

Media Release

The Hon Lisa Neville MP
Minister for Police
Minister for Water



Wednesday, 15 December 2021

PROTECTING THE WATERWAYS OF MELBOURNE'S WEST

The Andrews Labor Government is protecting the iconic rivers and creeks in Melbourne's western suburbs – improving access and amenities, tackling pollution, and ensuring appropriate development so our waterways continue to thrive for future generations.

Waterways of the West Action Plan follows two years of extensive consultation and is informed by a 50-year Community Vision, which highlights their aspirations and expectations for the protection of their much-loved waterways.

Waterways of the West includes the network of creeks and rivers from Moonee Ponds (*Moonee Moonee*) Creek to Little River (*Worrin-yaloke*), including the Maribyrnong (*Mirrangbamurn*) and Werribee (*Wirribi Yaluk*) rivers and their tributaries, and other waterways such as Stony Creek, Skeleton Creek, Steele Creek and Lollypop Creek.

This new approach to waterways management put Traditional Owners voices at the centre of decision-making. The Bunurong, Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Traditional Owners will be part of every planning and decision-making process so their aspirations for Country and culture are recognised.

The effects of rapid population growth and climate change demand better management to make sure our rivers and creeks stay healthy. The Government is implementing new planning controls to protect the waterways from inappropriate development across local government areas.

An independently chaired Waterway Pollution Prevention Taskforce will also be established to identify pollution hot spots, the key industries contributing to that pollution and strategies to tackle the issue.

The Labor Government is contributing \$3.6 million to deliver the Waterways of the West Action Plan and Melbourne Water is investing \$42.8 million over the next five years on drainage and stormwater improvement projects, which will revegetate more than 1,300 hectares of land and maintain more than 2,600 hectares of riparian vegetation in western waterways.

The Government is also calling for submissions to the draft Gippsland and Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy to seek the community's views on options to meet increasing demand for water in a drying climate. Have your say at engage.vic.gov.au/central-and-gippsland-region-sustainable-water-strategy.

To read more about Waterways of the West Action Plan visit: water.vic.gov.au/waterways-and-catchments/wow

Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Lisa Neville

"I would like to recognise the work of the Ministerial Advisory Committee, the Traditional Owners, stakeholders and more than 250 community members who contributed."

"We're caring for our rivers, creeks and riparian landscapes as unique, interconnected living systems, protecting them from pollution and overdevelopment."

Quote attributable to Minister for Planning Richard Wynne

"New planning policy and controls – to be delivered across the life of the action plan – will work to safeguard the natural landscape and amenity values of the Waterways of the West from inappropriate development."

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