



Welcome to PPWCMA Catchment News. Catchment News is a quarterly communication from the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority

## Can I be paid for farming nature?

In a world filled with environmental concern, the traditional ways of working the land could in the future also include a different kind of 'farming' – sustainable farming of nature.

There are growing opportunities for people to provide specific benefits to the community or local environment such as natural habitat or water enhancement. These types of benefits are often called ecosystem services.

In some cases, a 'tender' system is operated whereby landholders can bid to provide ecosystem services and, if they offer good value, can be paid for carrying out the work. There are already some schemes in Victoria making payments to landholders for such services on private land.

Another emerging opportunity for landholders to gain an income is through the provision of 'offsets'. An offset market exists when the negative effect of works carried out are required to be offset by positive works elsewhere. There are currently markets emerging for native vegetation offsets (when native vegetation is cleared) and carbon offsets.

In June, the PPWCMA is running a series of seminars outlining some of the emerging schemes, the obligations involved and potential returns for landowners (see dates right).

The seminars will outline tender schemes, vegetation offsets and carbon offset opportunities and include perspectives of landholders already taking part in the schemes.

### **FARMING NATURE SEMINAR DATES**

#### **Saturday 14 June**

Frankston Arts Centre, Cnr Young & Davy Streets,  
Frankston Contact Sarah Canham on 8781 7960

#### **Saturday 21 June**

Manningham Function Centre, 699 Doncaster Road  
Doncaster Contact Sam Bayley on 9296 4622

#### **Saturday 28 June**

Witchmount Estate Winery Function Centre  
557 Leakes Road, Rockbank  
Contact John Robinson on 9218 5611

Those wishing to attend are asked to contact the PPWCMA via the website, [www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/events](http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/events).



# Caring for Our Country

The Australian Government has recently announced its new “Caring for Our Country” program which will replace the Natural Heritage Trust and various other environmental funding programs.

The goal of Caring for Our Country is to have an environment that is healthy, better-protected, well-managed, resilient, and that provides essential ecosystem services in a changed climate. The program has six national priority areas:

- A national reserve system,
- Biodiversity and natural icons,
- Coastal environments and critical aquatic habitats,
- Sustainable farm practices,
- Natural resource management in remote and northern Australia, and
- Community skills, knowledge and engagement.

Caring for Our Country will provide \$2.25 billion over five years from 1 July 2008 to June 2013. This is comparable to previous total national funding levels.

The 2008/09 financial year will be transitional and it is clear that there will be some significant changes from the processes that have been used in recent years. The most significant changes include:

- The new program will open annual funding up to a higher degree of competition across Australia, enabling various organizations (councils, non-government organizations, government agencies, regional catchment authorities) to bid for projects together or individually.
- There is a strong focus on accountability and outcomes.

For the transitional year, funding is made up of:

- Guaranteed funding to each regional organization (CMA or equivalent) of 60% of the average of its funding from previous years.
- \$31.8 million in a “transitional” pool for regions suffering particular hardship in adjusting to the new arrangements.
- \$127.2 million in a “competitive” pool.

For the Port Phillip and Western Port region, guaranteed funding is \$2.1 million for 2008/09. Project proposals have also been submitted for consideration the transitional and competitive pools.



## Caring for Our Country (continued)

The PPWCMA has submitted that on-ground works, community engagement, regional capacity, collaborative projects and leveraging of additional funding should be maintained as much as possible in the transitional year while the Caring for Our Country priorities and processes are further developed.

The funding allocations will be announced by the Australian Government in due course. It is hoped that this will occur before the end of the financial year so that a smooth transition can be made from 2007/08 into 2008/09.

For further information, please contact Stephen Thuan or David Thomas at the PPWCMA on 8781 7900.

## Native Vegetation Plan Changes

Recent revisions to the Bioregional Conservation Status for vegetation communities (Ecological Vegetation Classes) in Victoria, and to some of the criteria for assessing the conservation significance of native vegetation has resulted in changes to Appendices 3.2 and 3.3 of the Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan.

Under *Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – a Framework for Action*, it is the regional native vegetation plans that act as reference documents for the conservation status of vegetation communities within CMA regions.

The changes to the Native Vegetation Plan are of interest to local government, consultants, individuals and organisations that need to refer to this document for processing clearing permits and offsets in the region.

The changes are outlined on the PPWCMA website – <http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au> in the “Publications, Strategies and Plans” section.



## Victoria-Virginia Landcare Fellowship

John Robinson, the PPWCMA's Werribee and Maribyrnong Landcare Coordinator, has been awarded a Victoria-Virginia Landcare Fellowship (the second ever presented) and will be travelling to the United States for a four to five week period in July to learn about the Landcare movement in that region.

There are several active Landcare groups in Virginia and John will not only have the opportunity to share some of his experiences from many years being involved in Landcare as a landholder, member of Landcare and Friends Groups and as a Landcare Coordinator, but also look at how Landcare has been applied in the United States.

During his stay in the US, John's activities will include presentations on Landcare in Victoria, our methods of community engagement, work with VirginiaTech and the opportunity to present guest lectures, involvement in field days and discussions with environmental groups in that region.

John says winning the Fellowship is an honour and thinks "the knowledge sharing aspect of the visit will be hugely beneficial." He is looking forward to the trip and

is especially interested to see how Landcare has evolved and been applied to the landscapes and environment in the USA, in light of Landcare's relatively short history in that country.



*John Robinson working with  
Wallan Primary School*

## Power in Numbers Regional Forum

The "Power in numbers: exploring community collaboration" forum was held in late February and explored the value of collaboration between groups and agencies to improve environmental outcomes.

The event attracted about 90 people representing:

- 17 Landcare groups or networks
- 11 Friends groups
- 20 community groups
- 9 local governments
- 2 education groups
- 4 government agencies.

The forum developed networks amongst attendees, provided case studies on how collaboration has worked and provided opportunities to raise topics and issues around the challenges of collaboration.

A full report of the event can be found on the PPWCMA website at

[http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/events\\_2007archive.html](http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/events_2007archive.html)



## Landcare award nominations open

The PPWCMA is pleased to announce the running of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Port Phillip and Western Port Landcare Awards and celebration event at Zinc in the city, this September.

The awards recognise individuals, groups and organisations who are working to creating a better environment within our region.

The PPWCMA is calling for nominations for the Landcare awards. You can register your interest on the PPWCMA website or contact your PPWCMA Landcare Coordinator.

Nominations close on **Friday 6 June!**

## New Landcare groups

### *Southern Ranges Environment Alliance (SREA)*

The Southern Ranges Environment Alliance (SREA) is working to restore habitat and bio links stretching from Bunyip State Park to Dandenong Ranges National Park, to Yellingbo Reserve and Lysterfield State Park.

The alliance includes: Southern Dandenongs Landcare Group, Johns Hill Landcare Group, Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater, Macclesfield Landcare Group, Selby Wildlife and Environment Group and others.

### *Middle Yarra Landcare Network (MYLN)*

The Middle Yarra Landcare Network works within the Yarra River Sub-catchments of Andersons Creek, Jumping Creek and Brushy Creek.

The group includes; Friends of Warrandyte State Park, Andersons Creek Catchment Area Landcare Group, Jumping Creek Catchment Landcare Group and Wonga Park Environment Group.

Its first on-ground project, the MYLN Habitat Link Project aims to plant 3,200 indigenous plants in key areas to widen the corridor along the Jumping Creek Habitat Corridor.

## 2008 Grants Calendar launched

The March 2008 Grants Calendar is now available via the PPWCMA website. Please visit:

[http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/funding\\_calendar.htm](http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/funding_calendar.htm) or call the PPWCMA on 03 8781 7900 to obtain a copy of the calendar.



## Yarra 4 Life



An exciting partnership, called Food For Trees, has been established with the Victorian restaurant industry. The project aims to plant one million trees within the next 10 years and expects the work to also create benefits such as cleaner waterways and providing habitat for native wildlife.

See the PPWCMA website for more information on the Food For Trees initiative - [http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/projects\\_key\\_yarra\\_investment.html](http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/projects_key_yarra_investment.html)

## Grow West

### Minister Jennings launches the Land and Biodiversity Green Paper at Grow West



*Matt Mooney, CVAs Ken Beasley and Minister Jennings at the launch*

The James Whyte Island Reserve, within the Grow West area near Bacchus Marsh, was the site for the launch of the Land and Biodiversity Green Paper on Sunday 6 April. Minister for Environment and Climate Change Gavin Jennings highlighted the importance of community input into the Land and Biodiversity Green Paper. The site illustrated the importance of revegetation and biodiversity works to improve the landscapes across and create vital links. Grow West worked with Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) to deliver the event.

### July 20 Community Planting Day

On Sunday July 20, individuals in and around the Grow West area (Bacchus Marsh, Ballan, Werribee and surrounds) are invited to take part in a Grow West Community Planting Day. The planting, run in conjunction with Conservation Volunteers Australia, Victorian National Parks Association and Friends of Werribee Gorge, will be held at James Whyte Island.

Those interested to attend should contact Matt Mooney on 03 9218 5615.



# Events

## MAY

- 13 May**      **DSE Community Consultation session Land and Biodiversity Green Paper**  
Beaconsfield - Melaleuca Lodge – cnr Princes Highway and Brunt St  
Contact DSE on 136 186 or visit [www.dse.vic.gov.au/landwhitepaper](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/landwhitepaper) and go to 'have your say'
- 14 May**      **DSE Community Consultation session Land and Biodiversity Green Paper**  
South Morang - Plenty Ranges Arts & Convention Centre - Ferres Boulevard  
Contact DSE on 136 186 or visit [www.dse.vic.gov.au/landwhitepaper](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/landwhitepaper) and go to 'have your say'
- 22 May**      **International Day of Biodiversity**
- 29-30 May**    **Victorian Landcare Forum 2008**  
Novotel Forest Resort, 1500 Midland Highway, Creswick  
Contact [landcare.forum2008@dse.vic.gov.au](mailto:landcare.forum2008@dse.vic.gov.au) or Doug Evans on 9296 4662

## JUNE

- 5 June**      **World Environment Day – United Nations Environment Program** [www.unep.org/wed/](http://www.unep.org/wed/)
- 6 June**      **Nominations close for the**
- 14 June**      **Can I be paid for farming nature seminar (Frankston Arts Centre)**  
Seminar looking at options for landholders wishing to earn an income by running environmental services on their land. Contact Sarah Canham on 8781 7960  
TIME: 9am registration  
VENUE: Frankston Arts Centre, Cnr Young & Davy Streets, Frankston  
RSVP online at [www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au](http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au)
- 21 June**      **Can I be paid for farming nature seminar (Manningham Civic Centre)**  
TIME: 9am registration  
VENUE: Manningham Function Centre, Civic Centre 699 Doncaster Road Doncaster  
Contact Sam Bayley on 9296 4622  
RSVP online at [www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au](http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au)
- 28 June**      **Can I be paid for farming nature seminar (West of Melbourne)**  
TIME: 9am registration  
VENUE: Witchmount Estate Winery Function & Convention Centre  
557 Leakes Road, Rockbank (Melway 338 J9)  
Contact John Robinson on 9218 5611.  
RSVP online at [www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au](http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au)

## JULY

- 20 July**      **Grow West Community Planting Day**  
Contact Matt Mooney on 9218 5615
- 27 July**      **National Tree Day – Planet Ark** [www.treeday.planetark.com/](http://www.treeday.planetark.com/)



## Staff news

**Jude Horrill** has joined the PPWCMA as Major Projects Manager bringing strong commercial experience to the organisation. Jude will lead marketing of the Grow West, Living Links, Yarra 4 Life and Spirit of the Bunyip projects.



**Emmaline Froggatt** has joined the Regional Catchment Strategy team as the RCS Land Coordinator, based in Frankston.



**Stephen Thuan** has joined the PPWCMA as the Environmental Funding Coordinator, based in Frankston.



**Annie Leonard** joined the Business Team in December as Administration Coordinator, based in Frankston.



**Matt Mooney** has taken over the reins as Grow West Coordinator based in Sunbury.



**Adam Shalekoff** has taken on the role as Local Government Coordinator, based in Frankston.

Catchment News is published and distributed by the Port Phillip and Westernport Bay Catchment Management Authority for the interest of our stakeholders and interested parties. Anyone wishing to be added to the Catchment News mailing list should contact Communications Manager Anne Gigney on [anne.gigney@ppwcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:anne.gigney@ppwcma.vic.gov.au). Should you wish to be taken off the list, please contact Anne.

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