- The Authority CEO Chairs the GEA forum and led development of a partnership agreement between GLaWAC and the 13 forum member agencies. The agreement establishes four key objectives about aboriginal workforce development, increased participation in decision making on country, implementation of the Joint Management Plan and increasing cultural knowledge and understanding.
- GEA hosts our Women Leadership Team forum (GEA-WLT). Managed by women in Gippsland, the forum is about developing and fostering leadership at all levels. GEA-WLT hosted an annual regional forum, a mentoring program, jointly convened training across agencies and has involved over 400 women in Gippsland to date.
- 19 community groups have been involved in delivering the waterway health program this year, including Angling Clubs, Landcare Groups, local schools and Friends of Groups. Our community grants programs including Gippsland Lakes Community Grants, Landcare grants, Riparian Action Plan grants and Angler Riparian grants are assisting more groups to get involved in worthwhile projects.
- Recreational values are being incorporated into regional landscape plans for the future. For example community spaces are being incorporated into the Lower Mitchell Rehabilitation plan, one of the priority flagship projects listed in the Water Plan for Victoria.

OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL		
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS				
1.2 Water storage (no.)	5	9		9
1.5 Waterway structure (no.)	27	28		28
1.8 Monitoring structure (no.)	6	6		6
1.9 Fence (km)	29	31	6	37
1.10 Visitor Facility (no.)	3			0
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS				
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	130	116	47	163
2.2 Weed control (ha)	1,744	2,906	106	3,012
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	20,803	14,001	27,817	41,818
2.8 Earth works (no.)	1	1		1
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES				
3.1 Grazing (ha)	68	607		607
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION				
4.1 Approval and advice (no.)	380	252		252
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	24	31	16	47
4.3 Assessment (no.)	452	729	36	765
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	876	1,676		1,676
4.5 Partnership (no.)	113	206		206
4.6 Plan (no.)	31	64	44	108
4.7 Publication (no.)	77	85		85





LOCATIONS

Snowy River, East Gippsland

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

32 partnerships, 72 Landholder Agreements, 3,935 participants engaged in events, 20 assessments, 306 waterway structures installed, 167km fencing, 279ha revegetation, 432ha of weed control

PARTNERS

DELWP, DJPR, ARI, Moogji Aboriginal Council, Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Council, VFA, VEWH, NSW Office of Water, East Gippsland Shire, NSW National Parks, NSW LLS, Victorian Recreational Fishing, Narooma Agriculture, Gippsland Regional, Water Quality Monitoring Partnership, University of Wollongong, Parks Victoria, VicRoads, Marlo Landcare, Jarrahmond Landcare, Orbost Rainforest Centre, Paddle Steamer Curlip Group, Snowy River Alliance, Marlo Angling Club, Orbost Angling Club, landholders, schools, Waterwatch.

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy, Regional Waterway Strategy Snowy River Plan of Works

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian Government's \$222 million Water for Victoria initiative

SNOWY SUCCESS

“The Snowy Rehabilitation Program is a great success. To get to where we are now took consistent effort over many years and commitment from everyone involved, such as government agencies, Aboriginal groups, interest groups and landholders.”

Dr Peter Veenker, Chair of East Gippsland, Catchment Management Authority

Few rivers capture the public imagination like the Snowy River. With help from the Victorian Government, our partners and community the EGCMA have spent the last two decades giving the Snowy the consideration, the resources and the time to aid its rehabilitation.

The Snowy Rehabilitation Program has been underway since 2002 as part of the Snowy river recovery that was committed to by the Victorian, NSW and Commonwealth governments. As part of Victoria's contribution, a commitment to complete rehabilitation works on the Victorian section of the Snowy catchment was also made.

The recovery of the river is now well underway. Riparian zones have improved markedly, grazing stock are largely absent, formal partnerships are held with most landholders on the Snowy and Buchan rivers, willows are fully controlled in the whole Victorian catchment, large wood structures are more common place in the rivers and estuaries, partnerships with Aboriginal people and recreational user groups are well established and Australian Bass are well represented in angler catches.

The EGCMA delivered the program, but the substantial progress made in the condition of the Snowy River has been the result of collaborative efforts between the EGCMA, landholders, community, Government agencies, local businesses and researchers.

The Snowy River is currently in the Recovery and Growth phase, because whilst the riparian corridor is largely restored, fish habitat needs further work in the estuary and the best options for Snowy environmental flows is still being determined.

The current objective for the Snowy River is: 'By 2030, the Snowy River will be in the target achieved phase, requiring maintenance only. The banks of the river will have established native vegetation; and the river will continue to support recreational activities. The river will withstand a moderate flood, with no major changes to its course minimising impacts on agricultural production. Environmental flows will be targeted to improve the condition of the Snowy River.'

It will take many years for the Snowy catchment to recover fully, but it is now time to watch that process and aid recovery through a maintenance approach, rather than a large scale intervention.

1 Moogji Aboriginal Council Works Crew undertaking weed control on the lower Snowy. EGCMA

2 Paddling near Tulloch Ard Gorge. EGCMA

3 Snowy River before and after (1957-2019). EGCMA



FLAGSHIP RIVERS – CANN DO



LOCATIONS

Cann River, East Gippsland

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

7 partnerships, 26 landholder agreements, 120 participants engaged, 49km fencing, 68ha revegetation, 68ha non-woody weed control, 68ha woody weed control

PARTNERS

Far East Victoria Landcare
Cann Valley Landcare Group
Local landholders
DELWP
East Gippsland Shire Council
Parks Victoria
Local contractors

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

East Gippsland
Regional Catchment Strategy
Regional Waterway Strategy
Flagship Waterway

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian Government's \$222 million Water for Victoria initiative

“I can see signs of the river getting back to what it was like when I was a child, which means it will get back to being a very healthy river.”
Daryl Cameron, 3rd generation farmer on the Cann River floodplain

After many years of consistent effort on the flagship waterway, the Cann River, we have progressed to the ‘target achieved’ stage. The local community, such as landholders and Landcare, have worked together for many years to improve the health of the river, local access and amenity.

The Cann River project comprises the Cann River Floodplain, from Noorinbee in the north to below the Princes Highway Bridge near the Cann River Township, a total river length of 34km.

Cann River is a remote rural community with a population of 194 people. They rely on the river for water supply to the town and farms and recreational uses like fishing, birdwatching and swimming.

The 26 landholders involved in the project have been supported to fence, revegetate and control willows along their section of the river. The combined landholder contribution has resulted in 85% of the floodplain having a continuous native vegetation corridor and 98% of the floodplain being free of willows.

Another positive outcome of the works was evident in 2011 when a moderate flood caused only minimal impact with no major changes to the river course.

The EGCMA is currently working with the Cann Valley Landcare Group to plan for projects in the area, including identifying access points and removal of alignment training fences that are no longer needed. A walking track and improved amenities along the river will encourage greater use by locals and visitors alike.

The EGCMA is also working with the community and the East Gippsland Shire to improve access from the caravan park located along the river bank to facilitate increased participation along the river.

Further downstream, the river flows into Tamboon Inlet, a well-known recreational fishery in Far East Gippsland. The project is providing stability, resilience and good water quality to the downstream system, allowing fish to thrive and increasing recreational opportunities. Locals are now seeing Platypus and Bass return to this section of river.

- 1** Members of the Cann River Landcare Group with EGCMA Project Coordinator Mel Birleson *EGCMA*.
- 2** West Cann Bridge, 1969. *EGCMA*
- 3** West Cann Bridge, 2018. *EGCMA*

GLENELG HOPKINS

LAKE CONDAH, BUDJ BIM CULTURAL LANDSCAPE. *GHCMA*



GLENELG HOPKINS

KEY EVENTS AND INSIGHTS

- Glenelg Hopkins CMA delivered the largest program in its history with the successful completion of the flood recovery program, funded through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. A total of 47 sites costing \$6.3 million were completed. A further \$2.59 million was sourced through the Victorian Government's Disaster Response and Recovery Actions funding for recovery works that are continuing into 2019-20.
- A highlight of the environmental watering program this year was the recorded ten-fold increase in numbers of the critically endangered pygmy perch and more than doubling of the numbers of river blackfish. Estuary perch, tupong and black bream were also found to be migrating between 70 and 270 kilometres upstream.
- The Glenelg Hopkins region was very successful under the Australian Government's Regional Land Partnerships Program which saw \$14.48 million of approved projects.
- The Glenelg Hopkins CMA Waterway Management Twinning Program was run again which provided a suite of activities to help participants build skills and networks important for becoming more effective waterway managers.
- The Glenelg Hopkins Soil Benchmarking project is being delivered in partnership with Southern Farming Systems. The project aims to better understand the current condition of the region's soils and identify soil constraints to production.
- The Grange Burn Restoration Project continued at Hamilton with revegetation of over 21,000 plants across 11.9 ha of land and 3.1 km of waterway frontage cleared of woody weeds. This project has strengthened partnerships with Southern Grampians Shire Council and Wannon Water who are both now funding works to make it a key recreational destination for local residents and tourists.
- The Pine Wildling Control Project has continued to protect the habitat of the South-eastern Red-tailed Black Cockatoo. To date the project has undertaken pine wildling control on over 2800 hectares of remnant vegetation.
- Landcare continues to be strong in the region, with the program supporting 27,285 m of fencing, 38,740 trees planted and 36 ha of direct seeding.



OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL		
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS				
1.2 Water storage (no.)	12	18	11	29
1.3 Pump (no.)	7	2		2
1.5 Waterway structure (no.)	98	32	38	70
1.6 Terrestrial structure (no.)	6	3	1	4
1.8 Monitoring structure (no.)	61	76		76
1.9 Fence (km)	99	125	11	136
1.11 Road (km)			0	0
1.12 Crossing (no.)	5	1	2	3
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS				
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	99	201		201
2.2 Weed control (ha)	3,191	3,857	620	4,477
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	33,882	33,193	3,426	36,619
2.5 Threatened species response (no.)	4		16	16
2.8 Earth works (no.)	31	2	29	31
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES				
3.1 Grazing (ha)	447	604		604
3.2 Agricultural practices (ha)	130		404	404
3.3 Water (no.)	15	12	1	13
3.4 Fire (no.)	4		3	3
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION				
4.1 Approval and advice (no.)	358	394	12	406
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	147	102	57	159
4.3 Assessment (no.)	734	484	360	844
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	3,444	3,432	2,809	6,241
4.5 Partnership (no.)	47	47		47
4.6 Plan (no.)	112	42	84	126
4.7 Publication (no.)	221	206	127	333
4.8 Information management system (no.)	10	13		13



AUSTRALIAN GRAYLING IN THE GLENELG RIVER



LOCATIONS

Glenelg River, South West Victoria

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

1 water regime, 5 engagement activities
1,454 participants, 78 media items, 2
engagement plans, 1 management plan

PARTNERS

Arthur Rylah Institute, Victorian
Fisheries Authority, DELWP, Victorian
Environmental Water Holder

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Glenelg Hopkins Waterway Strategy
2014-2022
Glenelg Hopkins Regional Catchment
Strategy 2013-2019

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian
Government's \$222 million Water for
Victoria initiative

- 1** An Australian grayling captured during
Glenelg River fish surveys near Casterton. *ARI*
- 2** Additional flows have delivered
environmental, social, economic and cultural
benefits along to the river. *GHCMA*
- 3** Environmental water being delivered
through the 5 Mile outlet on the Glenelg River.
GHCMA

“This is the first confirmed record of this nationally threatened native fish in the Glenelg in 122 years!”

Antony Ford, Glenelg Hopkins CMA Chair

Scientists from the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research (ARI) caught an Australian grayling (*Prototroctes maraena*) in the Glenelg River in February 2019, the first confirmed record of this nationally threatened native fish in the Glenelg in 122 years!

The discovery is an encouraging sign that delivering environmental flows to the Glenelg is supporting instream conditions for native fish, including this flow-dependent species.

The fish was caught downstream of Casterton during fish surveys for the Native Fish Report Card program, which is supported by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA).

Australian Grayling rely upon appropriate flows to trigger adult fish to move upstream to spawn, and juvenile fish to return to their nursery areas in the ocean and estuaries. Altered river flows and barriers to fish movement have contributed to a dramatic decline in this species, which was once abundant throughout the coastal rivers of south-eastern Australia.

Glenelg Hopkins Waterway Health Planner, Stephen Ryan, said the exciting discovery adds to a story of positive outcomes for native fish species in the Glenelg River.

“We have recorded a tenfold increase in numbers of the critically endangered variegated pygmy perch (*Nannoperca variegata*) and more than doubling of

numbers of river blackfish (*Gadopsis marmoratus*),” Mr Ryan said.

“We also know that fish are moving more freely between fresh and saltwater habitats on the back of improved river connectivity and flows. Estuary perch (*Macquaria Colanorum*), tupong (*Pseudaphritis urvillii*) and black bream (*Acanthopagrus Butcheri*) are migrating significant distances upstream - 270, 240 and 70 kilometres respectively,” he said.

This evidence has been collected by ARI scientists as part of the Victorian Environmental Flows Monitoring and Assessment Program (VEFMAP) which assesses fish response to environmental water releases.

Research by ARI scientists in other coastal river systems in Victoria has shown managed flow ‘pulses’ or ‘freshes’ have been found to trigger or enhance spawning migrations of the Australian grayling.

“The verified capture of the Australian grayling in the Glenelg River earlier this year is the latest piece of an ecological puzzle showing encouraging signs that native fish, including threatened species, are recovering with support from efficient environmental flow management,” Mr Ryan said.

Widespread work through the Glenelg River Restoration Project to install fish habitat, control erosion, providing fish passage and improve water quality has also contributed to supporting this species recover.



PROJECT TAKES FLIGHT

The recent completion of Walker Swamp hydrological restoration was celebrated by staff from the Department of Environment and Water (DEW) and the Wannon River Catchment Management Authority (CMA). The project was a joint effort between the Victorian Government and the Wannon CMA. The project was a joint effort between the Victorian Government and the Wannon CMA. The project was a joint effort between the Victorian Government and the Wannon CMA.



LOCATIONS

Part of the Wannon River floodplain, (north-east of Dunkeld, north-west of Glenthompson)

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

5km fencing, 50 ha of bathymetric restoration, 1 assessment, 1 monitoring plan, 1 draft monitoring plan, 1 fact sheet, 1 media release, 2 newsletters, 2 newspaper articles.

PARTNERS

Nature Glenelg Trust, Trust for Nature, AGL Energy, Hamilton Field Naturalists Club, Parks Victoria

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Glenelg Hopkins Regional Catchment Strategy, Waterway Strategy, Regional Landcare Support Strategy 2012-2018, Soil Health Strategy 2014-2019; Water for Victoria

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian Government's Our Catchments, Our Communities initiative

RESTORATION OF WALKER SWAMP

“Positive environmental changes usually take a long time. To make such significant steps forward in such a short time has transformed our understanding of what is possible when restoring wetland landscapes.”

Greg Kerr, Nature Glenelg Trust

The Glenelg Hopkins region has 44% of Victoria's total number of wetlands. These wetlands provide habitat for many endemic or threatened species. However, many of these wetlands occur on private land and developing partnerships is key to ensuring wetlands are preserved in, or returned to, their natural state.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA (GHGMA) partnered with the not-for-profit environmental organisation Nature Glenelg Trust (NGT), AGL Energy and Hamilton Field Naturalists Club to purchase a large (50-hectare) ephemeral wetland, Walker Swamp, and its surrounds in 2017.

NGT also purchased an adjacent floodplain, doubling the size to create the 440-hectare Walker Swamp Reserve. The reserve and its catchment had previously been extensively drained and planted to Blue Gums.

Community volunteers and contractors have undertaken extensive restoration on the site over the last 12 months. This has included installation of a boundary fence, removing failed blue gums and their mounds and restoring the wetland bed.

A draft management plan has been developed along with two draft conservation covenants, to permanently protect the site and guide ongoing management. Included in this are the results from an eco-hydrological study that was undertaken which identified the optimum reinstatement levels for hydrological restoration.

GHGMA and NGT have previously undertaken hydrological restoration at Gooseneck and Brady Swamps, downstream of Walker Swamp.

Restoration ensures the protection of critical wetland habitat for wildlife, such as the FFG listed and vulnerable Brolga and the nationally vulnerable Growling Grass Frog.

Funding and support from Our Catchments, Our Communities has helped NGT leverage additional funding for on-ground hydrological restoration works, monitoring and ongoing management of the Reserve.

NGT will own and manage Walker Swamp in perpetuity as one of their Restoration Reserves in Victoria and South Australia – sites specifically chosen because of their location, restoration potential, environmental values and demonstration / education potential.

This project completes the floodplain scale restoration of the Wannon River floodplain delta, where the river braids after flowing out of the steep south east edge of the Grampians National Park.

1 Evening light highlighting the regeneration of aquatic vegetation after blue gum mound removal in May 2018. *Greg Kerr, Nature Glenelg Trust.*

2 The Walker Swamp Celebration was covered in the regional paper The Hamilton Spectator on the 29th September 2018, page 21. A full-page article entitled 'Local Restoration Project Takes Flight'. *Hamilton Spectator.*

3 Finding out what critters live in Walkers Swamp, September 2018 Celebration. *Lachlan Farrington, Nature Glenelg Trust*



GOULBURN BROKEN

BROLGA AT GAYNORS SWAMP NEAR COROP. *PAT FEEHAN*

GOULBURN BROKEN

KEY EVENTS AND INSIGHTS

- Local knowledge and connections are critical to the successful delivery of all our projects. An example of this is the community-driven Bogies and Beyond project, funded through Our Catchments Our Communities. The Bogies and Beyond citizen science water bore monitoring sub-project continues to provide information on changes to this valuable, and often only, source of water for farmers in the area. Another citizen science subproject, Tree Storey, identified that many of the area's trees are showing signs of severe stress. This phenomenon has attracted state-wide interest with University of Melbourne researchers now looking in to the extent of the canopy collapse and possible causes.
- We took a pro-active approach to planning for low and no-flows in the catchment's creeks by trialling aerators and working with our partners to prepare to relocate fish to other sites if they became stressed during the hot, dry summer and autumn. Fortunately, much of the work we've done with landowners and the community over the years to revegetate and install in-stream habitat to create shelter paid off and our native fish populations found shelter in the deeper pools despite difficult conditions. This planning by agencies will not go to waste with the forecast for dry conditions to continue.
- Our relationships with councils, agencies and industry allowed us to recycle and re-use timber cleared for road widening projects, solar farms and other infrastructure projects as snags in the Broken Creek and lower Goulburn River. These snags help restore valuable habitat for native fish and other aquatic wildlife and complement the many other works we do to improve the health of our rivers. This initiative to reuse timber has been formalised across the state with an MoU signed between VicRoads and the 10 CMAs in May.
- In a classic case of persistence paying off, it was fantastic to finally complete the Mosquito Drain 40 project. It's taken more than 25 years but this 120km drain, servicing 200 landholders is now finished and will help combat water-logging issues in the Tatura/Girgarre area. This project involved multiple agencies and extensive community engagement, including with Traditional Owners, which saw the drain design altered to protect significant cultural and environmental sites.
- The Tri-State NRM Murray Alliance, which is made up of NRM agencies from either side of the Murray and from SA continues to get runs on the board. This year another very successful Indigenous business forum was held, this time in Renmark, to further explore opportunities to promote Indigenous economic autonomy through social enterprises. Examples of successful WA Indigenous businesses were shared and an MoU creating an East West Alliance will allow ongoing support and mentoring for this approach.

OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL			
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER	TOTAL
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS					
1.1 Channel (km)	10	37			37
1.2 Water storage (no.)	17	16		1	17
1.4 Irrigation structure (ha)	500				0
1.5 Waterway structure (no.)	325	581			581
1.7 Terrestrial feature (no.)	202	254			254
1.8 Monitoring structure (no.)	20	22			22
1.9 Fence (km)	46	67	1	2	70
1.10 Visitor Facility (no.)		7			7
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS					
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	450	418	207	0	626
2.2 Weed control (ha)	2,687	1,613	459	28	2,100
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	15,490	282	1,147		1,429
2.5 Threatened species response (no.)	1	1			1
2.8 Earth works (no.)	2	3			3
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES					
3.1 Grazing (ha)	271	414	83		497
3.3 Water (no.)	29	30			30
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION					
4.1 Approval and advice (no.)	853	1,030		1	1,031
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	58	59	49		108
4.3 Assessment (no.)	1,442	1,631	157	2	1,790
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	10,537	16,362	1,416		17,778
4.5 Partnership (no.)	114	136	12		148
4.6 Plan (no.)	124	79	48	1	128
4.7 Publication (no.)	309	424	148	1	573
4.8 Information management system (no.)	2	6	1		7





LOCATIONS

The GMID covers 27,000 km², stretching from Cobram in the east to Cohuna in the west.

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

1 management plan
2 engagement events
3 publications

PARTNERS

Goulburn Regional Partnership, RDV Hume, North Central CMA, Goulburn Murray Water, Campaspe Shire, Gannawarra Shire, City of Greater Shepparton, Goulburn-Murray Water, Irrigators, GoFarm, Agriculture Victoria, DELWP, Murray Dairy

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-19
Agriculture Victoria Strategy
Food and Fibre Sector Strategy
Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities 2010-2020

FUNDING

Victorian Government

WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT A RESILIENT IRRIGATION REGION

“This plan speaks to the vision of the leadership in the region. They recognise that doing nothing is not an option.”

Resilience expert Paul Ryan

Industry, government and irrigators are guiding the development of a masterplan that will ensure long-term growth and prosperity of the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID).

The GMID in northern Victoria, the State's foodbowl, generates \$5.9 billion worth of dairy, fruit, vegetables, meat and cereals each year.

Recognising GMID communities are grappling with the challenges – and opportunities – of the effects of changes to land and water policy and climate; the region's leaders are driving the development of a strategy and implementation plan to guide the future social, economic and environmental sustainability of Australia's largest irrigation region.

Goulburn Regional Partnership Chair David McKenzie said there was a need to examine potential agreements between councils, government and industry to make certain the region's future was bright.

“A key challenge is making sure we all play our part to ensure that the GMID is as productive a region as it can be, by maximising our natural advantages over other areas,” he said.

Resilience expert Paul Ryan, a member of the consultancy team charged with developing the masterplan, said resilience would be at the heart of the plan.

“It means we will take a holistic and collective approach to planning a future where we consider people, the environment and the economy in equal parts,” Mr Ryan said.

He said this would be the first time in Australia when industry leaders had committed to building resilience at this scale.

“It's been done at a local level before but to think about doing it across such a large and diverse region is really exciting.”

Goulburn Broken CMA CEO Chris Norman said despite the challenges the region was facing, it was incumbent on industry leaders to form a united front and contribute to shaping its destiny.

“We need to focus on building a resilient GMID which can deal with unpredictability,” Mr Norman said.

“We're working towards ensuring it has the agility, diversity and skills to transform into something that can adapt to rapid change.”

The masterplan is due for completion in December.

1 Industry, farmers and government agencies will all have input into the GMID Masterplan. *GBCMA*

2 The masterplan will guide efforts to ensure GMID communities are resilient and can adapt to change. *GBCMA*



<https://youtu.be/NZanb-Pqew>



LOCATIONS

Greater Shepparton
Campaspe
Moir

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

2 engagement events
15 publications

PARTNERS

Greater Shepparton City Council
DELWP Hume
Local farmers

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-19
Biodiversity Strategy for the Goulburn Broken Catchment 2016-2021
Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan
Biodiversity 2037

FUNDING

Sustainable Irrigation Program
Greater Shepparton City Council

2019 - YEAR OF THE Paddock TREE

“I think The Year of the Paddock Tree is a great initiative. They (trees) can’t live forever and it’s time we looked after the ones we have left and start planting new trees,” Koyuga farmer Kevin L’Huillier

An alarming decline in the number of paddock trees across the Goulburn Broken catchment prompted a campaign to protect as many of the region’s scattered trees as possible.

The Goulburn Broken CMA and Greater Shepparton City Council collaborated on the campaign declaring 2019 the Year of The Paddock Tree.

Greater Shepparton CEO Peter Harriott said the Goulburn Valley had lost more than 97 per cent of native vegetation that was in the region before European settlement.

“It’s now up to us to protect what’s left. The region’s land use is rapidly changing. The earlier we can have the conversation with landowners the more chance we have of protecting native vegetation,” Mr Harriot said.

Each month, the campaign used social media to focus on a different theme. These themes ranged from primary school children describing why they love the region’s trees to farmers talking about the productivity benefits of scattered paddock trees. Other topics covered include the importance of trees in providing food and shelter for native species, the cultural significance of trees for Traditional Owners, and promotion of grants for landholders to protect and improve native vegetation on their properties.

The campaign also helped promote guidelines and protocols around clearing native vegetation and the importance of following regulations and laws set down by the Country Fire Authority and local councils during stubble burning season.

A forum was held in April bringing together agencies, local government, farm planners, developers, farmers and industry to discuss native vegetation regulations and the benefits of collaborating to communicate with farmers about the value of native vegetation on their properties.

The widespread promotion of the campaign included a photography competition and exhibition, a science forum and awareness raising of other benefits of maintaining paddock trees; such as attracting pollinators and beneficial insects that help with pest control.

1 Year of the Paddock Tree highlighted the environmental, productivity and aesthetic benefits of scattered trees. *GBCMA*

2 The campaign was an opportunity to highlight regulations around protecting native vegetation. *GBCMA*



<https://youtu.be/KctGY48p2wI>



MALLEE

LOCALS DARREN AND SON IZZY FISHING FROM THE BANKS OF THE MURRAY RIVER. *MALLEE CMA*

MALLEE

KEY EVENTS AND INSIGHTS

- Over 460,000 ha of targeted environmental works were undertaken in 2018-19 to protect the region's priority natural, cultural and productive landscapes. Regional delivery partnerships, which are integral to the success of these on ground activities, were further supported through the provision of 121 individual funding grants to community groups (33) and private land managers (88).
- Integral to all Mallee CMA NRM processes is the protection and management of cultural heritage values. In 2018-19 this was supported through 144 cultural heritage assessments at proposed works sites and seven cultural heritage management plans being approved and lodged with Aboriginal Victoria.
- Recreational values provided by the region's priority waterways were also enhanced through community-driven projects which identified, prioritised and implemented works such as the installation of 25 visitor facilities. Works which have collectively improved opportunities for a range of recreational activities including bushwalking, cycling, canoeing, camping and recreational angling.
- Community engagement and capacity building approaches continue to be well supported. In 2018-19 this resulted in some 7,695 stakeholders participating in 670 individual events. Evaluation of these activities identified that 66% of surveyed participants rated the overall delivery of events as 'excellent', and a further 30% as 'good'.
- Materials produced to promote the region, NRM programs and involvement opportunities continued to reach a large and diverse audience. The Mallee CMA Facebook page for example had an average daily reach of 2,275 people in 2018-19, and nine posts were each viewed by over 10,000 people.
- Planning for delivery partnerships and engagement activities continues to be informed and enhanced by advice received from regional stakeholders through established forums such as the Salinity Accountability Advisory Committee, Aboriginal Reference Group, Land and Water Community Advisory Committee, Catchment Partnership Committees and Ramsar Coordinating Committee. In 2018-19 this framework was enhanced by the establishment of the Mallee Floodplain Management Strategy (FMS) Implementation Steering Committee, with representatives from key regional stakeholders collaborating to identify and implement priority actions.

OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL			
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER	TOTAL
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS					
1.1 Channel (km)	1	3			3
1.4 Irrigation structure (ha)	156	692		73	765
1.5 Waterway structure (no.)	1	1			1
1.6 Terrestrial structure (no.)	3	3			3
1.7 Terrestrial feature (no.)	3	3			3
1.8 Monitoring structure (no.)	201	17	153	1	171
1.9 Fence (km)	34	47	17		64
1.10 Visitor Facility (no.)	21	25			25
1.11 Road (km)	32	37			37
1.12 Crossing (no.)	8	3			3
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS					
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	481	416	146		562
2.2 Weed control (ha)	120,697	112,703	14,372		127,075
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	308,236	260,663	75,287		335,950
2.8 Earth works (no.)	2	2			2
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES					
3.3 Water (no.)	45	48			48
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION					
4.1 Approval and advice (no.)	373	277		107	384
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	125	104		53	157
4.3 Assessment (no.)	510	509	84	37	630
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	5,016	4,854	2,306	535	7,695
4.5 Partnership (no.)	166	142	25	8	175
4.6 Plan (no.)	143	94	18	5	117
4.7 Publication (no.)	477	388	139	40	567
4.8 Information management system (no.)	17	16		1	17



LOCATIONS

Merbein Common
Nyah Recreational Reserve

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

2 management agreements – binding non-perpetual
11 engagement events – meeting
1 publication – visual

PARTNERS

Sunraysia OzFish
Nyah - Nyah West United Football and Netball Club
DELWP
Parks Victoria
Swan Hill Rural City Council

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy
Mallee Waterway Strategy

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian Government's Angler Riparian Partnerships Program

PARTNERING TO PROTECT PRIORITY WATERWAYS

“These projects are a prime example of how our community can drive important works that will provide shared benefits, build community pride and enhance our natural landscape.”

Sharyon Peart, Mallee CMA Chair

Mallee fishing and community groups are going from strength to strength thanks to the Angler Riparian Partnerships Program, which has led to more active groups, riparian improvements and achieving shared benefits.

Sunraysia OzFish and Nyah - Nyah West United Football and Netball Club are two groups to see the benefits of protecting and enhancing local areas through the program, which have delivered recreational benefits without negatively affecting the landscape around them.

The groups' passion for the Merbein Common and the Nyah Recreation Reserve saw two well planned applications submitted to the Mallee CMA as part of the Angler Riparian Partnership Program. The groups took the time to plan works at each site that will provide habitat, native revegetation, pest plant and animal control and the installation of solar lights. These works are all based on ideas from local community members that were included in the submission.

Sunraysia OzFish has planned a fish habitat project at Cowanna Billabong, which is one of the most picturesque wetlands at Merbein Common. Members have collected woody debris that will be put together to make fish hotels, and then installed in the river to improve conditions for native fish and other aquatic species.

At Nyah Recreation Reserve, the football and netball club has planned native revegetation adjacent to the Murray River, as well as pest plant and animal control works and the installation of a solar light at Nyah boat ramp.

These works will enhance the areas for recreational users by providing natural fish habitat and riparian vegetation, as well as providing a range of structural and ecological functions, essential for maintaining riverine ecosystems and overall catchment health.

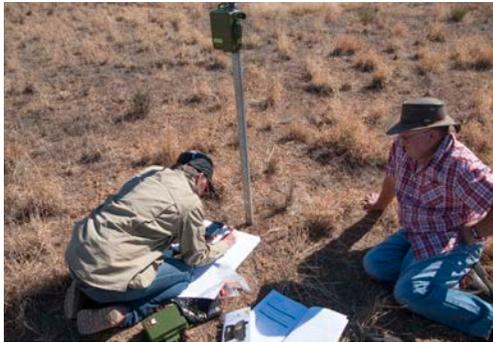
Our community groups can be proud of their achievements, which play a key role in maintaining a healthy habitat in waterways and riparian areas. By taking ownership of their works, community groups have shown that they are committed to protecting riparian habitat not only to improve fishing in their favourite places, but also to keep waterways healthy for the benefit of all.

Over time, the benefits of these and future works will improve fishing and other recreational activities, increasing community value and encouraging others to visit and enjoy these sites.

1 Sunraysia OzFish volunteers collecting woody debris for in-stream habitat works
Braeden Lampard

2 Fishing from the bank in the Mallee
Mallee CMA.

3 Cowanna Billabong, which is part of Merbein Common.
Mallee CMA.



CITIZEN SCIENTISTS TUNING IN TO BIRD SONGS

“This capacity building project is raising awareness, building skills, and bringing people and practices together for the benefit of this critically endangered bird’s habitat.”
 Sharyon Peart, Mallee CMA Chair



LOCATIONS

Birchip region

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

3 engagement events (field days)
 3 publications
 1 Assessment

PARTNERS

Birchip Landcare Group
 Trust for Nature
 Private landowners

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy

FUNDING

Funded through the Australian Government’s National Landcare Program

Citizen scientists around Birchip are tuning into nature to investigate the persistence of the Plains-wanderer around the Birchip region. By deploying song meters and reviewing audio, participants are hoping to confirm if this critically endangered, small grassland bird still inhabits the landscape.

Trust for Nature, Birchip Landcare Group and Mallee CMA have been working with Landcare members and landowners around the Birchip region to raise awareness of the Plains-wanderer and their habitat.

The Plains-wanderer was once widespread throughout the grasslands of eastern Australia; however, due to habitat loss they are now restricted to a few isolated remnants mostly in Victoria and New South Wales. It is estimated that there are between just 250 and 1000 Plains-wanderers left in the wild nationally.

The bird depends on sparse native grasslands with open bare-ground patches, herbs and grasses and avoids areas with large trees, potentially as a defence mechanism to protect themselves from birds of prey that perch in those trees.

This project is one of the many tangible ways the Mallee CMA is collaborating with partners and linking the people in our region with their environment.

As part of the project, members of Birchip Landcare Group and Trust for Nature have undertaken fauna surveys to determine the level of native vegetation suitable for the Plains-wanderer across the landscape. While most Plains-wanderer habitat has been cultivated, the surveys found a number of remnant vegetation sites that could be suitable for the bird now, or for their future release.

After ground-truthing suitable areas, five song meters were deployed at sites that were chosen based on local knowledge and the amount of native vegetation that was deemed suitable habitat for the Plains-wanderer.

Encouragingly, landholders involved in the project think they have seen Plains-wanderers over the last few years in the project area. Armed with this information, Birchip Landcare Group and Trust for Nature are now eagerly waiting to see if they pick up any sound from a Plains-wanderer on the song meters.

1 Male Plains-wanderer and chicks. *Dr David Baker-Gabb*

2 Birchip Landcare Group establishing song meters on priority properties. *Brian Lea*

3 Male and female Plains-wanderers. *Dr David Baker-Gabb*



NORTH CENTRAL

GUNBOWER FOREST. *RICHARD TATTI*

NORTH CENTRAL

KEY EVENTS AND INSIGHTS

- A Healthy Coliban Catchment project focuses on a 20-year plan to protect and enhance one of the region's most important waterways - the Coliban River and its tributaries upstream of Malmsbury Reservoir. Coliban Water, the North Central CMA and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation have joined forces to create a plan, aimed at protecting water quality, the fauna and flora, and cultural history of the area.
- The construction of a fishway at Koondrook will provide passage to native fish such as the iconic vulnerable Murray cod and Golden perch from the river into the creek for the first time in more than a century. Key partners including the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH), the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Goulburn Murray Water have agreed to take the proposed Koondrook fishway into a detailed design and costing phase, and then through to construction.
- The Environmental Water Management program coordinated the delivery of 55,600 ML of water for the environment to 14 wetlands and waterways across the region. These environmental and consumptive flows contributed to the environmental, social and recreational values of the wetlands and waterways.
- The statewide River Detectives program engaged 94 schools and approximately 2,700 students across five regions of Victoria. Teachers were provided resources, training and support to deliver curriculum aligned water testing on local waterways.
- In its first year of implementation the Regenerative Agriculture project established three farming groups and undertook initial planning and skills workshops. The project aims to increase the capacity of the region's agricultural communities to achieve practice change that results in improvements for soil, biodiversity and vegetation.
- The North Central CMA's Board endorsed the organisation's Reconciliation Action Plan in October 2018. Since then achievements include paid cultural leave provisions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in our 2017 Collective Agreement; the establishment of a Reconciliation Working Group; key partnership projects such as the Yung Balug Djarra, Dja Dja Wurrung, Healthy Country Planning - Djandak, Gatjin and Wi (Land, Water and Fire) at Boort; engagement of businesses such as Djandak, Woka Walla, Barapa Land and Water and Taungurung works crews in the delivery of on-ground works on Country. Staff and Board members also participated in cultural awareness training sessions with Dja Dja Wurrung.

OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL			
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER	TOTAL
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS					
1.1 Channel (km)	2.6				0
1.2 Water storage (no.)	34	39			39
1.3 Pump (no.)	1	1			1
1.5 Waterway structure (no.)	47	37	20		57
1.6 Terrestrial structure (no.)	1	1			1
1.8 Monitoring structure (no.)	6		6		6
1.9 Fence (km)	78.9	64	18		82
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS					
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	379	347	57		404
2.2 Weed control (ha)	2,116	2,292	6	64	2,362
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	2,062	316	1,560		1,876
2.5 Threatened species response (no.)	2		2		2
2.8 Earth works (no.)	4		4		4
2.9 Rubbish removal (ha)		242			242
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES					
3.1 Grazing (ha)	108	111			111
3.3 Water (no.)	99	99			99
3.4 Fire (no.)	5	5			5
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION					
4.1 Approval and advice (no.)	906	4,276		5	4,276
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	41	55	19		79
4.3 Assessment (no.)	1,202	1,055	76	3	1,134
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	5,524	5,141	625	227	5,993
4.5 Partnership (no.)	44	38			38
4.6 Plan (no.)	155	124	20		144
4.7 Publication (no.)	64	68	32		100
4.8 Information management system (no.)	1	1			1





PLAINS FOR WANDERERS

“Since covenanting Dea’s grassland and Browns paddock I’m over the moon. I’m not saying I’m green, but I’m getting greener by the day. I love getting out there and seeing the results.”

Andy McGillivray, local landholder and covenantor



LOCATIONS

Northern Plains Grasslands

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

3.8 km fence
 57.1 ha vegetation
 6.4 ha weed control
 44.1 ha pest animal control
 2 threatened species responses
 3 management agreements
 10 site-assessments
 2 engagement events
 89 engagement event participants

PARTNERS

Trust for Nature
 Parks Victoria
 DELWP
 Northern Plains Conservation
 Management Network
 Private landowners
 Traditional Owners

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

National Recovery plan for the plains-wanderer (*pedionomus torquatus*)

FUNDING

Funded through the Australian Government’s National Landcare Program

The Zoological Society of London recently listed the plains-wanderer as the world’s most important endangered bird species, based on assessment of the species’ rarity and evolutionary uniqueness.

With numbers at an all-time low, the North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is working with communities and stakeholders to protect, enhance and improve habitat to ensure their long-term survival.

The Critically Endangered plains-wanderer is in trouble.

Monitoring conducted across the Victorian Patho Plains since 2009 indicates a decline in numbers of about 95 per cent between 2010 and 2014. The current national number of plains-wanderers is estimated to be somewhere between 250 and 1,000 birds, representing a record low for the species. Many of these are thought to be in the North Central CMA region on private

farming land and public reserves.

In Victoria, plains-wanderers inhabit sparse, treeless, lowland native grasslands across the Northern Plains, a significantly threatened ecosystem. Working with landholders and project partners, the project aims to increase awareness of the importance and decline of the species; identify suitable habitat on private property located in the project area and place covenants on private property to protect, improve and enhance plains-wanderer habitat.

- 1** Newly established covenant on the Patho Plains. *Trust for Nature*
- 2** Northern Plains Grassland and Plains-wanderer banners. *Northern Plains CMN*
- 3** River and Grassland Tour, *Trust for Nature*



LAKE BOORT DJANDAK GATJIN AND WI (LAND WATER AND FIRE)



“I really think we did our Ancestors proud on this day by showcasing our culture to have so many happy people enjoy the event and to give positive feedback was just an honour.”

Amos Atkinson, Yung Balug Clan, Dja Dja Wurung

LOCATIONS

Yung Balug Djandak, Lake Boort, Lake Lyndger

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

6 engagement events
236 engagement event participants
242 ha weed control
242 ha pest animal control
242 ha rubbish removal
5 cultural burns
1 partnership
1 plan

PARTNERS

Parks Victoria
Forest Fire Management
Barapa Land and Water

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Dhelkunya Dja: Dja Dja Wurrung Country Plan 2014-2034
Dja Dja Wurrung Recognition and Settlement Agreement
North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-2019
Northern Victorian Water Resource Plan

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian Government's Our Catchments, Our Communities initiative.

The Boort area is one of the most culturally significant areas in Australia. It is the gate-keeper of Traditional Owner knowledge and home of the Dja Dja Wurrung.

The Lake Boort Djandak, Gatjin and Wi (Land Water and Fire) project is working with the Yung Balug Clan of Dja Dja Wurrung to empower the Traditional Owners of this significant landscape to manage and care for their sites.

The project is providing Dja Dja Wurrung member participants a long-missed opportunity to reconnect and actively practice traditions, in the same manner as their ancestors had done for thousands of years. (Aunty Marilynne Dja Dja Wurrung).

The project has worked closely with the Yung Balug family group to develop a Healthy Country Plan that captures their aspirations and goals for managing Lake Boort and surrounding areas; a landscape with the highest density of scar trees recorded anywhere.

The project is supporting Yung Balug to establish agreements to take a lead in managing the landscape; peeling back and breathing life into cultural practices including Djandak Wi (Country fire), forest gardening (managing food and fibre plants), ceremony, and protecting and managing cultural sites from challenges including rabbits, weeds and inappropriate water regimes.

An additional aim established by the Family group, is to work more closely with neighbouring mobs and as a result Barapa Land and Water have been engaged to deliver some of the project works and support an increase in the collaboration between mobs in caring for Country.

1, 2 & 3 Yung Balug Djaara (Yung Balug family group) planning in and around Lake Boort. *Dja Dja Wurrung*



NORTH EAST

KING RIVER. NATALIE ORD

NORTH EAST

KEY EVENTS AND INSIGHTS

- Completion of the \$7.4 million Flood Recovery Program with 79 flood-damaged sites repaired.
- The quantification of the socio-economic value of key North East waterways showed they contribute annually \$28m in recreational benefits and attract 3.9m visitors.
- 123ML of environmental water delivered to support flows in the King and Buffalo Rivers.
- In an Australian first, a unique collaboration between Traditional Owners and local water authorities saw a consumptive water allocation owned by Taungurung Land and Waters Council gifted to the region as water for the environment.
- Partnerships continue to be vital to our success. In 2018-19 the Australian Government's National Landcare Program saw over 37,125ha of predator pest species and weed control work completed to protect threatened Alpine peatland and improve Mountain Pygmy-possum and Regent Honeyeater habitat. Ongoing funding has been secured for five key projects with an investment of over \$11 million over five years, ensuring the continuation of these vital programs.
- In conjunction with the East and West Gippsland CMAs, Parks Victoria, Workways and community groups, a drought employment program has been a lifeline for farming families, providing employment and income at a time of financial hardship.
- Through the Our Catchments, Our Communities program we continue to work with the Upper Mitta and Lower Ovens communities, partnering to plan for and deliver activities to improve biodiversity, waterway health and land productivity. This year saw the finalisation and implementation of two Catchment Action Plans for these high value areas and the establishment of eight management agreements and four projects with community groups to improve waterway health.



**NORTH EAST
CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY**

OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL			
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER	TOTAL
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS					
1.2 Water storage (no.)	16	14			14
1.5 Waterway structure (no.)	4	57	1	27	85
1.7 Terrestrial feature (no.)	32	104			104
1.8 Monitoring structure (no.)	24	17	0		17
1.9 Fence (km)	53	20	13	23	56
1.10 Visitor facility (no.)	5				0
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS					
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	214	99	1		100
2.2 Weed control (ha)	1,100	2,493	525	6	3,024
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	28,015	408	54,105		54,513
2.8 Earth works (no.)	8	34		36	70
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES					
3.1 Grazing (ha)	200	489			489
3.3 Water (no.)	3	3			3
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION					
4.1 Approval and advice (no.)	437	479	0		479
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	86	64	0	32	96
4.3 Assessment (no.)	236	375	71	6	452
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	2,155	5,930	2,582	133	8,645
4.5 Partnership (no.)	49	43	10	3	56
4.6 Plan (no.)	16	11	13		24
4.7 Publication (no.)	158	196	53	5	254
4.8 Information management system (no.)	4	5	1		6



OVENS RIVER RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM



“This symposium is a celebration of a hidden gem, an opportunity to showcase the richness of the lower Ovens and broaden the community’s knowledge of the research being conducted to help secure the long-term future of this asset” Katie Warner, CEO, North East CMA

LOCATIONS

GOTAFE/Charles Sturt University, Wangaratta Campus

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

57 people attended the Symposium
35 people attended the tour
1 media article

PARTNERS

DELWP
Centre for Freshwater Ecosystems (La Trobe University)
Charles Sturt University (CSU)

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

North East Regional Catchment Strategy
North East Regional Waterway Strategy

FUNDING

Funded by the Victorian Government’s Our Catchments, Our Communities initiative

The Ovens River Research Symposium held in March 2019 showcased the distinctive Ovens River landscape to the community. The symposium celebrated the river’s value as home to numerous threatened species including birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

The lower Ovens River is recognised as a Heritage River for its healthy river red gum forests and diversity of native fish species. The catchment provides habitat and refuge for the threatened Murray Cod and Golden Perch. This is significant country to Aboriginal people from the Bangerang, Taungurung, Yorta Yorta, Dhuduroa and Waywurru nations.

The Ovens River is one of the largest unregulated waterways in Victoria, contributing 6% of the water in the wider Murray-Darling Basin and is valued for its natural wetting and drying pattern across the floodplain.

The research symposium brought together experts and researchers to share their wide-ranging knowledge of the Ovens Valley with the wider community, building a broader public appreciation for the river’s value and mobilising ongoing support for its protection.

The day celebrated the revitalisation of the Ovens catchment and opportunities to study and protect the rich aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity and ecosystem in the valley.

Topics spanning historical and cultural aspects, hydrogeology, ecology, land use, and management were all covered.

Among the presentations, Prof. Susan Lawrence’s ‘Rivers of Gold’ revealed how gold mining released a staggering 90 million cubic metres of sediment between 1864 - 1900, devastating many downstream habitats.

Jim Radford shared insights into how riparian tree cover enhances woodland bird populations during extreme climatic events.

Jenny Hale discussed the potential for designating the Ovens floodplain as a Ramsar site to give internationally recognised protection to its valued wetland areas.

Dr. Geoff Vietz highlighted the hydrological and geomorphological intactness of the Ovens River system and the impacts of fire and floods.

Local media attended the symposium and shared the topics and insights from the event and post-event field trip, with a front-page story in the Wangaratta Chronicle reaching a wide community audience.

- 1 Dr. Geoff Vietz presents at the Ovens River research symposium. *NECMA*
- 2 Lower Ovens bus tour: stop at the Ovens-King confluence. *NECMA*
- 3 Welcome to Country by Dr. Treahna Hamm of Yorta Yorta. *NECMA*



‘UNCOVERING THE OVENS’ FLAGSHIP PROJECT



LOCATIONS

Upper Ovens Valley (between Myrtleford and Harrietville)

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

32.4ha of woody weed removal
 10 binding management agreements
 87 attendees at community meetings
 42 field day participants
 20 presentation attendees
 Installation of 4 woody waterway structures
 Removal of 8 instream blockages
 Installation of 630m fencing
 Publication of electronic newsletter

PARTNERS

Parks Victoria, DELWP, Upper Ovens, Valley Landcare Group, Tronoh Dredge, Hole Committee of Management, Landholders, Alpine Shire Council, HVP Plantations

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

North East Waterway Strategy
 Regional Riparian Action Plan

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian Government’s \$222 million Water for Victoria initiative and Recreational Fishing Grants Program

“The river has a completely different feeling through there now, like it can breathe all of a sudden”

Brian Jones - landholder partner in the “Uncovering the Ovens” Flagship Waterway

Uncovering the Ovens is a long-term, large-scale waterway project to improve the overall health and resilience of the Upper Ovens River, a high flowing river supplying 6% of flows into the Murray-Darling Basin. The project focuses on improving the biodiversity and recreational values of this special river.

The North East CMA, with agency partners and the community, identified river restoration in the upper Ovens River as a priority project for both the long-term health of the river and the enhancement of a valuable recreational asset.

An extensive program of woody weed removal and stream channel and bank stabilisation was undertaken at priority areas. This program of on-ground works has successfully improved the scale and diversity of riparian native vegetation and increased access to waterways for community recreational activities.

Over 32 hectares of woody weeds were removed at six key sites between Porepunkah and Harrietville including various species of willows, blackberry and box elder.

Removal of these domineering non-natives has helped restore public access to the river and improved biodiversity in some key recreational areas. This work will also reduce the negative impacts of willows on riverbank erosion in the long term.

An on-going challenge for natural resource managers is to manage community expectations during a period of change

and educate and influence community values. The Uncovering the Ovens Flagship project prioritised public consultation, particularly with locals concerned about losing willows or the increased risks of streambank erosion from plant removal.

Over 80 people including landholders, community groups and government agencies participated in local meetings. Participants had the opportunity to discuss and learn about the significant benefits for the river and river users by removing these introduced species.

These meetings have led to an enhanced community understanding of, and support for ongoing woody weed removal. Ten management agreements are in place to deliver restoration works along the Ovens.

Two management agreements signed with the Tronoh Committee Management will include over 20 hectares of streamside land targeted for weed control, including walking trails and picnic areas. These sites are well situated to link up with sites downstream in the Smoko, Freeburgh and Bright area, which are already seeing the benefits of the program.

1 Stakeholders visit works site at Smoko on the Ovens River - *Brooke Hermans*

2 Instream woody habitat on the Ovens River near Harrietville. *Craig Hart - North East CMA*

3 Instream woody habitat and woody weed control works on the Ovens River at Smoko Campground. *Craig Hart - North East CMA*



PORT PHILLIP & WESTERNPORT

MELBOURNE CBD FROM POINT COOK. *ROBYN CHARNLEY*

PORT PHILLIP & WESTERNPORT

KEY EVENTS AND INSIGHTS

- Delivered \$166,040 in funding to 38 Landcare and community environmental groups for on-ground works and community building activities through the Victorian Landcare Grants 2018-19. The application process for the Victorian Landcare Grants 2019-20 also saw unprecedented interest, with close to 150 applications received.
- Hosted the catchment partnership event *Our City in Nature* with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria and Agriculture Victoria in May 2019, which attracted 300 representatives and volunteers from the environmental sector.
- Engaged 5,349 people in 119 community events delivered by the PPWCMA and its partners, including the 13th annual Grow West Community Planting Day and the 2nd annual Discover Dandenong Creek Festival, helping the region's communities understand and be part of land, water and biodiversity management.
- Celebrated 15 years of the landscape restoration program, Grow West. Since its beginnings as a program to control serrated tussock, rabbits and manage erosion in the Upper Werribee Catchment, Grow West has planted over 1.3 million trees across 2,500 hectares and become one of Australia's longest-standing and most successful landscape restoration projects.
- Developed two habitat restoration plans for sites in the Yarra Valley that will contribute to saving the critically endangered populations of the Helmeted Honeyeater and Lowland Leadbeater's Possum over the next 5-10 years.
- Protected and enhanced the ecological character of the Western Port and Port Phillip Bay Ramsar sites by controlling feral cats, pigs, foxes, rabbits and weeds across 49,779 hectares.
- Supported recovery from the Bunyip State Forest fires in March 2019 by delivering workshops on natural environment and agricultural recovery to affected landholders.
- Signed partnership agreements with the Bunurong Land Council and Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation Wadawurrung, meaning the PPWCMA now has agreements with all of the region's Registered Aboriginal Parties.

OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL			
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER	TOTAL
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS					
1.9 Fence (km)	1		1		1
1.10 Visitor Facility (no.)	11	2			2
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS					
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	48	73	149		222
2.2 Weed control (ha)	3,796		227	16	4,103
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	69,831	62,419	41,657		104,077
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES					
3.2 Agricultural practices (ha)	960		1,400		1,400
3.4 Fire (no.)		1			1
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION					
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	20	23	20		43
4.3 Assessment (no.)	58	39	32		71
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	970	3,738	1,783	658	6,179
4.5 Partnership (no.)	82	72	6	36	114
4.6 Plan (no.)	65	5	60	1	66
4.7 Publication (no.)	78	93	422	142	657



GREENS BUSH TO ARTHURS SEAT BIOLINK



“Partnering with the community to get trees in the ground and nest boxes installed, and teaming with the landholders to deal with environmental weeds, has made a significant contribution to building a viable corridor for Mornington Peninsula’s wildlife.”

Chantal Kelly, Project Coordinator

LOCATION

Mornington Peninsula

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

8.9 ha of revegetation
 16,000 indigenous trees and shrubs planted
 34.9 ha of weed control
 204.7 ha of pest animal control
 11 nesting boxes installed
 18 workshops and planting days involving 187 volunteers

PARTNERS

Mornington Peninsula Landcare, Network and associated groups, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Parks Victoria, Southern Peninsula Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association, Melbourne Water, Chisholm TAFE, Holmesglen TAFE, Balcombe Grammar, Flinders Christian Community College, Birdlife Australia, Scouts Australia, local landholders,

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Water for Victoria
 Port Phillip and Westernport Regional Catchment Strategy

FUNDING

Funded by the Victorian Government’s Our Catchments, Our Communities initiative

The Greens Bush to Arthur’s Seat Biolink project aims to re-establish a connection between two of the largest patches of remnant vegetation on the Mornington Peninsula through revegetation, weeding and pest control.

The project is being delivered by the Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network with the support of the Port Phillip & Westernport CMA and focuses on revegetation, weeding and pest control across 22 private properties. The works undertaken to establish the biolink will benefit local fauna by improving habitat and enhancing opportunities for movement across the landscape.

In 2018-19 the project achieved 8.9 hectares of revegetation through the planting of indigenous trees and shrubs, 34.9 hectares of weed control and 204.7 hectares of pest animal control. The installation of 11 nesting boxes also supported a variety of hollow-dependent species including microbats, pardalotes, rosellas, owls, kookaburras and possums.

Community engagement is a key focus of the project and in the last 12 months 187 individuals from local schools and community groups (including guides and scouts) have participated in 18 workshops and planting days.

2019-20 will be the final year of the project and will focus on new and follow up weed control and revegetation on the participating properties. Monitoring will continue with bird surveys, drone filming and vegetation quality assessments planned to map landscape changes over the project period. The initial stages of Phase 2 of the project will also begin, supported by a Victorian Landcare Grant.

- 1** Year 7 students from Balcombe Grammar at a planting day. *Chantal Kelly*
- 2** Nest boxes being installed on participating properties. *Chantal Kelly*
- 3** Drones being used to monitor planting areas and track progress. *Jacqueline Salter*



THE GREAT HEHO ESCAPE

“After years of significant community and agency recovery efforts, now is the ideal time to capitalise on these successes and help move the Helmeted Honeyeater from survival to expansion ... this project has provided a clear plan that could see numbers triple in the next 5-10 years.” Tania Foster, Port Phillip and Westernport CMA Chair



LOCATION

Yarra Valley

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

2 habitat restoration plans, 20 participants in landholder incentives program, 475 ha of pest animal control, 1 deer monitoring program, 51 ha of weed control, 0.5 ha of revegetation, 8 ha of fencing, 1 school education toolkit, 1 professional development event, 1 community event

PARTNERS

Parks Victoria, Yarra Ranges Council, Melbourne Water, Yarra Ranges Landcare Network, Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater, Trust for Nature, VNPA, Friends of Leadbeater’s Possum, DELWP, Zoos Victoria, Cardinia Shire, Wurundjeri Land Council, CVA, Birdlife Australia, Greening Australia, Biosis

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Port Phillip and Western Port Catchment Strategy, Yellingbo Conservation Area Draft 10 Year Plan, National Threatened Species Strategy, The National Recovery Plan for the, Helmeted Honeyeater

FUNDING

Funded through the Australian Government’s National Landcare Program, the Victorian Government’s Faunal Emblems Program and Zoos Victoria

This 12-month project led by the Port Phillip & Westernport CMA helped move the critically endangered Helmeted Honeyeater and lowland Leadbeater’s Possum from survival to expansion through a range of strategic and on-ground actions.

The Helmeted Honeyeater has a single wild population of around 200 individual birds, all of which are confined to Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve in Victoria’s Yarra Ranges. After significant community and agency efforts to build the population from just 50 individuals in the 1990s to its current state, this project aimed to capitalise on these past successes and attempt expansion.

The lowland subspecies of the Leadbeater’s Possum is also confined to this reserve but has suffered a steep decline in the last two decades. The wild population has plummeted to just 34 individuals and captive breeding has been unsuccessful, meaning the threat of extinction looms large.

Through this project, 16 organisations and skilled representatives have worked together to develop two habitat restoration plans that provide a detailed road map to establish two new population sites. The successful rollout of these plans could see both the available habitat and population of the Helmeted Honeyeater triple in 5-10 years.

The project also involved on-ground works at the Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve expansion site, Burrungma Biik, as well as a landholder incentives program to support the establishment of new habitat locations beyond the reserve. A Helmeted Honeyeater schools education toolkit was also developed in partnership with Birdlife Australia and Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater.

The Great HeHo Escape project builds on the successes of the PPWCMA’s long-standing Yarra4Life program and works funded by the 2013-18 phase of the National Landcare Program. Yarra4Life is an established network of agencies, not-for-profit organisations and environmental groups working with landholders and the community to protect and enhance habitat for both the Helmeted Honeyeater and lowland Leadbeater’s Possum.

The Great HeHo Escape will finalise some elements in early 2019-20, including a hydrology restoration plan for Burrungma Biik, some revegetation works and a community engagement event. The PPWCMA will continue to drive and seek funding for the implementation of the habitat restoration work recommended in the plans.

- 1 Helmeted Honeyeater. *Merryn Kelly*
- 2 Juvenile Lowland Leadbeater’s Possum. *Kylie Fideler*
3. Project partners from PPWCMA, Zoos Victoria and Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater at Burrungma Biik. *Annette Ruzicka*



WEST GIPPSLAND

AERIAL PHOTO OF THOMSON RIVER. WGCMA

WEST GIPPSLAND

KEY EVENTS AND INSIGHTS

- Waterways: fenced 69.12 km priority waterways, completed 197.97 hectares of revegetation, removed willows over 113.88 ha, 1,444,41 ha of weed control and stabilising riverbeds and banks at 12 sites
- Strengthened our ongoing commitment to cultural competency with the renewal of our MoU with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) and signing our first MoU with the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC).
- Lake Wellington Land and Water Management Plan was finalised in 2019 and provides a 10-year vision for sustainable irrigation and water management in the Lake Wellington catchment.
- National Landcare Program Regional Land Partnerships – Core Services and 3 projects - Alpine Peatlands Protection Program, Corner Inlet Connections and the Sustainable Agriculture Project – a 5 year commitment for the region.
- Successfully constructed the Thomson River Fishway, allowing for low flows around the Horseshoe Bend Tunnel. This exciting project enables connection of the waterway from the Gippsland Lakes to the Alps and provides fish passage for many species of fish including the EPBC-listed Australian Grayling.
- Dry Conditions: Part of the region (encompassing the Wellington and East Gippsland Shires) have experienced ongoing dry conditions and were drought declared in 2018-19. As a result, we partnered on several initiatives to support the community including the Drought Employment Program, expansion of the Sustainable Irrigation Program and by providing support to community events

OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL			
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER	TOTAL
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS					
1.2 Water storage (no.)	43	24		6	30
1.4 Irrigation structure (ha)	555	555			555
1.5 Waterway structure (no.)	3	1			1
1.8 Monitoring structure (no.)	9	9			9
1.9 Fence (km)	54	36	11	4	51
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS					
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	117	128	33	7	168
2.2 Weed control (ha)	1,275	111,060	398	2	111,460
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	11,612	0	5,600	6,000	11,600
2.8 Earth works (no.)	1	2			2
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES					
3.1 Grazing (ha)	35	0		60	60
3.3 Water (no.)	6	50			50
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION					
4.1 Approval and advice (no.)	1,316	1,408			1,408
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	115	26	20	27	73
4.3 Assessment (no.)	357	616	96	35	747
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	1,705	5,275	495	159	5,929
4.5 Partnership (no.)	170	91	75	6	172
4.6 Plan (no.)	116	35	104	54	193
4.7 Publication (no.)	89	127	63		190
4.8 Information management system (no.)	2	2			2



LOCATIONS

Gippsland Lakes

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

239 engagement event participants, 22 partners, 5 engagement events, 114 social media posts, 23 media releases

PARTNERS

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation, East Gippsland CMA, DELWP Gippsland, local government, Greening Australia, Marine Mammal Foundation, Gippsland Ports, Parks Victoria, Landcare networks and groups, Trust for Nature, universities, Birdlife Australia, Heyfield Wetlands Committee of Management, Friends of Beware Reef, Nagle College Landcare Group, Wetlands Environmental Taskforce Trust, Gippsland Plains CMN,

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy, West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy, Gippsland Lakes Priorities Plan, Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian Government's \$222 million Water for Victoria initiative and the Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee.

INVOLVING PARTNERS AND GETTING WORK DONE

“The Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee is a partnership in the truest sense of the word and has delivered better on-ground outcomes as a result of this work together.” Peter Jennings, WGCMCA Chair

For the last four years the Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee has worked together to encourage community ownership, participation and support for a healthy Gippsland Lakes system.

The iconic Gippsland Lakes is one of Victoria's most treasured environmental, economic and social assets. Like many natural resources, NRM professionals are attempting to balance often competing needs to ensure the Lakes are preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Recognising that community involvement is integral to this work, the Love our Lakes concept was developed. This 'brand' has been used to encapsulate communications, engagement and marketing undertaken by the partnership to drive community ownership, acceptance and participation in works to help protect the Gippsland Lakes.

Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee (GLCC) Co-Chair, Peter Jennings, said part of the committee's charter was to coordinate partnerships and community involvement.

“For the last four years we've been working as a committee to involve as many agencies and community groups as possible in caring for the Gippsland Lakes,” explained Mr Jennings.

“At last count this was an astonishing 40 partner agencies and community groups.

“Together, we've delivered on ground works, hosted events and talked with our community, all under the banner of Love our Lakes.”

GLCC is co-chaired by the chairs of East Gippsland CMA and West Gippsland CMA, recognising that each catchment has an impact on the Gippsland Lakes. Work delivered by each of the organisations is a true partnership, with agencies each having a seat within GLCC and the meetings of delivery managers.

“We know residents and tourist love the Gippsland Lakes – they keep telling us. They're interested in the environment and want to know more about how they can be involved,” continued Mr Jennings.

At the most recent round of events attendees were asked about their level of awareness and understanding of environmental issues surrounding the Gippsland Lakes. On average, these increased from 52 (out of 100) to 73.

For more about GLCC and the Gippsland Lakes projects go to loveourlakes.net.au

- 1** Speakers aboard the Lakes Entrance boat trip. *Rachael Millar*
- 2** Skipper, Alan Lewis with speaker Dan Cook and board members before the Rubeena Boat trip. *Rachael Millar*
- 3** Junior Rotary members participating in the Gippsland Lakes Great Pelican Count. *Rotary Club of Mitchell River*



LOCATIONS

Tarwin Lower
Mirboo North
Port Albert
Heath Hill
Devon North
Koonwarra
Fish Creek
Torwood
Woodside

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

14 participants

PARTNERS

Yarram Yarram Landcare Network
South Gippsland Landcare Network

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Our Catchments, Our Communities
Integrated Catchment Management
in Victoria 2016-2019, West Gippsland
Regional Catchment Strategy.

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian
Government's Victorian Landcare
Grants and the Our Catchments, Our
Communities initiative

MENTORS LEND A HAND

“Part of our role as a CMA is to help connect the community. This mentoring program is the perfect example of how we can work with Landcare to make this happen.”
Martin Fuller, WGCGMA CEO.

A program to mentor farmers and help them manage and develop their properties is being trialled through the South Gippsland and Yarram Yarram Landcare networks.

The aim is to match farmers with suitable local mentors who can provide advice and help them develop farm management plans.

As well as working with their individual mentors and visiting each other's properties the group gets together regularly to share information.

The eight mentoring partnerships include farms based in Tarwin Lower, Mirboo and Mirboo North, Port Albert, Heath Hill, Devon North, Koonwarra, Fish Creek, Torwood and Woodside.

Scott Elliott, Yarram Yarram Landcare Network Coordinator, said the feedback from the program was extremely positive and a second phase was due to be rolled out in March.

“The initial focus has been on farm mapping and developing management plans. We're hoping to expand that to include looking at permaculture and ways to improve properties, so they get better biodiversity and production outcomes.”

Port Albert farmers, Sandy and Saul Stainer, have Fish Creek's Gary Wallis as a mentor and says the program is already yielding benefits.

“It's excellent to hear other people's stories and to see how Gary has implemented his ideas. It's great to meet like-minded people.”

“Gary gave us some great ideas and showed his enthusiasm for property conservation.”

The couple said their next step was to develop a total farm plan.

Other participants said the opportunity to meet other property owners, improve their knowledge and being able to ask questions in a safe environment was important.

The mentoring program is an extension of the traditional Landcare focus, where like-minded property owners come together to work on revegetation projects.

It is hoped that similar projects could be rolled out through other Landcare networks in the future.

The first phase of the mentoring project was supported through funding from the Victorian Landcare Grants.

Phase two will be supported by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority through funding from the Our Catchments, Our Communities program.

1 Mentors and mentees on a farm walk at Gary Wallis' property. *Scott Elliott*

2 Mentees at Permaculture day organised by Yarram Yarram Landcare Network. *Scott Elliott*

3 Permaculture teacher, Bob Tatnell, ready to take the group through their paces. *Scott Elliott*



WIMMERA

HORSHAM ANGLING CLUB REMOVING RUBBISH FROM BIG RIVER. WCMA

WIMMERA

KEY EVENTS AND INSIGHTS

- Year 3 of the Wimmera Southern Mallee Socio-Economic Value of Recreational and Environmental water survey continued and we eagerly await the results. Year 2 conservatively estimated that \$30.2 million (9.47% increase from year 1) was contributed to the local economy and a total physical and mental health benefit of \$5.4 million.
- As a result of the survey analysis and data it is exciting that the Northern Grampians Shire Council and the Stawell Angling club have created the Grampians Lake Fishing Competition, an event which will generate significant financial and social returns for the community.
- Dry weather had a big influence on the health of our catchment. Well below average rainfall and well above average temperatures from July 2018 until May 2019 resulted in limited river and stream flows and average to poor farming across the mid- to northern parts of the catchment.
- On a positive note the fragile platypus population on the Mackenzie River appears to be expanding their range. Fish surveys, undertaken as part of the feasibility investigation into providing environmental water to Mt Cole Creek, revealed some very positive results with good populations of Obscure Galaxias and Southern Pygmy Perch.
- Wimmera CMA contributed to Victoria achieving its target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions in 2050 by installing our own 54kW photovoltaic system.
- For the first time we used water for the environment to deliver cultural watering at "The Ranch" in Dimboola. This collaborative project between Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) and the Victorian Environmental Water Holder delivered many environmental and social outcomes.
- We also partnered with the Centre for Participation to deliver the "HeartLand Horsham" tree planting event with support from Horsham Urban Landcare Group and Wimmera Development Association. The event introduced city-based migrants to our community and showed them regional Victoria is a great place to live, work and raise a family.



Wimmera CMA

OUTPUT	TARGET	ACTUAL		
		STATE	C'WLTH	OTHER
1. STRUCTURAL WORKS				
1.1 Channel (km)	9	10		10
1.2 Water storage (no.)	27	29		29
1.3 Pump (no.)	1	1		1
1.5 Waterway structure (no.)	15	17		17
1.8 Monitoring structure (no.)	22	22		22
1.9 Fence (km)	130	124	17	141
1.10 Visitor Facility (no.)	14	16		16
1.11 Road (km)	10	12		12
1.12 Crossing (no.)	1	1		1
2. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS				
2.1 Vegetation (ha)	249	162	99	261
2.2 Weed control (ha)	2,883	2,584	426	3,010
2.3 Pest animal control (ha)	35,415	41,606	431	42,038
2.8 Earth works (no.)	30	3		3
2.9 Rubbish removal (ha)		1		1
3. MANAGEMENT SERVICES				
3.1 Grazing (ha)	1,064	897	374	1,270
3.3 Water (no.)	30	33		33
4. PLANNING AND REGULATION				
4.1 Approval and advice (no.)	230	262		262
4.2 Management agreement (no.)	60	68		68
4.3 Assessment (no.)	1,643	147	1,543	1,690
4.4 Engagement event (no. participants)	4,900	4,916	1,357	6,273
4.5 Partnership (no.)	46	52	2	54
4.6 Plan (no.)	115	119	5	124
4.7 Publication (no.)	20	19	4	23
4.8 Information management system (no.)	1	1		1



LOCATIONS

Wimmera region

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

1 threatened species response
 5 management agreements
 57ha weed control
 57ha pest animal control
 70ha revegetation
 200 volunteers
 2 newsletters
 25 nest boxes

PARTNERS

Birdlife Australia
 Kowree Farm Tree Group
 Trust for Nature
 Wimmera CMA
 Greening Australia

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy
 South-eastern Red-tailed Black
 Cockatoo Recovery Plan

FUNDING

Funded through the Australian
 Government's National Landcare
 Program

FOOD FOR THE FUTURE

“The information and education I’ve received has been amazing: The CMA pointed me to look at things I didn’t know about before I purchased the property,”

Kadnook landowner Alicia Rutter.

This integrated tenure blind project aimed to improve the trajectory of the recruitment of South-eastern Red-tailed Black Cockatoo by supporting land managers and the community to protect and enhance existing and create new feeding and nesting habitat to achieve an increase in overall extent.

A Kadnook landowner is urging farmers and other Wimmera residents to consider what changes they can make to their properties to protect endangered species. Alicia Rutter, who owns a few hundred acres of bushland near the town, said she was approached by Wimmera CMA about working to protect the South-eastern Red-tailed Black Cockatoo late last year.

“I applied online and had a representative from the CMA come out and do a walkover with me, to do a checklist of everything and what was around,” she said.

“They put together a proposal and got back to me before the end of the year and asked me if I was happy to sign off on it. Because my property is not farmland, it’s probably less restrictive than it would be to other people, so I had to maintain emerging weed, look out for new ones, monitor cockatoo numbers, bait foxes and keep up with fencing.”

Mrs Rutter said she received Australian Government funding to put towards these measures, with the remuneration depending on the individual site.

She said under a contract she signed, she is not allowed to remove or introduce any soil on 195 acres of her land over the next 10 years.

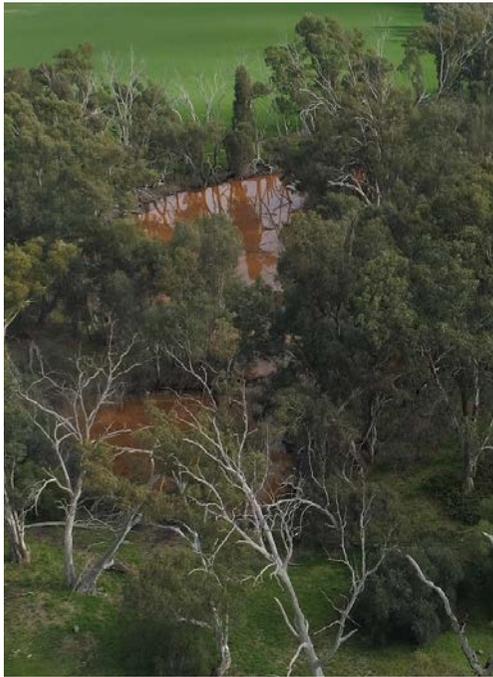
The CMA estimates 2,723 hectares of private land in the Wimmera is now dedicated to the species’ habitat.

Mrs Rutter, a home educator and arts therapist, purchased in the area in 2004 out of a desire to nurture land that needed to be cared for. She suggested residents approach their Catchment Management Authority for more information on how they could help if they wanted to.

“We often have groups of say 12 to 18 cockatoos flying over,” she said. “The next thing is to try and find out exactly where they are nesting, but they are around.”

1 South-eastern Red-tailed Black Cockatoo habitat secured through the project. *Wimmera CMA.*

2 Greening Australia tree hollow audit. *Wimmera CMA.*



WATERING THE BILLABONG



LOCATIONS

Dimboola

OUTPUTS 2018/2019

1 watering regime
50 participants

PARTNERS

Barengi Gadjin Land Council
Wimmera CMA
Victorian Environmental Water Holder

REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy
Wimmera Waterway Strategy
Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC)
Country Plan: Growing What is Good

FUNDING

Funded through the Victorian government's \$4.7 million Aboriginal Water Program and \$222 million Water for Victoria initiative.

“The watering is expected to improve the health of stressed red gums, encourage re-establishment of plant life and improve water quality. This exciting project will have many cultural and environmental benefits and is the result of extensive community consultation and planning.”

Wimmera CMA chief executive David Brennan.

Wotjobaluk Peoples marked the anniversary of their 2005 Native Title Consent Determination by returning water to one of their most culturally significant sites along the Wimmera River. The first ever environmental watering at The Ranch Billabong was supported by Wimmera CMA and the Victorian Environmental Water Holder in partnership with Barengi Gadjin Land Council.

Barengi Gadjin Land Council and Wotjobaluk Traditional Owners kicked off environmental watering at The Ranch Billabong at Dimboola on December 14.

The water was from the Victorian Environmental Water Holder's Wimmera and Glenelg Rivers water for the environment allocation.

Barengi Gadjin Land Council owns and manages The Ranch Billabong on the western side of the bridge at Dimboola.

Stuart Harradine, Water Officer at Barengi Gadjin Land Council and a Wotjobaluk Traditional Owner, is looking forward to restoration of the site and the outcomes that will result.

“Restoration of the billabong has been something our community has been keen to see for many years,” Stuart said.

“Barengi Gadjin Land Council has received funding to help achieve some of its goals for the site such as restoring native plant and animal habitats, and having water is a key part of this.”

The watering will lead to an improvement in the abundance of Old Man Weed, also known as Sneezeweed. This native wetland plant is a ‘mudflat’ species that grows once water levels recede and is traditionally important to the Wotjobaluk Peoples for medicinal purposes.

“We are also improving access and knowledge sharing at the site with tracks and interpretive signage,” Stuart said.

The Ranch Billabong area has been home to many generations of Wotjobaluk people, long before European settlement and increasingly after Ebenezer Mission at Antwerp closed. The cultural connection to the site remains and the land was sold to Barengi Gadjin Land Council in 2005. Plans for its management are included in the Growing What is Good Country Plan, Voices of the Wotjobaluk Nations.

1 The Ranch Billabong. *Wimmera CMA*

2 BGLC Water Officer Stuart Harradine at the Ranch Billabong Dec 2018. *Wimmera CMA*



<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=679137279233514>

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www.wcma.vic.gov.au



Australian Government

**National
Landcare
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