



IWM in Practice: Lessons and Learnings from Enhancing Our Dandenong Creek Program

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The Enhancing Our Dandenong Creek program is a five-year pilot of best practice sewerage management, developed in partnership between the community, local businesses, Councils, EPA and Melbourne Water. Melbourne Water has adopted an alternative approach to managing the impact of wet weather sewer spills on Melbourne urban waterways, which aims to deliver the best-for community outcomes at least cost, through adopting a collaborative and participatory approach to decision making.

The program has been delivered across four projects in the middle Dandenong Creek catchment. The flagship project is to “daylight” an 850m piped section of the creek, by removing the pipe and naturalising the channel. In addition, Melbourne Water has worked with Knox and Maroondah Councils to re-engage billabongs along the floodplain. A working group including council and community groups was established early in the project. Melbourne Water empowered the group to actively participate in the initial options development all the way through to ultimate selection of final options for delivery. The chosen options (daylighting the creek and billabongs) were fully endorsed by the group.

This presentation will focus on two aspects: the design and delivery of the “daylighting” project; and lessons and learnings from collaboration and implementation of IWM more generally.

Dandenong Creek was piped in the 1960s to manage flooding. Today, flooding is still an issue and this was a key consideration during the design and delivery of the project. Extensive investigations were undertaken to inform the channel design, including flood modelling and geotechnical investigations. Soil contamination, site access and land-tenure were key constraints on the project. However, in November 2017 removal of the pipe and construction of the waterway began. The project value is approx. \$12M.

In addition to the delivery of on-ground works, the project has also achieved significant social benefits among the organisations involved. The complexity and multiplicity of stakeholders and institutions makes delivering collaborative projects a challenge. Some of the key lessons and learnings from the Dandenong Creek project will be presented. The achievements of the program have not only enabled successful and timely completion, but will continue to yield in future collaborative efforts.