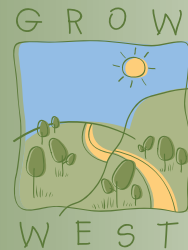


Snapshot 2014/15



Landscape rehabilitation on a grand scale

Grow West has improved degraded landscapes around Bacchus Marsh, west of Melbourne, for the past 12 years. Its vision is to rejuvenate up to 10,000 hectares and develop vegetation connections across the landscapes between the Brisbane Ranges National Park, Werribee Gorge State Park and Lerderderg State Park.

So far, Grow West has worked with landholders on projects ranging from 1-100+ hectares. In total, over 1,000 hectares have been revegetated to improve erosion control, weed control and the biodiversity values of the area.

Grow West brings together planners and practitioners from numerous organisations and community groups including the Moorabool Shire Council, Melbourne Water, Southern Rural Water, Parks Victoria, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and the Moorabool Landcare Network. The Port Phillip & Westernport CMA coordinates Grow West on behalf of the partner organisations by convening an Implementation Committee, managing the project's finances and employing project staff who lead the delivery of on-ground works, reporting and promotion.

Actions in 2014/15

Grow West's revenue was low in 2014/15 compared to previous years, totalling approximately \$65,000 including:

- \$15,000 from Balance Carbon on behalf of the Merino Company of Australia, owned by Lempriere Wool of the Australian Wool Company, to undertake a community planting day in the Pentland Hills area; and
- \$70,000 from partner organisations including the Moorabool Shire Council, Melbourne Water and Southern Rural Water to contribute to the ongoing planning and coordination of Grow West.

Activities in 2014/15 included revegetation of 6.5 hectares of land with 6,500 seedlings at the annual Grow West Planting Day in July and a Grow West Mini Plant Out in August

As part of ongoing planning for Grow West, a landholder survey was also undertaken regarding potential future work to extend the Myrniong and Korkuperimul Creek biolinks. The survey identified changes in landholders' practices and perceptions towards biodiversity in comparison to a similar survey undertaken in 2009, which will assist implementation of the next stage.



Volunteers of all ages get involved in Grow West activities to revegetate the landscapes near Bacchus Marsh

Next steps

In 2015/16, Grow West will celebrate more than 10 years of community action at the annual Grow West Community Planting Day. Efforts to secure major funding for revegetation will continue. A list of landholders and sites ready for revegetation is maintained to enable implementation to commence immediately upon the securing of new funds.



Volunteers at the Grow West Community Planting Day

Case study - Grow West Planting Day inspires community volunteers

In July 2014, the 9th annual Grow West Community Planting Day was held with 220 volunteers coming together to plant thousands of trees.

The participants included local families and community members along with numerous volunteers travelling from Melbourne for the day. Many are return visitors to the Community Planting Day and view the event as an enjoyable and rewarding opportunity to contribute to environmental health.

The site for this planting day was on Yaloak Estate in the Rowley Valley. Over the past 12 years, Grow West has worked with Yaloak Estate on numerous revegetation, farm forestry and remnant protection projects and provided assistance with grants, advice and links to specialists and volunteers. The work on Yaloak Estate has helped to suppress Serrated Tussock in the area, reduced soil erosion and sediment entering into the local creeks and contributed to an increase in the biodiversity of the area.



Grow West Community Planting Day

