

The Glenelg River Restoration Project – the story so far



ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LARGE SCALE RESTORATION PROJECT 2004 - 2008

- Fencing and protecting 230 km of waterways, 704 ha of remnant vegetation and the establishment of another 744 ha of revegetation
- Removal of approximately 180,000 m³ of sand from the main river channel and the establishment of habitat refuge pools
- Reinstatement of 870 large logs to 8.5 kms of the river bed
- Construction of carp screening units on the outlet of Rocklands reservoir to prevent Carp movement downstream, and monitoring to establish the extent of carp presence
- Establishment of an Environmental Water Reserve for the Glenelg River
- Construction of outlet structures to ensure delivery of flows to the river
- Ecological assessments to maximise the value of flow delivery
- Removal of five barriers to fish passage on the Crawford and Stokes Rivers and Moleside Creek, opening an additional 198 kms of waterway to fish passage
- Mapping high priority erosion areas across the Dundas and Merino tablelands and the commencement of erosion control measures in this area
- Educational seminars aimed at 'Connecting the Community to the Glenelg River'

Four years of restoration on the Glenelg River.

History 2004 - 2008

The Glenelg River is the largest river in south west Victoria, and at 500 kms in length, it drains a catchment area of 11,998 km². The river rises in the Grampians Ranges in the north, and flows south to the Southern Ocean at Nelson adjacent to Victoria's border with South Australia.

The Glenelg Hopkins River Health Strategy gives a high priority to the Glenelg River due to its high environmental values that are under threat. The management of threats has been the ongoing focus for funding and resource allocation in the Glenelg.

Over the past four years (2004 - 2008) Glenelg Hopkins CMA, in consultation with State and Federal Governments, allocated approximately \$10 million to improving and protecting the Glenelg River and its tributaries.

The Large Scale River Restoration Project facts and figures

A significant proportion of the total funding for the Glenelg River has been through the Large Scale River Restoration Project (LSRR) developed by Glenelg Hopkins CMA and funded through the Victorian Government's Stressed Rivers Program, and more recently *Our Water Our Future Programs*. The allocation of funds to programs in the Glenelg Basin is shown below in *Figure 1*. The majority of LSRR funds has been allocated to riparian protection, carp management, flow improvement, sand and erosion control, and in-stream habitat improvement, as shown in *Figure 2*.

Future works

The Large Scale River Restoration funding will continue over the next four years, with a major focus on erosion control and riparian enhancement and protection along the Glenelg River.

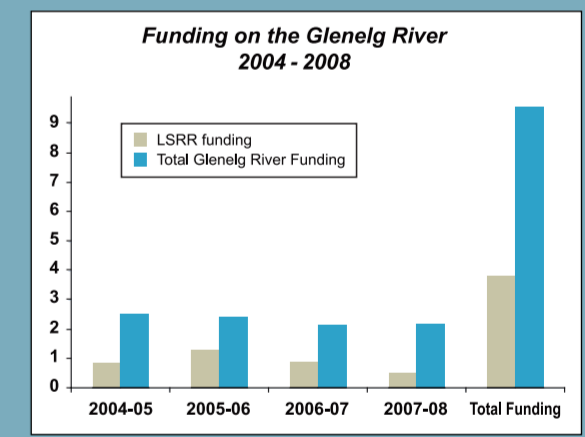


Figure 1 – Total funding for the Glenelg River showing the Large Scale River Restoration Project proportion

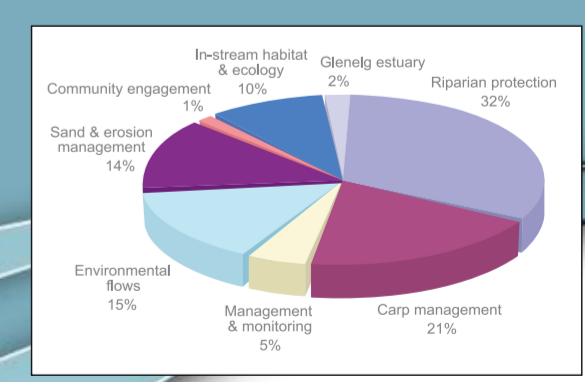


Figure 2 – Distribution of LSRR funding



Environmental flows

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Development and implementation of the Environmental Operating Strategy and the Annual Watering Plan in conjunction with Wimmera CMA
- Works on two outlets on the Rocklands-Toolondo channel to allow the delivery of environmental flows
- Delivery of summer / autumn base flows to the Glenelg River in 2004, 2005 and 2006 with noticeable improvements in water quality
- Development and implementation of a monitoring program including fish, water quality, flow and physical habitat along the Glenelg River
- Completion of multiple investigations to improve knowledge and understanding of Glenelg River flow requirements
- Opening a channel in a major sand deposit at the junction of the Glenelg River and the Yarramlyup Creek (frenchmans creek) to allow the passing of environmental flows downstream.

5-mile outlet - before and after upgrade works

Carp management

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Design and construction of self-cleaning carp screens at Rocklands Reservoir to minimise risk of carp passing to the Glenelg River during environmental flow releases
- Surveys of carp numbers in the Glenelg River downstream of Rocklands Reservoir and removal of carp when detected
- Trials of radiotracking in Rocklands Reservoir to identify large carp aggregations and the potential to harvest them in numbers
- Feasibility study on the potential to control the upstream migration of carp from Rocklands Reservoir through the construction of a fish barrier
- Assessment of the potential of short-finned eel as an indigenous predator to control carp numbers in Rocklands Reservoir
- Establishment of a "Carpwatch" program to encourage a report of carp sightings and captures to assist in understanding their distribution and abundance
- Interpretive signage installed at fishing locations encouraging anglers to report carp sightings or captures
- Community education seminar held with high profile Chef Stefano De Pieri and commercial carp fisherman Keith Bell
- Support for community run carp fishing competitions in Rocklands Reservoir

Previous infrastructure New Carp screening units

In-stream & riparian protection and enhancement

ACHIEVEMENTS

- In-stream habitat enhancement through the re-instatement of large wood within the river channel
- Sand extraction to slow the movement of sand towards the lower Glenelg River and to provide refuge pools during drought
- Fencing and revegetation of waterways in partnership with the community along the Glenelg River and its headwaters
- Community education activities, including:
 - Seminars canoeing down the Glenelg River investigating sand management.
 - Water quality and in stream habitat needs
 - Seminar with high profile marathon swimmer Tammy Van Weise and research scientist Dr Michelle Jones-Lennon reinforced these needs for the Glenelg River system.

Re-snagging works Casterton

Additional components

ACHIEVEMENTS

- A study of fish and macroinvertebrate utilisation of the Glenelg River estuary
- Development of digital elevation and water balance models
- Community educational seminar held at Nelson with respected fishing and outdoor journalist Steve Starling and Deakin University Professor John Sherwood both speaking on estuary processes and threats to fish communities
- Gully erosion control works on the steep slopes of the upper Glenelg

Sand extraction Healthy section of the Glenelg River