



CHAIN OF PONDS

Transforming the Moonee Ponds Creek

APRIL 2021 NEWSLETTER

From the Chair

Happy Autumn everyone,

Congratulations to Chain of Ponds partners and supporters for being Highly Commended at the Stormwater Australia Awards in the category, Excellence in Strategic & Master Planning! A great effort and very well deserved. It's not easy collaborating in complex environments and knowing when and how best to collaborate takes skill and practice so well done.

Thank you to Jacqueline Novoselac from Melbourne Water and the Branding Working Group for our wonderful new logo and style guide. Now available to all partners and supporters and our new website is coming soon!. This will be an independent site and home to all the latest CoP news. A great resource for all of us and easy to share.

Our recent gathering in the headwaters of the Moonee Ponds Creek, at Woodlands Historic Homestead, was a great chance to reconnect in person and hear about the hidden treasures of the Upper Moonee Ponds Creek. Let's keep talking about the balance of in person versus online meetings. While our online meetings are very convenient, the informal conversations at face to face meetings are often where the magic happens. Enjoy the latest news on the projects, ideas and people that make up this inspiring collaboration.

Pondly,

Rachel



Chain of Ponds Brand Identity Refresh

The Branding Working Group has made great progress and with Jacqueline (Melbourne Water) at the helm, has helped develop a new logo for the Chain of Ponds. The objective was to develop a unifying brand identity for the Chain of Ponds Collaboration and any projects delivered by the group. Our purpose is to engage the community with the brand and increase awareness of the collaboration group and the positive projects being delivered, as well as encourage further community involvement in these projects. It was important that this new brand identity conveys to community members and other key stakeholders that we are working towards improving the health of the Moonee Ponds Creek so that there is a lasting and positive legacy for the community. The Governance Group selected the logo at the last meeting (from a field of five options) and it was a strong winner. It represents the creek and the riparian vegetation. It also includes the description of our purpose, transforming Moonee Ponds Creek. Thank you and farewell to our previous logo that served us well.



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New Website

The Chain of Ponds website is getting a makeover! Previously, all Chain of Ponds information has been located in the Your Say section of the Melbourne Water website. The Chain of Ponds team have been working to produce a new, independent and dedicated site allowing easy access to all the latest news and information of the Collaboration. The staging site is up now and we hope to go live in June. Stay tuned.

New Research Looks at Chain of Ponds as Model for Collaborative Governance

A research project at the University of Melbourne's Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning is exploring the collaborative governance model of Chain of Ponds. Our innovative model of urban ecosystem governance is being examined as part of the project to advance understanding of collaborative approaches.

The research will involve interviews and workshops with Chain of Ponds and other waterway groups to explore governance mechanisms, practices and principles. Following this, the researchers will analyse findings to construct the key elements for collaborative governance in an urban ecosystem setting. This reporting will offer insights to support effective management of urban biodiversity and the ways that collaboration can create real impact in the environment.

A literature review of theoretical frameworks for collaborative ecosystem governance is currently underway and is expected to be completed by May 2021, with best practice examples from around the world identified. The focus groups and workshops will begin in June and continue to September 2021, with the research to be completed and published by the end of the year.

The Chain of Ponds collaboration are very proud to be involved in this important work. The research team at the University of Melbourne includes Dr Judy Bush, Dr Cathy Oke, Dr Kathryn Davidson, Ariana Dickey and Maddison Miller. The Chain of Ponds representatives on the project include Rachel Lopes, Alex English and Geraldine Plas.

Bandicoots on the Flight Path

An exciting new project is underway in collaboration between Chain of Ponds and Melbourne Airport, 'Bandicoots on the Flight Path'. This living art project is being designed to highlight the significance of the area of the Moonee Ponds Creek close to the airport, allowing passengers on incoming flights to view the large-scale EcoArt piece from the air. It was inspired by the bandicoot planting in the Iramoo Grasslands in St. Albans, with Rick van Keulen.

The project involves planting native indigenous species in the shape of a bandicoot, creating the impression of a giant marsupial hopping along the grassland and over the creek. The area chosen for this planting is close to the east-west runway at Melbourne airport, in an area that had previously been quite environmentally degraded. The project has the added benefit of revitalising the area with the plants that would have originally called this landscape home. The chosen plant species will flower into bright yellow, popping beautifully out of the landscape and clearly visible from the air.

When the project is complete, it will have the additional advantage of creating a seed bank for Parks Victoria volunteer groups to collect seeds, and it will act as an opportunity to educate people on the native plants and indigenous history of the area.

The project is the brainchild of Parks Victoria's Steven Cantwell, who joined the Chain of Ponds collaboration late last year. Upon a call out for creative Eco Arts ideas, Steven came up with the idea of the bandicoot. Since then, Chain of Ponds governance members have liaised with Melbourne Airport to involve them in the plan.

While planting is yet to begin, the project is underway. Steven is currently creating a high definition map of what the bandicoot will look like from the air. Tin will be laid in the shape of the animal to prepare the soil for planting, removing the need for chemicals. This has the added benefit of creating an instant visual impact, so the art piece will be visible before the plants have grown.

We look forward to seeing the project progress and our bandicoot come to life!



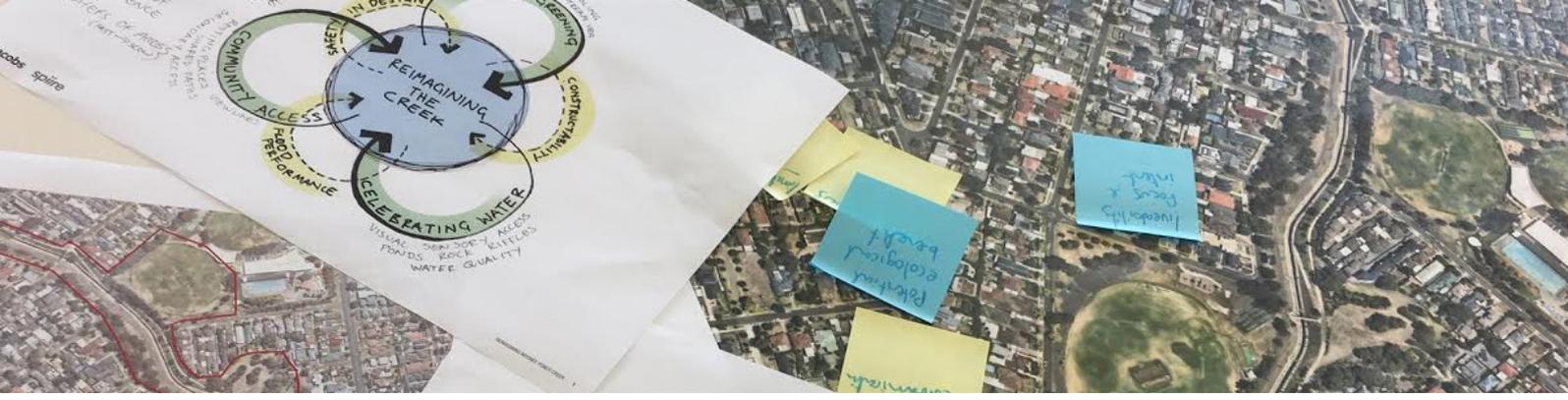
Dr Debbie Reynolds



Catherine van Wilgenburg



Dr Debbie Reynolds



Reimagining Moonee Ponds Creek

The Naturalisation Project at Brosnan Crescent, Strathmore is progressing well. This project is a key priority for the Chain of Ponds Collaborative, involving the naturalisation of a 600 metre section of Moonee Ponds Creek between Herbert and Margaret Streets in Oak Park.

There has been a lot of activity since investigation works concluded in December. A Project Agreement has been drawn up between the Project Partners, a Communications and Engagement Plan has been agreed upon, and the results of the geotechnical investigations have been released. The results highlight a number of constraints and challenges that the design team is working through, community engagement is planned from the 17th of May with the opportunity to learn more about the project, constraints and opportunities.

Jacobs Engineering Group and Spiire Consulting have been engaged to design the project and the first site walk and workshop was held in March. It was a great discussion where the essence of the project was teased out by independent facilitator Bruce Turner.

Fin Adamson, Project Manager from Melbourne Water, presented on the project at our recent Collaboration Gathering at Woodlands Estate, April 21.

Themes for the project's delivery include:

Iconic, Community Ownership, Diversity of uses/experiences, Innovative and Resilient and Natural Experience.



Update from the Litter Working Group

The Litter Working Group has been hard at work finding solutions to the wicked problem of litter. At their last meeting on 9th March, they discussed next steps and shared updates with our partners in litter management, Sustainability Victoria and Keep Victoria Beautiful.

Sustainable Victoria are currently focused on improving their methods of collecting data and evidence to form a better picture of the litter situation. There is a recent shift in focus from end of pipe solutions, when the litter is already in the environment, to stopping the litter in the first place. Some policies that will support this include a ban on plastic bags and a ban on single use plastics. It is important that data can be gathered to measure the success of these policies, and be used to inform policy in the future.

Sustainable Victoria also has a number of grants that the Litter Working Group would be eligible to apply for, including the Recycling Victoria Community Fund.

Keep Victoria Beautiful have been championing litter prevention for over 50 years. They are currently focused on the Litter Enforcement Officer Network (LEON) which involves 300 authorised officers around the state supported by the EPA. Additionally, Keep Victoria Beautiful runs many programs aimed to reduce litter, such as Adopt a Roadside (which helps reduce roadside litter), Stationeers (which encourages volunteers to keep stations and public transport hubs free of litter), and the Sustainable City Awards, which recognises and celebrates positive actions taken by communities in urban areas to protect and enhance their local environments.

Keep Victoria Beautiful has a large base of engaged volunteers, and partnering with them will prove invaluable in bringing the community on board in the litter management of Moonee Ponds Creek and surrounds.

The Litter Working Group has prioritised enacting the recommendations made in the catchment-wide litter assessment, which focused largely on polystyrene.

The next steps are to work closely with local councils to try to identify gaps in litter management. The Litter Working Group has identified that litter from construction sites is a particular issue, and we need to delve deeper to discover how councils are managing this and how compliance could be enforced.



Getting to Know Damien Harrison



Introducing Damien Harrison, Coordinator of Biodiversity Strategy at Hume City Council and member of the Chain of Ponds Governance Group. Damien has been working for fifteen years at Hume City Council in the biodiversity conservation area and has had extensive involvement in the Moonee Ponds Creek throughout this time.

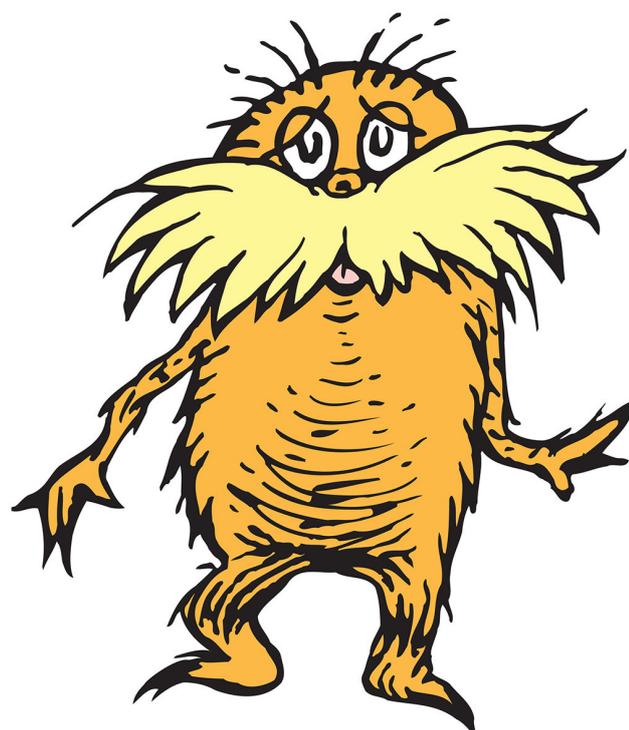
Damien understands the importance of the Moonee Ponds Creek in the overall wellbeing of Melbourne's broader water network. He loves being involved in the Chain of Ponds Collaboration because of the inclusive nature of the project. 'The most exciting thing is that people involved feel like they are being heard and that they see it as a conduit to getting things done,' Damien notes. 'It is encouraging to hear this kind of feedback from people who have been involved in the Moonee Ponds Creek for decades.'

In Damien's view Integrated Water Management is critical to Melbourne's future. He believes in the importance of collaboration and applying sustainable and innovative solutions to face the issues associated with IWM, which transcend political boundaries.

Growing up in Sunbury, some of Damien's earliest memories are of exploring the Jacksons Creek and its rugged environment, climbing red gums and clambering into stormwater pipes. He has fond memories of yabbing, dodging swooping magpies and picking wild blackberries. No doubt that these early experiences influenced his later career choices to focus on the conservation of our precious waterways. Damien loves the diversity of Melbourne's catchments and the way that the landforms, topography and vegetation of each catchment makes it unique. It's one reason why he feels that the Moonee Ponds Creek has its own iconic features and special charm.

Alex English awarded Moreland Shine Award

Congratulations for Alex English, who was awarded the 2020 Moreland Shine Award for Individual Excellence at the Moreland Awards last December. Alex is a valued member of the Chain of Ponds Governance Group and well known for his dedication and passion for the environment and Moonee Ponds Creek. The awards declared him to be the 'Lorax of Moreland'. Well done Alex!



Chain of Ponds Collaboration recognised at the Stormwater Australia Awards

The Chain of Ponds Collaboration have been given the 'Highly Commended' award at the Stormwater Australia Awards. The awards, which were held on 14 April, recognised the fifteen organisations and groups involved in the collective action of transforming the Moonee Ponds Creek. Chain of Ponds was awarded in the category for Excellence in Strategic or Master Planning. Well done everyone!



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