

## YARRA AND MARIBYRNONG RIVERS – STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

### RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The future planning and management of Melbourne's two major rivers – the Yarra and Maribyrnong - involves several State Government agencies and local government:

- Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE)
- Parks Victoria
- Melbourne Water
- Environment Protection Authority (EPA)
- Port of Melbourne Corporation
- Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority
- Local Government

Further information about the roles of these authorities, particularly in relation to rivers in the metropolitan area, is set out in the attached Adobe document.

### Department of Sustainability and Environment

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) was established in December 2002 to bring into one organisation all of the state's responsibilities for managing Victoria's natural and built environments. DSE responsibilities that contribute to the health and sustainability of the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers include:

- Managing the regulatory framework for land-use planning, environment assessment and land subdivision. DSE also provides advice on planning policy, urban design and strategic planning.
- Ensuring the protection and management of Victoria's natural and cultural resource base, and the maintenance and enhancement of the State's biological diversity.
- Through Heritage Victoria, providing advice on cultural heritage management.
- Working in partnership with farmers, Landcare groups, industry, catchment bodies and other key stakeholders to achieve sustainable development and conservation of land and water resources.
- Managing plant and animal issues across Victoria, including the conservation of native fauna and flora, the control of pest plants and animals and the welfare of domestic animals.
- Providing management services and information about land ownership, location of land parcels and boundaries, valuations and permissible uses.
- Conducting research across a range of topics including biodiversity and conservation, forests, population, housing, land development and employment.

One of DSE's priorities is to coordinate implementation of *Melbourne 2030: Planning for Sustainable Growth*, which was released in October 2002. *Melbourne 2030* is the guiding policy for managing growth and change across metropolitan Melbourne and the surrounding region over a 30-year time scale.

*Melbourne 2030*, together with the *Port Phillip and Westernport Regional Catchment Strategy* and the *Victorian River Health Strategy*, provide the policy context for planning and management of the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers.

Website: [www.dse.vic.gov.au](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au)

### Parks Victoria

Parks Victoria manages an extensive network of parks across the State of Victoria, including national, state and metropolitan parks, marine national parks, many significant cultural assets and Melbourne's bays and waterways. The total area under Parks Victoria management is 4.1 million hectares – 17% of the state.

Parks and open space for which Parks Victoria has direct management responsibility along the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers include:

- Organ Pipes National Park
- Brimbank Park and Horseshoe Bend in Keilor
- Yarra Bend Park
- Yarra Flats, Banksia, Birrarung and Westerfolds Parks in Bulleen and Templestowe
- Warrandyte State Park.

Parks Victoria has a role in the care, protection, management and use of the lower Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers for the purpose of recreation, leisure, tourism and water transport. Responsibilities include licensing private jetties, issuing permits for commercial boating activities and enforcing regulations.

Parks Victoria is also responsible (under the *Marine Act 1988*) for recommending and enforcing regulations, maintaining navigation aids and recommending and enforcing river closures associated with the conduct of events.

Other activities Parks Victoria undertake to enhance the recreational use and visitor satisfaction of the waterways include management/removal of water borne litter and dredging and removal of obstructions to ensure safe navigation.

Website: [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

### **Melbourne Water**

Melbourne Water is a State Government owned business enterprise. In addition to managing Melbourne's water supply catchments and removing and treating most of the city's sewage, Melbourne Water is responsible for rivers and creeks and major drainage systems.

Melbourne Water provides the following functions for metropolitan rivers and creeks:

- River and creek drainage, floodplain and riparian zone management, including protection and enhancement of flora, fauna and habitat values within the floodplain and stabilising and rehabilitating eroded rivers and creeks.
- Streamflow and land management, stormwater management, water recycling, energy and greenhouse management, waterway health planning, water resource management and conservation.
- Flood and regional drainage management.
- Operating water, sewerage and drainage hydraulic systems in accordance with public health, environmental, safety and regulatory obligations.
- Community education programs.
- Monitoring and reporting of the condition of waterways.
- Research and technology development.

Website: [www.melbournewater.com.au](http://www.melbournewater.com.au)

### **Environment Protection Authority**

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is a statutory body established under the *Environment Protection Act 1970*. This Act provides the legal framework by which environmental objectives, goals and regulations are established for the State. Waterways are protected through State environment protection policies (SEPPs) which are legal tools made under the Act. SEPPs establish beneficial uses which reflect the values and uses the community wishes to protect, and give clear guidance on what needs to be done to protect them (the attainment program).

The SEPP (Waters of Victoria), last updated in June 2003, applies to the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers. SEPP (Waters of Victoria) has several schedules covering sensitive areas such as Western Port. Schedule F7 applies to the Yarra Catchment in particular. Schedule F6 (Waters of Port Phillip Bay) is also relevant to the Yarra and Maribyrnong as its attainment program applies to the catchment of Port Phillip Bay.

Website: [www.epa.vic.gov.au](http://www.epa.vic.gov.au)

### **Port of Melbourne Corporation**

The Port of Melbourne Corporation is a State Government owned business enterprise, established in July 2003 with objectives and functions as defined in the *Port Services Act 1995*. The lower reaches of the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers are within the port area.

The Corporation undertakes the integrated management and development of the land and maritime functions of the port and its integration with the broader freight and logistics system.

The Corporation works closely with its customers (including shipping companies and cargo owners) to ensure their needs are met through the provision of specialised, high quality port facilities. It also provides:

- Road, rail and associated infrastructure within the port.
- Value added services, including trade development, customised port facilities and logistics advice on cost effective transport.
- A whole-of-port response to port safety.
- Implementation of security procedures that fully comply with international standards.
- Environmental management.
- Safe and efficient shipping control in the port waters of Melbourne.
- Safe navigation and channels to the port in Port Phillip Bay.
- Port education programs.
- Adequate channel depth.

Website: [www.portofmelbourne.com](http://www.portofmelbourne.com)

### **Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority**

The Port Phillip and Western Port CMA (PPWCMA) was established in October 2002, replacing the Catchment and Land Protection Board. The role of the PPWCMA under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* includes:

- Preparing a Regional Catchment Strategy which outlines the condition of natural resources; extent and causes of land and water degradation; objectives, measures, priorities and responsibilities for addressing degradation; and measures to coordinate and monitor implementation.
- Developing an active partnership with stakeholders in catchment management.
- Providing advice to Government on catchment management and land protection, including regional priorities to guide resource allocation.
- Promoting greater community awareness and understanding of land and water resources.
- Reporting annually on the condition and management of land and water resources.

The first Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) for the region was released in 1997. A revised draft strategy was released in August 2004. The document can be downloaded from the PPWCMA website:

<http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/>

### **Local Government**

Victorian local government authorities provide a broad range of services, facilities and infrastructure to local communities. Councils also play a key role in planning for their communities including land use, transport and environmental planning, and planning for the future provision of Council services and infrastructure. Council activities and responsibilities that contribute to the health and enjoyment of the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers and their environs include:

- Planning and management of open spaces, parks and other recreation facilities.
- Capital works to provide and maintain infrastructure and facilities including storm water drains and local roads.
- Managing the use and development of land adjacent to the river including the approval of new development.
- Administering local laws including control of animals, parking and littering.

Other activities that may have some impact on the rivers include:

- Environmental education programs and supporting local environmental initiatives.
- Economic development programs that support the growth of local businesses and employment (eg tourism strategies).
- Cultural and sporting events.
- Waste and recycling services.