

Friends of the Yarra Valley Parks

108. Melbourne Water thanks the Friends of the Yarra Valley Parks for its thorough and considered submission.

109. Melbourne Water believes strongly that community groups play a key role in managing the Yarra – we consider them central to our collective efforts and we will emphasise this further. As has been outlined in the course of submission and during evidence, collaborative management is a key part of the *Healthy Waterways Strategy* and Melbourne Water recognise that the challenges ahead of us on the river can only be tackled as a community.

110. The submitters are right when he says the three opportunities included in the YSP around the Murundaka and Montpelier wetlands area are subject of rehabilitation works conceived by, advocated for and implemented by the Friends group and other community members. This highlights, Melbourne Water feels, the importance of community groups in identifying not just threats to the river and its environs but also to implementing solutions.

111. This was central to the deliberations of the YCC when it added the action on page 42 of the YSP. In this section, in which the plan discusses the collaborative management of the Yarra, the YSP has included as one of the 4 management objectives that:

- *All stakeholders, including the community, are involved in taking care of the river.*

112. We take on board the submitters' comments that the plan should specify roles and responsibilities for Friends and community groups, and that this area of the river should function under joint management arrangements between the Friends (representing the local community), Parks Victoria and the Wurundjeri.

113. Melbourne Water has already committed to work in this way through the co-designed *Healthy Waterway Strategy*.

114. Melbourne Water will take this back to the YCC and suggest further commitments in the YSP to '*Work with the community to support and expand their stewardship role.*'