

JANUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER

FROM THE CHAIR



RACHEL LOPES
Chain of Ponds Collaboration Lead

Hi everyone,

Happy New Year! A year of great conversations, connections and co-delivery for the Moonee Ponds Creek.

I'm delighted to share our first Newsletter of 2021 with you. We have a diverse and exciting array of projects on the go and continue to work closely with the Friends and Upper Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek to support and encourage each other to care for and improve Moonee Ponds Creek. As Collaboration Lead, my priority for 2021 is to support the

collaboration in determining what a mature collaboration looks like and work towards achieving this. Whether it be greater clarity around governance, planning and reporting, more projects on the ground or increasing the growth and impact of the collaboration. I look forward to the challenge. I'll continue to support the projects already underway and communicate with our broader Chain of Ponds Supporters as we go. Please don't hesitate to get in touch and enjoy the latest news from the Creek.

Pondly,
Rachel

Brosnan Crescent Naturalisation

On 10 December 2020, geotechnical investigation works commenced on the Brosnan Crescent Naturalisation project. The project is a key priority for the Chain of Ponds Collaboration and involves the naturalisation of a section of the creek next to Brosnan Crescent, Strathmore. These works were completed in late December.

The project site presents a unique set of challenges including managing flood risk to the community, erosion and potential land contamination. These are being investigated and will inform the ultimate project feasibility and design.

The State Government has contributed \$5 million towards the project, which is being managed by Melbourne Water in close collaboration with Moreland City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, the Friends of the Moonee Ponds Creek and the Department of Environments, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

Melbourne Water plan to present the findings of the geotechnical investigations to the Chain of Ponds Collaboration group and other key stakeholders in the second quarter of 2021. There will be broader community engagement on options once they have been designed.

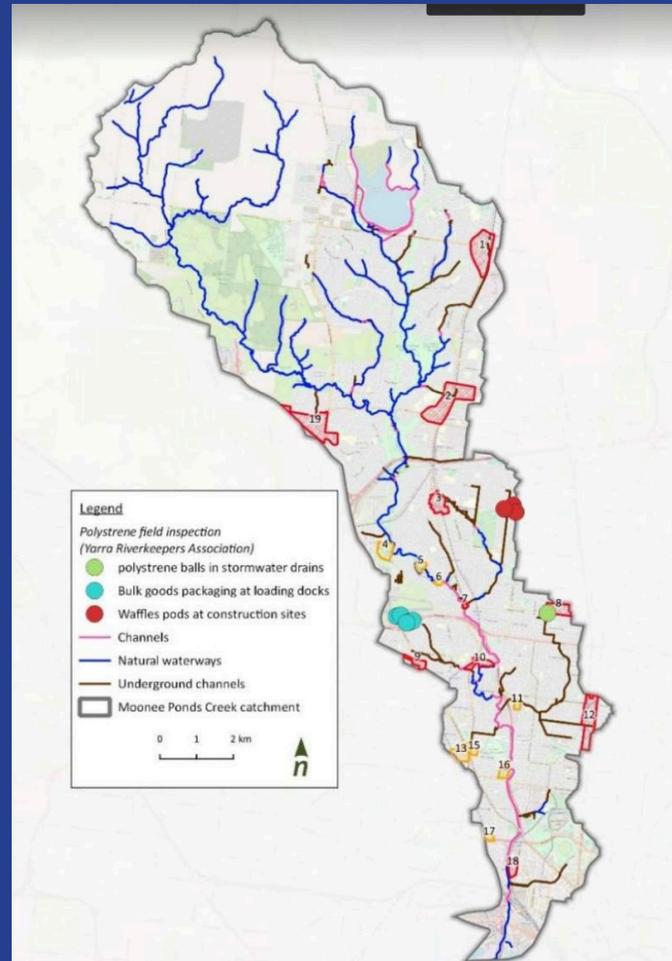
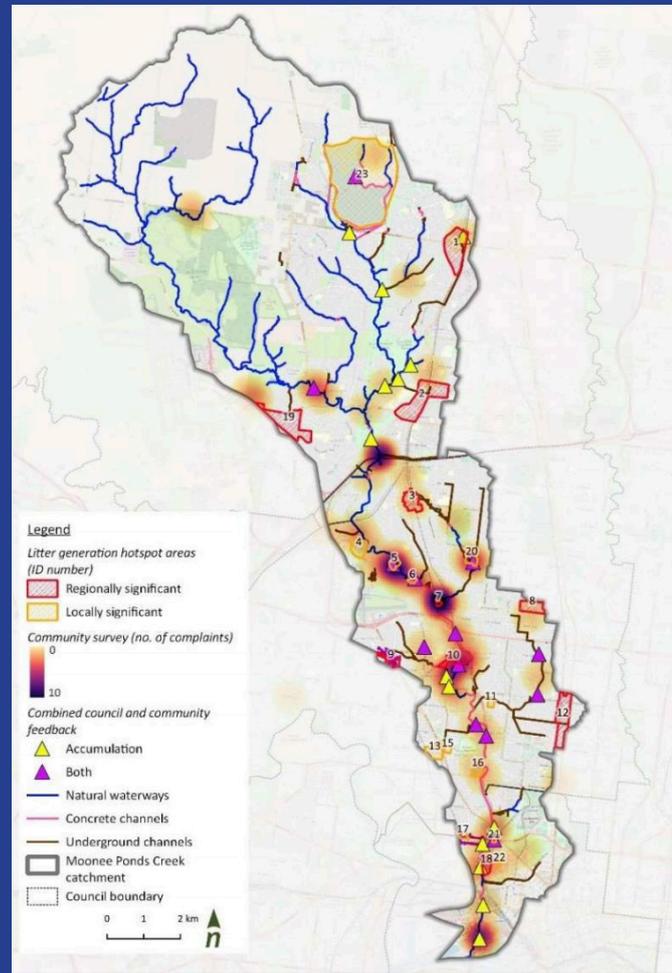


Catchment Litter Plan / Working Group

A lot has happened since our last update in July this year! Whilst COVID restrictions hindered the project's planned litter site surveys, community group activities and launch of RMIT litter trackers, our project consultants Alluvium busily worked behind the scenes to analyse the catchment data we were able to obtain. Out of the analysis findings, a strategic approach for the catchment and recommended action plan was workshopped and developed with the Project Steering Group.

A big thanks to all community members and agencies who so diligently provided data and information. Melbourne Water's new Working for Victoria workforce was also able to make a contribution to this project and the creek through additional litter pick up activities and data collection. The information gathered helped identify the catchment's key problem litter types to focus on: polystyrene and street litter (food packaging, cigarette butts, cans etc). It also identified where the significant litter generation and accumulation hotspots are (pictured below) and the most applicable actions to address these.

We now have a [final report](#) which is available for viewing. Next steps are to celebrate the work done to date, launch the delayed litter trackers in the lower section of the Moonee Ponds Creek and get the band (Litter Working Group) back together to develop and deliver the Action Plan. Keep your eye out for a celebration on the Creek in February.



Hopetoun Ave Bridge

Work will soon begin on the Hopetoun Ave Bridge, the first step in the plan to improve connectivity to the Moonee Ponds Creek Shared Trail for Moreland residents. The new bridge, for both pedestrians and cyclists, will cross from Donald Avenue to Hopetoun Avenue in Brunswick West. The bridge will include handrail lighting for safe usage at night. The potential impact on wildlife has been considered in the design of the lighting. Work on the new bridge will begin in February 2021.

Following the installation of the bridge, further work will be undertaken to improve recreational access in this area. This includes linking existing sections of the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail by creating new shared paths on both the Moonee Valley and Moreland sides of the creek. The existing concrete section of the trail will be upgraded with a handrail, and revegetation work will be undertaken in the area. This work will commence in March and continue through to approximately September 2021.

On 26 November 2020, a community information session was held regarding the proposed bridge and other aspects of the project. Approximately 15 people attended and showed great enthusiasm for the improvements.



Trails/Transport & Connectivity Guidelines

The Trails, Transport and Connectivity working group has developed a guideline for public land alongside the creek. It is consistent with the existing Chain of Ponds master plan document. The proposal from the working group is that this guideline could be adopted in principle by the MOU participants (particularly the four councils, Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water as the land managers), as an example of a collaborative

approach to public open space management. The guideline is designed to be used alongside public land managers' existing policies and internal guidelines around urban design, assets and signage.



Feasibility Study – Upper Moonee Ponds Creek Trail

A feasibility study is being undertaken for the Upper Moonee Ponds Creek Trail, with the intention for the study to be completed by April.

The main objectives of the feasibility study are to identify possible alignments of the missing link trail, constraints and opportunities for the trail, and overall costs. The study will endeavour to identify ways to enhance the visitor experience to the trail, such as important nodes of interest and incorporating EcoArt into the design. It will also analyse any barriers to the alignment, such as land ownership, topography and environmental constraints.

The proposed location of the new shared path is from the Tarnuk Retarding Basin in Westmeadows, through the Mitchell Lasry Quarry site to the Woodlands Historic Park.

The idea to complete this section of 'missing link' path was discussed in the early phases of the collaboration and has since been re-invigorated as an important project to complete in the upper MPC catchment. While the MPC trail is generally regarded as complete, beyond the Tarnuk reserve in Westmeadows the trail merges into the broader Woodlands Historic Park network of trails and loses its identity and connection to the creek.

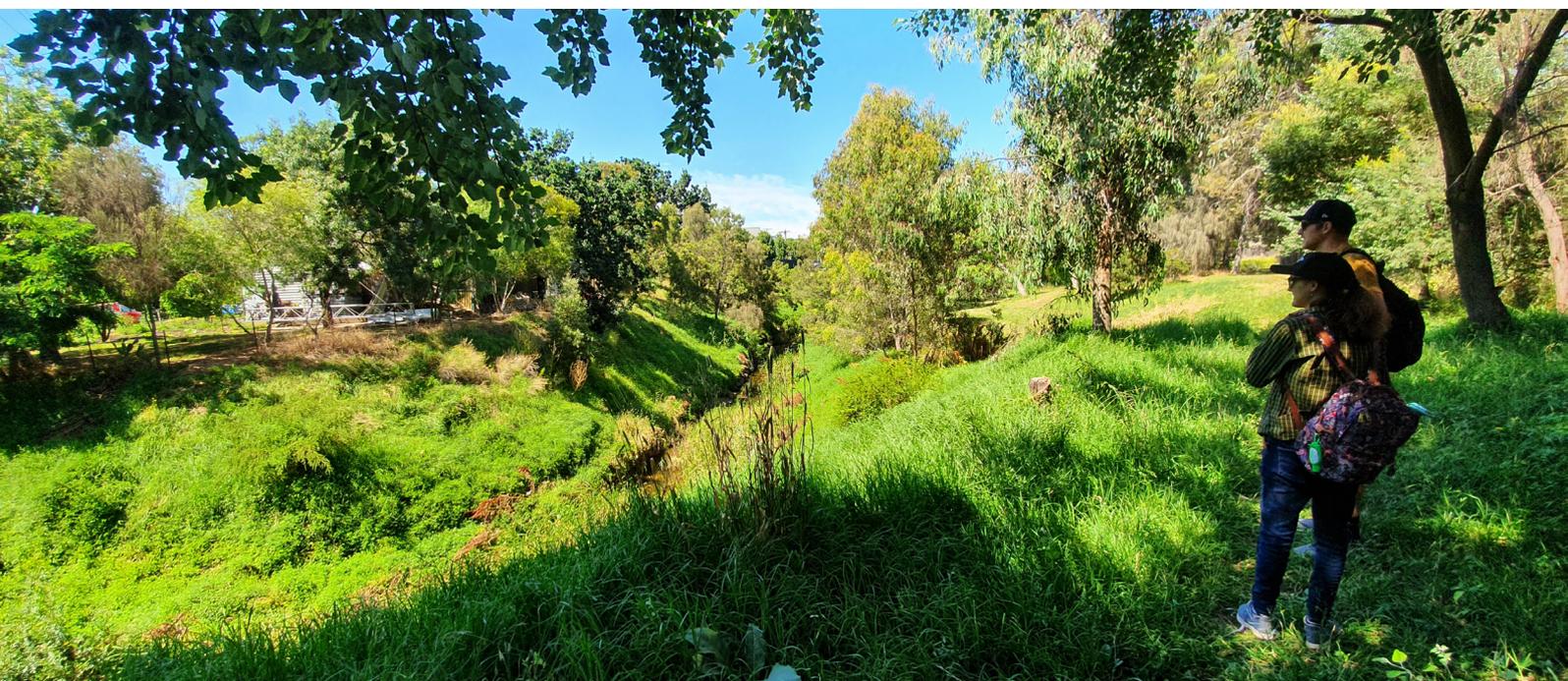
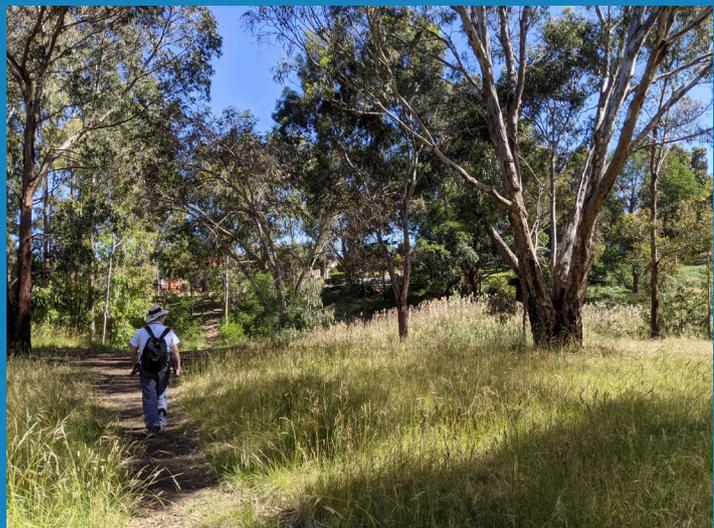


Working for Victoria crew – Moonee Valley

Through the Working for Victoria program, people living in the Moonee Ponds catchment area have been given the opportunity to take part in the City of Moonee Valley's 'Mapping of Moonee Ponds Creek trail' project during the COVID-19 pandemic. This project focuses on collecting information along the Moonee Ponds Creek trail relating to existing infrastructure assets. The asset data will be uploaded into a GIS database and used to create a prototype web-based information sharing map for use by Council and other stakeholders to assist with future planning of public realm improvements along the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor.

The Working for Victoria teams have been walking the length of the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor and the Yuroke Creek tributary, using a portable electronic device to record and note the location of existing open space infrastructure assets and

opportunities within 300m either side of the Creek. Assets include seats, signs, toilets, lights, drinking fountains, and bridges within the public realm corridor either side of the Creek.



Signage along the Creek

Additional signage is going to be installed along sections of the creek in late January or early February, with an exact date yet to be determined. This signage will warn of a drop off from the side of the path into the creek, and is intended to prevent accidents. Some users of the trail, particularly cyclists, have fallen over the side in recent times, prompting the need for warning signage to be installed.

The success of the signage in curbing accidents along this part of the trail will be closely monitored. If it does prove adequately successful in preventing accidents, other options that could be implemented in the future include stencils painted on the path as additional warnings. Following this, gates could be installed in the future.



Getting to know GG members: Alex English



Introducing Alex English, Open Space Planner at Moreland City Council and member of the Chain of Ponds Governance Group. Alex has worked extensively on sustainable development projects and is passionate about local greening and improving community health and wellbeing. He has been at Moreland CC for five years, where he has been involved in urban greening and park planning including the creation of six new local parks for the community across Moreland.

Alex loves being a part of the Chain of Ponds Collaboration and working with committed and engaged people towards a common goal. He enjoys the collaborative nature of the project and the way that the Chain of Ponds Collaboration allows people from different organisations to work together, implement fantastic actions and initiatives, and identify areas for improvement. Alex is encouraged by growing community and governmental understanding of the importance of waterways and catchments within Melbourne, and is determined to restore as much of our natural waterways as possible. A favourite time for him is the final stage of a project, 'having the community come out and share the experience of bringing those underground concrete drains back to life, seeing water come back to the surface, vegetation thriving again.'

