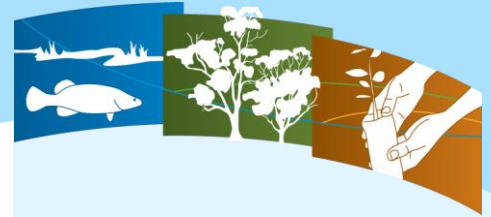


CARING FOR THE CAMPASPE

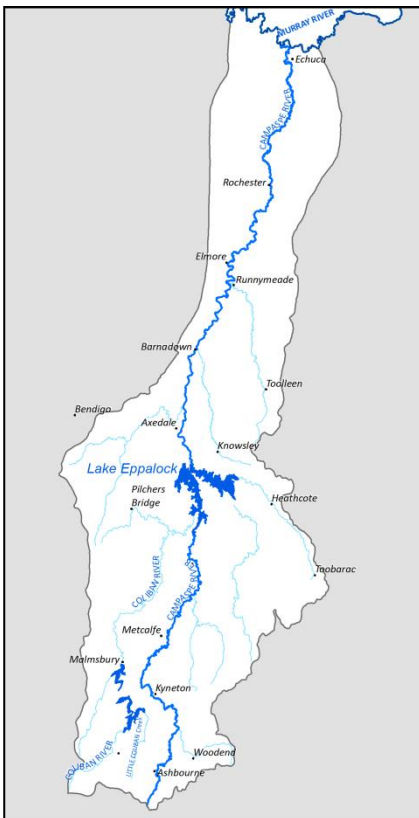


THE CAMPASPE RIVER

The Campaspe River extends more than 220km from the Great Dividing Range near Ashbourne to Echuca on the Murray River.

Containing many threatened flora and fauna, the river is highly valued for the social and economic benefits it provides to adjacent landholders, towns and surrounding communities.

The health of the river is directly linked to the health of the fringing (riparian) vegetation.



Project area targeting the Campaspe River.

PROJECT GOALS

In 2012, the North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) secured \$3.73M of Victorian Government funding to protect and enhance the river's important riparian vegetation.

This four-year project aims to complement the river health improvements to be gained through the delivery of environmental flows (downstream of Lake Eppalock).

The riparian (streamside) vegetation plays an important role in the health of the river. A diversity of native trees, shrubs and grasses shade (cool) the water, hold the banks together and filter runoff 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.



Endangered Swift Parrot.
Photo: Courtesy Chris Tzaros

ON-GROUND WORKS

More than 650 landholders along the river have been given the opportunity to get involved in the project. This may be directly through the uptake of incentives for their river frontage or involvement in community engagement activities.

The project has been funded to deliver the following on-ground outputs:

- 80km of riparian fencing
- 163ha of woody weed control
- 48ha of willow control
- 80ha of revegetation
- community engagement

"A natural area is being rehabilitated; people have demonstrated support and a connectedness to the project; well-attended revegetation days have already occurred; the local economy has had a stimulus from the project; the growing native vegetation will benefit neighbouring biodiversity; and the reputation of our organisation's may be enhanced from involvement in the project."

Brendan Smith, Parks Victoria



Tree planting with Kyneton Scouts, Joeys and Cubs in May 2014.



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PROJECT REFERENCE GROUP

Given the broad geographic area through which the river winds, a Project Reference Group guides the planning of community engagement activities and prioritisation of on-ground works and future project funding opportunities.

“This project is a fantastic opportunity for Campaspe River landholders and adjoining communities to implement and support significant on-ground works.

“These on-ground works will improve river health and water quality with an increased awareness of the Campaspe River’s values.

“The support of communities and the adoption of the works program by landholders have been very impressive and significant riparian planting and fencing as well as willow and woody weed control has been achieved.”

Colin Smith, Project Reference Group Chair and NRMCA member

The group meets quarterly and involves representatives of the community, local government, investor Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Goulburn-Murray Water and the following Aboriginal corporations:

- Dja Dja Wurrung Clans
- Taungurung Clans
- Yorta Yorta Nations



Onground works team members of Dja Dja Wurrung and Yorta Yorta Nations with DELWP representatives at a Project Reference Group meeting in November, 2014.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Increasing the awareness and understanding of the river’s values, threats and management is a key objective of the project both at the landholder and broader community levels.

Information and advice is provided directly to landholders managing river frontage and at topic-based workshops, e.g. Crown land and weed management, environmental flows, fish ecology, etc.

The broader community is also invited to other river-based events, such as information sessions about willow removal and platypus.



Australian Platypus Conservancy’s Geoff Williams at an Echuca information session in July, 2014.

The project has also supported the expansion of the River Detectives program to more than eight schools along its length. About 150 students are involved in collecting and sharing monthly water-quality data.

Through the River Detectives program, students experience hands-on learning in outdoor environments which contributes to increased creativity, health and wellness.

A SUCCESS STORY

By 2015, the project has worked with more than 50 individual landholders and public land managers with demand exceeding available funding.



The river at Axedale before willow removal.

“The removal of the willows has made a tremendous difference. Clearing the willows opened up river access, revealed the beauty of the glorious River Red Gums and natural landscape that we trust will attract native species.”

Yvonne Wrigglesworth, President Axedale Our Town – Our Future



The river at Axedale after willow removal.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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