

Revealing the river of times past



Project name: Caring for the Campaspe
Financial year story collected: 2013-14

Caring for the Campaspe is a four-year (2012-16) project delivered by the North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) aiming to protect and enhance 400ha of vegetation along the Campaspe River, improving aquatic and riverside ecosystem health.

For many years prior to the Caring for the Campaspe project, volunteer community groups have worked tirelessly to improve the river environment in towns along its length.

One such group is the Campaspe River Reserve Committee, that manage the Crown land reserve through the Rochester township as a Section 86 Committee of Management on behalf of the Shire of Campaspe and Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI).

The Caring for the Campaspe project is an opportunity to support the efforts and priorities of the group. Long-term Committee Chair Paul Poort says that supporting local communities to care for waterways they are connected to is crucial to ensuring positive change.

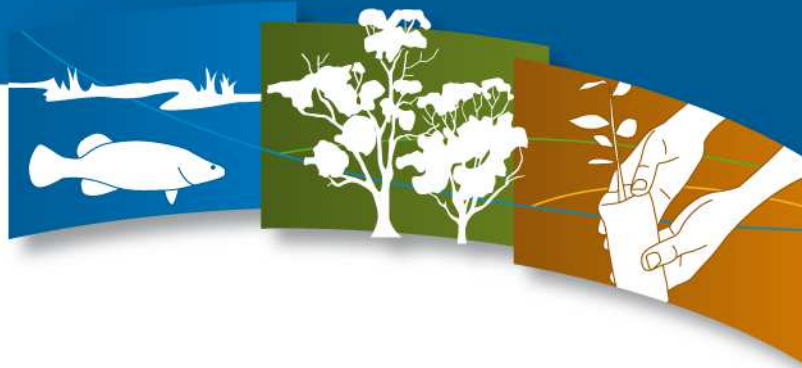
“The Campaspe River Reserve Committee is responsible for the up-keep of the river walk in Rochester, so we were able to identify what works would be appropriate along the river in the town.

“Before the clearing of date palms and ash trees along the western bank of the Campaspe upstream of the Rochester-Kyabram bridge, adjacent to the Lions Park there was only a glimpse of the river from the park area,” Paul said.

As soon as the works started on 18 September 2013, Paul was impressed by the results. In a letter provided to the contractors he wrote:

“Taking a walk last night and “WOW” it looks great already. You’re doing a great job. Copied a couple of photo’s to show what the swimming area was like before the palms took over. The area below was used as the town pool from 1900s to the 1956 flood. Keep it up. I at least appreciate what you’re doing. Thanks a lot.”

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Paul says that since the works were completed the river can be seen in a whole new light.

“The clearing of date palms and other non-indigenous vegetation along the western bank of the Campaspe upstream of the bridge has opened up views of the river, bridge and views of the opposite bank,” Paul said.

“The removal of plants such as the date palms will slow down their spread along the waterway and improve the enjoyment of the walk and river within our community.

“Observations by committee members and feedback from the community and users of the walk have indicated that the works have been beneficial. Community interest has been enhanced because points of interest along the river, such as the old swimming hole, site can now be viewed.

“The project manager (Angela Gladman) and on-ground staff were pleasant to deal with and work was carried out effectively. We were impressed with the efficient way the works were implemented and pleased to be early recipients of the funding.

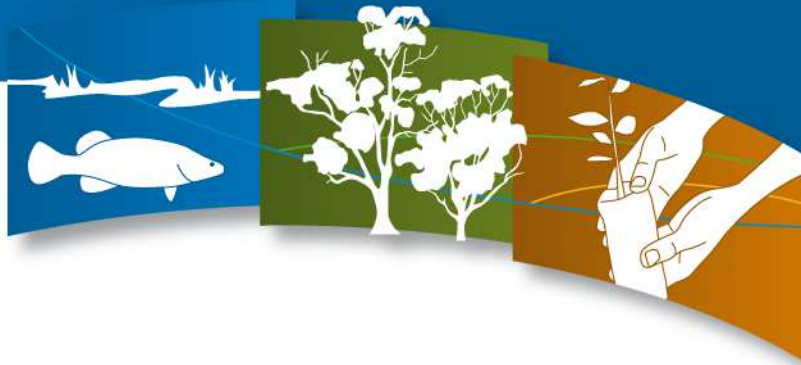
“The revegetation of the cleared banks with native plants by Conservation Trust Volunteers in May 2014 has restored the riverbank in the township.

“This committee hopes that the project will continue to provide support for groups like ours to enhance access to the river and protect the local river environment,” Paul said.

The \$3.73M Caring for the Campaspe project is funded by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries.

Department of
Environment and
Primary Industries





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Before date palm removal, Rochester township (13 September 2013)



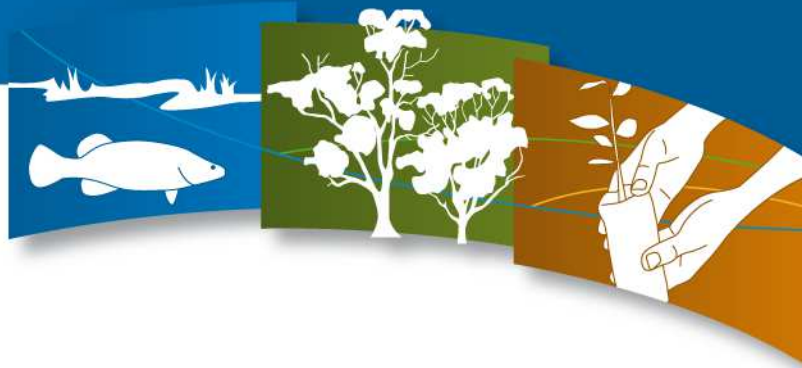
After date palm removal, Rochester township (24 September 2013)



Same site used as the swimming hole in the 1950s



After revegetation with swimming hole interpretative signage installed by the Campaspe River Reserve Committee, Rochester township (3 June 2014)



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Before date palm removal, Rochester township (13 September 2013)



After date palm removal, Rochester township (24 September 2013)



After revegetation, Rochester township (3 June 2014)