



Westernport and Mornington Peninsula Catchment Collaboration -- Implementation Workshop 1

Co-delivering the Healthy Waterways Strategy

Date: 2 May 2019

Time: 9.30am- 1.30pm

Venue: Tarnuk Room - Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne

Purpose of the workshop

The purpose of the workshop was to begin implementation planning and discuss how we will work together to create healthy waterways in the Westernport and Mornington Peninsula catchment. The workshop allowed for members of the catchment community to share information about existing programs in the region and explore how they might work together across the region to implement the [Westernport and Mornington Peninsula Catchment Program](#).

Who attended?

A total of **47 participants** representing 27 different organisations attended the workshop.

- 32 participants were external partners who represented a diverse array of groups including: councils, community and landcare groups, land owners, consultants, water retailers, industry groups, PPWCMA and DELWP.
- 15 participants from Melbourne Water helped support the conversations and provide catchment knowledge.

What happened?

Part 1: Setting the scene

John Woodland (Melbourne Water Regional Services Manager - South East Region) welcomed partners and newcomers to the new phase of Strategy co-delivery. He acknowledged the recent fires in the region and the dramatic effect they have had on the community. He mentioned that the Healthy Waterways Strategy already has good traction in the region, then

brought up the main question for the day: How can we best work together and build on existing progress?

Facilitator **Geoff Brown** rearticulated the main question of the day and asked participants to think about how Melbourne Water can help support existing programs to do better work.

Participants were invited to share what they value most about collaboration. This included:

- the chance to get to know your neighbours and others who have a role in waterway management
- gain knowledge and learn from each other
- coordination and support to implement projects
- working together to achieve a common goal which may not have been achievable alone.

We also heard from Pam Cunningham, who had been directly affected by the Bunyip bushfire and how the length of time and uncertainty associated with accessing recovery funding and get underway with repairs was affecting the community.

Geoff highlighted a key take-home message from this discussion: 'asking for help gets the collaboration going.'



Part 2: Building on existing collaborations

Two presentations highlighted existing successful collaborations in the catchment.

- **Shiroma Maheepala** (DELWP) provided an update on the Integrated Water Management Forums, highlighting the release of the Strategic Direction Statements for the [Westernport](#) and [Dandenong](#) regions, the commitment to prepare catchment-scale IWM plans and timeframes moving forward. She discussed how the forums intend to allow member organisations to identify, prioritise, enhance or accelerate integrated water management opportunities across the whole water cycle. Many of the projects build on what is already happening and tie in with the Healthy Waterways Strategy.
- **Chantal Kelly** (Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network) discussed the Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network as an example of collaboration. The network consists of 10 landcare groups and 1 equine group who aim to protect and enhance their local environment. She highlighted the completion of the Watson Creek biolink plan (the 6th plan to be completed out of 11) and discussed the Greens Bush to Arthurs Seat Biolink project and how it is contributing to the aims of the Healthy Waterways Strategy.

Geoff then invited the participants to identify the positive things that stood out from these examples and other projects that involve collaboration currently occurring in the catchment. Two key stand-outs were:

- Linking people and areas of land resulting in greater benefits as longer stretches can get improved.
- Neighbours see the change and also get involved

Projects included:

- Development of the implementation plan for the [Healesville to Phillip Island Nature Link](#)
- Westernport biosphere work with landholders on water management plans
- Ongoing work with private landholders along Cannibal Creek, including fencing and weed control
- Dunns creek Landcare collaboration with Vic Roads
- The Grasmere Creek realignment project that involves Council and Parks Victoria
- Water quality monitoring undertaken by the Mornington Peninsula Vignerons Association
- Partnership between Melbourne Water and the Department of Agriculture on effluent and waterway management on rural land
- Koo Wee Rup to Longwarry drainage program.

Shiroma's and Chantal's presentations can be found in the document library.



Part 3: How can the Westernport and Mornington Peninsula Catchment best organise itself to deliver its Co-designed Catchment Program?

Geraldine Plas (Principal, Waterway Collaboration at Melbourne Water) introduced the Healthy Waterways Strategy collaborative implementation framework developed as part of the Strategy, and explained how the input received at the Westernport forum in July 2018 had informed the framework. She invited participants to think about how the framework would best work in practice and for the co-delivery of the Strategy over the coming years.

HWS Collaborative Implementation Framework

Implementation forums

- Oversight of Catchment programs implementation
- Catchment collaboration



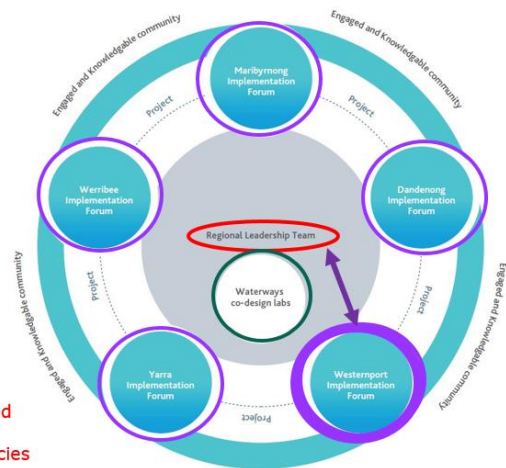
Waterways co-design labs

- Think-tank for region-wide issues

Region-wide Leadership Group

- Oversight of Strategy implementation and governance
- Linkages with related processes and policies
- Process for systemic issues

[Healthy Waterways Strategy](#), page 149



Tom Le Cerf (Waterways Officer at Melbourne Water) invited participants to consider the diverse nature of the Westernport and Mornington Peninsula Catchment and how a successful collaboration model might take this into account. He described areas that have strong friends networks already, areas with a tourism focus, areas subject to large scale urban development, areas that are largely agricultural, or those that have strong natural values.

Geoff Brown introduced the main task for the day which was developing the collaboration model for the Westernport and Mornington Peninsula catchment. He asked the participants to consider the **benefits they would most want to see from a collaborative approach**. These were identified as:

- **Improved planning (getting in early, developing projects that can run longer than a financial year)**
- **The opportunity to join forces and avoid duplication on projects**
- **Access to more funding opportunities**
- **Linking people (including landholders, neighbours and agencies)**
- **Creating stimulus**
- **Understanding each other's programs**
- **Identifying projects that need support**

Suggestions were also made for meeting three times a year:

- Before annual budget planning
- To review end of financial year reporting
- To share stories and celebrate

Participants then split into six groups who were asked to develop possible models and report back, considering the five questions:

1. Who's in the group? Is there a core group?
2. How often do they meet? And how?
3. What is the role of group?
4. How does the group connect with the Region-wide Leadership Group?
5. How does the group connect with the other stakeholders in the catchment?

An overview of the models developed by the six groups, and their characteristics is included in the document library.

As a final activity, Geoff Brown invited all participants to identify the **key elements of an effective model that we could all agree on**. Participants **all agreed that a whole of catchment approach** (rather than splitting the catchment) **was critical** to enable learnings on similar issues that occur in several areas of the catchment. They also identified the following key elements for an effective collaboration model:

- **Work towards a common purpose**
- **Streamline communication, between and within organisations**
- **Learn from and extend the existing programs in place**
- **Involve decision makers so change can happen**
- **Strong representation of all stakeholders**
- **Develop criteria for who will be in the core management group**
- **Engage with stakeholders and local communities**
- **Consider the effects climate change will have on the future.**

A working group of volunteers was established to progress the development of a model for the catchment.



Part 4: Where to next?

John Woodland closed the workshop thanking participants. **Geraldine Plas** outlined the next steps, including:

- Melbourne Water will convene the working group, who will be tasked to progress the development of the collaborative implementation model, and share the model with the forum for feedback.
- All are encouraged to contribute to the Westernport and Mornington Peninsula conversation space on the [Your Say platform](#), where anyone can post an event, share a story, add photos and videos, celebrate successes or communicate anything else waterway-related in the catchment.

Geraldine also provided an update on the Melbourne Water price submission and development of the 2021-26 Waterways and Drainage Investment Plan. Information and opportunities to contribute can be found on the [Your Say platform](#), and will also be provided via the HWS newsletter.

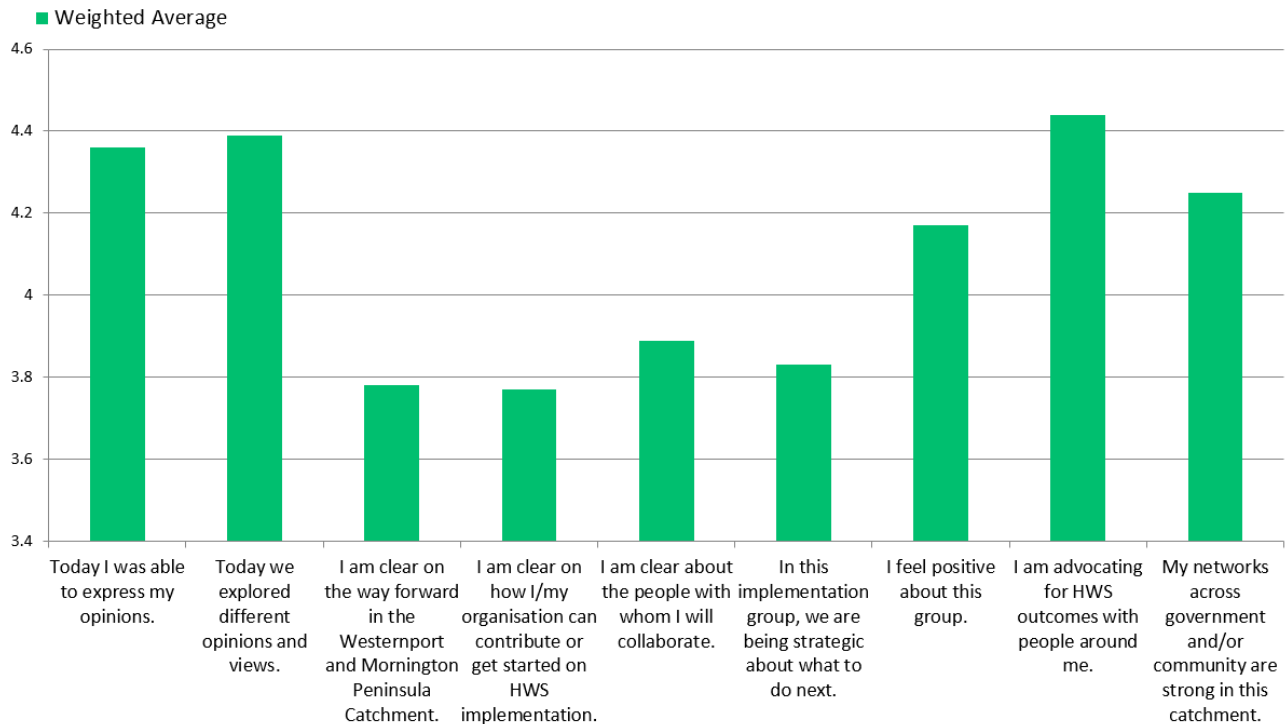
Full details of discussions, outcomes, and next steps are outlined in the report attached in the Document Downloads section.

Part 5: Evaluation from the sensing sheets

The workshop was evaluated to provide opportunity for ongoing learning. As a final action, participants completed a sensing sheet and provided comments on the design of the workshop and their experience of collaboration.

36 out of 47 attendees (77%) filled out the sensing sheets.

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements related to putting Healthy Waterways Strategy into action (5 - Strongly agree; 1 - Strongly disagree):



What did you enjoy about this workshop?

"Many good ideas about communication and collaboration between groups and stakeholders."
 "Collaboratively networking with knowledgeable participants!"

What could be improved for next time?

"Would be nice to get more + broader range of stakeholders along"

What does this implementation group need to focus on next time it meets?

"Collaborative model - confirmed/agreed to. Compile list of projects and start sharing these stories/projects on the YourSay website!"
 "More structure on how to communicate with all interest parties (those not in the core group)."
 "Making sure have funding and resources to do a management plan and then have the resources and funding to implement and monitor it."

For more information about creating healthy waterways together please visit
<https://yoursay.melbournewater.com.au/healthywaterways>