GROW WEST



2025-26 SNAPSHOT

www.growwest.com.au

Established in 2003, Grow West is one of Victoria's most ambitious programs of landscape restoration. With a vision to rejuvenate 10,000 hectares across the Upper and Middle Werribee Catchment, west of Melbourne, the program is transforming degraded land through sustainable land management practices such as revegetation and the protection and enhancement of remnant vegetation.

In 2025-2026, Grow West ran a very successful community planting day on Monteville Lane, Ballan; worked with landholders to protect and enhance grassland on their properties; continued rehabilitation of a degraded Grey Box woodland in Eynesbury; and facilitated round table collaborations with a wide range of partners.

The success of the program is due to the strong collaboration between the community and Grow West partners. The Committee currently includes Melbourne Water, Moorabool Shire Council, Southern Rural Water, Greater Western Water, Parks Victoria, Moorabool Landcare Network and community members.

Melbourne Water hosts Grow West on behalf of these partner organisations.



Grow West community planting day, Monteville Lane, Ballan, July 2025.
Credit: B McRitchie

2025-2026 Grow West achievements

5 hectares revegetated

70 ha being rehabilitated

4,000 seedlings planted

Partner contributions of $45,000 to support the coordination of Grow West.

15 organisations and groups involved

12 landholders engaged

213 volunteers

Valuing our threatened grasslands

The Victorian Volcanic Plains (VVP) once stretched across vast areas of south-western Victoria, but today, less than 2% of this critically endangered ecosystem remains. This ecosystem faces ongoing threats from invasive species, soil disturbance, land clearing, fragmentation, and isolation of remaining patches.



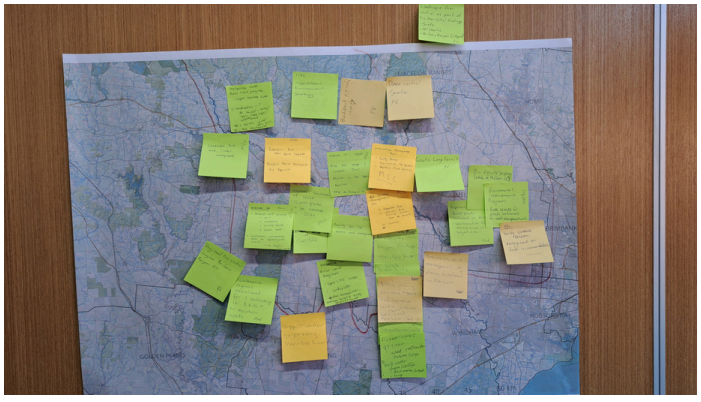
To combat these challenges, Melbourne Water has entered into the second year of collaborating with private landholders in a grassland stewardship project aimed at safeguarding this invaluable ecosystem. Five properties are continuing to actively enhance and protect the grasslands. Four new properties have joined the program.

Landholders are making valuable improvments to the health of these grasslands through actions such as controlling high-threat weeds, including Serrated Tussock, Chilean Needle Grass and African Boxthorn, undertaking rabbit control, and managing stock grazing to prevent overgrazing.

This project is funded by the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust and delivered by Grow West through Melbourne Water, a member of the Regional Delivery Partners panel.

From ideas to action

The Grow West round table and our other collaborative forums provide valuable opportunities for organisations and community members to come together, share knowledge and explore both current and emerging projects across the Grow West landscape.



Throughout the year, these forums support collaboration and strategic planning, while also providing a space to explore innovative ideas and future projects. It is particularly rewarding to see proposed initiatives progress into active delivery and contribute to lasting benefits for the region.

We have a wide range of attendees representing Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation, Landcare and Friends groups, community groups, Council, Werribee River Association, water authorities, and Parks Victoria.

Rehabilitating a degraded Grey Box woodland





In its second year, this project in Eynesbury aims to rehabilitate a patch of degraded remnant Grey Box Woodland - an ecosystem that is now endangered, making it vital to protect and improve what remains. This site is especially significant because it connects key habitats across the landscape: a larger Grey Box woodland to the north, Coolibah Creek to the east, and the Werribee River to the south.

We are working closely with Traditional Owners and the Eynesbury Environment Group to develop a shared vision and create a pathway for positive outcomes at this site. Works are well underway on site and include pest plant and animal control to encourage natural recruitment of the remnant vegetation. We are also planning for revegetation through a community planting day.

This project is part of Melbourne Water's Our Catchments, Our Communities Vital Landscapes project supported by the Victorian Government.

Community Planting Day

This year's planting day was run in partnership with a private landholder on Monteville Lane, Ballan.



213 volunteers helped to plant, guard and water 4,000 seedlings. The planting on this scenic property along the Korjamnunnip Creek will help create a habitat corridor for local fauna including platypus, phascogales and wedge tail eagles.

Bacchus Marsh Rotary Art Show

Grow West is a proud sponsor of the Rotary Club of Bacchus Marsh Art Sale and Exhibition. Artists of all levels are invited to enter a work in any medium that expresses their understanding and appreciation of the precious, yet fragile, environment in the Grow West area.

Congratulations to this year's winner, Colin Clark, for their engaging linograph piece titled *Beneath They Speak.*



Looking ahead to 2026-2027

- A revegetation project at the top of the 1,000 steps in Bald Hill Reserve, Darley, run through our annual community planting day. This project will contribute to being another stepping stone connecting the Lerderderg River, Wombat-Lerderderg National Park and Werribee Gorge State Park.
- Finalising the next Grow West Strategic Plan to guide the collaboration's work for the next five years.
- Continuing to conserve grasslands and Grey Box Woodland through our funded projects.

Photo credits: Melbourne Water, unless otherwise stated.

For more information on Grow West:

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Melbourne Water

Moorabool Shire Council

Moorabool Landcare Network Inc

Australian Government
Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water

Parks Victoria

Greater Western Water

Southern Rural Water

Victoria State Government