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Minister for the Environment and Water

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Minister for Water

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Minister for Environment

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP THE PLATYPUS THRIVE

The Albanese and Allan Labor Governments are investing in game changing environmental projects that will restore critical habitat for our beloved platypus and threatened frogs and native fish species.

The landmark \$24 million Platy Patch project will work to improve critical habitat at 14 sites across Victoria over the next four years under the guidance of Victoria's leading ecological research centre, the Arthur Rylah Institute [ARI].

The project is jointly funded by the Albanese Labor Government's Natural Heritage Trust under the Urban Rivers and Catchments Program, the Allan Labor Government and Melbourne Water.

Platypus are considered vulnerable in Victoria, with evidence of a population decline across the state.

The species requires stable river and stream banks to burrow, as well as plenty of riverbank vegetation and woody habitat to provide food.

Rehabilitation works funded by the Platy Patch project will include extensive revegetation, weed control and replanting of woody habitat in waterways.

Smart water rain tanks will also be installed and used along Monbulk Creek to ensure creek flows are appropriate throughout the year.

Catchment Management Authorities, Melbourne Water, Coliban Water, One Tree Planted, Zoos Victoria, the Australian Platypus Conservancy, various local governments, Parks Victoria, Landcare and DEECA will work together with ARI on the restorative project.

The project is one of 11 in Victoria to share in \$44.3 million of grant funding from the Albanese Labor Government's Natural Heritage Trust under Round Two of the Urban Rivers and Catchments Program.

This includes two projects with Melbourne Water, receiving almost \$20 million in Albanese Labor Government funding and matching funding from the Allan Labor Government, that will 'daylight' approximately 1.7 kilometres of underground drains.

- The Reimagining Eumemmerring Creek and Reimagining Tarralla Creek projects will bring water back to the surface, recreating natural, meandering waterways. The works will restore and preserve the habitats for a range of native mammals, waterbirds, fish and frog species, while also providing green spaces for the community to enjoy.
- The Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust is receiving \$8.3 million in Albanese Labor Government funding to transform the Bunurong Memorial Park in Dandenong South into diverse habitat for native species, with vegetated wetlands, creating an ecological link into the nearby Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands Ramsar site.

This compliments the more than \$609 million the Alban Labor Government has invested since 2014 in biodiversity and the natural environment under *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037*, Victoria's plan to stop the decline of our native plants and animals and improve our natural environment.

Quote attributable to Federal Minister for the Environment and Water, Murray Watt:

"Many native plants and animals are reliant on our rivers, creeks, wetlands, and estuaries, which is why the Albanese Government is committed to restoring rivers and waterways in our suburbs with a \$200 million investment through the Urban Rivers and Catchments Program.

"This funding will benefit a range of species who call these waterways home, as well as local communities who will have better quality urban green space.

"We're pleased to partner with the Victorian Government and a range of local organisations to deliver this important project."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Gayle Tierney:

"This is a significant collaboration that brings together extensive knowledge and experience that will ensure we're protecting and enhancing these important habitats for the platypus and other threatened species.

"Work to protect and restore Victoria's waterways and catchments is vital to support the state's native wildlife."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Environment Steve Dimopoulos

"The platypus is an iconic Australian species and we're making sure it, and a range of other threatened species, have the habitats they need to thrive."

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