



Lower Werribee River during the flooding episodes of September to October 2022, next to our plantings as part of More Trees for a Cooler Greener West program.

Annual Report 2022-2023

OUR *Vision*

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

Let's care and connect to the Werribee River and its waterways

Welcome to our *Annual Report 2022-23*

The Werribee River Association Inc. (WRA), established in 1981, is a not-for-profit waterway protector whose purpose is to work to protect the natural environment and promote sustainable living practices.

Our history is rooted in advocacy and volunteering for the environment and human health within the Werribee River catchment. The former Committee of Management is now a Board of Management, and we have paid staff leading the work, supported by community volunteers.

The organisation is guided by a Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024, a Business Plan 2021-2025 and has completed a Concept Proposal for a Community Enviro-Hub as a valuable future environmental asset for the West which supports our vision of a secure and permanent place of our own.

Werribee River Association staff and board acknowledge and respect the Traditional Owners of the land and waterways upon which we work, live and play, in particular the Wadawurrung, Bunurong and Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation.

We acknowledge and respect Elders past, present and emerging. Sovereignty was never ceded, and we firmly believe that First Nations people deserve recognition in the Australian constitution.



Left to right photos – Litter volunteer at work; Waterbugs educational session; Stakeholder walk along the lower Werribee River.

Working to achieve healthy waterways



None of this work is possible without the support of generous community supporters and donors and funding partners.



Our Chair's report

It has been an honour to serve as the Chairperson for the Werribee River Association this reporting period of July 2022 to June 2023, the 42nd year for the Association. I have been on the board since 2017 and so lucky to witness our progress and development as well as our ongoing impact.

Since 1981 the Association has been working toward a healthy Werribee River catchment. Our organisation works with land and water managers and the local community to support and restore biodiversity; to support improved water quality outcomes for the river; to deliver environmental education and to draw focus to the iconic Perridak (platypus) that calls our river home. The Association invests in programs that build community connection and strength and our activities and areas of focus are shaped by global, regional and local environmental needs.

For many years, John Forrester, our much loved and respected River Keeper has been a strong and consistent voice for the river and our community. John has continued this advocacy over the past year, has continued to educate us, and has shaped our work and the drive for professionalisation across our organisation.

Our dedicated Business and Community Development Manager, Lisa Field, has continued to guide the team to deliver a great range of community environmental programs,

in the field, in the classroom, involving Traditional Owners, targeting diverse communities, using the arts and promoting advocacy and direct action. We truly have a dedicated and passionate team who work above and beyond expectations to keep achieving great outcomes.

We are grateful for the support of our funders and partners and for the opportunities to collaborate with all our stakeholders. Our programs are aligned to local, state and semi-government policies and working group objectives and we are proud of our contribution towards Wyndham City's Resilient Wyndham 2020-25, Melbourne Water's Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018-28, the Waterways of the West Action Plan, the Lower Werribee Waterway Amenity Action Plan, the Central Region and Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy, and the Port Phillip and Western Port Regional Catchment Strategy.

Over the past year, we've revisited and celebrated our proud history as an organisation, and the achievements of every dedicated member and volunteer over 42 years of action. Through our work to develop the Werribee River Guide, we've highlighted our amazing Wirribi Yaluk and its surrounding environs and helped to elevate our amazing natural heritage to greater prominence.

Organisationally, we've experienced significant change this year with the departure of three of our volunteer board members, and we've welcomed four new members into the fold.

We are measuring our progress and impact against the objectives we set ourselves in our 2019 – 2024 Strategic Plan, and we're preparing the groundwork required for our next plan. We've been reviewing our capacity, our strengths and areas to be further developed so we can continue to have far reaching positive impact.

I would like to thank the full contingent of board members who have helped us on our journey of improved governance over the last year, with special thanks again to Rob Bradley for being a terrific Vice Chairperson and always having WRA, our members and our mission front of mind.

We manage our finances astutely and are grateful for the funding support from Melbourne Water, Wyndham City Council and DEECA, and we are proud of further funding diversification achieved this year through Lisa's hard work and initiative. The Treasurer's report details our financial position.

On behalf of the board, I wish to present to you our Annual Report 2022-23 detailing our community environment leadership and impacts. A special thank you to Lisa for all her hard work in preparing this report, and a huge thank you to all of our members, volunteers, staff and supporters for your work for nature.

Kathryn Williams

Chairperson 2022-23

We are measuring our progress and impact against the objectives we set ourselves in our 2019 – 2024 Strategic Plan, and we're preparing the groundwork required for our next plan.



Left to Right photos - Paddle the Werribee River event; Guided nature walks at Werribee Park; Cultural education tour at the You Yangs, Wadawurrung Country.



WRA Staff: Lisa, Maryann, Jess, John & Charlotte visit the Werribee Open Range Zoo.

Manager's *Report*

Bringing a team of professional staff together has been a highlight of my work since commencing in my paid role as Community & Business Development Manager in November 2020, largely funded by a three-year Ross Trust grant designed to build the capacity and scope of the organisation.

The staff now support and compliment the coordination of our volunteer lead programming, strong membership base, and our Werribee Riverkeeper.

I firmly believe there are many opportunities for a community environmental organisation like our Association. There is certainly a need for action on climate change, waste, and advancing sustainable living and design practices. With a growing and diverse community, our role as educators and story-tellers has become vitally important; and we also support communities to be active stewards themselves.

This past financial year I have commenced supporting the board and governance of the organisation, and taking up more of the varied tasks undertaken by our long-standing community champion, Secretary of the Board and Werribee Riverkeeper, John Forrester.

Feedback from our plantings, litter clean-ups, guided walks, paddle days, children's programs

etc is overwhelmingly positive. Our volunteers and attendees enjoy the opportunities out in the field, along the waterways, marvelling at the beauty that is basically on our doorsteps. Please take a little time to review some of the capture feedback on page 20.

The Werribee River Association staff and volunteers work outside of the 9 to 5 model. We provide excellent value for the work we do; greatly benefiting the wider community and our major and minor sponsors.

Succession planning is necessary for any community group or organisation, and it is very pleasing to have new board members, new casual staff, and new volunteer leaders join our regular and familiar faces.

Our mission is clearly defined to work towards a healthy river system, with clean water, clean air, healthy soil and cool and open green spaces, for all of us to enjoy. To achieve this, we need a connected and resilient community, and we as an organisation need financial and physical support to continue this work. Please get involved – donor, sponsor, supporter, volunteer, or become a member if you're not already.

Lisa Field

Community & Business Development Manager

Werribee Riverkeeper's *Report*



The Minister for Water, Harriet Shing MP launched the Waterways of the West CALD Toolkit for practitioners, with various community, government and Traditional Owner stakeholders in Werribee.

As I move through my 30th year with the Association, I can reflect on a lot of changes in the Werribee Catchment, the Werribee River and other waterways, and well as various improvements within our organisation which have been necessitated by those changes.

When the Association commenced in 1981, there was no waterway manager, and local residents in the township of Werribee were very alarmed at the disregard for the Werribee River. WRA realised very early that the Werribee River is a living entity, deserving a rightful entitlement of environmental water flows to survive.

Now all of our river systems are being seen as natural entities, as decreed by the State of Victoria in the innovative Waterways of the West legislation 2021. That legislation came about because of our community advocacy, emphasising the waterways as valuable community and natural assets, essential for all life. WRA and our allied groups wanted change in the way in which our waterways were respected and valued as living entities.

John Forrester

Werribee Riverkeeper

The flooding events of September and October 2022 filled the natural flood plains at Werribee River Park.



Advocacy Improving amenities, access, water quality

When the Association formed in 1981 letter writing was the way things were done, but today methods and outcomes of advocacy have expanded significantly. From formal submissions, to advocacy walks, to meeting with Members of Parliament, our advocacy pitch has been varied, proactive and efficient, and promotes the wider benefits of a clean environment for all.

To achieve such change, WRA partnered with an alliance of community and environmental organisations and individuals working for long-term sustainable water options for the people of Victoria, the health of the Werribee River, and the cultural, economic, environmental and social values it provides for the Werribee Catchment.

Our growing number of strategic alliances now exceeds sixty, and covers business, community groups, universities and more. A significant part of our work toward change is working within networks and forming partnerships. The theme of this work includes: reducing stormwater

pollution run-off, mitigating poor urban design that has impacted on wetlands; improving biodiversity outcomes along the riverine parklands; protection of green wedges; enhancing plantings in public spaces; allowing community plantings in new estates; and, planting trees for shade, habitat and aesthetics.

Our team have engaged 88 campaigns, submissions, collaborative actions and meetings involving 768 people across our partnerships, and reaching countless others via social media, television, radio and the press.

Our work is not finished. We need to continue work on the threats imposed on our waterways and human health, and engaging with organisations which impact our waterways. That includes water authorities, municipalities and their planning, open space and other teams, the EPA, Parks Victoria and more, including those organisations whose work while not responsible for water or waterways, nonetheless impacts them such as VicRoads and housing developers.

Partners: *Members of Parliament, Concerned Waterway Alliance, Melbourne Water, DECCA, Green Wedge Alliance, Friends of Steele Creek, Yarra Riverkeeper, Port Phillip Eco-Centre, Australian Waterkeepers Alliance, Wyndham City, BMX Club, Southern Rural Water, Monash University, Victorian Fisheries, Wombat Forestcare, Grow West, Victoria University.*



Stakeholder walk along the lower Werribee with representatives from DECCA, Wyndham City, Melbourne Water, Greater Wester Water, and Werribee River Association.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Concerned Water Alliance

Fortnightly meetings with a group of waterway and Landcare leaders was instrumental in reporting to government the true value of water. In the lead up to the October 2022 State Election, our team visited 19 politicians to provide our recommendations for future water security and pollution controls.

Advocacy Walks

The simple act of bringing stakeholders together is instrumental to better management of land and waterways. This past year we have held stakeholder walks along the lower Werribee River, behind the farms, to support better information and collaborations across different land managers, and also to highlight the care which the official land manager DEECA, finds it hard to achieve.

Our team have also been engaged to support to enhance community engagement into government consultations, with our expertise at the local level being of notable benefit.

Werribee River Guide

The new Werribee River Guide launched in June 2023 is a website and printed brochure that stems from a collaborative partnership, working to enhance the lower Werribee River. This Werribee River Guide speaks up for the river in a new voice, and is not your typical tourism guide.

The website www.werribeeriverguide.com seeks to showcase the special places and hidden gems along the river. Whether planning a family day out, or looking to get on the move along the trails, the guide is a resource to explore.

The Lower Werribee Waterway Amenity Action Plan (LWAAAP) Implementation Group

Following the development of the LWAAAP in 2021-22, a group of stakeholders continue to meet to support the actions identified in the plan. The LWAAAP is an action from the Waterways of the West Action Plan, released by the Victorian Government in December 2021, which highlights the importance of waterway amenity for the west’s growing population.

The actions in the plan are wide and varied, listing the many needs of the lower Werribee, and providing direction for those government and other organisations which can do so much to provide a better community access and amenity, and a healthier waterway.

The Association has been working in partnership with diverse stakeholders since 1981 – underpinning much our work is speaking up on matters that concern community.



Education – developing a love for nature

The Werribee River Association's educational services play a crucial role in promoting waterway health and environmental awareness among our target audiences that include children, adults, and our culturally and linguistically diverse community. Our educational services aim to be inclusive, adaptable, and in both traditional presentation methods and hands-on experiences like field trips, to support a well-rounded learning experience for students.

Working within the traditional schools environment, whom typically have a very busy schedule, has been slow in Terms 1 and 4, but there was a higher uptake of our services during Terms 2 and 3, which is pleasing.

Our aim is to continue to broaden our work with schools and learning providers, and it is pleasing that we now have a partnership with Wyndham City that supports our school sessions on biodiversity outcomes. This reduces the financial cost on schools, and is an enabler for the growth of our reputation and experience working in Wyndham's schools.

Wyndham City and Melton City have engaged us for school holiday programs, and we have also developed our own series of school holiday programming to meet the needs of a young population.

In partnership with the Port Phillip Eco-Centre we co-led educational programming with students at Wyndham Community Education Centre, on a project to build multicultural ambassadors for the environment.

To reach a younger audience, our team have needed to refine, develop and explore what we do. We've used storytelling, music, creativity workshops, outreach events, and partnered with schools and other services to develop effective and engaging programs.



Our environmental educational programming for the young age groups, has included everything from traditional classroom presentations on wildlife, to nature play and bush crafts, to looking at water bugs under the microscope, to picking up litter, and some session designed for specific audiences, i.e. youth leaders. We have also led guided walks at various locations with families, Scouts groups and schools.

Within our programs for younger audiences, we provided more than 60 sessions, to 2600 attendees.

Sponsors and supporters: *Melbourne Water, Wyndham City, Lendlease, Melton City, various schools and education providers, Scouts, Werribee Open Range Zoo.*

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

CALD Engagement Program

A new CALD engagement project commenced in September 2022, funded by DELWP (now DEECA). This 22-month CALD Engagement Program provides varied programming initiatives for children, and families, particularly school holiday programming and activity resources for children. We also attend festivals and community events, lead guided walks and conduct healthy soils workshops as part of our work with diverse communities.



We delivered 60 educational programs for children and youth engaging 2600 young learners.



Left to Right photos – Outdoor nature play; children's holiday activities at Saltwater Community Centre; Children's Week Picnic activities.

We delivered another 140 activities in the wider community, reaching 8000 attendees, building a strong focus on waterway health and care for nature.



Left to Right photos – Catch a Carp youth winning entrants; children's holiday program at Saltwater; Winter Street Party platypus engagement

Across all of our activities, including volunteer led events, we engaged 13,000 attendees.



Left to Right photos – Litter blitz groups – Love Our Street 3030 – Werribee, Beach Patrol 3030; and Love Our Street 3029.

Community Engagement

Enabling a rich & diverse place for growth



Program launch event at Wunggurwill Dhurrung Centre, Wyndham Vale. The Mother's for Mother Nature educational series sought to link culture, nature and sustainability.

This year our community engagements have grown significantly. We have achieved this through collaborations with partner agencies, by engaging many new casual and culturally diverse workshop instructors, and by experimenting. We can't do this work alone, and it has been wonderful to expand our net of facilitators, supporters and attendees. Our community engagement activities have also been enhanced by using the arts as a medium to communicate our values and connections to waterways.

Community engagement with the Werribee River Association includes all of our guided walks, presentations, workshops, paddle and fishing events, food and other swaps, stalls, pot-luck dinners and other social events. This year we have delivered almost 140 community engagement events to over 8000 attendees.

Our focus through all of our work is on building community awareness on the importance on protecting our environment, water literacy, biodiversity and nature awareness; however, we have also focus on sustainable living practices, the share economy, social development, place making, and community capacity building activities.

With our larger and broader plans to one day have our own place, a community environmental hub, it is important we keep expanding our services that will one day, neatly fit into this mould. And won't that be wonderful.

To reach a broad community base, our team attended the Wyndham City's Children Week Picnic and Winter Street Party, and Melton City's Djerriwarrh Festival. We also hosted music in the park, toy swaps, and included cultural foods into the programming.

It is at many of these events we get to show off Peri, the taxidermy platypus, and our expanding team of non-living display animals, like Coco, the very popular paper-mache frog.

None of this work is possible without the support of our funding providers, community partners, staff and volunteers. It has been a significant year of growth, and no doubt a great platform as we continue to move about the catchment.

Sponsors and supporters: *Melbourne Water, Wyndham City, Lendlease Arts Assist, DEECA.*

We promoted waste free and sustainable lifestyles in local parks, and incorporated creative musical elements, part of the Sustainability Street Project.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Mothers for Mother Nature

Mothers for Mother Nature was a monthly program of activities to engage culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women in the environment/sustainability space in Wyndham. It connected locals with each other and with the Werribee River Association.

Overall, the program met its objectives, to create opportunities to link culture, nature and sustainability; to facilitate a sense of stewardship over waterways and landscape; to broaden overall community appreciation of cross-cultural values related to responsibility for nature; and, and to foster future diverse leadership in the local environment space.

Sustainability Street

The project's deliverables were modelled off Wyndham City Council's Resilient Wyndham, an important strategy to address the social and environmental impacts of the pandemic and climate change. In 2022-2023, Sustainability Streets engaged over 4000 people in 56 events.

Highlights include the development of an ongoing intergenerational nature playgroup, a new volunteer litter group for Point Cook, the implementation of 10 street libraries throughout Wyndham and inevitably new friends and supporters. Through widespread media coverage of the events, the project also helped to elevate the exposure of the organisation.

Paddle the Werribee River

We arranged 3 paddle days from Riverbend Historical Park, in partnership with Paddle Victoria, that enabled 120 people to experience the Werribee River up to Davis Creek

Catch a Carp at Manor Lake

This highly successful event highlighted this invasive species, and partnered with Victorian Fisheries Authority, Women in Recreational Fishing Network, fishing legend Jo Starling, Hooked On Bait and Tackle local business, Wyndham Council, and Melbourne Water.



Regeneration

From drought to floods, a year of change



Maryann, our Regeneration Officer, unloads mulch at the Werribee Golf Course, part of a biodiversity project to protect a large remnant Werribee Blue Box.

WRA's regeneration programs are reaching great outputs, partnering with community, business and land managers, and lead by our dedicated Regeneration Officer.

Across 56 events, we also had 524 volunteer engagements, working 1264 hours to support these conservation efforts. Our largest planting target was reached this year, with over 20,000 trees, shrubs and groundcovers being planted.

Over the following years, these small tube stock plants will offer a significant benefit to the local ecosystem, in and around the Werribee River, and ultimately support human health.

Some of our larger projects have included the planting of 5000 plants at Werribee River Park, part of the More Trees for a Cooler Greener West funded by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action DEECA, formerly DELWP.

In September and October 2022, the Werribee River flooded in and around our planting area at Werribee River Park. It was really a beautiful sight with the flood plains covered in water. Our

plantings were not so negatively impacted by the flood waters; however, the waters did affect road access and led to the closure of the pedestrian bridge over to Werribee park precinct. This made our work all the more difficult.

It was pleasing to sign a partnership MOU with Wyndham City, strengthening our relationship and work across key sites within the municipality.

Sponsors and supporters: *Melbourne Water, DEECA – More Trees for a Cooler Greener West, Wyndham City, Holcim.*

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Friends of Cobbledicks Ford

Now in its 5th year, this partnership program with Wyndham City has included monthly conservation activities in the reserve, between March and October, engaging a community of environmental stewards and supporters to help build this beautiful spot along the Werribee River. Co-led by volunteer John Marks and Jo Cumbo, with regular assistance from the team at Dreambuilders Centre for Change.

Friends of Presidents Park

One of our newer regeneration programs, conducted on the 1st Thursday of the month is still taking shape, but has been achieving amazing work supported by the team at Dreambuilders Centre for Change. As such, we have needed to broaden our reach beyond Presidents Park and to the surrounding areas. For those wanting to get a bit more active and outdoors, local in Werribee, this is the program to join, and we are looking for leaders and more regular community volunteers to support.

Partnership wins an award

The Werribee River Association are extremely pleased with the long-standing corporate partnership with Holcim Quarry. Together we have tracked some amazing results, that now includes almost 25,000 plants in the ground, and 5 tonnes of litter removed. Plus, we've shared many a good BBQ put on by Graeme Jones and his team after a morning out in the field.

In February 2023, at Holcim's Annual Awards held in New Zealand, this partnership was recognised, winning the Community Award – The Holcim Spirit, and acknowledging the strong relationship with the Werribee River Association that has been in place for over 10 years.

Save Our Soils

This multi-year project will monitor stormwater and agricultural run-off in two locations in Werribee South, to better understand the quality of water entering the Werribee River and Port Phillip Bay. The data will inform long-term evaluation of nature-based interventions in managing run-off.

The project includes community engagement, citizen science, real-time data monitoring, conservation plantings, advocacy and strategic partnerships to support the water quality of the lower Werribee River.

Werribee Park Golf Club Werribee Blue Box

WRA were extremely excited to receive a Melbourne Water grant to plant a biodiversity bed underneath the large, remnant Werribee Blue Box located on the river at the Werribee Park Golf Club. The project which involved planting 1,000 grasses, groundcovers and wildflowers, along with mulching, will assist in attracting beneficial insects, water retention, increasing organic matter and improving soil health, ensuring the ongoing health of this beautiful tree.



20,000 plants were added to the catchment along the riverine parkland. This was our largest planting season ever, supported by partnerships, volunteers, donors and government funded programs.



Citizen Science - measure to protect



Birds, frogs, platypus and water quality parameters were just some of the areas of investigation within our citizen science programming this year. Across 81 events, 345 attendees and 715 volunteer hours, volunteers were able to learn through direct measurement, and scientific exploration.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Frog Engagement & Protection Project

This project was led by Erin Bradley, local environmentalist, and long-term member of the Werribee River Association. Over 50 nights, 61 volunteers participated in the surveys that confirmed that several frog species were present in Wyndham waterways. 561 frogs were visually detected and of the native species detected, they included 1 Striped Marsh Frog, 80 Common Eastern Froglets, 103 Growling Grass Frogs, 137 Eastern Banjo Frogs (Pobblebonk), 240 Spotted Marsh Frogs. With special mention to the detection of 255 frogs within Graham's Wetland Reserve, including 53 Growling Grass Frogs (and even more heard). Erin also visited schools and attended community stalls. The full report is on the WRA website.

Waterwatch Werribee

Since 2008 The Werribee River Association has been undertaking monthly water quality testing at Bungees Hole as part of Melbourne Water's *Waterwatch* program. The program asks local volunteers and community groups to collect water samples to test for salinity, nitrates, phosphates, pH levels and turbidity.



Left to right photos – Melbourne Water personnel join the frog surveys; Waterwatch undertaken by citizen scientists.

With 15 years' worth of data collected at the site, we now have extensive insight into the characteristics of the area, the common threats and priority areas for advocacy.

This work is open to participants to drop by and see how the testing occurs and learn first-hand about water testing in the Werribee River.

Waterwatch expands to Werribee South

In 2022 we expanded our collection site into the lower Werribee River, to include three drain outlets in Werribee South. Aware of the important contribution Werribee South's market gardens make to Melbourne's food security, as well as the challenges many of the farms are facing in the current climate, we believe that this testing can help contribute to more economically viable and sustainable farming in the area.

Findings from four monthly tests from Nov 2022 to Mar 2023 reveal that sediment is coming off the farms, but not on a regular basis. It seems to occur after rain, irrigation or a combination of those two. Sediment runoff is not desirable for waterways or the farms as it means topsoil, and the nutrients it carries with it, is washing into the river. The Werribee River Association will be undertaking extensive planting around more than one of the selected drain outlets later in 2023 and will monitor whether this reduces sediment run-off.

This work is part of a project called Save Our Soils, funded by DEECA.

We had 5 formal groups undertake 48 community clean-up events, working alongside 84 individual clean-ups, all recorded via the Litter Stopper App, amassing to 4.5 tons of litter removed.



Litter Blitz - community champions act for everyone

Joining a litter clean-up group is as simple as showing up. Informal, direct action, and open to diverse ages, language groups and abilities.

This year we had 5 formal groups undertake 48 community clean-up events, working alongside 84 individual clean-ups, all recorded via the Litter Stopper App, amassing to 4.5 tons of litter removed. Areas covered in Werribee, Wyndham Vale, Manor Lakes, Tarneit, Hoppers Crossing, Truganina, Point Cook and Werribee South. A total of 695 volunteer engagements worked 873 hours to achieve this valuable work.

The first community clean up group was Beach Patrol 3030 that commenced in 2015, followed by Love Our Street 3030 in Werribee in 2018, Love Our Street 3029 in 2019, Love Our Street 3024 in 2020/21, and then the newest of the groups, Love Our Street 3030 – Point Cook, commenced in September 2022.

This group came about due to interest within the community particularly from the Korean Seniors Group in Point Cook.

The Association also arranges one-off clean-ups for students, community & corporate groups and in response to environmental hazards that required action.

In late 2022, we discovered a bean bag type toy and its polystyrene contents had been dropped into the Werribee River in central Werribee. We attempted to clean what we could and lodged a report with Melbourne Water seeking support. Also in late 2022, a volunteer alerted us to 30+ large polystyrene building pods in the dry river beds in the Werribee River. Together with Wyndham City cleansing crew, we removed these.

Groups and program

supporters: *Beach Patrol 3030, Love Our Street 3030 – Werribee, Love Our Street 3029, Love Our Street 3024, Love Our Street 3030 – Point Cook, Melbourne Water, Wyndham City, Beach Patrol Australia.*

Celebrating Volunteers - connect, act, reward



Left to right photos - End of year gathering with volunteers; National Volunteers Week celebration in May.

This year we hosted an end of the year Party and a National Volunteer Week pot-luck dinner, recognising and celebrating our volunteers. The theme of this year's National Volunteer Week was The Change Makers. These events are valuable opportunities to say thank you to our volunteer contributors.

In December 2022 we presented certificates to **Helen and Jos van den Berg** who are long-term stalwarts of the community's fight for equal recognition for the rights of the community and protection of waterways in the west of Melbourne; and, in particular their role in our advocacy program in late 2022 to the State Government highlighting the need for momentum to gain further improvements.

Dreambuilders were recognised for their growing involvement in the task of rebuilding healthy waterways, acknowledging their hands-on contribution in times of a volunteer shortage following the impacts of the pandemic.

In May 2023 we presented certificates to: **Julie Connell** for being a great force in helping to establish the newest clean up group in Wyndham – Love Our Street 3030 – Point Cook.

The **Point Cook Korean Seniors Group** for helping to commence the latest clean-up group.

Meg Rennie for her individual litter clean-ups and then reporting this into Litter Stopper App.

Meg is also an advocate for the river and the Association; referring others to get involved, or highlighting to Councillors the issues of litter and waste and the need for better amenities along the waterways.

Alan Jobson is a long-standing volunteer who contributes on a regular basis to the Love Our Street 3024 Wyndham Vale group, and Friends of Cobbledicks Ford, and occasionally at other events. Alan's response to the environmental problems is to work collaboratively to tackle these issues.

THANKS to our Volunteer Leadership Team *Nick Alderson, Rob Bradley, Erin Bradley, Nikki Colliver, Julie Connell, Joe Cumbo, John Forrester, Lisa Field, Andrew Grapentin, Nyukmei Liu, John Marks, Miwako Okumura, June Styles, Colin Styles, and The Point Cook Korean Seniors Group.*



Volunteer service hours across our programs and governance totalled 3100 hours, offering significant social, economic and environmental value.

Telling our Story - transparency, speaking up



The Association uses a variety of mechanisms to reach out to the community.

Our Facebook account that commenced in 2011, now has 5.4K Followers, and Instagram 1.2K followers; with an estimate reach of 200,000+.

The Association is supported by multiple newsletter subscriptions. The main email newsletter is sent out monthly, with over 2,000 subscribers, and 5-6 smaller email subscriptions for each litter and Landcare program.

We appreciate the number of people and organisations that share our newsletter – adding to the overall reach that we estimate to be 30,000+.

Our other online accounts include LinkedIn and Eventbrite; however, we have shifted our focus very much toward our updated website. If you haven't been, please check it out.

32 articles or appearances in the media supported our work.

Across all communication channels we estimate our reach is 250,000+

Our former website was not attracting any traffic, and was rarely updated, unlike our new website, that is routinely updated with new content.

The newly branded website launched in May has much better functionality, and includes all of our events, reports, a blog spot etc.

Mainstream media also featured our stories, with over 30 appearances in local press, Melbourne press and radio.

Media partners: *Wyndham Star Weekly, ABC Radio 774, Wyndham TV, The Westsider, 3CR Radio, Herald Sun, Weekend Birder Podcast, Star Weekly Melton, Star Weekly Moorabool*



You said - feedback to our work

The Werribee River Association welcome input, feedback and direction from stakeholders.

Hi Lisa and Team,
the Werribee River Guide is a fantastic resource. Well done to all involved. **Susanne**

My son sent me your newsletter this morning. Your group is so active and fantastic. I live in Williams Landing and am now retired. Congratulations on all you do and I will look at ways to engage. **Jennifer**

We as a family are thrilled to be part of Werribee River Association. We have decided to save money over birthday celebrations and use it for a good cause. My younger daughter just turned 8, she agreed to celebrate birthday at home with her friends and family instead of a play centre, she did have great time nevertheless. I have just donated saved money for a great cause WRA is supporting. **Pradnya**

We just had a great time on the Werribee River with Werribee River Association. However, there should be a proper structure to alight on/off the canoes safely. **Bettina**

Hi Charlotte, we just wanted to say THANK YOU very much for Thursday's Walk. Our volunteers are still raving about their experience and all that you shared. **Pare**

John & the Werribee River Association demonstrated commitment in words and action. Talk of funding is compromised by being not on time, for long enough or enough. Commitment is required by the state government to the waterways of the west. Promises of funding do not survive the churn of Ministers, political advisors and the ever-changing department staffers. Let's now see when the commitment to catchment and river health in the west will happen during the next 4 years of this government, hoping it's before the next crises in land management. And thanks John, you're inspirational. **Tim B**

We would like to thank you and your team for the amazing experience and help provided for today's event (Paddle the Werribee River). We look forward to have this experience in your future events as well. **Syed**

It's so exciting to see the WRA team now, and to see that the work is spread more broadly, with a whole team of talented and passionate people. **Robyn**

Thank you for Harpley wetlands & Voice for a River. Both interesting and well run events. **Bill**

Thanks again John for an amazing tour today. You were an absolute wealth of knowledge and really helped the students. You left us with tonnes of ideas and really excited the team. Just wanted to reach out and say thank you! I will look forward to receiving the history book. Being long-term residents of Wyndham, our family is most interested in this theme and all of the activities and events that the Werribee River Association has to offer. **Eddie**

Thanks for a wonderful guided tour Fatima. You did an excellent job of educating us on all on the wonders of the Werribee River region. I was surprised when you told me it was your first time leading a group on the Werribee River tour, you are so knowledgeable! **Bettina**

Just wanted to update you that the street library we installed at Tower Road, Werribee is doing so well, it's thriving. We can see it has a tremendous response and I can see new books being shared almost every day. We are delighted to see that the library is being loved by the people around us. We cannot thank enough Werribee River Association, Wyndham Council, and you for organizing the street library workshop. **Pradnya**

Our Team - a powerhouse of passion



Our small team of professional staff and board continued to expand their skills, attending 30 diverse professional development sessions throughout the year, overlapping both formal education and peer networking learning methodologies.

Kathryn Williams

Chairperson

Kath is an environmental scientist who has worked in environmental assessment and management for over 15 years.

Rob Bradley

Deputy Chair

Rob is passionate about caring for our environment and deeply concerned about the biodiversity loss of the western grasslands species.

John Forrester

Riverkeeper, Board Secretary

John is a well-known community champion for the Werribee River and he has been instrumental in leading the development of the Association.

Liesl Verity

Treasurer

Board departure in August 2023

Liesl is an experienced risk, governance and tax professional and is a Chartered Accountant.

Meghan Hopper

Board Member

Board departure in January 2023

Meghan is a governance and advocacy professional, working in local government and with family links to the catchment.

John Marks

Board Member

John is a long-time environmentalist and community activist, and passionate about getting people on the waterways.

Adrian Cloonan

Board Member

Adrian has been active in the environmental sector for over 50 years.

Jasmine Thomas

Board Member

Board commencement in May 2023

Jasmine is studying a Bachelor of Wildlife & Conservation Biology and is a long-time member of the Association

Muthu Pannirselvam PhD -

Board Member

Board commencement in April 2023

Muthu has scientific, academic and entrepreneur expertise; with a Master of Science and PhD, Science & Engineering.

Dr Will Buchanan

Board Member

Board commencement in July 2023

Will has more than 20 years of leadership experience in water industry and is the Chief Scientist at a Victorian water corporation

Lisa Field

Community & Business Development Manager

Lisa has worked extensively in community services and a history of environmental activism.

Charlotte Williamson

Education Manager

Charlotte has over 15 years experience as an environmental educator.

Maryann Weatherill

Regeneration Officer

Maryann has extensive conservation expertise, working with local government, land and water managers.

Jess Fairfax

Sustainability Officer

Jess is a creative scientific communicator and environmental programmer, delivering on some short and medium terms projects on all things to do with waste and sustainability.

Fatima Measham

Community Engagement Facilitator

Fatima is a passionate nature educator and has worked on the Werribee River Guide and some of our culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community programs.

Our Partners – enriching our work

Our work is made so much richer by our relationships with partners and providers. Thank-you!

ABC Radio	Friends of the Barwon (CWA)	Seed2Leaves
Anti-Toxic Waste Alliance	Friends of Steele Creek (CWA)	Seeding Victoria
Arts Assist	Gippsland Environment Group Inc (CWA)	Snap Werribee
Australian Waterlife	Glen Orden Retirement Community	The Waterways Network (CWA)
Australian Platypus Conservancy	Global Women’s Kitchen	The Westsider
Bacchus Marsh Grammar	Grassy Plains Network	Victorian Environmental Friends Network
Bacchus Marsh Platypus Alliance	Greater Western Water Greening the West	Victorian Multicultural Women's Association
Beach Patrol Australia	Grow West	Victoria University
Bio2Lab	Herald Sun	Victorian Fisheries
Bunnings Werribee	Hobsons Bay Wetlands Centre	Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation	Holi Festival Pres Park	Waterkeepers Australia
CBA	Holcim	Werribee Bushwalking & Outdoors Club
Church of Later Day Saints	Jawbone Marine Sanctuary Care Group	Werribee Open Range Zoo
Club 60 Wyndham Vale & Tarneit	Junubi Wyndham	Werribee Park Golf Club
Collins & Co Audit Pty Ltd	Kooyongkoot Alliance (CWA)	Werribee Park Farm Hub
Committee for Wyndham	Landcare Vic Inc (LVI)	Werribee Park Heritage Orchard
Concerned Waterway Alliance (CWA)	Lend Lease	Western Melbourne Tourism
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Maribyrnong River & Waterways Association	Werribee Tourism & Business Association
Development Victoria	Melbourne Water	Westend Photography
Dreambuilders Centre 4 Change	Melton City Council	Western Automotive Group
Eat My Garden	Monash Uni	Western Plains Flora
Ecocentre St Kilda	NAB	Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung CHAC
Ecodynamics	NatureWest	Wyndham BMX Warriors
Environmental Justice Australia (CWA)	Newport Lakes Native Nursery	Wyndham City
Environment Victoria (CWA)	Paddle Victoria	Wyndham Community and Education Centre
EPA	Parks Vic	Wyndham Harbour
First Friends of Dandenong Creek Inc (CWA)	Parks & People Foundation	Wyndham Rotary
Frasers Property	People for a Living	Wyndham Star Weekly
Friends of Hopetoun Park & Parwan Gorge	Moorabool (CWA)	Wyndham Women Support Group
Friends of Latrobe Water (CWA)	Pulse with Purpose	Yarra Riverkeeper (CWA)
	Project Space	
	Ross Trust	
	Salvation Army	
	Sam Burone Design	

Our Financial Reports

The Werribee River Association has continued to operate as a professional not-for profit business across 2022-23 financial year.

The sound financial management of the business operations has been overseen by our board, Treasurer, and a Finance Sub-Committee.

The day-to-day financial operations is supported by Bookit Bookkeeping, and our annual audit provided by Collins & Co, an independent auditor based in Footscray, Melbourne. The following pages here are from the financial audit.

Our Business & Operations Manager also supports the Association's smooth financial management.

Financial assets for the Association are just over \$700,000, with over \$150,000 being set aside for investment and further capacity building.

The income sources for the Association are largely coming from government grants, that set the terms and conditions that are often one-off and short term.

Some of our grant funding is multi-year, like with a Bayfund Project funded by DEECA; and from Melbourne Water; this presenting a welcomed degree of certainty.

Corporate sponsorships can also be re-occurring and a reliable source of funds to assist operations of the organisation, and this area of our finances has been steadily growing.

It has been pleasing to be part of the More Trees for a Cooler Greener West program. Whilst this provided significant work for the delivery, it also supported our current staffing of the Regeneration Officer.

There is a growth in the funding from corporate support programs, donations, and program fees. A very small amount of funding is generated by investment interest and membership fees.

Our total income for the 2022-23 FY was \$568,630.08.

The major expense for the Association is toward staffing and professional services. This expense is aligned to the delivery of the funded programming, the management, and in the delivery of fee for service work.

It is consistent that a community environmental agency's major expense is on its people, given the nature of the work is across education, community engagement, regeneration, advocacy etc.

Other expenses for the Association include the indigenous plants we use, regeneration equipment and supplies, printing of materials, vehicle expenses and general program expenses.

We do have unfunded expenses, i.e. website hosting and maintenance, members portal, rent, etc, we continue to keep these costs down. This year we did invest in a website refresh, supporting all of our programming, particularly engagement, advocacy and communications.

The total expenses for the 2022-23 FY were \$467,609.37.

A net profit of \$101,020.71 was earned.

Thank-you to our funding providers, sponsors, donors and diverse supporters, and to the staff and contractors we engage to deliver great value.



Managing the Association's financial resources is important for succession planning and in supporting all that we do.

Compilation Report

Werribee River Association Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2023

Compilation report to Werribee River Association Inc..

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements of Werribee River Association Inc., which comprise the asset and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2023, income and expenditure statement, the statement of cash flows, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes. The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statements have been prepared is set out in Note 1.

1. Director's Responsibility

The directors of Werribee River Association Inc. are solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statements and have determined that the significant accounting policies adopted as set out in Note 1 to the financial statements are appropriate to meet their needs and for the purpose that the financial statements were prepared

Our Responsibility

On the basis of information provided by the directors of Werribee River Association Inc., we have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements in accordance with the significant accounting policies adopted as set out in Note 1 to the financial statements and APES 315: Compilation of Financial Information.

Our procedures use accounting expertise to collect, classify and summarise the financial information, which the directors provided, in compiling the financial statements. Our procedures do not include verification or validation procedures. No audit or review has been performed and accordingly no assurance is expressed. The special purpose financial statements were compiled exclusively for the benefit of the directors of Werribee River Association Inc.. We do not accept responsibility to any other person for the contents of the special purpose financial statements



Dated: 12/10/2023

Karen Kennedy

Bookit Bookkeeping Services

PO Box 5100

Hoppers Crossing VIC 3029

Directors Declaration

Werribee River Association Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2023

The directors have determined that the company is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The directors of the company declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes, present fairly the company's financial position as at 30 June 2023 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements; and
2. In the directors' opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.



Dated 12 October 2023

Kathryn Williams

Chairperson, Werribee River Association

Profit and Loss

Werrabee River Association Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
Income		
Trading Profit		
Corporate Support Programs	46,100	11,000
Donation (DGR)	13,392	1,955
Donation (non-DGR)	5,713	14,050
Grant non government	-	1,818
Grant Ross Trust Business Manager	40,000	40,000
Grants from Local-Government	21,030	12,720
Grants from Philanthropic	14,500	-
Grants from Semi-Government	230,570	69,603
Grants from State/Fed Government	169,531	68,569
Interest Income	2,849	(186)
Membership - Corporate	186	30,286
Membership - Family	1,609	1,536
Membership - Individual	856	1,038
Program Fees	22,294	5,913
Total Trading Profit	568,630	258,304
Total Income	568,630	258,304
Total Income		
	568,630	258,304
Expenses		
Depreciation	3,593	778
Motor Vehicle	5,012	3,025
Accounting/Bookkeeping	11,231	14,903
Advertising/Marketing	100	670
Affiliations/Memberships	-	1,010
Annual Leave Provision Expense	6,154	8,787
Bank Fees	(2)	10
Bookkeeping	-	5,505
Computer equipment and repairs	698	3,340
Consultant - Business	2,027	8,508
Consultant - Environment	41,131	31,102
Donations	2,650	65
Entertainment/Catering	4,124	1,232
Finance Charges	24	-
Freight & Courier	-	10
Gifts	-	100
Grant - Photo Comp Project	-	900
Insurance	936	2,845
Marketing	-	2,422
Meeting Expenses	-	606

	2023	2022
Members Portal/Admin	768	768
Memberships/Subscriptions	1,444	956
Office Expenses	951	672
Plants Purchased	26,199	21,627
Postage - PO Box Rental	139	131
Printing & Copying	10,723	2,350
Professional Artist/Designers	14,792	-
Professional Development	170	699
Program Expense	15,578	5,421
Regeneration Tools /Resources	11,513	200
Rent - Office	1,194	326
Repairs and Maintenance	917	2,021
Staff & Volunteer Protective Clothing & Equipment	1,778	770
Stationery	-	39
Telephone & Internet	1,224	1,631
Training Courses	-	269
Wages and Salaries	267,479	176,681
Wages Superannuation	27,647	17,687
Website Expenses	3,943	720
Workers Compensation	3,473	1,362
Total Expenses	467,609	320,147
Profit/(Loss) before Taxation	101,021	(61,843)
Net Profit After Tax	101,021	(61,843)
Net Profit After Distributions/Dividends Paid	101,021	(61,843)

Movements in Equity

Werribee River Association Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
Equity		
Opening Balance	311,594	373,437
Increases		
Profit for the Period	101,021	(61,843)
Total Increases	101,021	(61,843)
Total Equity	412,614	311,594

Balance Sheet

Werribee River Association Inc. As at 30 June 2023

	30 JUN 2023	30 JUN 2022
Assets		
Current Assets		
2012 Nissan Navara ZME 334	15,968	15,968
Acc Dep 2012 Nissan Navara	(4,370)	(778)
Accounts Receivable	1,634	8,140
AUD PayPal	133	228
Bendigo TD 1	100,649	100,000
Bendigo TD 2	50,087	50,000
Debit Card xx6906	98	330
Sundry Debtor	2,190	77
xx3335 Community Solutions	550,611	540,474
xx6914 Public Fund	3,796	505
Total Current Assets	720,795	714,945
Total Assets	720,795	714,945
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
GST	18,398	24,044
Accounts Payable	7,570	5,982
Annual Leave Provision	20,409	14,255
GST Adjustment Account	(1,138)	(1,138)
Income in Advance	246,000	342,048
PAYG Payable	11,772	8,074
Rounding	1	1
Suspense	5,168	4,105
Wages Deductions Payable	-	5,982
Total Current Liabilities	308,180	403,351
Total Liabilities	308,180	403,351
Net Assets	412,614	311,594
Equity		
Retained Earnings	412,614	311,594
Total Equity	412,614	311,594

Notes to the Financial Statements

Werribee River Association Inc.

For the year ended 30 June 2023

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The directors' have prepared the financial statements on the basis that the company is a non-reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial reports. This financial report is therefore a special purpose financial report that has been prepared in order to meet the needs of members.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below which the directors have determined are appropriate to meet the needs of members. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. The accounting policies that have been adopted in the preparation of this report are as follows

1. (a) Income Tax

By virtue of its aims as set out in the constitution, the Association qualifies as an organisation specifically exempt from income tax the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

1. (b) Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)

Motor Vehicles are carried at cost. All assets are depreciated over their useful lives to the company.

1. (c) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date

Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on-costs.

1. (d) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the company has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

Provisions recognised represent the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at reporting date

1. (e) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash on hand includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts

1. (f) Trade Receivables and Other Receivables

Trade receivables and other receivables, including distributions receivable, are recognised at the nominal transaction value without taking into account the time value of money. If required a provision for doubtful has been created

1. (g) Trade Creditors and Other Payables

Trade creditors and other payables, including bank borrowings and distributions payable, are recognised at the nominal transaction value without taking into account the time value of money.

1. (h) Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is measured at the value of the consideration received or receivable..

For this purpose, deferred consideration is not discounted to present values when recognising revenue.

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest rate method, which, for floating rate financial assets, is the rate inherent in the instrument.

Dividend revenue is recognised when the right to receive a dividend has been established.

Revenue recognition relating to the provision of services is determined with reference to the stage of completion of the transaction at reporting date and where outcome of the contract can be estimated reliably. Stage of completion is determined with reference to the services performed to date as a percentage of total anticipated services to be performed. Where the outcome cannot be estimated reliably, revenue is recognised only to the extent that related expenditure is recoverable.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST)

1. (i) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense.

Receivables and payables in the balance sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

1. (e) Related Party Transactions

The Committee Members act in an honorary capacity and are not paid for their services as Committee Members.

There were no transactions with related parties during the 2023 year.



Collins & Co Audit Pty Ltd

127 Paisley Street
Footscray VIC 3011
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WERRIBEE RIVER ASSOCIATION INC. A.B.N. 45 866 719 214 INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report of Werribee River Association Inc. (the Association), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2023, and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes and the statement by the members of the Board.

In my opinion, the financial report of the Association is in accordance with *the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and *the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*, including:

- i. giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its performance for the year ended; and
- ii. complying with Australian Accounting Standards as per Note 1, *the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and *the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. I am independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

I draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Werribee River Association Inc. to meet the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and *the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the applicable legislation and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.



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Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the responsible entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the responsible entities use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal controls that I identify during my audit.

Auditor: Frederik Ryk Ludolf Eksteen

ASIC Registration Number: 421448

Address: Collins & Co Audit Pty Ltd, 127 Paisley Street, FOOTSCRAY VIC 3011

Signature:

Date: 12 October 2023

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ABN 33 614 161 796

Werribee River Association *Inc.*

Working for the Werribee River since 1981

Our waterways thank you for your support

Become a Donor TODAY!



Views from K Road Cliffs, K Road, Werribee South, of the Werribee River in flood, October 2022.

Werribee River Association Inc

PO Box 74 Werribee, 3030

No. A0017169K

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