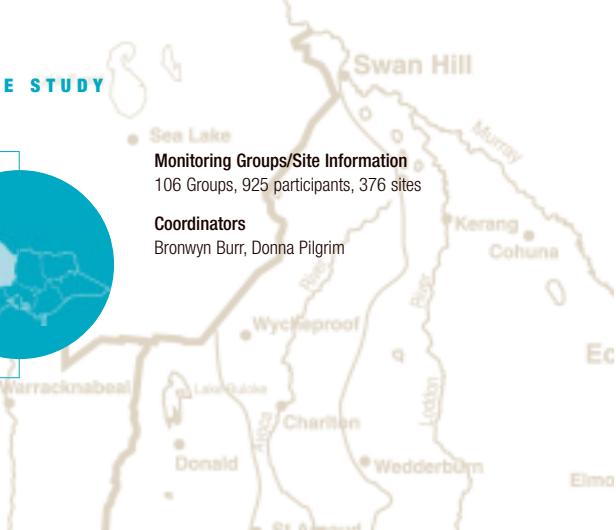


Partners/Sponsors Natural Heritage Trust, North Central Catchment Management Authority, Coliban Water, Shire of Campaspe, City of Greater Bendigo, Rochester Campaspe Water Services Committee, Department of Primary Industries.



North Central

Waterwatch kits in the classroom

"The children gained such a lot from the activity. It will make a great difference to how they treat our waterways." *Donnette Field, Teacher at Echuca West PS.*



12



Top. Education resources developed by North Central CMA in conjunction with Waterwatch, Urban Stormwater, Salinity and Waterways.

Above. Emily Boucher (Stormwater Officer for Campaspe Shire) facilitates a stormwater activity with Echuca West Primary School students.

The North Central Waterwatch program understands that the key to achieving lasting educational outcomes is developing material that classroom teachers feel comfortable teaching. Long after the Waterwatch facilitator has gone, students need to be able to explore their own ideas about their natural environment and in the North Central region, learning is supported via rigorously developed education manuals.

North Central Waterwatch, in collaboration with the North Central Catchment Management Authority, developed a series of resource kits specifically looking at the topics of urban stormwater, salinity and waterways. Linked to the Curriculum Standards Framework for levels 4 and 5, the resource kits were designed for teachers keen for environmental education to meet standards set by the Department of Education & Training.

Expanding the regional partnership approach, the Urban Stormwater Kit was distributed free to every primary school in support of local government's regional strategies to increase stormwater awareness.

One of the many schools to receive the kit was Echuca West Primary School, whose 140 students have a unique understanding of the importance of water. The school itself relies on tank water and they dedicate ten weeks of their year to studying waterways.

The Waterwatch resource kit has played an important role in the implementation of this program by developing the students' understanding of catchment processes.

"The bright, fun and easy to use layout makes the manual stand out from the rest, with great hands-on activities that illustrate to students how their actions impact on the environment," said Emily Boucher, a facilitator of the program from the Campaspe Shire Council.

An initial visit to Echuca West Primary School provided the junior grades with a visual demonstration from the kit about river and catchment processes. The activity provided an introduction to water quality, river management and the concept of a catchment.

"The student's reactions were extremely positive," said Emily. "They began to make the connection between the river and the streets. The look on their faces was like, oh my goodness, yuk!"

The Environmental Education Resources are one component of the North Central region's Stormwater Education Program titled "From Your Street To Your Creek". This Stormwater Education Program recently won the National Award for Excellence in Urban Stormwater Education at the Stormwater Industry Awards ceremony.