

## Moonee Ponds Creek Litter Action Plan: By Chain of Ponds Working Group

### Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung as the traditional custodians of the Moonee Ponds Creek and its catchment. We pay our respects to their ancestors and Elders, past and present. We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to their traditional lands, which continue to be important to them today.

### Introduction: The Chain of Ponds Litter Working Group

A Litter Working Group has been established to address litter across the Moonee Ponds Creek catchment and brings together representatives from Hume, Merri-bek, Moonee Valley, and Melbourne city councils, a variety of community group representatives and Melbourne Water to tackle litter at a catchment scale.

### ***Problem Statement***

Litter within the Moonee Ponds Creek catchment is having an ongoing negative effect on both community and environmental values.

Although many community groups have, are, and will continue to clean-up litter within the catchment, these small, sporadic and isolated efforts are no match for what is a systemic, and growing problem (with increases in living density and consumerism) within the catchment.

Litter from streets within the Moonee Ponds Creek catchment makes its way to the waterway primarily through stormwater channels. Once it enters the creek if it does not get caught by litter trapping infrastructure then it can make its way into Port Phillip Bay, onto the beaches and in some cases even out through the heads and into the ocean. Macro and micro plastics make up a large proportion of this litter and this debris can remain intact for hundreds of years negatively impacting marine ecosystem function and resilience.

### ***Our Solution***

To understand the spatial, temporal and cultural nature of the problem, we will assess litter sources, pathways from the streets to the creek and accumulation points. We'll develop an understanding of the behavior that leads to littering. And will

use this information to strategically coordinate actions across a catchment-scale to ensure that resources and communities are used in the most efficient way possible to reduce litter within the creek and ultimately reduce the litter contribution to Port Phillip Bay.

By coordinating action at a catchment scale with a shared commitment of responsibility across land and waterway managers, and the community, we can build a greater awareness of the problem and in doing so, create a collaborative culture and a sense of shared custodianship.

The collaboration is based on the common agenda that litter management is a shared responsibility, and that effective litter management over the long term requires a collection of complementary interventions – from education to community clean-ups to infrastructure to maintenance to enforcement – planned strategically and driven by data. Progress needs to be supported by data and regular litter audits are needed to provide updated datasets.

*Note: this Action Plan has been developed by the Chain of Ponds Litter Working Group with consideration of the Alluvium Moonee Ponds Creek Litter Assessment and more recent findings from on-ground analysis of litter accumulation with local council representatives, community groups, RMIT university and waterway managers.*

## Action Plan

The action plan has been split into 3 phases. These phases are detailed in **Figure 1** which highlights that each phase has a set of major themes which the actions relate to. These are (Phase 1) the gathering of baseline data linked to each litter source hotspot, (Phase 2) the roll out of litter education campaigns and enforcement programs, and the assessment of council-run litter waste management strategies at each litter source hotspot, and (Phase 3) the development of strategies to advocate for new waste management policies and improved litter infrastructure.

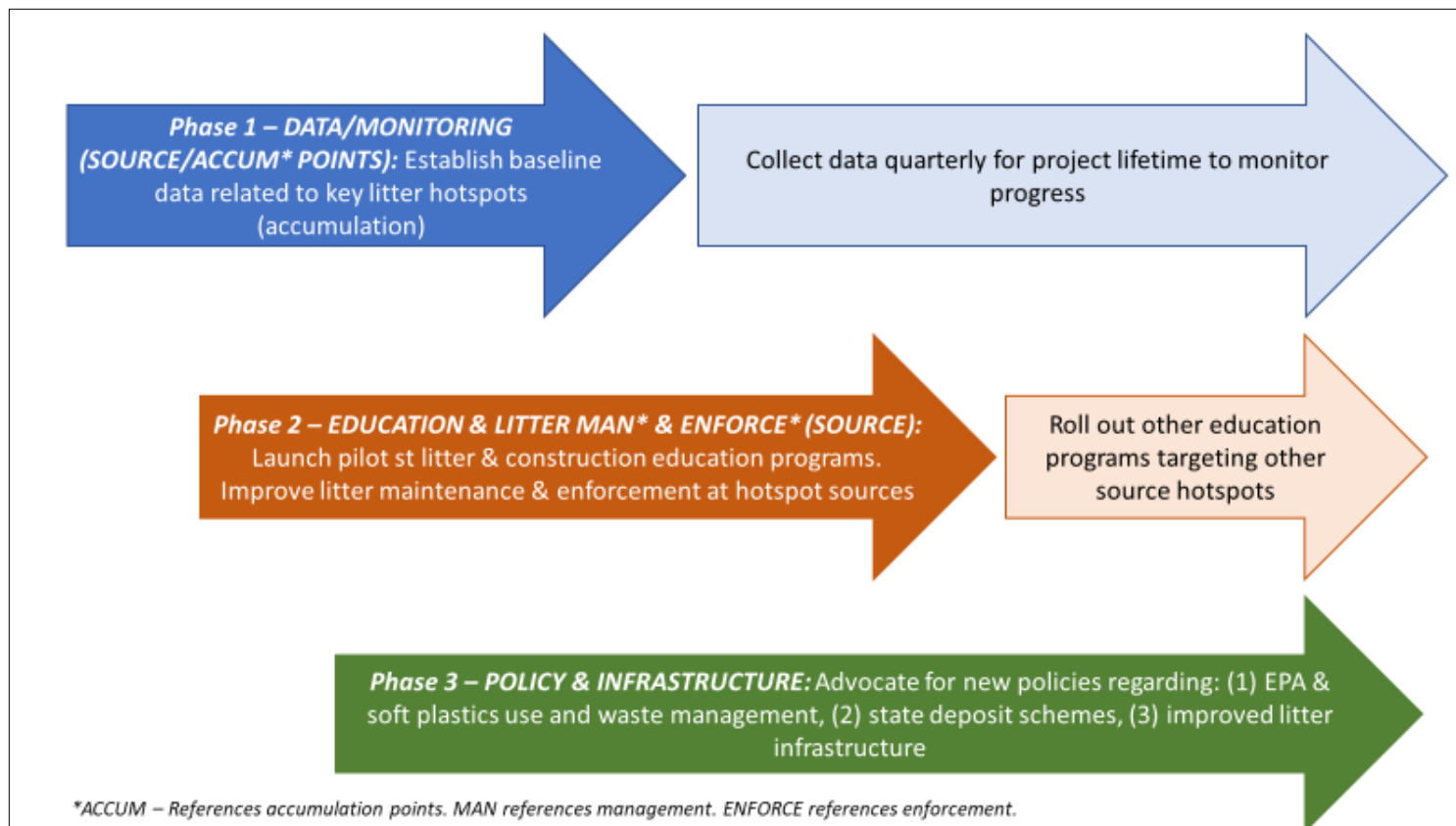


Figure 1: Infographic showing the how each action group phase links to the other in terms of timing and how actions are linked.

### **Action Items by Phase:**

**Table 1** lists the actions decided upon by the Litter Action Lead in collaboration with the Chain of Ponds Litter Working Group. Each of these actions link to the phases detailed in **Figure 1**. Phases 2 and 3 **actions** may be subject to change based on results from Phase 1. Any changes however will be discussed and approved by the Litter Working Group and shared with all stakeholders. Actions related to Phase 3 are still being developed.

*Table 1: Table of Litter Working Group actions related to each Phase with details of theme, and timing.*

Phase / action #	Action Description	Theme	Timing
<b>PHASE 1</b>			
Phase 1 - 1	Ground truth data presented in Moonee Ponds Creek Litter Assessment report related to regional and local accumulation sites associated with hotspots.	Accumulation spot identification	Oct 22 – Jan 23
Phase 1 - 2	Establish main accumulation spots within each council region for ongoing auditing and community clean-ups.	Accumulation spot identification	Dec 22 – Jun 23
Phase 1 - 3	Develop (1) community awareness of the problem and (2) a network of locally engaged community members near accumulation spots (1-1)	Community engagement	Dec 22 – Jun 23
Phase 1 - 4	Undertake initial community-led clean-ups/audits at accumulation spots (1-1)	Clean-ups/audits	Dec 22 – Jun 23
Phase 1 - 5	Build collaboration across community in the wider Moonee Ponds Creek catchment. Setup a communication platform amongst this community to thoughts.	Community engagement	Dec 22 – Jun 23
Phase 1 - 6	Develop schedule for ongoing clean-ups at accumulation spots (1-1)	Clean-ups/audits	Apr 23 – Jun 23
Phase 1 - 7	Develop reporting dashboard to give stakeholders clarity on litter data and progress towards reducing litter in the creek.	Data/progress reporting	Apr 23 – Jun 23
Phase 1 - 8	Refine litter auditing methodology to align with approved Melbourne Water method where possible and train community on how to undertake.	Data/progress reporting	Apr 23 – Jun 23
Phase 1 - 9	Assess council waste management strategies at hotspot locations and discuss with working group opportunities for improvement. Report new initiatives.	Waste mgt* strategy dev*	Dec 22 – Dec 23
Phase 1 - 10	Test pilot litter enforcement strategy in a small region with high construction activity.	Enforcement	Apr 23 – Jun 23

Phase 1 - 11	Test pilot street education program on West St as this is a main contributor to litter into the East branch of Westbreen Creek (a tributary of the Moonee Ponds Creek).	Education	Apr 23 – Jun 23
Phase 1 - 12	Develop a school engagement plan which focusses on involving children in art projects that uses litter collected from the creek. Use plan to apply for funding.	School engagement	Apr 23 – Sep 23
Phase 1 - 13	Liaise with other litter groups across Australia to gather learnings which can be applied to the Moonee Ponds Creek Chain of Ponds Litter Action Plan	Strategic development	Dec 22 – Dec 23
<b>PHASE 2</b>			
Phase 2 - 1	Roll out education programs in other hotspot areas, using the learnings from the West St (Westbreen Creek) pilot program (1-10) for guidance.	Education	Jul 23 – Mar 24
Phase 2 - 2	Roll out enforcement strategies in other hotspot areas across the catchment using learnings from the initial enforcement pilot program (1-9) for guidance.	Enforcement	Jul 23 – Mar 24
Phase 2 - 3	Continue to facilitate the coordination of community-led litter clean-ups/audits across the catchment ensuring that data is being stored correctly in Litterwatch.	Clean-ups/audits	Jul 23 – Jul 24
Phase 2 - 4	Report on Litterwatch data to provide progress updates for source reduction education programs and litter enforcement programs in each hotspot.	Data/progress reporting	Apr 23 – Mar 24
Phase 2 - 5	If grant applications are successful kick-off the school Litter-arty engagement program through a pilot program targeting several locally engaged schools.	School engagement	Sep 23 - Jul 24
Phase 2 - 6	Discuss with council's new opportunities for improved street waste management and develop commitment for upgrades where the working group see opportunities.	Waste mgt* strategy dev*	Jul 23 – Mar 24
Phase 2 - 7	Discuss with councils and water managers opportunities for improved infrastructure and develop commitment for upgrades where working group see opportunities.	Infrastructure Improvement	Jul 23 – Mar 24
<b>PHASE 3</b>			
Phase 3 - 1	Use data gathered and community engagement from Phase 1 & Phase 2 actions to support tactics to advocate for policy changes in areas of soft plastic a polystyrene use.	Policy development	Dec 23 – Dec 24
Phase 3 - 2	Use information gathered from phases 1 & 2 to build business case for increased investment in litter infrastructure across the catchment and within the creek.	Infrastructure Improvement	Dec 23 – Dec 24