

Recognising waterwatchers' contribution to river health

The growth of the Waterwatch program over the past 12 years can be attributed directly to the personal commitment and contribution of passionate volunteers, coordinators, advocates and partners. The program's growth from 60 participants in 1993 to over 80 000 participants in 2005 is testimony to the collaborative desire of ordinary Victorians to make a difference to the health of our rivers and to ensure our water resources are managed for future generations.

To commemorate this significant input, we recognised many individuals and groups in particular, on the contribution and commitment for over 10 years to river health management in Victoria.

In February 2005, Melbourne hosted over 300 delegates for the 4th National Waterwatch

Conference. Four Victorians were recognised for their significant contribution to the Waterwatch program nationally.

Australia's the longest serving Waterwatch State Co-ordinator, **Vera Lubczenko** was recognised for successfully building the programs' profile, investment and participation opportunities in the early years.

Patrick Monaghan was recognised for his long-term contribution to the Waterwatch program, educating several generations of students in Victoria's Wimmera district.

Victoria's first Waterwatch State Co-ordinator, **David Hodgkins** was recognized for his ongoing role in educating Victorian communities, advancing data confidence in community monitoring, and in national data management and interpretation.

The developer of Waterwatch's famous turbidity tube, **Noel Morgan** was recognised for his contribution in providing a simple, affordable apparatus that allows communities to observe and measure changes in water clarity.

Additionally, over 300 Waterwatch supporters and partners were recognised for their long-term contribution to river health in Victoria in October 2005. The Minister for Water, John Thwaites, awarded certificates to 50 volunteers recognizing their ten year contribution through the program, and 250 certificates to individuals and groups for their five year commitment - an outstanding achievement!

This year also saw the development of the Waterwatch Victoria online 'Hall of Fame', which will allow regional Waterwatch programs to regularly nominate and recognise the exceptional contributions of local Waterwatchers to local natural resource management and education.

With monitoring and assessment activities being such a long term game, Waterwatch Victoria is continually awed by the sustained commitment of so many Victorians to creating a better future. We thank-you for your ongoing efforts, and look forward to celebrating new milestones in the future.



Top Awardees included (from left) Vera Lubczenko, Patrick Monaghan, David Hodgkins and Noel Morgan (with awarder Tarnya Kruger). **Right** Fifty Waterwatch volunteers received a 10 year commemorative certificate in 2005. Congratulations and thankyou!