

Question Report
Report Gen Feb 08, 2023 3:03 PM
Topic: Weisbar ID
Health W: 839 8326 0060
Question Details

#	Question	Asker Name	Answer	Answer Name
	How can we have a dialogue regarding the emerging issues that are not addressed in the RHS but impact the condition of our waterways and how will we address those concerns? Eg high nutrient loads from rural run off and a high salt content in water discharged / recycled from sewage treatment plants- which if sprayed on our western sodic soils will turn them hydrophobic with disastrous consequences.	Helen van den Berg	Thanks for your questions Helen. The HWS mid-term review is in progress and this is a good opportunity for new and emerging issues to be flagged. So please feel free to contact us regarding this. However, the Strategy does have Rural Land targets to reduce nutrient and sediment run off. We also have performance objectives to address no net increase in sewage treatment plant discharge to waterways. I am also aware that there are guidelines for the use of recycled water as irrigation though I'm unsure how adequately they protect sodic soils. Salinity is a major concern for irrigated crops though so I'm sure that salinity in recycled water is part of the guidelines. If any other panellist has better knowledge of these guidelines please make comment on this part of Helen's question. We will look forward to hearing from you Helen.	Trish Grant
1	Helen van den Berg Maribyrnong		Great question, April, and something we are working hard on and adapting as we go. We tried to 'do the doing' of alignment across delivery partners and tracking and reporting at river basin catchment scale, but it was really hard to get traction on specific projects / progress specific opportunities at that scale. We are working on collaboration and engagement approaches that are a bit of a tighter scale, e.g. 2-3 connected sub-catchments, that we are trialling this year. If you have any good ideas too, please feed them through!	Gall Hall
2	This strategy had a fantastic co-design approach with 660 people from 220 orgs, and as Cheryl notes many groups have obligations towards healthy waterways. What is the intention to re-convene these groups toward the genuine participation?	April Seymore	That answer from Trent BTW - all my responses are showing as coming from our gracious tech host Gall :)	Gall Hall
3	This strategy had a fantastic co-design approach with 660 people from 220 orgs, and as Cheryl notes many groups have obligations towards healthy waterways. What is the intention to re-convene these groups toward the genuine participation?	April Seymore	The HWS stormwater targets align with the new GED flow guidance - which is great... the catchment IWM plans as part of the Integrated Water Management forum are also aligned with the GED flow standards. There are many initiatives underway which will get closer to ensuring the new flow standards for stormwater are met - particularly in new urban areas... for example MUSIC guidelines are being updated so that treatment systems are appropriately designed... local government are starting to require additional systems like passively watered street trees which helps achieve the infiltration targets under the GED and MW are planning works in the stormwater priority areas through a capital investment program. However, there is still a lot of work to go to ensure all development meets the new standards. For example at the moment developer services schemes are not designed to meet the new standards.	Gall Hall
4	How does the General Environmental Duty under the new EP Act 2017 impact the implementation / targets of the HWS?	April Seymore	Hi April, the General Environmental Duty (GED), is at the centre of the Environment Protection Act 2017 and applies to all Victorians. The GED requires a person who is engaging in an activity that may give rise to risks of harm to human health or the environment from pollution or waste to minimise those risks, so far as reasonably practicable. All businesses/organisations must manage their risks under the general environmental duty.	Gall Hall
5	How can Melbourne Water plan to duplicate the Head St. Stormwater Diversion Drain in Elwood adding further pollution to the Bay contrary to CSIRO reports on Port Phillip Bay and Best Storm Water Practice, and Planning Amendment VC 154? There are wonderful upstream options for flood retarding + bio-retention that have been neglected. Does your business case factor in how many extra days our beaches will be closed as a direct result of this sort of harmful engineering? Why is Melbourne Water ignoring best practice in the Elster Creek Catchment?	Isaac	Hi Isaac, Thanks for bringing this up again in this forum. I understand that you have been discussing this project via the Elster Creek Collaboration and the Diversion Drain project team, this is the best place to continue these discussions.	
6	Shouldn't there be community representation on the RLG to fulfil the promises of government across 5 strategies to engage community in waterway management?	Andrew Kelly	Hi Andrew, Great question... thank you. The RLG is looking at how we bring in others to the RLG meaningfully. I will raise this in the next meeting with the RLG.	Gall Hall
7	John Forrester WRK link is not working he was trying for 15 minutes!	Helen van den Berg	I've answered	Gall Hall
8	Water retailers are not represented but their role is expected in the projects and activities aimed at improving the health of the waterways. It is even more important now with the broad umbrella of integrated water management covering all elements of water cycle for the holistic outcome for the community.	Suresh (SEW)	Thanks for the Q Suresh. We are working at many levels with the retailers on environmental opportunities, and through the IWM Forum, but certainly might be more opportunities to collaborate. The RLG doesn't have every partner represented - we are collaborating with heaps more partners than are represented on the RLG! - but there absolutely might be benefit, especially if there are big ticket issues / opportunities that retailers have a lead part in delivering and aren't progressing as well as we need...	Gall Hall
9	Would it be better to separate the Mornington Peninsula from the Westernport region as its waterways flow into both bays and the peninsula issues are distinctively different to Gippsland?	Anonymous Attendee	There are a number of different ways to split the catchments across the region. The Mornington Peninsula is kept together as a single area, rather than splitting into three basins (e.g. waterways flowing to Westernport, waterways flowing to Port Phillip Bay and waterways flowing to Bass Strait). Whilst it is included with the Westernport region in the Healthy Waterways Strategy Catchment Plan, we have dedicated staff focusing solely on implementing the Healthy Waterways Strategy on the Mornington Peninsula. These staff have a great understanding of the distinctive characteristics of the waterways and catchments of the Mornington Peninsula.	Trish Grant
10	Will natural wetlands stop being developed as treatment wetlands in developers' favour?	Anonymous Attendee	The issue of protecting natural wetlands is a priority issue and focus area for the Region-wide Leadership Group (RLG). Since 2021 a working group, which includes members from the RLG organisations, the Wurundjeri and the Victorian Planning Authority have been working on how to protect the values that natural wetlands provide. At this stage the working group is developing recommendations around this for consideration by the RLG in mid 2023.	
11	Why is there no community representation in the RLG? Is this being revisited as a result of the mid-term review to ensure communities are represented/have a voice? Thanks so much, Charlotte	Anonymous Attendee	Looks like it will be, Charlotte! Was initiated as a group initially with agencies with the greatest financial resources / commitments to contribute to the strategy, to get that initial alignment; with the mid-term review coming up it is a good time to re-prosecute if that group needs shifting.	Gall Hall
12	Will the integration of MW and PPWPCMA broaden the funding available through grants for outcomes that can be delivered by partners/leaders like waterkeepers, Friends, EcoCentre, councils or others that look at both on-land and waterway projects as interconnected?	Anonymous Attendee	Through the Liveable Waterways, Liveable Communities program the types of grants that are available to be applied for has already been broadened significantly (https://www.melbournewater.com.au/services/grants/liveable-communities-liveable-waterways-program). As part of this program, which can consider grants which cover a number of different areas. If you have something specific in mind, we suggest you reach out to our grants team. As a broader business, there is a lot of working going on to understand the best way to fully integrate the MW and PPWPCMA waterway and catchment programs.	Paul Rees
13	Will the integration of MW and PPWPCMA broaden the funding available through grants for outcomes that can be delivered by partners/leaders like waterkeepers, Friends, EcoCentre, councils or others that look at both on-land and waterway projects as interconnected?	Anonymous Attendee	Currently though, the \$5 for waterways work that MW have is through the Waterways and Drainage Charge and regulated by the ESC, whereas CMA project funding is via grants for specific projects (i.e. determined ahead of receiving the \$5). We are aligning works where possible, but the available funding has not expanded and we can't fund catchment projects directly through the regulated income. Looking into this ahead of our next price submission.	Gall Hall
14	What about water flows? Peak flows in urban areas are around ten times those in undeveloped areas causing excessive erosion. Elevated nutrient levels favour re-establishment of weeds when riparian vegetation is washed away	Robyn	Hi Robyn, The new flow guidance for stormwater released as part of the new GED should help to address the threat of urban development. The HWS stormwater targets also align with these guidelines. They require runoff from impervious areas to be harvested, evaporated or infiltrated - which will go a long way towards maintaining natural flow regimes. There are many treatments systems which can be used. While there is a lot of planning underway to ensure these objectives are met - we are behind where we need to be.	Gall Hall
15	Does 'successfully established' riparian vegetation refer to the total area attempted or total area that survived at the target quality/density?	April Seymore	We track the areas that have been planted and QA/QC systems are in place (and improving) to ensure the correct density is achieved. Sometimes we need to replant areas that have not survived. We also have some detailed monitoring sites where we track outcomes in more detail and apply these learnings more broadly.	Gall Hall
16	Will you be making updates to the mapped wetlands layer? For the upper Merri the current information showing on your report card map (https://healthywaterways.com.au/map) is not up to date and doesn't reflect recent identification and mapping of Upper Merri wetlands by Alluvium for MWC	Luisa	Thanks for pointing this out Luisa - we will follow up on this for sure. Consider me onto it.	Trish Grant
17	Why is the vegetation increase in Dandenong so different to other catchments?	Anonymous Attendee	The vegetation establishment targets in the Healthy Waterways Strategy are stretch targets which were designed to be quite challenging to meet. The Dandenong Catchment had the smallest area of vegetation targets to start with, which is why it is on-track compared with the others. Melbourne Water has recently allocated additional resources to this program to try and get it back on track.	Paul Rees
18	Why is the Dandenong catchment the only one on track	Merran Price	See above answer	Merran Price
19	Why is the Dandenong catchment the only one on track	Merran Price	The vegetation establishment targets in the Healthy Waterways Strategy are stretch targets which were designed to be quite challenging to meet. The Dandenong Catchment had the smallest area of vegetation targets to start with, which is why it is on-track compared with the others. Melbourne Water has recently allocated additional resources to this program to try and get it back on track.	Paul Rees
20	Thanks Trish How do I contact you my email is jhberg67@bigpond.com. The current salt levels are known to be unacceptable Im very worried that the rush to use manufactured water with high salt content is NOT being considered seriously and it will impact offfiltration and productivity for agricultural	Helen van den Berg	I will contact you via email Helen. Thanks for highlighting this.	Trish Grant
21	How do we keep track of outcomes from IWM forums?	Nicole Kowalczyk on Wurundjeri Wo	Requested response from DEECA	
22	What scale of progress is likely to be achieved via the level of funding through IWM forums? (ie where will the \$5 primarily come from to address stormwater infiltration being significantly off track)	April Seymore	DELWP (now DECCA) have provided a few rounds of funding for priority projects, but also includes funding from agencies and local governments, split according to stake different partners have in the outcome.	Gall Hall
23	How can Melbourne Water, Councils and the EPA work together to get a pragmatic solution to pollution control, the reporting of incidents and issuing fines? The population is confused.	Graham Ross	Hi Graham, great question. The Environmental Protection Agency is the lead agency for the public to reporting pollution to (https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/report-pollution). Once the EPA are notified, they will investigate and engage with Melbourne Water and Council to work together to minimise the impact of pollution and identify and stop the pollution at the source (where possible). The agency that issues any fines (if required), will depend upon which legislation has been breached as part of the pollution event. So the bottom line is notify the Environmental Protection Agency as the first point of call to report pollution and they will engage Melbourne Water and others directly.	Paul Rees
24	Environmental water target in the SWS: Will be have to wait until 2032 for the targets to be met, or will they be incrementally achieved with full achievement prior to 2032?	Anonymous Attendee	Some rivers in the SWS have 5-year targets that will be achieved sooner than 2032, for example the Werribee River has a target of 2 GL to be returned to the environment by 2024, then an additional 10 GL by 2032. For all rivers the question about incremental vs. full achievement will depend on how the water is being recovered and this varies across the systems	Gall Hall
25	Im wondering if this committee are aware of the Work that has been put into Stop the Quarry in the Beveridge Wallan precinct ?? The Group has been very active in bringing the Constorium to account. The Quarry will have a significant impact on the water table of the Upper Merri Creek. This has been on going for close to 6 years. A Ministerial Advisory Committee was formed and submissions presented in 2022. A new environmental minister has been appointed in Sonya Kilkenny. We are awaiting her decision on this matter.	Gazza Sturdy	Comment not question - but note that the work of the community on this is appreciated	
26	For the stormwater I would expect Developers would be establishing the assets on our behalf as part of their development works.	Merran Price	For the stormwater I would expect Developers would be establishing the assets on our behalf as part of their development works.	Merran Price
27	For the stormwater I would expect Developers would be establishing the assets on our behalf as part of their development works.	Merran Price	That is correct Merran, a large number of constructed waterways and wetland are delivered by developers as part of Precinct Structure Plans.	Paul Rees
28	Wetland in Berwick Manuka Rd - pls keep an eye out for this one. Is it possible for regional NGOs to participate in the IWM Forums? (Thinking specifically of waterkeepers) We can often make connections and work to progress worthy ideas that fall outside the current scope / remit of such a network and its members.	Anonymous Attendee	Noted	
29	How is HWS implementation being incorporated into drainage schemes?	April Seymore	Agency only as far as I understand April, but I'll follow up with you after to connect you with our IWM reps at MW :)	Gall Hall
30	How does the strategy support significantly degraded waterways in the urban area to maintain and improve the amenity and biodiversity values of these waterways over time? Or does it?	Suresh (SEW)	Can we please take this on notice and get back to you with a more thorough response. That said state policy now refers to the Healthy Waterways Strategy (at Clause 12.03-15). This is a positive change that will support better waterway outcomes through strategic planning processes such as Precinct Structure Planning, and should support referral decision-making and helps defend our position at VCAT or Planning Panels. Other initiatives happening at MW are review of MUSIC guidelines.	Gall Hall
31	How many fish barriers in the Maribyrnong still need to be removed?	Helen van den Berg	The access performance objectives (202km increased access across the region by 30 June 2028) contribute to improving the social values of waterways in urban catchments. The strategy also supports a number of projects that will improve the amenity and biodiversity values of urban waterways, including the pilot Chain of Ponds (Moonee Ponds Creek) collaboration, the emerging Gardiners' Creek collaboration and several creek naturalisation projects.	Geraldine Pias
32	How many fish barriers in the Maribyrnong still need to be removed?	Helen van den Berg	Melbourne Water have mitigated the two large barriers on the Maribyrnong (Arundel St and McNabs Weir) that were included in the Healthy Waterways Strategy. There are other smaller barriers in the system that have been investigated and found to be either only partial barriers (still navigable by fish after a substantial flow event) or provide a poor cost/benefit (length of stream opened). Many concrete weir barriers through Sunbury have been modified to allow passage, but there are several substantial natural rock barriers on Jacksons Creek that Melbourne Water has not prioritised after a cost/benefit analysis.	Gall Hall

28	How many fish barriers in the Maribyrnong still need to be removed?	Helen van den Berg	The HWS prioritised two barriers to be removed by 2028. They were located at McNabs Weir and Arundel Weir. Arundel Weir fishway and McNabs Weir fishway were completed in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively. Assessments indicate the fishways are working well and the Maribyrnong catchment is on-track. More information is available at https://healthywaterways.com.au/report-card?subid=MAR&tabid=river&	Gail Hall
29	Gambusia are in huge numbers at Devilbend & Bittern reservoirs	Marnie	Thank you for your comment	
30	Im not finding GWW very open to discussing this issue	Helen van den Berg	Thank you for your comment	
31	Is Gardiners Creek covered under the Healthy Waterways Strategy?	Graham Scott	Yes, absolutely. Gardiners is one of the sub-catchments in the broader Yarra catchment. Specific information about the Gardiners Creek catchment can be found in the Yarra Catchment Program and Yarra report card.	Geraldine Plas
32	The strategy needs adjustment in many areas - need a set of workshops to work through these	Anonymous Attendee	We would be happy to discuss this in more detail. Could you please be in touch via waterway.strategy@melbournewater.com.au ? Many thanks	Geraldine Plas
33	Thanks Gail, do the flow guidelines for stormwater address this problem in established areas or just new developments?	Robyn	Just SOME new development Robyn where it was most cost effective to protect existing waterways values. These are the stormwater priority areas that can be found on the maps page on the website.	Trish Grant
34	I can't see community being mentioend here as either partners or collaborations? This should be upfront, surely.	Johanna Selleck	Johanna, we need to get better at calling out and highlighting that then! We have a really significant incentives program that each year supports community groups in delivering projects on the ground, and is overwhelmingly driven by contributing to the HWS performance objectives. Definitely partners, and strong and valued ones!	Gail Hall
35	I can't see community being mentioend here as either partners or collaborations? This should be upfront, surely.	Johanna Selleck	Hi Johanna, thanks for your question and noted we could bring community partners and collaborations out more in our reporting today. We do have numerous collaborations with our community, on ground across catchments through our Waterway & Land Officers, with citizen science projects, incentives programs and our Regional Landcare and Regional Agricultural Landcare programs. Community participation and feedback is also gathered through the use of your Say and other engagement techniques, with community feedback and involvement feeding into on ground projects.	Gail Hall
36	What is being doing to protect Gardiners Creek from poor water quality coming from the Brickworks Development?	Graham Scott	Hi Graham, I will get back to you seperately on this as I have your contact details.	
37	Why does the RLG think the strategy is so challenging?	Louise Minty	Why does the RLG think the strategy is so challenging?	Louise Minty
38	How is the continual sale of riparian land owned by MW for private development consistent with the RHS?	Anonymous Attendee	Thank you for your comment, the assertion is not accurate	
39	Trent - where are you answering people's questions?	Anonymous Attendee	Questions that have been answered flip across to the next tab - 'answered'!	Gail Hall
40	What about a community rep on the RLG? That seems a simple and easy step.	Andrew Kelly	Thanks Andrew, I will table that at the next RLG.	Gail Hall
41	MCMC are looking at reporting on outcomes of our community litter creek clean ups on the Merri, Moonee Ponds and Plenty River and we'd like to collaborate with MW on this to ensure we use the same methodology as MW does. Who are the best staff I can be connected to talk about this?	Julia Cirillo MCMC	Julia, You can contact me in the short term. This is not my bag but I can help connect you to the right people.	Trish Grant
42	MCMC are looking at reporting on outcomes of our community litter creek clean ups on the Merri, Moonee Ponds and Plenty River and we'd like to collaborate with MW on this to ensure we use the same methodology as MW does. Who are the best staff I can be connected to talk about this?	Julia Cirillo MCMC	Hi Julia, happy for you to contact me as well about this one.	Gail Hall
43	Does EPA ever fine Vicroads for the heavy metal and hydrocarbons their roads deliver to waterways? Why don't our roads have toxicant treatment systems on their major roads? Perhaps they could invite dinot the leadership Team to get them up to speed. The chemical pollution is already impacting the food web in our waterways. Helen	Helen van den Berg	EPA has not issued any fines to VicRoads in relation to roadway runoff to waterways as the risks and impacts are not yet well understood. However, there is a lot of active research occurring internationally to investigate the chemical components of tyres as an emerging chemical class.	
44	Should MW look at having in-house Landscape Architects to play a role in bridging the conversation between knowledge groups?	Glen Dunstan	Melbourne Water does have a number of Landscape Architects working here, not always as landscape architects though. I agree it is an important set of skills to help provide connections and holistic consideration of landscape issues and opportunities	
45	'@Rachel Gualano very happy to discuss our GED questions off line, but given the ostensibly stronger obligation on duty holders to PREVENT risk (not just be held accountable for harm) it seemed there may be ripple effects to the HWS either in topics included, targets or strengthened partnerships emphasised e.g. to balance risk reduction as well as the proactive plantings and other great work in HWS.			
46	Oh! Agree with how Cheryl just said this! EPA + MW - how to collaborate with pragmatic solutions.	April Seymore	Thank you for your comment, It has been passed on to both Cheryl and Rachel	Gail Hall
47	How does HWS strategy flow through to work on private land?	Bob	Hi Bob, the strategy flows through to work on private land in a number of different ways. One of the key ways that we engage with private landholders is through the Liveable Communities, Liveable Waterways grants program (https://www.melbournewater.com.au/services/grants/liveable-communities-liveable-waterways-program). This programs provides private landholders with funding and technical advice to help them improve waterways flowing through or adjacent to their properties. Melbourne Water undertakes direct works projects on private land in priority areas and we work with local landcare groups to build capacity and delivery projects. We also have a number of education programs, to encourage private landowners to manage stormwater and waterways on their properties.	Paul Rees
48	It is great to see that CORSWs, HWS, GMUWSS all acknowledge each other. At the same time there is a risk that HWS depends on SWS and UWSs, and SWS and UWSs depends on IWM Catchment Scale IWM Plans, while IWM catchment plans are not funded and committed. Sunbury's Water Future has some budget for implementation for stormwater volume reduction. Are there plans to include budget for other priority catchments, Melton, Upper Yarra, Merri, Cardinia in the next MW price submission?	Suresh (SEW)	Thank you for your comment	
49	LRCL has organised a tour of the Little River Catchment on Saturday 18 February at which MW will talk about work they are doing to improve the LR environment and DEECA will speak about progress on initiatives to improve environmental flows. More details of the tour and to register on Eventbrite - https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/guided-self-drive-little-river-catchment-tour-tickets-516564988787aff-ebd5bde5de4 . We appreciate the support of all the agencies who will be involved in this tour.	Nigel Corby - Spire	Thanks for your question Nigel. Yes MW are currently investigating projects with current price submission funding and additional funding will no doubt be sought for the next price submission as well. I can get back to you with more details on these.	Gail Hall
50	Is MW investigating changes to the EDM for sodic and erosive soils? There are a lot of agencies talking about this for some time and some good work done - but changes to engineering guidelines are needed	Patrick O'Halloran LRCL	Great plug for that event Patrick Sodic soils are found across Victoria, including Melbourne's greenfield development areas, such as the north region around Kalkalla and Beveridge as well as around Sunbury and in the west region around Merrim and Parwan. Melbourne Water currently investigates sodic soils through soil testing and analysis to inform Development Service Schemes (DSS) and PSPs on a case by case basis. This helps to inform corridor widths for example in Kalkalla creek. Agree that a region-wide approach would be beneficial for overarching guidelines	
51	Forgive my ignorance: does MW approach strategicpartners/landholders to apply for incentives? Or is this funding always based on who comes forward and applies?	Elyse Kelly-Mitchell Shire Council	Great question - in the past, we have done proactive recruitment with councils for stormwater and veg opportunities, and private landholders for riparian veg. But mostly relied on who approaches us re: community groups. We are shifting that as we are getting better data on where we are on/off track to target areas we need to work...	Gail Hall
52	Many of the report card ratings have been marked significantly higher because they assume "planned" works have already been committed to or completed. Take 'stormwater' in the Yarra Catchment for example marked as '32% - slightly off track' when 'actual' progress is closer to just 1%. Will the mid-strategy review assess if the 'planned' contributions towards the targets are actually likely to be delivered, and if it is in fact appropriate that they count towards this report card?	April Seymore	Many of the report card ratings have been marked significantly higher because they assume "planned" works have already been committed to or completed. Take 'stormwater' in the Yarra Catchment for example marked as '32% - slightly off track' when 'actual' progress is closer to just 1%. Will the mid-strategy review assess if the 'planned' contributions towards the targets are actually likely to be delivered, and if it is in fact appropriate that they count towards this report card?	Riv Davey-Greene
53	Many of the report card ratings have been marked significantly higher because they assume "planned" works have already been committed to or completed. Take 'stormwater' in the Yarra Catchment for example marked as '32% - slightly off track' when 'actual' progress is closer to just 1%. Will the mid-strategy review assess if the 'planned' contributions towards the targets are actually likely to be delivered, and if it is in fact appropriate that they count towards this report card?	Riv Davey-Greene	Hi Riv, a great question and suggestion. This is exactly what we will be doing via the mid-term review. We will also re-consider whether planned works should be used to judge progress... It's important to show where planning is happening but we also don't want to give false impression of progress. Thanks for your thoughts.	Gail Hall
54	Why arent there targets in the HWS to remove xkm of concreted and piped waterways?	Anonymous Attendee	The outcomes are a bit higher level than identifying the specific projects to achieve them - e.g. add riparian veg, improve access - and the reimagining / waterway daylighting program is one way of getting there. But costs are high, and very different between the projects. Needs to go through the Price Submission process to be able to commit (which we continue doing)	Gail Hall
55	Why arent there targets in the HWS to remove xkm of concreted and piped waterways?	Anonymous Attendee	Creek naturalisation is covered under a non-quantified Regional Performance Objective of the Healthy Waterways Strategy. A quantified target would likely have required more specific information on exact location, nature of works and available budget. As I mentioned, several creek naturalisation projects are underway under this Regional Performance Objective.	Geraldine Plas
56	How expensive are reimaging your creek projects compared to other environmental works?	Anonymous Attendee	A great many factors more expensive, in general. Amazing outcomes, but our budget to deliver them (which is regulated / approved through our Price Submission) is limited by that relative cost.	Gail Hall
57	How expensive are reimaging your creek projects compared to other environmental works?	Anonymous Attendee	The Reimagining your creek projects are quite expensive and are generally significantly more expensive than other environmental works when compared on a per area basis (e.g. \$5/ha). For this reason the targets in the Healthy Waterways Strategy for other environmental works are far larger than those for daylighting pipe projects. Given the significant cost, the location of these daylighting projects are carefully chosen to maximise environmental and social outcomes.	Paul Rees
58	VC154 has been in play for several years now, is MW following its implementations by local governments	Paul Caine	The Victorian State Government through DEECA did some work last year through the Embedding IWM in Urban Planning project where they had consultants interviewing some councils on implementation of IWM and stormwater matters. I'm not aware of the specifics though. The implementation of CI 53.18 may have been explored because Amendment VC224 (gazetted Oct 2022) made changes to CI 53.18 to remove an exemption that existed whereby the provisions were previously not applicable to growth areas (Urban Growth Zoned land). DTP & DEECA interviewed councils to support those reforms.	
59	MCMC supports Elyse's request re changes to EDMC (and potentially other guideline documents) in response to the widespread presence of sodic soils in north and west growth areas and the massive challenges that these soils present to the management of erosion and to implementation of 'sustainable' and effective DSSs (Developer Services Schemes aka 'drainage schemes')	Luisa	See response to Elyse Kelly-Mitchell Shire Council question above	
60	Does the Kororoit Creek have a focus as well - sorry dropped out for a bit there. Wetlands in particular would be welcome for the urban stretches of this lovely creek.	Jodie Williams (she/her) Wurunditj	Kororoit is one of the sub-catchments in the broader Werribee catchment - with focus on vegetation, access, participation, water for the environment, physical form, frogs, stormwater and several natural wetlands in the Kororoit sub-catchment. Further details can be found in the Werribee Catchment Program and report card at https://healthywaterways.com.au/	Geraldine Plas
61	I wonder if these needs to be made more broadly clear to people. What are we giving up to do these few areas? By the way would love one in my area but I think there are more important things to spend limited money on.	Anonymous Attendee	Thank you for your comment about the Reimagining your creek program	
62	Having a target is fine but as Rosslyne Reservoir outlet needs to be enlarged first it seems it will be a long time before we get water. Yet this target of 7G has been on the books since 2006! Community is getting pretty sceptical about agency ability to deliver the upgrade and water.	Helen van den Berg	Thank you for your comment	
63	What progress has been made to manage and reduce impact of farm dams on inflows into waterways particularly in unregulated waterway catchments?	Patrick O'Halloran LRCL	Farm dams and exclusion of stock / rehabilitation of veg around them is a big focus of MW's Rural Land Program, and have some great uptake by landholders. Aligning with councils on similar programs too. Of course opportunities to expand, but getting good traction on the benefits and buy in from the farming community.	Gail Hall
64	Thank you for hearing us on litter in 2020/21 forum. Unfortunately, the Litter Lab was siloed to each sector which made it a bit tricky to test what works without just primarily suggesting what OTHER sectors could do without opp to hear perspectives on what barriers existed etc	Anonymous Attendee	Thank you for your comment. The litter labs were held with a number of partner organisations who all worked together across topics and co-developed the draft plan. If you attended these labs I would be interested in your further feedback on this. There is still the opportunity to contribute to this plan whilst it is in draft form and during the implementation phase.	

60	One half hour session with EPA re progress on PP taskforce is NOT genuine collaboration with community	Helen van den Berg	Thank you for your comment Hi Simon, The Litter Action Plan is currently in draft form. Once finalised we will share the actions through the Healthy Waterways Strategy newsletter. One of the actions is to support Community action in litter reduction. We will work with the community on what this looks like. If you are interested in getting involved in this or to join the newsletter email us at Waterway.Strategy@melbournewater.com.au	
61	can we see a copy of the litter action plan?	Simon Crawford		
62	has there been any work on the styrofoam problem in our waterways ?It is a serious problem everywhere. especially in new building projects and estates.	Gazza Sturdy	Some amazing work by Yarra River Association mapping the issue and where it is coming from in the lower Yarra area, and inspections and enforcement around construction sites is a focus for EPA and MW in the future. The cumulative impact of many smaller dams in a catchment is significant as it impacts watershed into the waterways. If someone wishes to construct a dam that is on a designated waterway or meets the requirements under Part 1(A) concerning size, then a construction licence is required to be issued by the licencing authority where the dam is to be sited. If the dam is to be sited away from waterways and is only small, then a construction licence is not generally required by a water authority. In these cases, a planning permit by local council may be required depending on local planning provisions. Council may then refer to MW as the CMA for comment. Under Section 8 of the Water Act, a person has private right to water that can be captured on their property for domestic and stock purpose without a licence. So any water captured in a small dam can be used for this purpose without a licence issued under Section 51. If the water is going to be used for commercial/irrigation purposes, then a licence would be required to be issued by the local water authority. If the small dams are only for domestic and stock and have been built with correct approvals then there may not be much MW/Councils can do based on current legislation. To progress this issue licensing agencies could work together to understand the issue and look at solutions, particularly around compliance/enforcement as mentioned. Melbourne Water is responsible for dam licencing under Sec 67 of the Act, below, in the Yarra Catchment and Lower Maribyrnong. Southern Rural Water have this delegation in the Mornington Peninsula area. EWAPs aim to influence farm dam development One area where Melbourne Waters is trying to influence this space is through the implementation of Environmental Water Action Plans (EWAPs). EWAPs have been developed as a mechanism to protect the flow regime of drought refuges and ground water dependent ecosystems in unregulated systems (currently 16 sites have been identified across Melbourne). Some of the EWAPs identify the threat of farm dam development and agricultural practices and recommend actions such as: •Limit further farm dam development in upstream catchments and investigate opportunities for rationalising existing farm dams to reduce farm dam impacts – establish referral process for assessing new farm dam impacts on stream flow •Implement catchment scale on-farm management to minimise water quality impacts associated with agricultural runoff Gaining support and working with partner agencies, such as Southern Rural Water, will be critical in ensuring these actions are met.	Gail Hall
63	Small catchment dams including stock and domestic dams are having significant impacts on the ecological health of catchments. Each catchment has general problems including illegal dams and particular problems. How do we integrate the concerns highlighted in the SWS around dams in the balance of the HWS? How do we encourage enforcement and compliance by agencies noting the collaborative approach of the HWS? Should companies be responsible to clean up pollutants on land they occupy if the land has been affected for many decades before they occupied the land?	Andrew Kelly Merran Price	Should companies be responsible to clean up pollutants on land they occupy if the land has been affected for many decades before they occupied the land? Hi Johanna, the new environment laws in Victoria provide more powers and tougher sanctions. For example, EPA has charged the company and three directors allegedly behind a chemical spill that polluted Cherry Creek and Cherry Lake in Altona North in March 2022. The company faces a maximum penalty of up to \$1.8 million. Company directors face penalties of up to \$360,000 and possible imprisonment.	Merran Price
64	We need tougher fines and consequences for people polluting waterways...I think?	Johanna Selleck	A key principle of the Act is to ensure that duty holder actions and decisions are based on the best available, relevant and reliable evidence in the circumstances. This includes information that can and should reasonably be considered about the risks of harm arising from activities, and the reasonably practicable ways of preventing or minimising those risks. This information is referred to as the 'state of knowledge'. 'State of knowledge' is a dynamic concept that changes over time as knowledge of risks and the ways to control those risks improves. As research and understanding of risks and issues progress, new 'state of knowledge' will be established. EPA has not issued any fines to VicRoads in relation to roadway runoff to waterways as the risks and impacts are not yet well understood. However, there is a lot of active research occurring internationally to investigate the chemical components of tyres as an emerging chemical class.	Gail Hall
65	How many people have been prosecuted under the General Environment Duty resulting from the 170 inspections?	James		
66	The Elster Creek catchment is likely the most urbanised sub-catchment in the Melbourne area and subject to major flooding events. Implementation of the Flood Management Plan seems to be way off track. Is MW willing to do what is necessary to bring the Flood Management Plan deliverables back on track.	Paul Caine	Hi Paul, happy to discuss offline in more detail, but the actions that are off track are so far good reason, including the updating of flood mapping which will incorporate better climate change modelling. Many of the actions are not due for completion until June 2024.	Gail Hall
67	There are a lot of good Strategies & Action Plans being mentioned by the various Agencies. Can we get a list of websites, key contacts & a master summary website. Many of us are trying to leverage off the good work on our local programs to avoid re-inventing the wheel. Everything is so inter-connected. What has been done about restaurants discharging oil into the drainage network...? Is there any educational resource available or effective monitoring system to help LGAs?	Alan West - Kingston Vassiliki Bouloymytis	Hi Alan, we created a background document for this forum. It lists a number of relevant strategies and plans which could be helpful. We will also share these slides on our website: https://mhwstorage.blob.core.windows.net/files/2023-02/HWS%20regional%20forum%20background%20info.pdf What has been done about restaurants discharging oil into the drainage network...? Is there any educational resource available or effective monitoring system to help LGAs? Hi Leonie, we are currently planning for 23-24 so specific campaigns are not yet determined suffice to say that this is a high priority given it is part of our 5 year strategic plan. This is in addition to the projects that are underway as I covered in my presentation.	Gail Hall Vassiliki Bouloymytis
68	Rachel - do you have plans for future campaigns in other waterways? Are they already determined?	Leonie Gibson	With Friends of Williamstown Wetlands we tried to map all the gross pollution traps in Hobsons Bay. Information from the local council and MW showed that information was not up to date and maintenance was very patchy. How will MW and LGAs better collaborate to manage GPTs?	Gail Hall
69	Monitoring technology systems for fine grain and real time data to aid enforcement?	Glen Dunstan	Hi Elise, this will be quite soon as we recently commenced annual planning for 23-24. Megan Vallas is the Program Manager, Officer for the Protection of the Local Environment and her email address is Megan.Vallas@epa.vic.gov.au if you'd like to discuss this	Hobsons Bay Wetlands Centre Gail Hall
70	When do submissions to the EPA for the OPLE program open?	Elyse Kelly-Mitchell Shire Council	Hi Doug, this will be quite soon as we recently commenced annual planning for 23-24. Megan Vallas is the Program Manager, Officer for the Protection of the Local Environment and her email address is Megan.Vallas@epa.vic.gov.au if you'd like to discuss this	Gail Hall
71	And how are the OPLE program submissions sought - interested in something focussed on Mullum Mullum Creek	Doug Evans	I have informed your question. During the preparation of the Healthy Waterways Strategy the community was heavily involved in the development of each catchment vision, performance objectives development and most aspects of the strategy's development. This forum is one method we are using to provide information on the progress of the strategy to date along with the dedicated newsletter and website where you can see the report card. In 2023 we will work on more events and methods to involve the community in a way that works to optimise strategy implementation across all partners, including the community.	Gail Hall
72	Seems like community has collaborated to many ground works, but what about community's roles and responsibilities in decision-making (plans, projects and strategies preparation)? to what extent it is defined clearly and communicate with wider community for better progress?	Dineth Perera	Melbourne Water will contact you Helen to get more detail on what specific works you are thinking about. Great point Paul, we will note this in the post discussion with presenters. Long time no see. Are there any in particular acronyms that we can help you with right now? Trent to follow up this one	Helen van den Berg Paul Rees
73	Who can we contact to get detailed information on works done in Lower Maribyrnong Parks? Helen	Helen van den Berg		
74	The less acronyms for us amateurs in the slide titles the better	Paul Caine		
75	Trent Griffiths - Paul Caine 0490 292 820	Paul Caine		
76	Does the Parks Vic Junior Ranger Minibeast Program collaborate with the Waterwatch Vic program? I find this an interesting graphic about the activities/partnerships but don't understand how much reach / impact for the Investments?	Julia Cirillo MCMC Anonymous Attendee	Thanks for the question Julia, not currently but we are commencing the collaboration discussion with MW, watch this space! Mid-term review is going to include a section on evaluating collaboration / co-delivery, which will include where partnerships have been an effective approach. That answers one half of the question! Hi Rio, do you have a question?	Gail Hall Gail Hall Gail Hall
77	Rio here - Project Officer for the Maribyrnong Valley Connection Project	Rio-Jade Fairhurst	Hi Rio, great question. The suggested ecological vegetation class (EVC) for priority Healthy Waterways Strategy reaches is matched to the communities that historically occurred on-site. Sometime when the waterway has changed over-time (e.g. incised and disconnected from a floodplain) a slightly modified or different ecological community from the nearby area will be more appropriate. What this means is that MW can and should use grassland species where this is the historic and/or most appropriate community for that location given local site conditions. Currently our Healthy Waterways Strategy programs are largely limited to the bed and banks of a waterway (e.g. 20m either side). We are working on how we can better integrate Melbourne Water and Catchment Management Authority programs to provide funding for grasslands and other ecosystems further from waterways.	Paul Rees
78	Just wondering who is doing the monitoring of the revegetation outcomes of the floating wetlands and Bass Coast plantings?	Sasha Jellinek	Hi Sacha, I'll need to take that on notice and come back to you? I'm pretty sure with the floating wetlands trial it's the University of Melbourne - but I just want to confirm that. I'll need to check with Bass Coast re the Biolinks Plan.	Gail Hall
79	I agree, some really fabulous snapshots of works underway! I am curious and this is a big Q - has the existence of the HWS and/or RLG - actually altered (increased? improved) the waterway commitments of the member orgs, or landholders, or improved the effectiveness of their existing remit by being better coordinated... or is the report card just a way of collating business as usual? We often talk about the period for a report but rarely compare whether this 5 years is overall a more effective or productive period than the prior 5 years, ie is this HWS making an impact more or less than prior strategies.	April Seymore	Hi April, these are exactly some of the questions we will be asking and seeking to answer through the HWS mid-term Evaluation, as part of the 'Evaluation of collaboration and co-delivery'. Stay tuned for more information about how to be involved (March-April) and the results later this year.	Geraldine Plis
80	Access along waterways is very important especially where there is Crown land water frontage. Challenge is overcoming very strong resistance from adjoining private landholders and getting the delegated land to prioritise enabling public access.	Patrick O'Halloran LRCL Paul Caine	Thank you for your comment, Patrick. We have been closely looking at the HWS access targets over the past few years and are planning further engagement with co-delivery partners in the second half of 2023. I would love to hear more and if you are thinking about a specific waterway/ area at geraldine.plis@melbournewater.com.au No need to respond to this	Geraldine Plis
81	Paul Rees - Paul Caine good to see you are with MW yes long time no see			
82	Joanne thanks for your question. Biodiversity, through the environmental values, is central to the HWS. In many ways most of the performance objectives in the strategy are for the benefit of waterway values. So all of these focus areas under discussion are because we want to achieve the outcomes for biodiversity. We also have Sites of Biodiversity Significance embedded in the Strategy centred around protecting specific habitats where biodiversity is high or threatened species are present. The mid term review of the HWS is taking a deep dive on how the values are faring overall across the catchment and the outcomes of this will be shared through the Annual Report next year. Though this review subcatchments were we really need to double down for biodiversity protection are becoming clearer.	Johanna Selleck Johanna Selleck	Done - I hope my previous answer goes some of the way to addressing your questions Joanne.	Trish Grant Trish Grant
83	Tricky question previously - some topics I would consider priorities for asking for action by MW (while our own group priorities relate to ones that are more in our wheelhouse). For example the planning scheme is one where it's less likely community groups should have to be the coordinators/drivers	April Seymore	Thanks April, good to know. Yes the focus areas are generally those that the RLG can affect change on. When we hold the catchment forums we will have a chance to dig deeper with more themes and partners	
84	Again- biodiversity is nowhere to be seen?	Johanna Selleck	Answered below	
85	Is anyone reading these questions?	Gazza Sturdy	We are Johanna. I am trying to source an answer for you	Geraldine Plis
86	ty	Doug Evans	No need to respond to this	
87	Thanks Rachel	Doug Evans	No need to respond to this	
88	Which of the five Kulin Nation Clans currently have a Healthy Country Plan?	Doug Evans	I've answered Wadawurrung Gunaikurnai Taungurung All are working with MW and have Country Plans All have nation statements in Water is Life -incl also Bunurong and Wurundjeri	Gail Hall
89	Great to see the Healthy Country Planning process being used locally	Doug Evans	No need to respond to this	
90	Thanks for sharing Rhys and team - beautiful Wadawurrung dja	Sandra McCormick DECCA	Got it, thanks Patrick, will be in touch!	Geraldine Plis
91	Geraldine, have emailed you directly.	Patrick O'Halloran LRCL		

98	Would be very interested in the Healthy Waterway, Healthy Country Engagement plan when it is available.	Patrick O'Halloran@ LRCL	Great to hear. I recommend checking here https://www.wadawurrung.org.au/resources
99	Water as a living entity - I love this	Paul Caine	Thank you for your comment
100	Thank You all. It was most informative and enjoyable	Paul Caine	Thank you for your comment
101	It's not so bad, I would not have travelled to Melbourne but on Zoom it was great for me.	Graham Stockfield - Turtles Australia	Thank you for your comment
102	Will we get any notes or copies of transcript from the forum or responses to specific questions?	Patrick O'Halloran@ LRCL	The forum has been recorded and we will share this on the dedicated website - https://healthywaterways.com.au/ . We will respond to as many questions as possible and send the responses out to attendees
Questions from chat area			
Water retailers are not represented in implementation group but their role is expected in the projects and activities aimed at improving the health of the waterways. It is even more important now with the broad umbrella of integrated water management covering all elements of water cycle for the holistic outcome for the community, is it being reconsidered?			
		Suresh (SEW)	Hi Suresh, I assume you mean Water retailers are not represented at the Region-wide Leadership group? If so, this has been looked at previously but I will bring it back to the RLG for discussion at the May meeting for reconsideration. Hi Steve, we provide feedback to the State Government on any proposed burn plans and strategic firebreaks and ask them to avoid clearing or burning waterways wherever possible. Strategic firebreaks are generally (but not always) located along ridge lines and other areas away from waterways.
2	How was the vegetation maintained given construction of the strategic firebreaks?	Steve	In the HWS there are some urbanised sub-catchments eg Brushy ck, Kororoit ck lower which are in stormwater priority areas and in these all new development should be treated in line with the Stormwater (SW) volume performance objectives. For other urban catchments not in the priority areas - they can now still start to address impacts by using the 'other areas' flow targets as set out in the EPA guidance. Over time, with renewal, these areas should start to improve as SW volume targets are implemented. With respect to amenity there are performance objectives for social values in most sub-catchments. They are mostly around providing access to and along waterways. There are also revegetation performance objectives in most urban sub-catchments - and the driver for these is for both environmental and amenity benefits. Location and design of vegetation in these urban areas is often done in collaboration with local communities. Another example of targets in highly urbanised waterways is the fishway program where there are a number of fishways proposed at the bottom end of systems which while they may be degraded they are still important passages for fish migration. Hi Darren, can we please catch-up and check that your projects have been captured. We use IWM working groups to gather data along with MW schemes and grants. We may be missing a few. It would be good to have you on our stormwater reporting working group if you are interested.
3	How does the strategy support significantly degraded waterways in the urban area to maintain and improve the amenity and biodiversity values of these waterways over time? Or does it not?		Thanks Andrew. Paul Rees actually provided that answer. I posted it on his behalf. I will grab this from the chat and put the two of you in touch.
4	as MW included GWW's nine stormwater harvesting projects across the Maribymong and Werribee catchments? Co-funding by GWW to LGA's providing water for a cooler, greener west. Cheers Darren	Darren Coughlan	Baseflow rules for harvesting from waterways or from drains to waterways are about making sure only stormwater is harvested, and not streamflow. Otherwise it's not strictly stormwater harvesting, it's also waterway extraction, and this is likely to exacerbate the reduced baseflow problem that is characteristic of urban waterways. To protect or restore urban waterways, we need to both reduce runoff volumes (through harvesting wet-weather stormwater flows) and increase baseflows (through infiltration). Stormwater harvesting schemes that reduce baseflow are unlikely to contribute to the goal of improving waterway health. The streamflows we use to determine passing flow thresholds for stormwater harvesting schemes are modelled estimates of pre-development baseflows in urban streams. We use pre-development baseflows, rather than existing baseflows, because this contributes to the long-term goal of restoring urban streams. Managing mosquito fish (Gambusia) is challenging. As per the DELWP 2021 information on managing freshwater pests, the focus on mosquito fish management is preventing increased spread.
5	Trish Grant. I posted anonymously accidentally. I asked about Westernport as a separate 'catchment'. You mentioned dedicated MP staff and I would appreciate learning more convener@waterwaysnetwork.com.au	Andrew Kelly	
6	Is the baseflow estimator for stormwater harvesting going to be reviewed? The current baseflow rules mean it's almost impossible for large harvesting schemes to be implemented based on the current base flow targets.	Jase	For small, high value waterbodies drying can be used as a management technique but this would be dependent on the other fauna that is present. The waterbody would need to be dried for a significant period which could be disruptive to breeding cycles and detrimental to desirable species.
7	I'd like more information on actions to minimise impacts of invasive species in waterways eg: mosquito fish that have outcompeted native fish. This is important in terms of climate change too.	dayanthi	Johanna - biodiversity and habitat are absolutely on the radar and strongly connected to the vegetation targets. We are already working really hard on these and have a big program to deliver; my take is that the focus areas are more what ISN'T already moving to bring more into the spotlight. Trent Griffiths (Melbourne Water) to Everyone: And the CMA projects are very focused around biodiversity and habitat. Absolutely recognise there is an extinction crisis, and hopefully better planning and better stormwater management support our waterways and riparian areas supporting biodiversity. Biodiversity underpins almost all work we do along waterways, so we might take for granted that it is recognised but need to call it out more. Can definitely talk to you more offline about these aspects
8	Surely biodiversity and creating habitat should be a focus area? Needed urgently...	Johanna Selleck Knox Environment Society and other groups	Hi Helen, I will share the Slido results but they were scored in the background showing that Stormwater came up slightly above Water for the Environment in the results. It was very close though. As we mentioned in the activity the RLG chose two focus areas in 2022 and so may do the same this year, but it depends on what resourcing is needed for each. The RLG will discuss focus areas for 2023 in a meeting later in February and your comments will be shared then. The survey will also be shared for completion by those that weren't able to use, or complete the activity in the time given.
9	Cheryl water for environment and stormwater were equal. It seems MW prioritised by their bias. Why our earth couldn't both be considered - that's what adaptive planning means! Helen	Helen Van de Berg	