



VICTORIAN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES

ACTIONS & ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT 2013/14

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FOREWORD



**THE HON.
PETER WALSH MP**

MINISTER FOR
AGRICULTURE AND
FOOD SECURITY

MINISTER FOR WATER

The Victorian Coalition Government is committed to maintaining healthy and productive catchments. The resilience of Victoria's environment, communities and industries underpins the prosperity and liveability of our state and the livelihoods of all Victorians.

Catchment management is delivered through a coordinated, community-based approach with a focus on ensuring government funds are effectively applied and leverage as much public benefit as possible.

Central to management of our catchments is the partnership between catchment management authorities, the Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Parks Victoria, water authorities, regional communities, local government, businesses and landholders.

The Actions and Achievements Report 2013/14 demonstrates the ongoing achievements of this partnership. The report shows the broad range of activities undertaken across Victoria's catchments to improve the environmental condition of Victoria's waterways, land and biodiversity.

These achievements have all been delivered through Victorian Government funding and coordinated by the 10 Catchment Management Authorities.

Importantly, the report showcases the contribution catchment management makes to supporting practical local action that benefits the environment and the Victorian community.

The report also highlights the importance of good governance to help drive continuous improvement and make sure that the community's valuable resources are targeted where they have the most impact.

We commend our 10 Catchment Management Authorities for their vital contribution to looking after our catchments and congratulate them for producing this valuable report. We hope that readers find this publication useful and it encourages them to continue to contribute to the long-term health of our catchments.



**THE HON.
RYAN SMITH MP**

MINISTER FOR
ENVIRONMENT AND
CLIMATE CHANGE

^ Top: The Hon. Peter Walsh MP (on right) and Steve Ryan from Glenelg Hopkins CMA at the launch of the 'Text a Carp' program

Above: The Hon. Ryan Smith MP helping to install a nest box during a visit to East Gippsland

< Valleys near Apollo Bay (Photo: Corangamite CMA)

The Hon. Peter Walsh MP
Minister for Agriculture and Food Security
Minister for Water

The Hon. Ryan Smith MP
Minister for Environment
and Climate Change

VALUE:

...the environment and
what it has to offer

ACT:

...to protect, conserve
and maintain the
environment

ENJOY:

...the wide range of
benefits of a healthy
environment now and
into the future

OVERVIEW

IMPLEMENTING THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT'S ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS PRIORITIES

The Victorian Government's *Environmental Partnerships* approach was launched in November 2012 and is built on three aspirations: **Value** the environment and what it has to offer; **Act** to protect, conserve and maintain the environment; and **Enjoy** the wide range of benefits of a healthy environment now and into the future.

Eight priorities have been identified to help achieve these aspirations and Victoria's 10 Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) are at the coalface of implementing many of them.

State-wide priorities, such as those expressed in *Environmental Partnerships*, needs to be broken down into the regional scale for implementation. Victoria's 10 Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) are at the coalface of this regional implementation.

This 2013/14 report is the first attempt to standardise and combine our regional reporting. While this first report will not be perfect, it is a start. We expect our approach will evolve over time, as data systems and standards are refined.

The report highlights actions delivered by funding administered and coordinated by CMAs. As evidenced in the report, many delivery partners, agencies, community interest groups and individuals contribute to the achievements in this report. Generating partnerships and involvement is a key principle behind CMA programs.

The reported achievements are those that have been derived from Victorian Government funding only at this stage. Next year we will apply the Victorian standard outputs methodology to incorporate achievements from other funding sources as well.

This report is designed to achieve the following:

- **Describe outputs simply –**
Outputs are the results of the work we do to improve the environment.
- **Aggregate outputs –**
To consistently report each CMA's contribution to *Environmental Partnerships* priorities at a state-wide level.
- **Improve accountability –**
Improve the transparency and use of information through consistently applying standard outputs.

The report structure is as follows:

OVERVIEW:

Report context and a snapshot of some major outputs achieved state-wide in 2013/14.

REGIONS AT A GLANCE:

Brief description of each CMA region.

KEY FOCUS AREAS:

Highlight state-wide outputs under each of three key focus areas for CMAs, including a description of their relationship with *Environmental Partnerships* priorities.

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:

Case study stories from each CMA region.

OUTPUTS BY REGION:

Outputs for each CMA and key insights or events.

< Local seed collection forms the basis of revegetation activities
(Photo: West Gippsland CMA)

\$95 MILLION:

...in State Government investment through CMAs

\$58 MILLION:

...in additional investment from other sources

\$229 MILLION:

...in estimated co-contributions by community

✓ A Gippsland Grammar student assists Maffra and Districts Landcare Network's revegetation activities
(Photo: Maffra and Districts Landcare Network)

OVERVIEW

2013/14: INVESTMENT AND OUTPUTS

During 2013/14, the following total investment was made across Victoria's 10 CMA regions:

**\$95
MILLION**

IN STATE
GOVERNMENT
INVESTMENT
THROUGH CMAs

**\$58
MILLION**

IN ADDITIONAL
INVESTMENT FROM
OTHER SOURCES

**\$229
MILLION**

IN ESTIMATED
CO-CONTRIBUTIONS
BY COMMUNITY

As a result, a huge number of outputs were achieved.

Highlights related to State Government funded options include:

34,479

**EVENT
PARTICIPANTS**

... that is over 172 people
participating in local
events each working day

471 KM

OF FENCES

... that is about the distance from
Melbourne to Echuca and back

6,185

**PLANNING
APPROVALS AND
ADVICE PROVIDED**

... that is about one every 15
minutes of every working day

22,878 HA

OF WEED CONTROL

... that is about five times the
size of the City of Melbourne

2,746 HA

**OF VEGETATION
ESTABLISHMENT OR
MAINTENANCE**

... that is over 1,373 times the
size of the Melbourne Cricket
Ground oval

46,240 HA

**OF PEST ANIMAL
CONTROL**

... that is over four times the
size of Phillip Island

NOTE: The data above is presented to approximate scale and reflect outputs related to State Government funding only. The community co-contribution figure is based on modelled assumptive data derived from the Catchment Condition and Management Report 2012, Victorian Catchment Management Council. The 'working day' figures assume an eight hour day and 200 work days per year. The City of Melbourne Municipality covers an area of approximately 4,000 ha, the Melbourne Cricket Ground about 2 ha and Phillip Island around 10,000 ha.

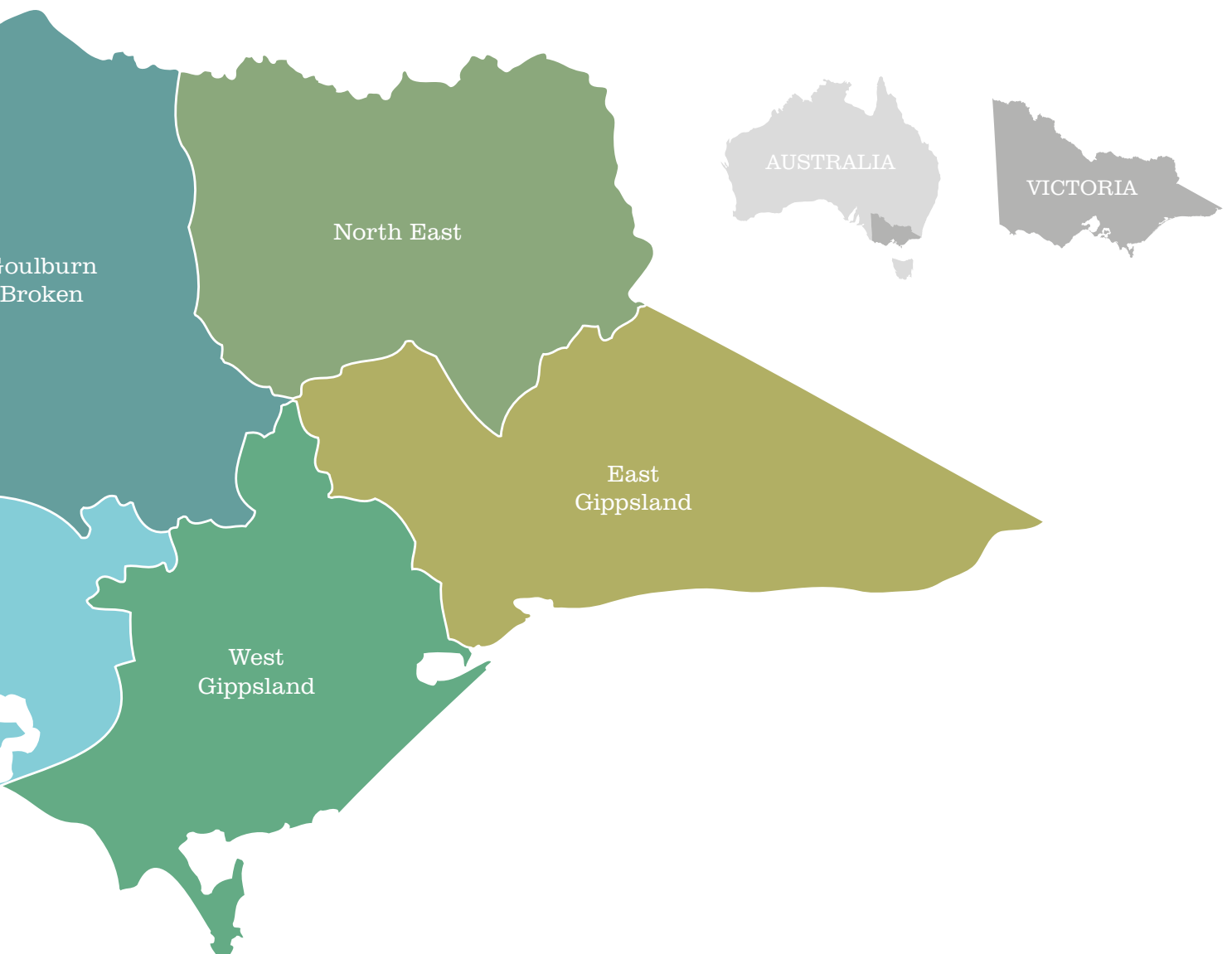


REGIONS AT A GLANCE

VICTORIA HAS A STRONG INTEGRATED CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK ESTABLISHED UNDER THE CATCHMENT AND LAND PROTECTION ACT 1994.

Under this *Act*, Victoria is divided into 10 catchment regions (see map below) with a CMA overseeing each region. The CMAs also have responsibilities under parts of the *Water Act 1989*.

CMAs are designed to maximise community involvement in decision-making. Each CMA is comprised of a board of local people, with delivery through staff, contractors and partners. Following is a brief description of the 10 regions from each community Chairperson.



CMA's are designed to maximise community involvement in decision-making.

Each CMA is comprised of a board of local people, with delivery through staff, contractors and partners.

Following is a brief description of the 10 regions from each community Chairperson.



WIMMERA

CHAIR: Karen Douglas

The Wimmera region covers 30,000 square kilometres and straddles the Wimmera River. One quarter of the 50,000 people who live in the region depend directly on agriculture for their income. Natural Wimmera features include more than 3,000 wetlands, and the Grampians and Little Desert national parks.

The region is home to 1,500 species of native plants, 420 species of native animals and more than 2,000 sites of Indigenous archaeological significance.



NORTH CENTRAL

CHAIR: David Clark

The North Central CMA region encompasses a diverse landscape, extending from the foothill forests of the Great Dividing Range in the south to the riverine plains and Murray River in the north.

The region is agriculturally diverse with extensive areas of irrigation, productive cropping and mixed farming enterprises and cropping and grazing country in the mid and upper catchments.



MALLEE

CHAIR: Sharyon Peart

The Mallee region runs along the Murray River from Nyah to the South Australian border; and south through vast dryland cropping areas and public reserve.

The Mallee lies primarily within two broad landform regions: the Riverine Plain and the Mallee dune fields.

A number of significant wetlands can be found in the region, including the Hattah Lakes system.



GOULBURN BROKEN

CHAIR: Murray Chapman

The Goulburn Broken catchment extends north from the outskirts of Melbourne to the River Murray.

The catchment boasts a diversity of landscapes including seasonally snow-covered alps, forests, granitic outcrops, gentle sloping plains, box woodlands and red gum floodplains. Primary industries include dairy, horticulture, viticulture, livestock production, cropping, and timber production.



NORTH EAST

CHAIR: Lynette Coulston

Victoria's North East extends across 1.9 million hectares between the River Murray in the north, Victorian Alps in the south and the Warby Ranges in the west.

Key industries include agriculture (dairy, beef, wool, cropping and horticulture), forest industries, tourism and value-added processing industries, particularly in the region's two largest centres of Wangaratta and Wodonga.



GLENELG HOPKINS

CHAIR: Michael Waggoner

The Glenelg Hopkins region is characterised by flat volcanic plains in the south, with the Grampians, Dundas Tablelands and Central Highlands dominant in the north.

The region contains 44 per cent of Victoria's wetlands and 10 per cent of Victoria's threatened species. It is a highly productive region for agriculture – particularly for dairy, beef, sheep and cropping.



CORANGAMITE

CHAIR: Alice Knight

The Corangamite region extends across 1.3 million hectares of land, with 78 per cent in private ownership.

The region has rich and diverse landscapes, ranging from expansive volcanic plains, to coastal environments, and the Otway Ranges.

The diverse and productive landscapes support production forests, cropping, grazing, horticulture, viticulture and dairy enterprise.



PORT PHILLIP AND WESTERNPORT

CHAIR: Neville Goodwin

With an area of 1.3 million hectares and a population of approximately 4.2 million, the Port Phillip and Westernport region is the most populous of Victoria's 10 catchment management regions.

The region is known for having farmlands, vineyards, national parks, native animals, beaches, bays and spectacular vistas all within close proximity to the state's capital city, Melbourne.



WEST GIPPSLAND

CHAIR: Angus Hume

The West Gippsland catchment region extends from Warragul through to the Gippsland Lakes and the Great Dividing Range to Wilsons Promontory.

The West Gippsland Region provides 95 per cent of Victoria's electricity, 60 per cent of Melbourne's water storage capacity, and 20 per cent of Australia's milk production. The region contains well known natural assets such as forests, rivers and wetlands.



EAST GIPPSLAND

CHAIR: Peter Venkeer

East Gippsland is predominantly publicly owned land comprising state forests, and national and coastal parks.

About 41,000 people live along the coastal plains or the strips of farming land up the river valleys and on the mountain plateaux. The productive use of the region's assets is highly valued and includes farming, tourism, manufacturing, lifestyle and conservation.



KEY FOCUS 1:

...engage Victoria's communities in natural resource management

KEY FOCUS 2:

...protect and improve the environmental condition of Victoria's waterways, land and biodiversity

KEY FOCUS 3:

...provide good governance and leadership



KEY FOCUS AREAS

This section highlights some of the 2013/14 outputs related to three key focus areas for Victorian CMAs. It includes a description of how these relate to *Environmental Partnerships* priorities.

The focus areas are:

KEY FOCUS ONE

ENGAGE VICTORIA'S
COMMUNITIES IN
NATURAL RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

KEY FOCUS TWO

PROTECT AND IMPROVE
THE ENVIRONMENTAL
CONDITION OF
VICTORIA'S WATERWAYS,
LAND AND BIODIVERSITY

KEY FOCUS THREE

PROVIDE GOOD
GOVERNANCE AND
LEADERSHIP

Incentives are offered by CMAs to encourage landholders to fence off waterways and protect vegetation. Such incentives were used in Corangamite CMA's Gellibrand River project where community partnerships have been operating for more than 12 years and have resulted in more than 348,000 trees planted, 102 ha of weeds removed including 144 km of willows, 110 ha fenced and 100 landowners involved.



34,479:

...participants in
engagement events

1,396:

...partnerships were
created

746:

...new publications

KEY FOCUS AREAS

KEY FOCUS 1 – ENGAGE VICTORIA'S COMMUNITIES IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



Engagement of communities in natural resource management is central to the work of Victorian CMAs. The three main outputs related to this focus area are: participation in engagement events, partnerships and publications.

During 2013/14, across the 10 Victorian CMAs, there were a total of:

34,479 participants in events

1,396 partnerships

746 publications.

On average, **each** CMA hosted about 3,440 participants in **engagement events** across our state in 2013/14.

These events included field days, presentations, training or workshops; each designed to raise awareness, increase collaboration or provide skills and training about an issue in natural resource management.

Events such as these are aimed at delivering on the Victorian Government's **Environmental Partnerships Priority 6 – To support practical local action.**

This priority seeks to:

- Create ways to attract new volunteers
- Help community groups to partner and grow
- Support Victorians to deliver worthwhile environmental projects and activities.

The creation of 1,396 new **partnerships** in 2013/14 provided the opportunity for CMAs to engage with industry and the community to support local action. It also helped to leverage additional funding.

A total of 746 new **publications** were created, such as fact sheets, media releases, newsletters, reports, social media content and website materials.

These publications helped to keep Victoria's many volunteers informed about what is happening and also encourage new people to get involved.

Victoria has hundreds of community-based groups, such as Landcare, Coastcare and 'Friends' groups, with a total of nearly 100,000 members. These groups, and many other volunteers, give their time, knowledge and energy to deliver on-ground projects in their local communities.

As such, engagement activities are a high priority for all CMAs.

< Since 1994, 28,000 volunteers have got involved in tree-planting and other activities to provide habitat for the threatened Regent Honeyeater and other birds in the Lurg Hills near Benalla (Photo: Goulburn Broken CMA)

471 KM:

...of fences to protect
waterways

6,185 APPROVALS:

...and advice provided

198 SITES:

...where the water regime
was changed

639 WATERWAY:

...structures installed
or modified

22,878 HA:

...of weed control

2,746 HA:

...of vegetation
establishment or
maintenance

46,240 HA:

...of pest animal control

KEY FOCUS AREAS

KEY FOCUS 2 – PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITION OF VICTORIA'S WATERWAYS, LAND AND BIODIVERSITY

This key area of focus concerns improving the environmental condition of Victoria's waterways. It contributes to the Victorian Government's *Environmental Partnerships Priority 1 – Maintain healthy biodiversity and productive landscapes from catchment to coast.*

The condition of waterways, productive land, and land in permanent reserve is highly interdependent. Therefore programs delivering outcomes for one major purpose can also contribute to another. For example, while fencing along a waterway may focus on achieving improved water quality, it can also benefit biodiversity through protecting revegetation that provides places for native animals to thrive.

The same fence can improve landholder's production as well through better stock and grazing management.

During 2013/14, across the 10 Victorian CMAs, there were a total of:

471 km of fences to protect waterways

6,185 approvals and advice provided

198 sites where the water regime was changed

639 waterway structures installed or modified

22,878 ha of weed control

2,746 ha of vegetation establishment or maintenance

46,240 ha of pest animal control.

By any measure these achievements are big. The partnerships between CMAs, other agencies, individuals and community groups have achieved practical action to protect and improve the landscape in a big way.

A couple of practical regional examples of key focus two in action are shown in the photos on pages 16-17.



Local landholders see up close and personal the production benefits of using alternative fertilisers at a field day in Strathbogie (Photo: Goulburn Broken CMA)

< Farmer, Tom Wallace with Gippsland Grammar Students as part of Maffra and Districts Landcare Network revegetation activities (Photo: Maffra and Districts Landcare Network)



514:

...plans or strategies

424:

...management
agreements

KEY FOCUS AREAS

KEY FOCUS 3 – PROVIDE GOOD GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Good governance and strong leadership from government agencies is the focus of *Environmental Partnerships Priority 8 – Ensuring accountable and efficient environment agencies.*



The priority seeks to:

- Build stronger governance and drive continuous improvement
- Target investment in programs that deliver measurable outcomes
- Improve, integrate and share information.

With these objectives in mind, the Victorian Catchment Management Forum (VCMF) was created by the 10 CMAs and DEPI.

The Forum is committed to achieving efficiency gains, producing a consistent Engagement and Partnerships framework and improving Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) processes.

In the last 19 months, the VCMF has collectively achieved:

\$4.35 million in total recurrent savings

A new Engagement and Partnerships Framework

A new Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) framework.

The recurrent savings are material and achieved through streamlining corporate and 'back of house' processes, such as changes to fleet management arrangements, provision of IT support and office accommodation arrangements.

The *Engagement and Partnerships* framework is now being embedded into the planning and implementation processes of each CMA, ensuring that members of the community have opportunities to be involved in the decisions that affect them and their environment.

This report is a result of the new MER framework. The framework helps ensure all agencies and boards have high standards of accountability in place.

With good governance structures in place and strong leadership, Victorian CMAs are ensuring their work is strategic, efficient and accountable.

The planning starts with a high-level *Regional Catchment Strategy*, developed by each CMA and all the way through to individual property management plans with landholders, including legal conservation covenants attached to title.

During 2013/14, across the 10 Victorian CMAs, there were a total of:

514 plans or strategies

424 management agreements.

All Victorian CMAs completed a new Regional Operating Agreement (ROA) with DEPI and Parks Victoria regional offices this year. The agreements are designed to provide clarity around responsibilities and improve service delivery amongst these three regional agencies.



REGIONAL CASE STUDIES

**THIS SECTION PROVIDES A
SNAPSHOT OF CMA OUTPUTS FROM
AROUND THE STATE.**

It showcases a range of interesting stories – partnerships with local farmers, exciting results for native fauna and engagement with both young and old – and demonstrates that CMAs are having a significant impact on the ground.

The location of the case study projects is shown on the map below.



Above: Victorian outputs map which shows the locations of the works highlighted in the case studies.

< Campfire and Culture 2014 event, Wanderers Plains (Photo: North Central CMA)

PROJECT:

The Thriving Community
Wetlands project

INVESTMENT:

\$210,000

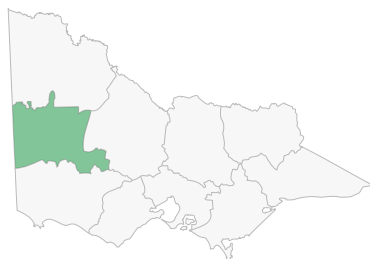
LOCATION:

The West Wimmera
Wetlands

“This is a real partnership.
Nature’s doing it partly, we’re
partly doing it and Wimmera
CMA’s helping too. It’s a real
combination of efforts.”

- Paul Jackman, Farmer

WIMMERA



WETLAND PARTNERSHIPS GROWING IN WEST WIMMERA

The objective of the 'Thriving Community Wetlands' project is to protect, enhance and restore wetlands that are highly valued by the community. Wetland protection incentives provide financial and technical support to landholders enabling them to undertake fencing, grazing management, revegetation and control of pest plants and animals to protect and enhance their wetlands.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Vegetation: **10 ha**
- Weed control: **260 ha**
- Management agreements: **9**
- Pest animal control: **130 ha**
- Approvals and advice: **1**

PARTNERS:

- West Wimmera Shire,
Trust for Nature and
Landcare

Paul Jackman has focussed on a 68 ha wetland on his property and says, "This is a real partnership. Nature's doing it partly, we're partly doing it and Wimmera CMA's helping too. It's a real combination of efforts."

"You get a big rain, the water arrives and the birds come practically overnight," Paul says. "The swans are the first... the water comes and they arrive straight away en masse. It's so good." Paul says landholder incentive programs such as these can be the difference between "people doing this sort of thing and not doing it."

There are an increased number of private landholders looking after these important wetlands in the Wimmera region. The project supports the farmer's efforts through incentives; this helps with the costs of completing environmental works.

The project forms part of a broader plan for wetlands in the Wimmera region. Wimmera CMA Chair, Karen Douglas says, "Preventing negative impacts to wetlands – from new developments and land-use change by working with local governments, agencies and other stakeholders to implement wetland-specific planning scheme overlays – is an ongoing priority for Wimmera CMA in the coming years."

PROJECT:

Thriving Community
Rivers Project

INVESTMENT:

\$464,000

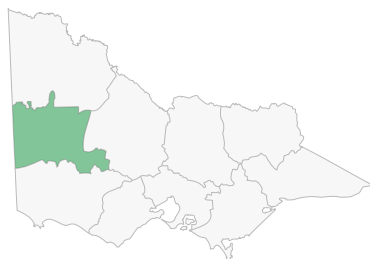
LOCATION:

Upper catchment of the
Wimmera River

“Before we fenced off the river, stock were really knocking the banks around, particularly the cattle. Since we’ve fenced it off the health of the waterway has definitely improved.”

- Peter Jackman, Farmer

WIMMERA



BENEFITS OF A HEALTHIER WIMMERA RIVER FLOW ON

The Wimmera River has a catchment of approximately 2.4 million ha. Wimmera CMA Chair, Karen Douglas says, “The area being treated is a high priority in the Wimmera Waterway Strategy and involves multiple partnerships in delivery. Our aim is to involve as many partners as we can, which makes the job of looking after our environment much easier.”

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Fence: **20 km**
- Vegetation: **14 ha**
- Weed control: **56 ha**
- Pest animal control: **28 ha**
- Waterway structures: **6**
- Publications: **1**
- Management plans: **1**
- Management agreements: **5**
- Assessments: **70**

PARTNERS:

- Local government, DEPI and Landcare

The objective of the project is to protect, enhance and restore river reaches that are highly valued by the community and consolidate benefits gained from environmental flows in the Wimmera River system. Financial and technical support to land managers and community groups assists them to improve management of riparian areas on high priority waterways, while large scale erosion control works on priority sites stabilises gullies and reduces sediment loads impacting high priority reaches downstream.

The way Dadswells Bridge farmer Peter Jackman sees it, “getting together with local Landcare members to fence off riparian areas is a great way to do something that benefits everyone, and by everyone I don’t just mean other farmers – I mean the whole community in the whole catchment. If we’re improving the health of our patch of river frontage by reducing sediment and erosion through fencing off stock for example, the benefits flow right through to the end of the river system.”

The project has delivered multiple benefits to landholders and the broader Upper Wimmera catchment community. The steep gradients of the hill country are prone to water erosion, particularly if the soil is exposed.

The heavy rains of 2010 and 2011 resulted in widespread flooding and damage to buildings and infrastructure. Coordinating projects to improve the quality of water in rivers and streams is an ongoing priority for Wimmera CMA.

PROJECT:

Mallee Irrigation Status
Report

INVESTMENT:

\$58,000

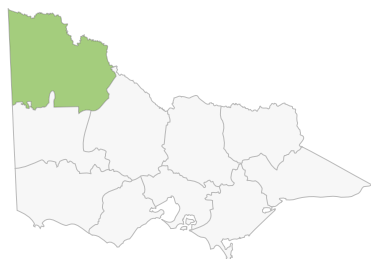
LOCATION:

Five major Mallee pumping
districts

“The report provides the community, industry groups and government with really important information that reflects how the horticulture sector is travelling and this will help inform industry, on-farm and regional planning.”

- Sharyon Peart, Mallee Chair

MALLEE



IRRIGATION REPORT PROVIDES VALUABLE INFORMATION FOR GROWERS

Irrigators in north-west Victoria have started to bring land back into production, with a new study commissioned by Mallee CMA showing the area of irrigable land dried off from irrigation has decreased.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Publications: 1
- Assessments: 1

PARTNERS:

- Victorian Government, DEPI, Lower Murray Water and local Landholders

The 2013-14 'Irrigation Status Report' found a three per cent decrease in the area of land dried off from irrigation in the districts of Nyah, Robinvale, Red Cliffs, Mildura and Merbein compared to the previous 2011-12 season, while in the private diversion area around Nangiloc/Colignan, a two per cent decrease was recorded.

Mallee Chair, Sharyon Peart says "One driving principle of Mallee CMA is to involve local people in decision making. To this end, this project involved local growers conducting drive-by surveys. These farmers had a combined experience of more than 100 years in the irrigation sector in the Mallee and possessed considerable local knowledge, which meant they could quickly identify crop types and irrigation systems, thus providing a cost effective method of data collection."

Collecting the data is one thing, but using it is another. Ms Peart says "We produced a final report detailing the irrigation status across the Sunraysia pumped irrigation districts and older private diverter areas as at summer 2013/14. The report provides the community, industry groups and government with really important information that reflects how the horticulture sector is travelling and this will help inform industry, on-farm and regional planning."

The report contributes directly towards the 20 year objective of the Mallee *Regional Catchment Strategy* 2013-19 in relation to optimising the productive capacity of Mallee agricultural landscapes, while minimising any adverse impacts. The report is an important addition to the existing irrigation database that contains records of crop type and irrigation methods across the Mallee.

PROJECT:

Returning water to
southern Mallee wetlands

INVESTMENT:

\$95,000

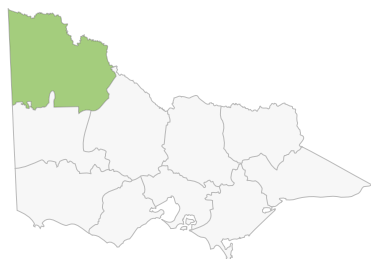
LOCATION:

Victorian Mallee, within the
identified Wimmera Mallee
Pipeline area from Sea Lake
in the north to Glenorchy in
the south

**“We are continuing to work
together to set annual watering
priorities for wetlands able
to receive water through the
Wimmera Mallee Pipeline,
and monitor the results.”**

- Sharyon Peart, Mallee Chair

MALLEE



BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO SOUTHERN MALLEE WETLANDS

Strong partnerships between the community and government agencies have successfully connected more than 50 wetlands to the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Water regime: **29**
- Partnerships: **4**

PARTNERS:

- Victorian Government, Mallee, Wimmera and North Central Catchment Management Authorities, Grampians-Wimmera-Mallee Water, Birchip Landcare Group and extensive community involvement

Many wetlands across the southern Mallee historically relied on water from the open channel system.

Through the 'Wimmera Mallee Pipeline' project, approximately 17,500 km of highly inefficient earthen water channels were converted to 8,800 km of reticulated pipeline, resulting in a number of significant water savings. These water savings have been redirected to deliver a range of environmental, economic and social benefits, including the connection of wetlands to the pipeline.

An entitlement of 1,000 ML per year has been allocated from water savings achieved by the pipeline to fill priority wetlands.

A total of 52 wetlands have now been connected, following assessment by the Wetlands Evaluation Team, which was facilitated by the Mallee CMA and included representatives from the community, Wimmera and North Central CMAs and Grampians-Wimmera-Mallee Water.

This project used an innovative approach to agency and community engagement that directly engaged community members, groups such as the Birchip Landcare Group, and government agencies in the selection, prioritisation and connection of wetlands, which resulted in strong community ownership.

The reconnected wetlands have transformed since the delivery of water, as illustrated by the observation of the rarely seen Australian painted snipe (*Rostratula australis*) at a wetland near Birchip. The Australian painted snipe is a threatened species that has suffered a significant decline in the past 30-50 years and researchers believe only very limited numbers remain in Australia.

Mallee Chair, Sharyon Peart says, "We are continuing to work together to set annual watering priorities for wetlands able to receive water through the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline, and monitor the results. The Mallee CMA is also working with the community and key stakeholders on the development of environmental management plans for wetlands within this system."

PROJECT:

Caring for the Campaspe

INVESTMENT:

\$970,000

LOCATION:

The Campaspe River, from
Ashbourne to Echuca

“People are interested in coming to a site where they can get easy and safe access; the community have demonstrated they are willing participants in revegetation programs, especially along rivers.”

- Brendan Smith, Parks Victoria Ranger

NORTH CENTRAL



CAMPASPE RIVER RECEIVES A FUNDING BOOST

North Central Chair, David Clark says, "The Campaspe River is identified as a priority river in the 2013 - 2019 North Central *Regional Catchment Strategy* for its ecological and recreational values."

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Fence: **6 km**
- Invasive weed control: **71 ha**
- Revegetation: **7 ha**
- Engagement event participants: **475**

PARTNERS:

- Parks Victoria, Goulburn-Murray Water, Landcare groups, DEPI, 3 Traditional Owner groups (Dja-Dja Wurrung, Yorta Yorta and Taungurung) and Private landholders

The 'Caring for the Campaspe' project aims to complement river health improvements gained through the delivery of environmental flows. Managing riparian (streamside) vegetation is also an important component of the project as it plays an important role in maintaining the health of rivers. A diversity of native trees, shrubs and grasses shade (cool) the water, hold the banks together and filter run-off from adjacent farmland.

It provides a source of food and shelter for both terrestrial and aquatic fauna, including Murray cod, platypus and threatened terrestrial species, e.g. swift parrots and squirrel gilders.

Parks Victoria Ranger Brendan Smith plays a key role in the project, liaising between Parks Victoria and neighbouring landholders, particularly during the burning phase of the willow removal works at Windmill Bridge Streamside Reserve.

"People are interested in coming to a site where they can get easy and safe access; the community have demonstrated they are willing participants in revegetation programs, especially along rivers" says Mr Smith.

The North Central CMA aims to involve as many partners as possible along the river in the delivery of the project. Further landholder engagement to help with on-ground works (such as fencing, revegetation and weed control) will be a priority. Willow control along the Campaspe River is likely to continue over the life of the project with a number of local communities along the waterway already showing considerable support.

This area is also a priority for the Commonwealth-funded Biodiversity Fund project – Kyneton Woodlands. A number of landholders have been able to take advantage of this flow-on investment.

PROJECT:

Bendigo Urban Flood Study

INVESTMENT:

\$478,300 for Flood Study
(of which \$91,400 was for
Community Engagement)

LOCATION:

City of Greater Bendigo

“The study is all about the wellbeing of the Bendigo community, and so teaming a consultation program with the thorough technical work in the study has been crucial.”

- David Clark, North Central Chair

NORTH CENTRAL



COMMUNITY INVOLVED IN BENDIGO FLOOD STUDY

The North Central CMA, in partnership with the City of Greater Bendigo, is leading the Bendigo Urban Flood Study. The study has produced up-to-date flood information, including flood model scenarios, for urban Bendigo. The CMA has undertaken the largest community engagement exercise in its history to ensure residents in the Bendigo municipality understand the results of the study and how it may affect them.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Engagement event participants: **600**
- Publications: **1**
- Partnerships: **3**

PARTNERS:

- City of Greater Bendigo, Victorian State Emergency Service and City of Greater Bendigo residents

North Central Chair, David Clark says, "The study is all about the wellbeing of the Bendigo community, and so teaming a consultation program with the thorough technical work in the study has been crucial. The feedback we've received will assist the North Central CMA, the City of Greater Bendigo and emergency services such as the SES to prepare for and respond to flooding in our city."

Information gathered from the project will help to ensure that appropriate development, emergency response and informed infrastructure design is undertaken in the catchment. The consultation component is enabling residents to comment on the accuracy of the model, understand the likely consequences of flooding and impacts of revised planning schemes.

This project was the largest advice and consultation initiative ever conducted by the CMA. It involved 9,217 letters to residents, 12 community engagement events, and phone responses to inquiries from residents. Lessons learnt from the consultation process led to the one-on-one approach, which proved much more constructive.

The future use of the information includes:

- Supporting City of Greater Bendigo in planning scheme updates using the new model and mapping
- Supporting Victorian SES to revise planning for emergency response
- Improving referral decisions to minimise flood risks to new developments and community.

A person wearing a yellow shirt and a hat is working in a field. They are holding a blue hose. In the background, there is a river and some trees. The top of the page has a decorative border with golden wheat stalks.

PROJECT:

Fruit Industry Employment
Program (FIEP)

INVESTMENT:

\$2 million

LOCATION:

Along waterways around
Shepparton, Tatura, Cobram
and other towns across the
Agricultural Floodplains in
the Catchment's north

**“As well as achieving the
environmental work outcomes,
we hope to see all program
participants employed in other
sectors and/or undertaking
further training to shift into
new industries.”**

- Murray Chapman, Goulburn Broken CMA Chairman

GOULBURN BROKEN



FRUIT INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM RESPONDS TO IMMEDIATE NEED

Goulburn Broken CMA coordinated an employment program for orchard workers affected by the announcement last August by local food manufacturing company SPC Ardmona (SPC-A) that it intended to cut its canned fruit (pear) intake. The main aim of the program was to provide employment and income for workers while the industry underwent structural adjustment.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Fence: **33 km**
- Weed control: **670 ha**

PARTNERS:

- Goulburn Murray Water, Parks Victoria, Greater Shepparton City Council, Moira Shire Council and 30 people employed

After induction and training (first aid, chemical handling and construction card), program participants carried out weed control, fencing, rubbish removal and other activities to improve the health of the region's waterways and landscapes.

The program has employed 30 people to date. The program was based on previous successful State Government programs run in the catchment that provided employment to landholders affected by drought and flood.

The program continued to allow the affected communities to keep skilled people in the district while providing support to important environmental projects that improve and protect local waterways and landscapes.

The program has been designed in consultation with orchardists to be flexible. This allows participants to stay involved in their orchards to make important decisions about the business in an ever-changing operating environment.

Goulburn Broken CMA Chairman, Murray Chapman says, "SPC-A is a major employer in our catchment. We were able to respond quickly to support our community during this time because of the well-established partnerships we have developed over the years.

"As well as achieving the environmental work outcomes, we have provided program participants with employment and further training that has helped them shift into new sectors, as well as providing income until they move on as other job opportunities in the community become available."

PROJECT:

Farm Water Program

INVESTMENT:

\$39.53 million

LOCATION:

Irrigation properties
across the GMW water
services area

“We hope we can continue these types of works into the future as modernisation of irrigation networks contributes to the Victorian targets of increasing the diversity and efficiency of agricultural production.”

- Murray Chapman, Goulburn Broken CMA Chairman

GOULBURN BROKEN



IRRIGATION UPGRADES CREATE MORE EFFICIENT WATER USE

Goulburn Broken CMA's 'Farm Water Program' helps irrigators achieve farm water savings by funding upgrades to farm irrigation systems. The water savings are shared between farmers and the environment. The program complements the Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) Connections Program's \$2 billion upgrade of the irrigation water delivery network.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Irrigation structure: **11,875 ha** (18,224 ha achieved over the two year life of the project)

PARTNERS:

- North Central CMA, Goulburn Murray Water, Dairy Australia, Murray Dairy, DEPI and Northern Victorian Irrigators

Participant Jarrod Lukies says, "The project has been terrific for the district. Irrigators that have got involved are saving time, labour and water use."

Hundreds of jobs have been created, which provides a welcome boost to local economies. This includes jobs for fencing and earthmoving contractors, irrigation designers, and irrigation manufacturing workers.

The on-farm upgrades help address risks that affect farm productivity by reducing water logging and nutrient run-off, and the re-emerging salinity and water table threats the region is facing as a result of recent flooding and wet weather.

The water savings generated by the program will help Victoria meet its commitment under the Murray Darling Basin Plan to return water to the environment.

Goulburn Broken CMA Chair Murray Chapman says, "We hope we can continue these types of works into the future as modernisation of irrigation networks contributes to the Victorian targets of increasing the diversity and efficiency of agricultural production."

This project is helping deliver a range of *Regional Catchment Strategy* priorities, and building the resilience of our catchment."

PROJECT:

Omeo Flood Recovery
Program – Livingstone
Creek

INVESTMENT:

\$500,000

LOCATION:

Livingstone Creek, Omeo

**“Working with community to
strengthen partnerships is a
key priority of the North East
Regional Catchment Strategy.”**

- Lyn Coulson, North East CMA Chair

NORTH EAST



LIVINGSTONE PARK OMEO GETS A BOOST

In June 2012, Omeo had its highest recorded one day rainfall event. Restoration of Livingstone Creek following this event involved strengthening partnerships between Government and the community.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Publications: **1**
- Partnerships: **2**
- Engagement event participants: **25**
- Waterway structures: **5**
- Revegetation: **1 ha**

PARTNERS:

- East Gippsland Shire Council, Gunaikurnai Land & Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC), Omeo Primary School, Landcare and Community groups, Local Contractors, DEPI and Australian Government (financial contributors)

Livingstone Park is now far more resilient to future flood events, environmentally much healthier, and is once again a great place to visit and enjoy. A celebration of the restoration program's completion and a true partnership project occurred in December 2013 with local MP Tim Bull and local government councillors recognising the efforts of the community and government agencies.

The project helped leverage \$250,000 of additional funding through East Gippsland Shire Council and gained in-kind participation of over 50 hours effort from volunteers. Omeo Primary School students also planted approximately 15,000 plants.

North East CMA Chair, Lyn Coulson says "Working with community to strengthen partnerships is a key priority of the North East *Regional Catchment Strategy*. The next step is to continue involvement of the Omeo community in NRM activities through a partnership approach that achieves their objectives.

The East Gippsland Shire Council and the CMA have established an MoU that will strengthen cooperation and the way we work with our communities."

PROJECT:

Waterwatch for North East regional communities affected by floods

INVESTMENT:

\$70,000

LOCATION:

Along the Ovens River and associated tributaries in North East Victoria

“We want as many people involved in looking after our environment as we can.”

- Lyn Coulson, North East CMA Chair

NORTH EAST



WATERWATCHERS FOCUS ON THE OVENS RIVER

Major flooding in the North East region from May 2010 to May 2012 triggered unprecedented community interest in participating in the CMA's Waterwatch program.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Publications: **1**
- Partnerships: **3**
- Plans: **1**
- Engagement event participants: **50**
- Information management systems: **1**
- Assessments: **50**

PARTNERS:

- Councils (Rural City of Wangaratta, Rural City of Wodonga, Alpine Shire Council, Indigo Council), North East Water, Landcare groups & interest groups (Ovens, Mudgegonga, Wangaratta Urban Landcare, Wangaratta Sustainability Group), Volunteer monitors

The North East Waterwatch program provides a valuable niche – it is the only monitoring program in the region actively engaging a broad sector of the community in water quality and catchment health issues.

By engaging with the Waterwatch program, the North East community are able to learn about how water quality in their part of the catchment has been affected by flooding and what they can do to build resilience in waterways and monitor the effects of future events.

The program has multiple partnerships in delivery including local shires, North East Water Corporation and the varied individuals and volunteer groups throughout the region.

CMA Chair Lyn Coulson says, "Working with communities to build resilience, and manage the natural resource base is a key priority of the North East *Regional Catchment Strategy*. We want as many people involved in looking after our environment as we can."

PROJECT:

Glenelg River Restoration
Project

INVESTMENT:

\$1,199,000

LOCATION:

Glenelg River
and tributaries

“Residents are now able to swim and fish in areas that were previously one flat sheet of sand. The works have reconnected the community back to the river.”

- Brian Murrell, Secretary of the Casterton Angling Club

GLENELG HOPKINS



COMMUNITY CELEBRATES NATIONAL RIVERPRIZE WIN

The 'Glenelg River Restoration Project' is an iconic project within the Glenelg Hopkins CMA region. Now in its 14th year, it is a long-term landscape scale project designed to restore health to the Glenelg River.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Fence: **53 km**
- Grazing regimes: **211 ha**
- Vegetation: **211 ha**
- Engagement event participants: **325**
- Plans: **3**
- Publications: **37**
- Partnerships: **31**
- Water regimes: **1**
- Water storages: **15**
- Management agreements: **17**
- Assessments: **8**

Glenelg Hopkins Chair Mike Wagg says, "In the early 2000s the Glenelg Hopkins CMA in conjunction with community groups and other agencies commenced the Glenelg River Restoration Project, which was an ambitious project to restore health to the Glenelg River."

Works have led to social and economic benefits to the Glenelg River community. Brian Murrell, long-term Casterton resident and secretary of the Casterton Angling Club, informs us that "Residents are now able to swim and fish in areas that were previously one flat sheet of sand. The works have reconnected the community back to the river."

The success of the Glenelg River Restoration Project was recognised in 2013, with a prize for the 'Most Outstanding Waterway Restoration Project' in the inaugural River Basin Society Awards; and through the Australian Riverprize Award.

Although the river is beginning to bounce back to life, there is still a long way to go. The Regional Waterway Strategy vision for the Glenelg River is "a healthier river system more resilient to drought and flooding events."

PARTNERS:

- DEPI, Parks Victoria, Landholders, Conservation Volunteers Australia, South Australian Research and Development Institute, Plantation companies, Greening Australia, Grampians-Wimmera-Mallee Water, Victorian Environmental Water Holder, Australian UAV, Casterton Angling Club, Vickeries Bros – Sand extraction

An aerial photograph showing a significant flood event. A multi-lane road runs vertically through the center of the image. To the right of the road, a large area of land is submerged in floodwater, with several trees and small structures visible above the surface. A bridge crosses a river or stream in the lower half of the image. The water appears dark and turbulent. The top and bottom of the page are decorated with a close-up image of golden wheat stalks.

PROJECT:

Skipton Flood Investigation

INVESTMENT:

\$85,000 plus \$35,000
from other partners

LOCATION:

Skipton

“Flood study work provided the basis for an amendment to the Corangamite Planning Scheme. This is important to ensure the latest flood information can be used in future planning decisions.”

- Mike Wagg, Glenelg Hopkins CMA Chair

GLENELG HOPKINS



SKIPTON FLOOD INVESTIGATION COMPLETE

Major flooding affected Skipton, in Victoria's Western District, from September 2010 to January 2011. Afterwards, Glenelg Hopkins CMA initiated a project to update flood models in order to support flood planning, response and recovery management.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Engagement event participants: **30**
- Assessments: **51**
- Publications: **8**
- Information management systems: **1**
- Partnerships: **6**
- Assessments: **24**

PARTNERS:

- Corangamite Shire, Skipton residents and landholders along Mount Emu Creek and Pyrenees Shire Council

CMA Chair Mike Wagg says, "The Skipton community provided substantial support throughout the delivery of the project. Community sessions were well attended and their inputs to aspects such as flood mitigation were vitally important to the project."

The CMA considered it important to get input and support from the community to ensure that the flood simulations and technical work involved the people affected. Further work on gauges was completed during the project. This additional information at flood times will help the community in flood preparedness.

"Flood study work provided the basis for an amendment to the Corangamite Planning Scheme. This is important to ensure the latest flood information can be used in future planning decisions," adds Mike.

The municipal emergency management plan has also been updated to include the new information.

PROJECT:

The Gellibrand River

INVESTMENT:

\$170,000

LOCATION:

Gellibrand River Catchment

**“In future we wish to
continue restoration works
and community monitoring
activities within the
Gellibrand catchment.”**

- Alice Knight, Corangamite CMA Chair

CORANGAMITE



BENEFITS OF A HEALTHIER GELLIBRAND RIVER FLOW ON

Corangamite CMA considers the Gellibrand River to be “the backbone of the Otways; supporting life, industry and recreational activities.” Among its values, the Gellibrand is an important water supply catchment, has an estuary with wetlands of national significance, and enjoys high recreational use.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Waterway structures: **1**
- Fence: **4 km**
- Management agreements: **2**
- Assessments: **10**
- Information management systems: **1**

PARTNERS:

- Landholders with waterway frontage, Waterwatch and EstuaryWatch volunteers

The ‘Gellibrand River’ project is about protecting those values and improving its health through achievement of a Corangamite *Regional Catchment Strategy* priority.

Community partnerships within this area have been operating for more than 12 years. As a result, more than 348,000 trees have been planted, 102 ha of weeds removed (including 144 km of willows), 110 ha of native vegetation has been fenced, and 100 landowners involved.

The official recording of a rare Australian grayling in the Gellibrand River in 2011 was the first in the catchment since scientists started monitoring in the early 1980s.

Corangamite CMA Chair, Alice Knight, says “In future we wish to continue restoration works and community monitoring activities within the Gellibrand catchment. We will also conduct future works monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of our catchment works in delivering long-term waterway health outcomes for the Gellibrand.”

PROJECT:

Environmental Water
Reserve: Moorabool River

INVESTMENT:

\$160,000

LOCATION:

Upper catchment of
the Moorabool River

“A comprehensive monitoring program for the Moorabool has been developed to evaluate the effectiveness of past watering events and improve the delivery of environmental water in future years.”

- Alice Knight, Corangamite CMA Chair

CORANGAMITE



MOORABOOL RIVER BENEFITS FROM INCREASED FLOWS

The Moorabool River Environmental Entitlement provides the environment with a share of the storage capacity and inflows at Lal Lal Reservoir. The environmental entitlement is specific to Lal Lal Reservoir and provides environmental benefits to the river downstream of the storage.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Water regimes: 1
- Plans: 1

PARTNERS:

- Victorian Environmental Water Holder, Central Highlands Water, Barwon Water, adjacent property owners and broader community

CMA Chair Alice Knight says, "On average 2,500 ML of environmental water is delivered annually in line with the annual seasonal watering plan. The delivery of this water along the Moorabool is improving conditions for fish, macro-invertebrates and vegetation by improving both habitat and protecting water quality."

These flows include:

- Three summer fresh flows of greater than 31 ML/day for 10 days. These flows allow upstream movement of fish, re-shape in-channel forms to maintain physical processes and physical habitat diversity and complexity
- Maintaining summer low flows of ~20 ML/day (December to May). These flows maintain fish habitat, maintain in-stream macrophyte species diversity and protect water quality

- When possible, the release of one winter fresh flow of greater than 146 ML/day. These flows maintain diverse macro-invertebrate community; limit encroachment of in-stream vegetation and species common to non-flowing water-bodies and protect water quality
- When possible, maintenance of winter low flows of 83 ML/day (June to November). These flows maintain fish habitat and maintain in-stream macrophyte diversity.

"A comprehensive monitoring program for the Moorabool has been developed to evaluate the effectiveness of past watering events and improve the delivery of environmental water in future years. In addition, funding has been secured to implement the program in 2014/15," adds Alice.

PROJECT:

Whitehorse Creek Biolink

INVESTMENT:

\$193,000

LOCATION:

Whitehorse Creek located in the upper Werribee Catchment between Ballan and Rowsley Valley to the west of Melbourne

“This project has involved multiple stakeholders in a collaborative way, and the vegetation link across this land will contribute to the overall goals of our *Regional Catchment Strategy*.”

- Neville Goodwin, Port Phillip and Westernport CMA Chairman

PORT PHILLIP AND WESTERNPORT



BIOLINKS AND LANDCARE INVOLVEMENT GROWING

The 'Whitehorse Creek Biolink' aims to protect remnant habitat and restore the landscape in the Upper Werribee Catchment, as well as involve local landholders and Landcare groups in addressing the threats to their land.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Fence: **6 km**
- Vegetation: **128 ha**
- Weed control: **128 ha**
- Pest control: **128 ha**

PARTNERS:

- Rowsley Landcare Group, Landholders, Melbourne Water, DEPI – Vision for Werribee Plains (financial contributors)

A secondary aim is to help reconstruct a biodiversity biolink for the health and diversification of native fauna in the region.

Port Phillip and Westernport CMA Chairman, Neville Goodwin, says, "This project has involved multiple stakeholders in a collaborative way, and the vegetation link across this land will contribute to the overall goals of our *Regional Catchment Strategy*".

"Seeing many landholders work together to create a connection between the Werribee Gorge State Park and the Brisbane Ranges National Park is wonderful. The CMA is proud to be playing a part in this work."

Thus far the project has transformed 128 ha of land through remnant enhancement and revegetation works. The local Landcare group have now received \$40,000 of external funding for NRM type projects, which will be delivered solely by them without the assistance of the CMA.

This group is now standing on their own two feet, with direct action helping increase the local Landcare membership base.

PROJECT:

Building skills to conserve and increase biodiversity in island revegetation

INVESTMENT:

\$20,000

LOCATION:

Phillip Island

“Future works in this project will include hosting training workshops with the Barb Martin Bushbank, extending seed collection activities on private land and improving the database, involving schools in propagation and seed collection activities, mapping strategic linkages in corridors across the island and continuing revegetation works that make corridors to the coast.”

- Neville Goodwin, Port Phillip and Westernport CMA Chairman

PORT PHILLIP AND WESTERNPORT



PHILLIP ISLAND REVEGETATION FOR ALL AGES

This small project located at Phillip Island, aims to conserve and increase biodiversity and volunteer participation through a new approach of combining training sessions, on ground revegetation works and creation of a seed collection database.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Fence: **1 km**
- Vegetation: **15 ha**
- Weed control: **15 ha**
- Engagement event participants: **116**

PARTNERS:

- Phillip Island Landcare Group (Lead), Newhaven College – 25 Year 9 students, Bass Coast Landcare Network, Barb Martin Bushbank Community Indigenous Nursery, six Landholders and Phillip Island Nature Parks

Working with the Barb Martin Bushbank, local environment groups, landholders, students at all levels and the general public are mapping and recording seed sources, revegetating six sites and educating each other in the whole process.

Some highlights of the project include,

- Five new regular weekly ongoing volunteers and 10 new intermittent volunteers to the Barb Martin Bushbank
- 25 students from Newhaven College Year 9 - Planting Day at Kitty Miller Wetlands; 1,900 plants across 4.1 ha to provide habitat for waterbirds
- Two additional revegetation sites (via one landholder) linking coastal vegetation
- Great community attendance, with more than 100 individuals receiving information and gaining skills in seed collection, propagation and/or revegetation.

CMA Chair Neville Goodwin says "Future works in this project will include hosting training workshops with the Barb Martin Bushbank, extending seed collection activities on private land and improving the database, involving schools in propagation and seed collection activities, mapping strategic linkages in corridors across the island and continuing revegetation works that make corridors to the coast."

PROJECT:

Coastal Wetlands and
Estuaries Program

INVESTMENT:

\$760,000

LOCATION:

Areas of the south
Gippsland coast including
Shallow Inlet, Anderson
Inlet and Corner Inlet

**“Most important to the CMA is
the lasting involvement with our
coastal community to look after
these areas over the long-term.”**

- Angus Hume, West Gippsland CMA Chair

WEST GIPPSLAND



COASTAL COMMUNITIES INVOLVED IN WETLANDS AND ESTUARIES PROGRAM

The 'Coastal Wetlands and Estuaries Program' aims to protect the nationally and internationally important wetland and estuarine environments of Anderson, Shallow and Corner Inlets. It focuses on reducing the impact of poor water quality from catchment sources. This involves a targeted erosion control, stock exclusion, riparian restoration and weed control program.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Fence: **10 km**
- Waterway structures: **4**
- Vegetation: **70 ha**
- Weed control: **54 ha**
- Soil treatment: **10 ha**
- Partnerships: **7**

PARTNERS:

- South Gippsland Landcare Network, Yarram Yarram Landcare Network, DEPI, Parks Victoria and Landholders

The extent and severity of erosion in the Anderson Inlet Catchment has been particularly concerning in recent years following above average rainfall and seismic activity. It impacts valuable dairying and dryland grazing land, while sediment run-off leads to poor water quality in the Inlet.

Response measures included the use of aerial seeding to revegetate small slips with perennial pasture, and the application of iFarm planning courses to build the capacity of landholders to respond to future extreme events (e.g. flood and drought).

West Gippsland CMA Chair, Angus Hume says, "When invasive weed infestations (including *Spartina*) are controlled and fringing coastal saltmarsh/mangrove areas are fenced, the condition of these areas improves, thereby improving wader bird roosting grounds.

"Most important to the CMA is the lasting involvement with our coastal community to look after these areas over the long-term," Angus adds.

PROJECT:

WGCMA – Landcare
Partnership

INVESTMENT:

\$493,000

LOCATION:

The West Gippsland region

“There are five major networks extending throughout the region, and we believe Landcare in our CMA remains the most effective approach to deliver NRM outcomes involving community ownership, connectivity, community participation and local relevance.”

- Angus Hume, West Gippsland CMA Chair

WEST GIPPSLAND



LANDCARE PARTNERSHIPS STRONG

Landcare in the south eastern corner of Victoria has a long and proud history, characterised by a committed and motivated grass roots community that has set about addressing Landcare/NRM issues across the region.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Fence: **28 km**
- Vegetation: **133 ha**
- Weed control: **60 ha**
- Partnerships: **75**
- Engagement event participants: **191**
- Management agreements: **46**
- Soil treatments: **8 ha**
- Plans: **5**
- Publications: **5**
- Information management systems: **1**

PARTNERS:

- Bass Coast Landcare Network, Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network, Maffra and Districts Landcare Network, South Gippsland Landcare Network and Yarram Landcare Network

CMA Chair Angus Hume says, "There are five major networks extending throughout the region, and we believe Landcare in our CMA remains the most effective approach to deliver NRM outcomes involving community ownership, connectivity, community participation and local relevance."

This year the networks also leveraged over \$1 million from sources such as the Australian Government, Communities for Nature and philanthropic organisations.

The outputs achieved this year were aimed at landscape scale outcomes related to improved catchment condition by:

- Protecting significant species and enhancing species resilience by improving habitat from the impact of invasive plants
- Protecting waterways, wetlands and riparian areas to improve water quality and habitat for biodiversity.

Angus says, "The West Gippsland *Regional Catchment Strategy* supports the presence of strong and effective Landcare Networks to provide a critical interface between our CMA at a regional level and the Landcare Groups at the local community level. This partnership will continue to build and deliver high quality NRM outcomes into the future."

- Establishing biolinks through targeted revegetation and remnant protection that ultimately results in habitat improvement for biodiversity and increased community capacity to contribute to NRM

< Gippsland Grammar school kids planting trees at a Kilmany (near Sale) field day
(Photo: Maffra and Districts Landcare Network)

PROJECT:

Securing Priority Riparian Areas (SPRA) project

INVESTMENT:

\$656,000

LOCATION:

East Gippsland catchment wide project

“Working in partnership with relevant landholders is the single most important aspect of the SPRA project. This creates a partnership approach to achieving river health goals.”

- Peter Veenker, East Gippsland CMA Chair

EAST GIPPSLAND



GROWING PARTNERSHIPS LOOK AFTER THE EAST'S RIVERS

The 'Securing Priority Riparian Areas' (SPRA) project is a state-wide initiative between DEPI, CMAs and Melbourne Water. It is designed to improve the health of Victoria's waterways; working in partnership with local landholders.

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Fence: **20 km**
- Grazing regimes: **43 ha**
- Management agreements: **18**
- Water storages: **22**
- Weed control: **147 ha**

PARTNERS:

- Landholders who have property adjoining priority waterways and DEPI

Peter Veenker, CMA Chairman says, "The SPRA project is guided by the priorities of the Regional Catchment and Waterway Strategies. They nominate actions for our priority river reaches and the staff work one on one with adjoining landholders to achieve these aims."

"Supporting ongoing engagement/ liaison with key landholders and developing meaningful partnerships makes this project a pleasure to manage. The project has also strengthened partnerships with DEPI; the crown land owner of most frontages in East Gippsland. "

Peter says, "Working in partnership with relevant landholders is the single most important aspect of the SPRA project. This creates a partnership approach to achieving river health goals. So not only is there a 'real' education and awareness component of the project, but the intent is to also recruit genuine partners who are prepared to contribute to maintaining the health of a particular waterway."

The project provides meaningful incentives to landholders in order to exclude their stock from the waterway frontage and control any emerging weeds once stock have been removed. Ongoing CMA liaison with the landholder is important to maintain a positive relationship for the long-term.

Each grant is underpinned by a long-term management agreement attached in perpetuity to the grazing license.

< Landholders have collaborated with the CMA to improve the Nicholson river.
Five years ago there was only pasture on the right of the fence (Photo: East Gippsland CMA)

A photograph of four men standing on a grassy bank next to a river. The man on the far left is wearing a black jacket and blue jeans. The man next to him is wearing a yellow and green high-visibility jacket and blue pants, and is holding a long pole. The man in the center is wearing a green jacket and dark pants, also holding a pole. The man on the far right is wearing a red and white plaid shirt and blue jeans, and is holding a small object. In the background, there are trees and a clear sky.

PROJECT:

Indigenous works programs

INVESTMENT:

\$295,000

LOCATION:

Snowy and Mitchell River
catchments

“In the future we are seeking even more project opportunities together. At present we are working with GLaWAC to link with Parks Victoria on a priority Gippsland Lakes project.”

- Peter Veenker, East Gippsland CMA Chair

EAST GIPPSLAND



INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIPS GROWING

East Gippsland CMA Chairman, Peter Veenker, advises, “The strengthening of partnerships with indigenous people is a key priority of our *Regional Catchment Strategy*. The CMA has jointly worked on projects with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) and Moogji Aboriginal Council, principally designed to improve aboriginal employment and training opportunities through NRM works.”

OUTPUTS 2013/14

- Fence: **15 km**
- Weed control: **174 ha**
- Vegetation: **4 ha**
- Partnerships: **5**

PARTNERS:

- GLaWAC, Moogji Aboriginal Council, Landholders, DEPI, East Gippsland Shire, Angling Clubs, Parks Victoria, local Landcare groups and Alpine Resorts Commission

The projects address priority threats to our rivers like willow and Cape Broom weed control together with revegetation works.

Works crews are contracted by the Authority and managed by each indigenous organisation.

The projects have enabled people to be trained in revegetation, safety, first aid and weed control methods. Some have gone onto further full-time employment and others have achieved higher levels of education through the projects.

The partnerships not only provide employment and training opportunities, they also connect local people with the land and the rivers. Both organisations integrate training with work-based tasks, enabling employees to increase their knowledge of natural resource management.

GLaWAC crews have been working in the upper Mitchell and Gippsland Lakes catchments and Moogji have been working on the Snowy.

Peter says, “In the future we are seeking even more project opportunities together. At present we are working with GLaWAC to link with Parks Victoria on a priority Gippsland Lakes project. We hope to see this project and many others emerge over the coming years to achieve our RCS goal.”





STATE-WIDE AGGREGATED OUTPUTS

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- The CMAs have collectively focussed on reducing back-office costs associated with their operations. The savings stated within this report are a result of 19 months of co-operative effort between the 10 CMAs
- The CMAs have established a state-wide Community Engagement and Partnerships framework designed to deliver on the *Environmental Partnerships* participation priority. The engagement event participant data reflects this increased focus across the state. This means more people are acting on and enjoying our environment
- The formation of the Victorian Catchment Management Forum (VCMF) between the CMAs and DEPI has achieved improvements in cooperation across the state
- The VCMF is now looking at more efficient ways to deliver *Regional Catchment Strategy* priorities. This work will be a key focus of the state-wide forum into next year.

The table below represents all regions combined achievements against target. The aggregated data provides the basis for state-wide level achievement of *Environmental Partnerships*.

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Channel (km)	99	99
Water storage (no.)	88	139
Pump (no.)	11	14
Irrigation infrastructure (ha)	7,326	11,998
Waterway structure (no.)	271	639
Terrestrial structure (no.)	3	0
Terrestrial habitat (ha)	1	6
Monitoring structure (no.)	119	167
Fence (km)	465	471
Visitor facility (no.)	15	20
Road (km)	30	33
Crossing (no.)	0	2
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	5,218	2,746
Weed control (ha)	23,466	22,878
Pest animal control (ha)	44,782	46,240
Threatened species recovery (no.)	0	2
Soil treatment (ha)	19	35
Earth works (km)	21	22
Management services		
Grazing regime (ha)	129	279
Water regime (no.)	85	198
Planning and regulation		
Approval and advice (no.)	6,525	6,185
Management agreement (no.)	396	424
Assessment (no.)	2,571	2,144
Engagement events (no. participants)	18,038	34,479
Partnership (no.)	1,155	1,396
Plan (no.)	690	514
Publication (no.)	865	746
Information management system (no.)	55	37

< Mid Loddon Soils Committee meeting at Trevor James' property near Serpentine



OUTPUTS BY REGION

This section presents outputs delivered by each CMA, including key insights or significant events for the year.

Glenelg Hopkins	65	North East	70
Wimmera	66	Corangamite	71
North Central	67	Port Phillip and Westernport	72
Mallee	68	West Gippsland	73
Goulburn Broken	69	East Gippsland	74





GLENELG HOPKINS

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- This year we were awarded the Australian Riverprize and a River Basin Management Society Award, recognising the contribution made by our CMA and community to restoring the Glenelg River
- We completed the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements program. Since the 2010/11 floods, our CMA has delivered a \$2.5m repair program throughout the region. Works covered 52 individual sites, using 6,000 tonnes of rock and 4,000 m² of erosion prevention matting
- We successfully developed and implemented the Estuary Entrance Management Support System. This system has helped clarify the decision process when artificially opening estuaries in the region and increased understanding of the need to balance various community values
- Our CMA has established successful partnerships with key angling groups in the region. These relationships have improved access to fishing locations, and involved anglers in collecting data about carp movement through the 'text-a-carp' program and fishing competitions.

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Water storage (no.)	4	18
Waterway structure (no.)	8	2
Terrestrial structure (no.)	3	0
Monitoring structure (no.)	37	37
Fence (km)	127	96
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	42	378
Weed control (ha)	81	171
Pest animal control (ha)	365	378
Management services		
Grazing regime (ha)	20	2
Water regime (no.)	6	6
Planning and regulation		
Approval and advice (no.)	363	458
Management agreement (no.)	14	13
Assessment (no.)	116	96
Engagement events (no. participants)	2,098	1,884
Partnership (no.)	5	8
Plan (no.)	17	7
Publication (no.)	30	37
Information management system (no.)	1	1



WIMMERA

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- Our CMA partnered with DEPI to deliver the 2013 Wimmera Environmental Accounts. This is a framework that informs and demonstrates effective NRM and productive flow-on effects to the economy
- Juvenile platypuses were found in the McKenzie Creek by researchers for the first time in more than a decade
- The Grampians Northern Complex fire caused extensive damage to works delivered by landholders and groups over many years. Communities on the northern Wimmera plains also faced challenges with major fires
- The 2013-14 target outputs for vegetation, weed and pest animal control included the targets of the large scale Wimmera CMA-led Victorian *Environmental Partnerships Program* tender (3,300 ha), delivered across the Wimmera and Glenelg-Hopkins regions. Targeted outputs will be confirmed in 2014-15
- Our Wimmera Landcare Community Celebration attracted 330 participants. Guests met Sustainable Landscape Designer Phillip Johnson, winner of 'Best in Show' at the 2013 Chelsea International Flower Show. Phillip shared how our precious Wimmera landscape inspires much of his work.

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Waterway structure (no.)	6	0
Fence (km)	23	26
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	3,364	86
Weed control (ha)	3,988	690
Pest animal control (ha)	5,758	1,431
Management services		
Water regime (no.)	6	6
Planning and regulation		
Approval and advice (no.)	471	359
Management agreement (no.)	14	19
Assessment (no.)	103	102
Engagement events (no. participants)	941	1,056
Partnership (no.)	50	56
Plan (no.)	26	24
Publication (no.)	3	3
Information management system (no.)	1	1



NORTH CENTRAL

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- We delivered 50,000 ML of environmental flows to waterways and wetlands, in collaboration with agency stakeholders and community reference groups
- A 3.3 km section of the Pental Island levee was repaired following the 2010/11 floods. We delivered these works in partnership with Swan Hill Rural City Council, DEPI and Parks Victoria. This work complemented additional flood recovery works and programs undertaken
- Other initiatives included replacing the Echuca weir with a fishway, opening up 27 km of river for fish passage; and launching the Waterbirds Field Guide at our Waterwatch Science Forum, the third in a series of identification guides
- Some significant variations to initial targets are due to:
 - a) misinterpretation of output definitions during rollout of new outputs (35 partnerships and 350 assessments) and;
 - b) inability to assess flood damaged or redundant sites (400 assessments).

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Channel (km)	26	26
Water storage (no.)	7	5
Pump (no.)	1	1
Irrigation infrastructure (ha)	0	0
Waterway structure (no.)	95	95
Fence (km)	60	53
Visitor facility (no.)	3	3
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	195	194
Weed control (ha)	2,696	2,935
Pest animal control (ha)	1,665	1,772
Earth works (km)	6	6
Management services		
Water regime (no.)	15	40
Planning and regulation		
Approval and advice (no.)	1,694	1,571
Management agreement (no.)	129	129
Assessment (no.)	1,396	624
Engagement events (no. participants)	3,905	4,347
Partnership (no.)	38	3
Plan (no.)	72	65
Publication (no.)	35	35
Information management system (no.)	2	3



MALLEE

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- Severe fire conditions in early 2014 burnt approximately 105,000 ha, requiring significant emergency response and recovery efforts. While this delayed the delivery of some activities, all 2013/14 projects were completed
- We delivered 94,584 ML of environmental water across 44 sites, with our performance in this sector illustrated by the Hattah Lakes environmental watering project winning the 2013 Banksia Sustainability Award for Water, and the 2013 Premier's Sustainability Award for Environmental Protection
- Community interest in NRM issues continued to grow as evidenced by the higher than expected participation in events and pest animal control programs. Also, the establishment of four new Landcare groups, including the Mallee's first Indigenous group and a group supporting people with disabilities
- While the majority of planned outputs were either achieved or exceeded, two output targets were not met due to:
 - Contractual delays in commencing the Victorian *Environmental Partnerships Program* (VEPP), requiring associated management agreement outputs to be deferred
 - A change in priorities for some Landcare groups, resulting in the delivery of additional engagement activities, in lieu of some formal planning processes.

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Pump (no.)	10	13
Terrestrial habitat (ha)	1	5
Monitoring structure (no.)	5	15
Fence (km)	14	15
Road (km)	29	33
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	72	81
Weed control (ha)	13,021	13,213
Pest animal control (ha)	9,756	14,063
Management services		
Water regime (no.)	6	44
Planning and regulation		
Approval and advice (no.)	113	117
Management agreement (no.)	17	2
Assessment (no.)	147	172
Engagement events (no. participants)	1,618	3,045
Partnership (no.)	225	274
Plan (no.)	206	159
Publication (no.)	58	60
Information management system (no.)	8	8



GOULBURN BROKEN

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- Benefits continue to be realised through the Victorian Government's \$100 million investment in farm modernisation, administered by our CMA on behalf of the Farm Water Program consortium. These benefits include water and labour savings, improved property values, jobs, and a renewed confidence in the future of agriculture
- State investment in our region assisted to leverage close to \$9.5 million of federal funding in 2013/14 to support landholders and community groups achieve productive and environmental improvements
- Fruit Industry Employment Program crews were quickly deployed to replace fire-damaged fences along 20 km of waterways following fires in Wunghnu and Numurkah during February 2014. This program was funded by the State Government and delivered by our CMA and regional partners
- The continued threat of salinity to agricultural production and the environment was confirmed through the 2014 'watertable map' of the Shepparton Irrigation Region. This highlights the need to ensure salinity management can respond to variable climatic conditions and the changing irrigation footprint.

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Water storage (no.)	37	64
Irrigation infrastructure (ha)	7,256	11,875
Waterway structure (no.)	37	339
Fence (km)	47	60
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	159	224
Weed control (ha)	700	1,318
Pest animal control (ha)	26,429	27,600
Earth works (km)	1	1
Management services		
Grazing regime (ha)	0	87
Water regime (no.)	24	70
Planning and regulation		
Approval and advice (no.)	821	796
Management agreement (no.)	13	22
Assessment (no.)	99	176
Engagement events (no. participants)	1,007	7,209
Partnership (no.)	154	396
Plan (no.)	144	131
Publication (no.)	89	135
Information management system (no.)	4	3



NORTH EAST

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- We completed the \$800 000 Omeo Flood Recovery Program in 2013/14 – a major effort for the CMA, our partners and community
- While the major flooding in our region from May 2010 to May 2012 damaged infrastructure and river health assets, the floods also showed the resilience of our community and their willingness to participate in repairing their environment
- A number of new, strong partnerships were formed between community and agencies as part of the continuing flood recovery process
- 2013/14 saw the development of our North East Waterway Strategy. The community and NRM partners worked together to identify a range of strategic waterway management actions for attention over the next eight years. Feedback received during public consultation on the Strategy supported taking a systems approach to waterway management challenges.

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Water storage (no.)	17	24
Waterway structure (no.)	14	91
Terrestrial habitat (ha)	0	1
Monitoring structure (no.)	28	64
Fence (km)	32	44
Visitor facility (no.)	0	4
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	46	236
Weed control (ha)	47	643
Pest animal control (ha)	10	5
Soil treatment (ha)	0	16
Earth works (km)	2	3
Management services		
Grazing regime (ha)	20	11
Water regime (no.)	3	2
Planning and regulation		
Approval and advice (no.)	781	336
Management agreement (no.)	13	7
Assessment (no.)	194	468
Engagement events (no. participants)	545	1,382
Partnership (no.)	68	42
Plan (no.)	126	18
Publication (no.)	112	103
Information management system (no.)	19	0

CORANGAMITE

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- While we experienced no major floods or fires, management of estuaries remained a focus for us owing to the prolonged issue of acidic water in the Anglesea River during late 2013
- We provided Victorian Landcare project grants to 13 groups and administration grants to 31 groups in our region
- Our Waterwatch program supported 24 community groups, with 70 monitors conducting water quality testing at 140 monitoring sites. The school education program supported 1,528 students, 32 parent helpers and 64 teachers from 33 schools
- The number of participants engaged at events exceeded the target of 4,115 by 2151 (52 per cent) primarily due to the strategic approach to select festivals and events in urban areas for Waterwatch and the other CMA programs (EstuaryWatch, Landcare and Indigenous engagement), creating greater community interest
- The new Barwon River fishway allowed over one million fish, including 16 species, to move past the lower tidal barrage in its first six months of operation. Species identified included the national threatened Australian grayling.

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Channel (km)	73	73
Water storage (no.)	0	5
Waterway structure (no.)	1	2
Monitoring structure (no.)	33	34
Fence (km)	36	40
Road (km)	11	12
Visitor facility (no.)	1	0
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	96	154
Weed control (ha)	230	1,213
Pest animal control (ha)	29	202
Threatened species recovery (no.)	0	1
Earth works (km)	0	0.3
Management services		
Grazing regime (ha)	39	121
Water regime (no.)	11	11
Planning and regulation		
Approval and advice (no.)	706	1,089
Management agreement (no.)	24	43
Assessment (no.)	344	292
Engagement events (no. participants)	4,115	6,266
Partnership (no.)	331	318
Plan (no.)	43	59
Publication (no.)	500	303
Information management system (no.)	18	20



PORT PHILLIP AND WESTERNPORT

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- Much of the on-ground work achieved by our CMA is done in partnership with councils, community groups and government bodies. Major collaborative projects during 2013/14 included Grow West, Living Links, Yarra4Life, Greening the Maribyrnong and the Ramsar Protection Program
- The data in this table relates to Victorian Government funded work undertaken in 2013/14 through our community grants, Whitehorse Creek Biolink project and the work of the Regional Landcare Coordinator
- In addition to these projects, we secured \$5.1 million from the Australian Government for 13 projects. These had diverse benefits including an additional 466 ha of revegetation, significant weed and pest animal control, and 21 community events attracting over 250 participants
- We submitted our new *Regional Catchment Strategy* that will establish agreed targets to be pursued collaboratively by many organisations in the years ahead.

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Fence (km)	10	10
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	182	182
Weed control (ha)	180	180
Pest animal control (ha)	263	263
Planning and regulation		
Engagement events (no. participants)	772	772
Partnership (no.)	77	77
Plan (no.)	10	10



WEST GIPPSLAND

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- Our key focus during 2013/14 was delivery of flood recovery initiatives funded by the Victorian Government arising from the June 2013 floods. In partnership with local landholders, we successfully delivered the full program, despite some challenging sites and planning
- Significant on-ground outcomes were achieved in relation to environmental condition, regional development, tourism and employment with support from the Regional Growth Fund. This involved us working in partnership with Parks Victoria, three local councils and two Landcare networks
- We continued to restore the peripheral wetlands of the Gippsland Lakes in partnership with Field and Game Australia through the Wetland Environmental Taskforce Trust. The Trust purchased an additional 245 ha property to add to Heart Morass site, which will soon be protected with an 1,125 ha Trust for Nature covenant
- We coordinated the first ever environmental releases on the Latrobe River system in partnership with the Victorian Environmental Water Holder and Southern Rural Water.

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Water storage (no.)	8	6
Irrigation infrastructure (ha)	70	124
Waterway structure (no.)	13	13
Monitoring structure (no.)	6	6
Fence (km)	68	76
Visitor facility (no.)	1	1
Crossing (no.)	0	2
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	286	307
Weed control (ha)	750	704
Soil treatment (ha)	19	19
Earth works (km)	5	5
Management services		
Water regime (no.)	3	3
Planning and regulation		
Approval and advice (no.)	1,192	1,073
Management agreement (no.)	153	149
Assessment (no.)	87	88
Engagement events (no. participants)	1,487	1,499
Partnership (no.)	125	132
Plan (no.)	34	30
Publication (no.)	26	24
Information management system (no.)	1	1



EAST GIPPSLAND

KEY EVENTS OR INSIGHTS:

- The year was dominated by severe natural rain and fire events. For example, Snowy/Brodribb fires (approx.170,000 ha) and several other fire events caused delays in work programs due to safety concerns. Despite this, our works program was completed on time and on budget
- Our links with Traditional Owners were further strengthened through providing executive and board support to the Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board (GKTOLMB). Through this support, we are able to assist the GKTOLMB and Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) focus on the task of establishing joint management with Parks Victoria over 10 parks and reserves in Gippsland
- The Authority provides administrative support to the Gippsland Lakes Ministerial Advisory Committee (GLMAC), responsible for advising the Victorian Government on project priorities for the Gippsland Lakes Environment Fund (\$10 million over four years). The program has achieved significant levels of on-ground works and help substantially increase our levels of community and agency participation this year.

Output	Target	Actual
Structural works		
Water storage (no.)	15	17
Waterway structure (no.)	97	97
Monitoring structure (no.)	10	11
Fence (km)	50	53
Environmental works		
Vegetation (ha)	777	906
Weed control (ha)	1,774	1,812
Pest animal control (ha)	508	527
Threatened species recovery (no.)	6	1
Earth works (km)	7	7
Management services		
Grazing regime (ha)	50	59
Water regime (no.)	11	16
Planning and regulation		
Approval and advice (no.)	384	386
Management agreement (no.)	19	40
Assessment (no.)	85	126
Engagement events (no. participants)	1,550	7,019
Partnership (no.)	82	90
Plan (no.)	12	11
Publication (no.)	12	46
Information management system (no.)	1	1

Heart Morass >
(Photo: West Gippsland CMA)



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