

Rob Ladds, woody habitat installed in the Little Murray



North Central Waterwatch  
River Health Snapshot Report  
**RiverScan Citizen Science  
Project 2019**

## Acknowledgement of Country

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) acknowledges Aboriginal Traditional Owners within the region, their rich culture and spiritual connection to Country. We also recognise and acknowledge the contribution and interest of Aboriginal people and organisations in land and natural resource management.



North Central Waterwatch Program supports people to actively care for their environment by participating in programs that monitor and report on the health of our regions land, water and biodiversity resources.

In 2016, North Central Waterwatch and the Native Fish Recovery Plan (NFRP) teamed-up to develop and implement a citizen science program called RiverScan. During the first year, RiverScan saw North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) staff and scientist work with twenty local community volunteers to monitor waterway health across four key waterways in the NFRP project area: Little Murray River, Box-Pyramid Creek, Gunbower Creek and the Loddon River. Since 2016, the RiverScan program has engaged over 240 community members through field days, trainings, workshops and meetings.

Through the RiverScan program, citizen scientists continue to play an important role in monitoring changes in the ecological health of waterways. The data collected helps North Central Waterwatch and the NFRP team make informed decisions about managing the environment to improve native fish habitat.

In 2019, monitoring included monthly water quality testing to understand pH levels, electrical conductivity, reactive phosphorus, turbidity, and dissolved oxygen. Annual waterbug surveys were also undertaken in spring 2019. The water quality data will give us a better understanding of the ecological health of priority waterways as changes in water quality can influence macroinvertebrates communities. The North Central Waterwatch program is seeking expression of interest for community volunteers to monitor water quality, and continual contribute to monitoring the ecological health of the four key waterways.

The Victorian Government is supporting community partnerships through Waterwatch and other citizen science initiatives to address local waterway priorities. These priorities are being addressed as part of the Victorian Government's \$222 million Water for Victoria investment to improve catchment and waterway health across regional Victoria.

## Summary of Results

Overall, the on-ground works to improve the ecological health of four priority waterways has been successful. Since 2016, all four waterways have shown overall improvements in ALT objectives or remained constant.

Over the last 4-years, the North Central CMA has completed extensive work to improve the ecological health of the key waterways. Over the course of the project, revegetation sites have shown promising results, with some sites having survival rates at 80%. In most cases, works have exceeded the targets set for the four-year project.

The current focus of the project is on delivering further fencing to compliment river health works, particularly along the lower Loddon and Little Murray rivers. The project also aims to build on strengthening relationships between the community and North Central CMA.

## Native Fish Recovery Plan Onground Achievements

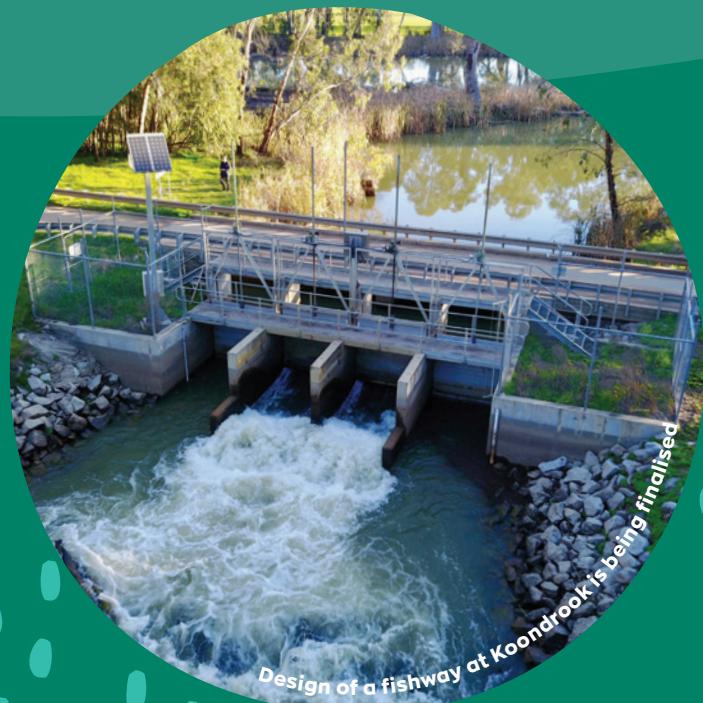






“ We've been creating deep pools in the Loddon River to improve habitat for native fish. It's shown to be beneficial; we are seeing a gradual improvement of ecological health and fish populations since 2016 ”

Peter Rose, Project Manager NRFP



## Acknowledgments

The River Scan Project would like to acknowledge the contribution and support from the following individuals during the development of this publication: North Central CMA staff members involved in the project, John Gooderham, The Waterbug Company; Adrian Leo, Bendigo TAFE; Terri Williams, lecturer, Bendigo TAFE and other students who have participated in the program.

We also acknowledge the tireless effort from our dedicated Citizen Scientists, whose contribution, commitment and support have contributed greatly to the report.

## How to get involved

Contact your local **Waterwatch Coordinator** at the **North Central Catchment Management Authority**

✉ Via post: **PO Box 18, Huntly VIC 3551**

📍 Main Office: **628-634 Midland Hwy  
Huntly Victoria 3551**

📞 Phone: **03 5448 7124**

✉ Email: **info@nccma.vic.gov.au**

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