

Bringing Murray River floodplains back to life



VICTORIAN MURRAY FLOODPLAIN
RESTORATION PROJECT
HEALTHY LANDSCAPES. STRONG COMMUNITIES

Victoria's magnificent river red gums can only survive with periodic flooding

The Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project (VMFRP) will get much needed water back onto high-value floodplains along the Murray River. Without this water, these iconic landscapes will continue to decline – along with the many native trees, animals and plants that depend on them.

Restoring the floodplains

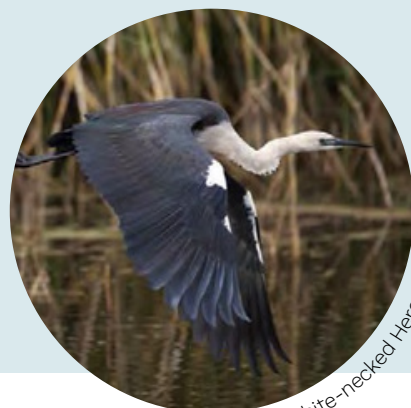
The floodplains next to the Murray River have evolved to periodically receive water. Historically, the river would spill onto the floodplains as often as 8 out of every 10 years, creating rich, lush landscapes teeming with life.

As our towns, cities, agriculture and industries have grown over time, we have changed the way the river flows to suit our purposes by using weirs and dams.

While this has benefited regional communities and economies, water no longer flows naturally as it once did, and the Murray River can no longer water these floodplains often enough to keep them healthy.

The VMFRP will remove blockages that stop floodwater flowing into creeks and build infrastructure like flow regulators, channels and containment banks to water the floodplain and hold water there for longer.

This water will bring new life and help these identified ecologically significant floodplains to survive and cope with future dry conditions and drought, so they can continue to be enjoyed by future generations.



White-necked Heron

Healthy floodplains are teeming with life

Here are some of the species that will benefit from these floodplain restoration projects.

Healthier floodplains are good for:

Local communities and visitors

Healthy floodplains are beautiful places to visit and are great for recreation like boating, fishing and camping.

Traditional Owners

Traditional Owners have cultural, spiritual, and economic connections to land, water and resources through their relationship with Country, having managed land and water sustainably over thousands of generations.

Local wildlife

Lots of species rely on floodplains for food, habitat and breeding, from microscopic creatures to frogs, fish, birds, bats and other mammals.

Vegetation

Flooding brings vegetation back to life, creating habitat, foraging and food for floodplain creatures. Some flood dependent species like river red gums and black box trees rely on the bigger floods that used to happen every ten years. Animals like bats and birds nest in the hollows of these trees.

Local economies

Projects will bring substantial financial investment into the region, creating jobs and helping local economies.

Examples of infrastructure



We'll remove infrastructure that blocks the flow of water through the floodplain, like this small pipe blocking the creek in Nyah Park.



Regulators will help us to move water onto the floodplains and hold it there before opening the regulator to return water to the river. Regulators will include fishways to help native fish on their journey.



Knowing when to add water

These restoration projects will help return a more natural watering regime at the identified high-value floodplains. We will monitor how often natural flooding occurs and will release water in the years where the environment needs a 'top up' to keep it healthy. We will not release water every year unless the floodplain needs it.

The watering plans at each site will be flexible; each year and each watering event will be tailored depending on things such as the conditions of the floodplain, water availability, river flows and timing since the last flood or watering.

Similar projects have already been successfully implemented under The Living Murray program. Visit www.mdba.gov.au for more information on these sites.

Delivering the projects

Progress is ongoing in restoring key floodplain sites along the Murray River, with several projects now moving through critical approval stages.

The Central Sites are progressing toward construction, with The Belsar-Yungera, Hattah Lakes, and Nyah-Vinifera projects successfully passing major planning milestones, most recently with their Planning Scheme Amendments (PSAs) officially gazetted. With these frameworks in place, the VMFRP team is now working on readiness for construction, bringing the central floodplains and the dependant species that call those delicate ecosystems home, one step closer to the vital uplift in environmental outcomes they so desperately need.

The East and West sites are finalising environmental approvals by undertaking the Environment Report (ER) for the East sites and the Environment Effects Statement (EES) for the West sites. These assessments will provide a comprehensive review of potential impacts and benefits and once finalised, will be publicly exhibited to invite input from communities, Traditional Owners and stakeholders as part of the approval process.



If you have questions about any of these projects or want to join the community consultation, email us at info@vmfrp.vic.gov.au

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