



*Wadawurrung Walk & Smoking Ceremony, Werribee River, off Watkins Gr, Werribee, June 2019*

# Annual Report 2018-2019

*Oct 2018 – Oct 2019*

Since 1981, we have been leading & advocating for

Our Werribee River & Our Waterways

## Acknowledgement of Country

Werribee River Association staff and board acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians of the land and waterways upon which we work.

We acknowledge and respect the deep connection Indigenous Australians have to the earth. We strive to work closely with our Indigenous community members so we can better connect to their wisdom and care for country.

## OUR Board 2018-19

Armando Aragon, *Chairperson*  
Kathryn Williams, *Deputy Chair*  
Nathan Williams, *Treasurer*  
Melinda Dalton  
John Marks  
Gary Gale  
Rob Bradley  
Allan Bernardi  
Robyn Thomas

## OUR Staff

John Forrester, Werribee Riverkeeper  
(honorary)  
Teresa MacIntosh, Science Officer  
Claudine Lagier Litter Blitz Officer (until May)  
Liam Coombes (from July)

## Volunteer Coordinators

**Beach Patrol 3030 Coordinator**

*Rob Bradley, Erin Bradley*

**Love Our Street 3030**

*Lisa Field & Nick Alderson*

**Love Our Street 3029**

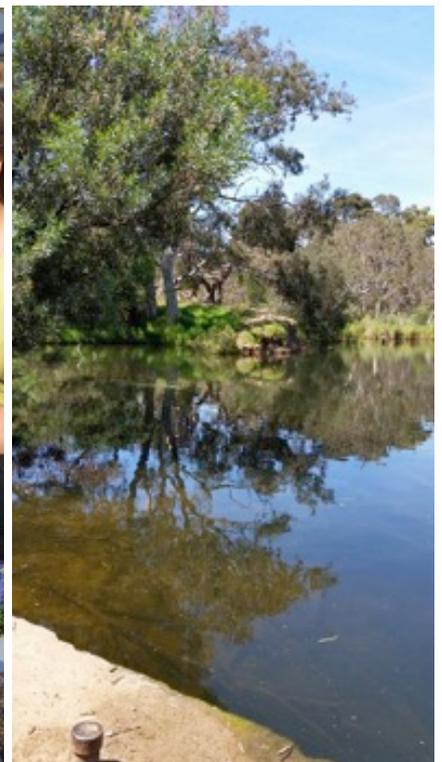
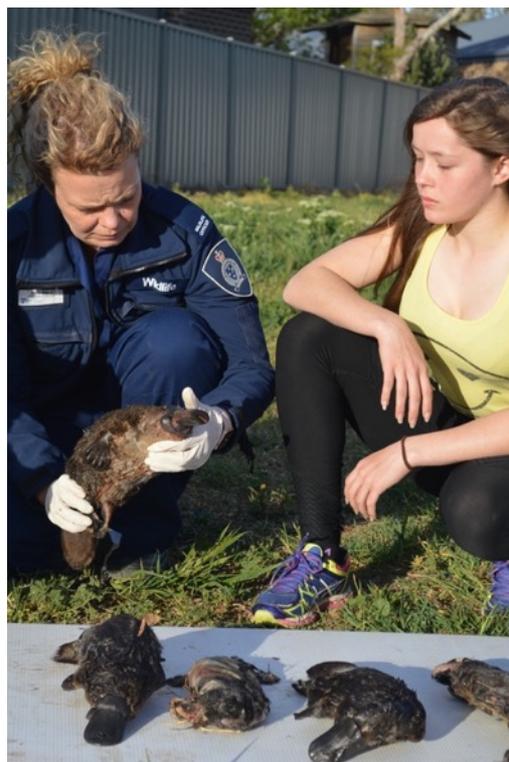
*Karen Hucker*

**Friends of Cobbledicks Ford**

*John Marks & Gary Gale*

**Friends of Werribee Park**

*John Forrester*



## A message from our President, Armando Aragon



The past calendar year has been exciting and full of successes. WRivA wishes to thank all of its volunteers, members and committee for contributing to WRivA's purposes.

In particular Robyn Thomas, whose outstanding contribution helped the organisation to achieve high standards of excellence.

Thanks also to Melinda Dalton for being an active member of our committee and participating on the Nutrients project that WRivA carries out in partnership with Monash and Melbourne University.

Thanks too to Allan Bernardi who has been a valuable member of our committee who has developed student leadership linkages at Wyndham Secondary College as seen in the Melbourne Water Kids Teaching Kids program and Waterways of the West.

Thank you to our Science Officer Teresa Mackintosh, who will continue her work of protecting the environment as an employee of Melbourne Water. Teresa has performed a great job within the organisation and her decisive work will be remembered for a long time.

Special thanks to John Marks and John Forrester for their commitment and involvement in securing a place in a relevant location for the organisation. This is a milestone for the organisation and a platform for future success.

The sustained growth of the last five years has allowed WRivA to become a central reference point and a key stakeholder on environmental topics for universities, local councils, Melbourne Water schools, and community groups. As Climate Change intensifies, our beloved river has difficult times ahead: increased water evaporation and water consumption due to high temperatures, and less rainfall in the coming years will reduce its flow and affect the riverine ecosystem. Agriculture and urban runoff will send contaminants and excess of nutrients to its waters.

But the river is not alone, a determined group of volunteers led by WRivA is planting trees, educating our kids and adults, raising awareness and providing advocacy about Climate Change and environmental issues, cleaning the beaches, analysing water quality, looking for DNA, teaming up with scientists from several universities and cataloguing the wildlife. This is- without any doubts- an important time to be involved and make a difference. Thank you.

## Operational Report from the Werribee Riverkeeper, John Forrester



During 2018-2019 the Werribee River Association continued its strategic approach to improving its capability and standing in the community.

The *Strategic Plan 2019-2024* has been published following a series of meetings and workshops, featuring a long-term vision:

### OUR Vision 2019-24

*A healthy Werribee River and catchment waterways by 2070, giving life to a modern, sustainable and culturally rich community*

The *Strategic Plan 2019-2024* features five objectives:

1. Community
2. Education
3. Organisation
4. Partnerships
5. Science

### Funding

WRivA has diversified its funding sources, and is investigating further initiatives in this area of work.

Melbourne Water continued to sponsor our Werribee Riverkeeper programs, provided a community support grant and project grants for two planting projects.

We received grants from the City of Wyndham towards two projects, while Holcim Lafarge Werribee provided funding and participation in corporate clean-up and planting activities.

WRivA obtained two Port Philip Bay Fund grants to employ a part-time project officer to conduct a mapping pollution initiative called 'Bridging Troubled Water', and a litter initiative called 'Litterblitz', also with a part-time project officer which added impetus to our litter programs.

We obtained a grant from Waterkeeper Alliance enabling us to commence rental of offices close to the Werribee River in the Werribee CBD.

We were contracted by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to lead the development of a student vision for 'Waterways of the West', a joint Minister for Water and Minister for Planning initiative.

WRivA, registered as a charity in February 2017, continued necessary steps to gain philanthropic funding, and so sought inclusion on the Register for Environmental Organisations in July 2018. A reply from the register administration in June 2019 was no timeline was possible as to a final decision.

## Professional Growth

Professional growth and skill awareness activities:

- Attended Masterclass Charity Pitch Melbourne Tue 13 Nov 2018
- Attended Social Media Workshop Footscray Wed 16 Jan 2019
- Attended finance management discussions with EcoCentre St Kilda Tue 9 Apr 2019
- Reviewed professional reading on the need for skilled committee members and volunteers
- Renaming of our committee as a board

## Marketing

Marketing and publicity are now embedded as a committee portfolio, and is a priority area of our work. We have achieved the aim of placing ourselves in the mainstream of Wyndham's business community by renting an office in the central business district, having membership of the Committee for Wyndham and the Werribee Business and Tourism Committee.

WRivA took advantage of a number of opportunities to further improve publicity of our organisation:

- The Werribee Riverkeeper featured on the Committee for Wyndham *Talking Wyndham* podcast
- WRivA held a *Healthy Waterways* Forum at Werribee Bowls Club
- An election statement was published and sent to Werribee Catchment and other politicians
- Ongoing website revisions took place throughout the year
- The Riverkeeper took up chair role on Melbourne Water's Waterways & Drainage Council
- The Werribee Riverkeeper was interviewed on 3MDR radio re Waterways of the West and other waterway needs as part of a speaking engagement for Friends of Cranbourne Botanic Gardens

*A healthy Werribee River and catchment waterways by 2070,  
giving life to a modern, sustainable and culturally rich community*

## Community Engagement



Community engagement is a major component of our strategic plan. Examples of some events WRivA provided or supported during the year:

- Organised Gift Swap Hoppers Crossing Fri 30 Nov 2018
- Moderated Overwintering Migratory Bird Exhibition Werribee Wed 5 Dec 2018
- Organised Climate Change Film Night Series Werribee Nov-Dec 2018
- Supported Trivia Night Wyndham Fri 1 Feb 2019
- Displayed at Rotary Club of Wyndham River Fun Run Werribee Sun 17 Mar 2019
- Displayed at Steps to Sustainability Conference Melbourne Zoo Fri 29 Mar 2019
- Attended Wyndham Visitor Economy Lunch Victoria University Werribee Wed 15 May 2019
- Organised student presentation at WOW Community Assembly Footscray Sat 15 Jun 2019
- Organised Wadawurrung Smoking Ceremony & Nature Walk Werribee Fri 20 June 2019
- Displayed at EcoLiving Expo Wyndham Vale Sat 13 Jul 2019
- Presentation to Parkinson's Group Werribee Fri 16 Aug 2019
- Supported 'Spring Clean the City Melbourne CBD Sat 21 Sep 2019

*It is estimated these 12 events exposed WRivA and its programs to more than 5000 people. Many schools were visited, activities undertaken and participation in events during the year which gave us immediate exposure to more than 10,000 people.*

### Working with Melbourne Water

- Conducting Environmental DNA Platypus Surveys
- Implementing the Healthy Waterways Strategy
- Taking Melbourne Water staff on tours of the catchment
- Undertaking community planting projects
- Chairing the Waterways & Drainage Customer Council
- And other initiatives.

### Working with the City of Wyndham:

- Membership on the Environment & Sustainability Committee
- Input to the Heritage Tree Register
- Input to the Coastal Management Plan
- Membership West Road Refuse Disposal Facility Community Reference Group
- Conducting activities for Green Living Series and the Wyndham Learning Festival
- Providing volunteers for Friends of Cobbledick's Ford
- Carrying out clean-up, data gathering, advocacy and other litter initiatives.

### Working with Parks Victoria:

- Carrying out planting projects
- Carrying out bird surveys
- Organising Mambourin on-site initiatives
- Assisting with People & Parks Foundation initiatives
- Advocating for better connections between Werribee River Park and the community.

### Building relationships with corporate partners:

- Melbourne Water – now at membership level, planning and practical activity
- Holcim Lafarge Wests Rd Werribee – funding, planting and litter clean-ups
- Werribee Open Range Zoo – in water bugs and planning for on-site activity
- Wyndham Tourism & Business Committee – membership
- Committee for Wyndham – membership
- Deakin University – collaboration.

### Working with Beach Patrol Australia

- In litter clean-ups as part of the BP network of over 47 BP and Love Our Street groups
- In data gathering for plastic awareness and control
- In advocacy for a container deposit scheme.



## Education Initiatives



### Waterways of the West (WOW)

Creating a student-led 50 year vision for waterways of the west. Working closely with Carranballac College – Yr 6-9, Wyndham Central College – Yr 9-10, St Theresa's PS, AlbionPS – Yr 5-6, Our Lady's PS Sunshine – Yr 5-6, Home Schoolers Werribee – Yr 3-12 and VU Senior Secondary School St Albans- Yr 10-11.

### Youth Enviro Summit City of Wyndham

Presented WOW at this forum, along to Pt Cook Senior College, Hoppers Crossing Sec College, Suzanne Cory HS, Thomas Carr College, Heathdale Christian College and Wyndham Central College.

### Other education initiatives

- Charles Prouse Kindergarten – membership of WRivA
- VCAL Students Warringa Park – litter clean-up & and nature walk
- Featherbrook College – tour and advice on grounds & water initiatives
- The Grange Sec College – litter clean-up and policy initiative

### Awards

WRivA is very pleased to have received the following awards during the past year:

- Member Lisa Field winner of the 2019 Environment & Sustainability Award City of Wyndham
- Volunteer Phoebe Edwards (Beach Patrol 3030) winner of the Young Leaders Award at the 2019 Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria Sustainable Cities Award
- Werribee River Association was a finalist in the KAB Sustainable Cities Awards in the protection of the environment category

## OUR Submissions

WRivA took advantage of various invitations to submit comment on topics of importance, including:

*City of Wyndham Volunteer Strategy, July 2019*

**“Worth of our volunteers to the community.** We believe that the value of our promotion, advocacy, fund-attracting, changes on work practices and policy within agencies and government brought about by our volunteer work, is far in excess of the (quoted) \$145,000,000 divided by 33,500 volunteers e.g. \$433 per person per year. Our own estimates are that **we are currently worth \$1.2 million value to the community a year**, therefore our 400 volunteers (including ~80 members) contribute \$3000 per year.

**Worth of our organisation to the community.** Our organisation has outgrown its members' homes and a shared, crowded out-of-date premises supplied by the City of Wyndham, in a difficult to access location. We have a program in place to secure our own place in a more relevant location to promote & better organize our volunteers and their work. Support for that program from the draft volunteer strategy would be a welcome help.

*Resilient Melbourne & Nature Conservancy Metropolitan Urban Forest Strategy, January 2019*

“P.5 – para 2, ‘...and other river corridors,” is a Yarra-centric view, and does not acknowledge that there are other rivers and creeks which are of importance in Melbourne as the city expands ever faster onto the Victorian Volcanic Plains. These rivers, creeks and the old & new wetlands are valued by their communities. The State Government has recently announced ‘Waterways of the West’ (WOW) rolling out of the 2017 Yarra River Act, with its own Ministerial Advisory Committee looking at the Maribyrnong, Werribee and Barwon Rivers, plus many important creeks such as Moonee Ponds Creek which has its own collaborative group arrangement under the WOW initiative, and Kororoit Creek which has had much community and corporate support see it return to a highly vegetated state.

Geelong should be included, as it is as close to the Melbourne CBD as Westernport Bay and the Mornington Peninsula, has a higher population and a mobile community which is linked with Melbourne in many ways – Employment, train, road, 2nd airport, expanding urban areas, Port Phillip Bay, Bellarine Peninsula, Little River etc.



We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, and from their language we have come to believe that: ‘Werribee’ means ‘backbone’ and ‘Maribyrnong’ means ‘I can hear a ringtail possum.’

## Election Statement



This is an abridged version of our election statement for the federal election of 2019.

WRivA's work is focused on the right of people to have healthy waterways. WRivA added \$3.6 million worth of value to their community over the last three years as a result of our work, offering increased natural benefits to children, adults and wildlife and encouraging safe passive and active recreation.

Our waterways and their communities require:

- Recognition that waterways are in a worsening condition
- Empowerment for local communities to act
- New generations of urban landcarers with connection to country
- Financial and other support for waterway protector organisations
- Paid employment for Landcare coordinators in urban areas
- Acknowledgement by government that local communities have invaluable knowledge

Water quality in most areas of the Werribee Catchment is very poor to fair at best. Farm runoff and stormwater are proving to be the greatest threat to the health of waterways, and the ability of people to fish or swim, or use the waterways in any way is greatly inhibited. Despite urban sensitive water design initiatives, our waterways are continuing to deposit nutrients and too much water too quickly into our waterways.

The *Bridging Troubled Waters* pollution mapping project aims to reduce threats to Port Phillip Bay health by determining sources and impacts of pollution in the Werribee catchment using smart stormwater solutions, biological assessments and leveraging of community partnerships. Identifying priority sources of pollution will help local government, EPA, Melbourne Water, and the community better target education and enforcement campaigns. Collaboration between all these stakeholders is critical to improve the condition of our urban waterways by reducing water pollution.

### Recent WRivA activity includes:

- Revegetation program with Holcim Werribee River 2017-2019, including on ground works of 10000 plants.
- Revegetation & survey program with Friends of Werribee River Park 2016-2019, including on ground works of 7000 plants; Riverwalk Estate and community volunteers; and, utilising work by impaired adults from Mambourin Enterprises.
- Revegetation & works program as Friends of Cobble Dick's Ford 2018-2019, including on ground works of 3000 plants; and, litter pick-ups with school group and community volunteers.
- Revegetation of 1500 plants at Mambourin St Werribee in 2019.

### Research projects:

- Bird Surveys at 3 sites – winter & spring 2013-2018
- WRivA 'A Stream of Litter' report 2014 & 2018
- WRivA research into main sources of litter into the Werribee River in Wyndham
- Led to City of Wyndham securing funds for their audit of gross pollutants (litter) traps and subsequent maintenance and works improvements

### Further submissions include:

- Senate Inquiry 2015 Marine plastic pollution
- State of Victoria DELWP survey 'Plastic Pollution' 2017
- Melbourne Water Healthy Waterway Strategy 2017-2019 litter a threat to waterways
- City of Wyndham Single-use plastics policy

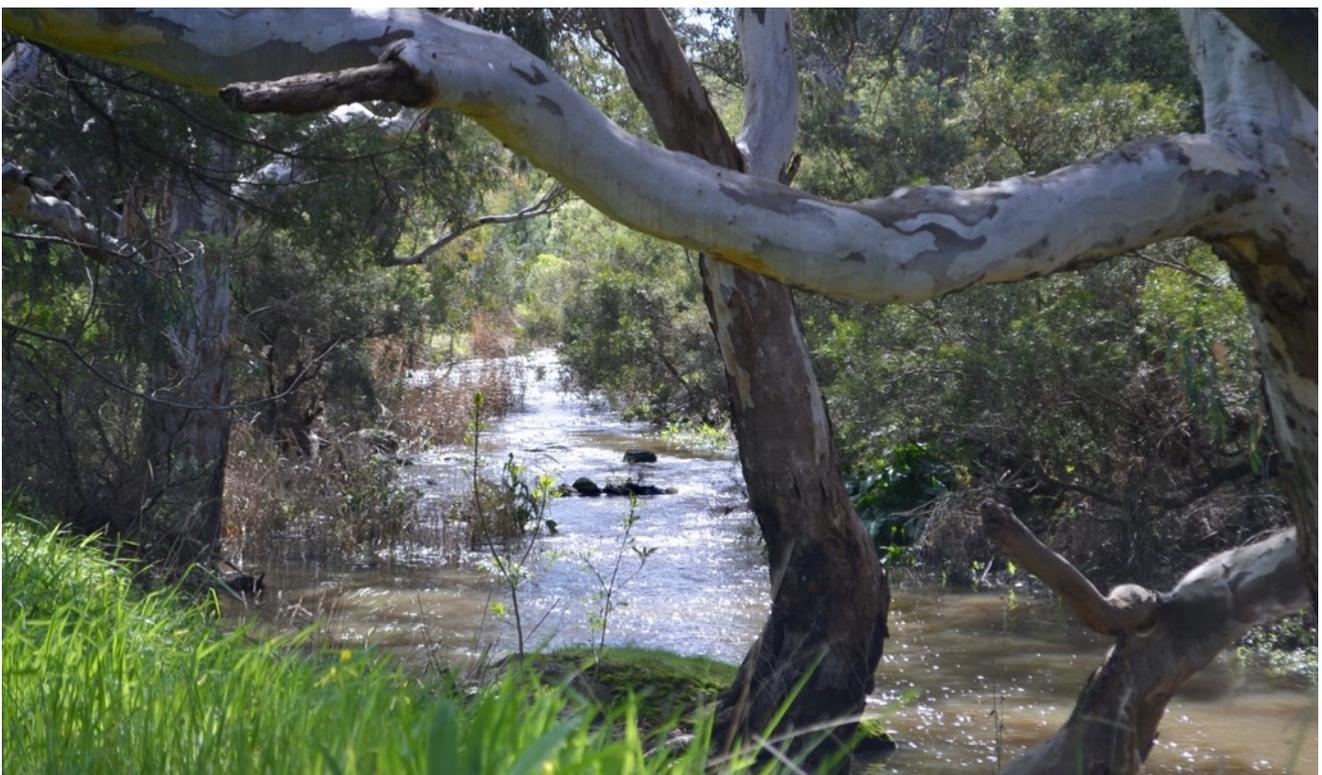
### Our Community activity programs include:

- Beach Patrol 3030 – 2015-2019
- Love Our Street 3030 – 2018-2019
- Love Our Street 3029 – from 2019

WRivA has a membership and volunteer base of around 400 people, who work on water quality, revegetation, litter and sustainability as well as developing pride in the waterways of the west among old and new generations and communities.

From 2016-2018 our people worked in excess of 3000 hours, and at \$30 an hour (standard grant in-kind hour rate) have added more than \$100,000 value to the Werribee River catchment by practical hands-on activity alone. Added to that is \$500,000 of grant and sponsorship funds we have brought into the catchment over that period.

*If we add on the value of our advocacy and submissions to strategies such as Port Phillip Bay Environmental Management Plan, Waterways of the West and other policy and planning initiatives, and the benefits they offer, our contribution is in excess of \$3.6 million dollars or \$1.2 million per year.*



## OUR Media



The Werribee River Association Facebook page has been maintained since March 9 2011, and has featured a posting on average every few days.

Date	Likes	Increase
Mar 9 2011	0	
Oct 2012	94	94
Oct 2013	178	84
Oct 2014	285	107
Oct 2015	621	336
Oct 2016	1112	491
Oct 2017	1415	303
Oct 2018	2016	651
Oct 2019	2580	564

Twitter activity began on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2014 as @werribeerivkeep with a tweet on the success of the June 2014 platypus survey from the Werribee Riverkeeper. WRivA's latest tweets have been advocacy for litter-smart legislation. Tweeting has been of lower priority in 2019 due to social media training which recommended we use Facebook, Mailchimp, and Instagram & Twitter in that order.

Date	Tweets	Increase	Following	Followers
Jun 7 2014	0			
Oct 2015	444	444	178	137
Oct 2016	567	123	228	192
Oct 2017	763	196	275	267
Oct 2018	957	194	279	335
Oct 2019	996	39	276	350

A Mailchimp newsletter has now been used since 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Since then we have sent out 9 newsletters and 3 other news items or announcements.

Instagram is now being used on our Litterblitz program and may be extended to other programs.

Our website has been further upgraded in 2019 and will undergo more improvements over time.

## OUR Membership

WRivA currently has 108 financial members, as reported for Landcare Victoria Insurance requirements. Members should note fees are due at end of October 2019 for those who have not renewed since 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

Accessing easier on-line membership of WRivA has been given priority in the past year with on-going work happening to achieve efficient on-line application, payments and information.

Our corporate memberships have grown to five in 2019, with Melbourne Water joining the Wyndham Harbour Rotary Club, Australian India Foundation Inc., Werribee Open Range Zoo, and Wyndham Secondary College as corporate members

## Our Financial Statements

### WERRIBEE RIVER ASSOCIATION INC. (Reg No A0017169K)

#### BALANCE SHEET

As of September 30, 2019

	TOTAL
<b>Assets</b>	
Current Assets	
Accounts receivable	
Accounts Receivable (A/R)	1,520.00
<b>Total Accounts receivable</b>	<b>A\$1,520.00</b>
Cash Account	222,462.76
Future Fund (Term Deposit)	26,055.81
Petty Cash Account	2,103.12
Public Fund	504.16
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>A\$252,645.85</b>
Long-term assets	
Rental bond	1,720.00
<b>Total long-term assets</b>	<b>1,720.00</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>A\$254,365.85</b>
<b>Liabilities and shareholder's equity</b>	
Current liabilities:	
Accounts payable	
Accounts Payable (A/P)	3,075.28
<b>Total Accounts payable</b>	<b>A\$3,075.28</b>
ATO Clearing Account	806.00
GST Liabilities Payable	4,489.52
PAYG Withholdings Payable	974.00
Payroll clearing	1,048.40
Superannuation payable	1,748.63
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>A\$12,141.83</b>
Shareholders' equity:	
Net Income	10,779.78
Opening balance equity	57,382.73
Retained Earnings	174,061.51
<b>Total shareholders' equity</b>	<b>A\$242,224.02</b>
<b>Total liabilities and equity</b>	<b>A\$254,365.85</b>

# WERRIBEE RIVER ASSOCIATION INC. (Reg No A0017169K)

## PROFIT AND LOSS

October 2018 - September 2019

	TOTAL
Income	
Donations	8,328.54
Grants	113,948.72
Membership	
Membership - Corporate	30,136.35
Membership - Family	681.75
Membership - Individual	368.15
<b>Total Membership</b>	<b>31,186.25</b>
Program Fees	7,327.29
Services	454.56
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>A\$161,245.36</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>A\$161,245.36</b>
Other Income(Loss)	
Interest income	775.83
<b>Total Other Income(Loss)</b>	<b>A\$775.83</b>
Expenses	
Accounting and bookkeeping	5,760.00
Advertising and marketing	770.00
Promotional Clothing	1,808.36
Promotional Materials	612.73
Sponsorship	500.00
<b>Total Advertising and marketing</b>	<b>3,691.09</b>
BAS Expense	-0.01
Catering / Refreshments	1,195.46
Community Program Delivery	1,260.00
Computer Expenses	472.97
Conferences	702.28
Education Program Development	6,300.00
Educational Program Delivery	1,056.06
Fuel & oils	274.81
Interest expense	30.36
Low Value Asset	2,100.46
Memberships	904.09
Motor vehicle expenses	22.68
Office expenses	318.16
Other External Services	4,889.00
Outdoor Equipment	1,311.41
Plants	3,340.86
Postage & shipping	7.55
Printing, stationery & supplies	1,213.16
Project Officer	54,278.24
Project studies, surveys, assessments	43.52
Protective Clothing	366.00
Rent or Lease of Buildings	1,563.64
Shipping, Freight, and Delivery Postage & Handling	118.18
Staff amenities	7.64
Subscriptions	420.00

	TOTAL
Superannuation	1,676.18
Telephone & internet expenses	567.28
Training courses	400.00
Travel expenses	3,524.20
Venue Hire	348.60
Wage expenses	18,456.31
Water science services	32,751.89
Website	1,870.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>A\$151,242.07</b>
Other Expenses	
BAS Roundoff Gain or Loss	-0.66
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>A\$ -0.66</b>
<b>NET EARNINGS</b>	<b>A\$10,779.78</b>



17 October 2019

The Treasurer  
 Werribee River Association Inc  
 P O Box 74  
 Werribee Vic 3030

The Quick Books file and bank accounts have been reconciled and reviewed and in our opinion represent a true and fair recording of the movements in the receipts and payments of the Werribee River Association Inc for the period 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019.

Garry Johnsey NTA&F ATI  
 Director & Senior Adviser

Please support us  
Be a Volunteer. Be a Member. Make a donation.



[www.werribeeriver.org.au](http://www.werribeeriver.org.au)

Unit 18, Level 1, 7 Bridge St, Werribee  
PO Box 74 Werribee, 3030  
Email: [werribeeriver@gmail.com](mailto:werribeeriver@gmail.com)  
Web: [werribeeriver.org.au](http://werribeeriver.org.au)  
[@werribeerivkeep](https://www.instagram.com/werribeerivkeep)

