

STREAMLINES

AUTUMN 2011

Regional QA/QC

Regional QA/QC came around again in February. This year QA/QC was combined with dinner and a slide show of volunteer Greg Gilbert's adventures overseas.

Regional QA/QC is sponsored by SGS who provide the mystery samples for the West Gippsland Waterwatch Program.

The QA/QC mystery sample testing is an important part of monitoring as it assures users of Waterwatch data that it is robust and can be used by various departments and organisations.

Pass rates of results are in the table below shows a high pass rate of participants. This demonstrates a high level of competency in regard to Waterwatch monitors data collection.

Parameter	Number of Results	Pass rate
pH	20	83%
EC	20	95%
Turbidity	20	85%

Thank you to all who participated and I look forward to the seeing you all at the State QA/QC in September.

Discover the Latrobe

Approximately thirty residents from the Noojee community spent recent a sunny Saturday morning discovering the Latrobe River. The day was an opportunity for the local community to learn about what agencies and communities can and are doing to ensure the protection of waterways throughout Gippsland.

To begin with Waterwatch Facilitator Nicole Russell gave a talk on Macroinvertebrates and how they can be useful in understanding river health. She then followed this up with a demonstration on how surveys are conducted in the waterway. A variety of Macroinvertebrates were found giving participants a glimpse at the freshwater animals that can be found in the Latrobe River.

Carolyn Ferguson, Environment and Pest Plant Manager with Baw Baw Shire demonstrated the many different weeds that are found in the Baw Baw Shire. A number of samples were passed around for participants to have a better look and Carolyn outlined the appropriate methods for reducing the spread of these weeds.

River Health Team Leader Michelle Dickson with the WGCMA then discussed recent works that have been completed along the Latrobe River in the local area. Lastly Environmental Health Coordinator Robyn Duffy from Baw Baw Shire spoke about the impact of septic tanks on rivers and the requirements that need to be met when installing and maintaining a septic system. The day ended with lunch and a lively chat about some the issues raised in the presentations.



Teacher PD session 2011

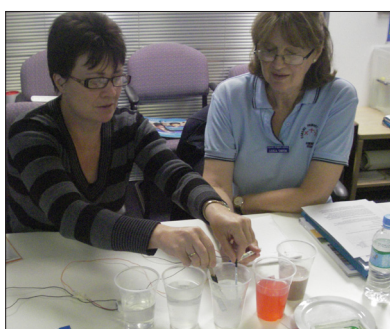
February 21st saw 14 teachers from West Gippsland attend the now annual Science Skilling up with Waterwatch Professional Development session in Traralgon. Proudly sponsored by ESSO Australia and supported by Gippsland Water, this popular day is aimed at increasing the confidence and knowledge of primary school teachers in planning and developing science related units around the topic of water.

On the day teachers witnessed several demonstrations relating to water temperature, density and salinity. The teachers then moved on to a practical experimentation lesson in creating salinity testers and testing household substances for pH levels.

Much fun was had by all and Marni (Waterwatch Facilitator) is convinced the participants drove the WGCMA administration staff mad by repeatedly setting off buzzers that sounded identical to the front door buzzer during testing!

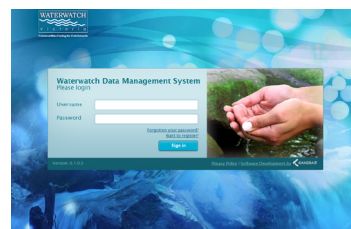
Some time was then spent in exploring ways of tying all the information together and incorporating the resources of Waterwatch and Gippsland Water when planning units of work. Experience from previous years of running this session has shown that teachers are now more willing to take up the offer to borrow testing equipment from Waterwatch and enhance their units with practical experimentation and field excursions. This alleviates the pressure on Waterwatch staff who currently have around 140 schools in the region to service.

If any schools would like to borrow equipment from Waterwatch, sponsorship from ESSO Australia has allowed us to have a class set of Water Testing Kits available for loan on a short term basis. Contact Nicole for further information.



New Waterwatch Database

Hooray! The new Waterwatch database is nearly up and running. The new database will allow volunteers to enter their data straight into the database. Training will be provided for those who would like to take on the challenge.



For those of you who do not have access to computers or the internet, don't panic, A Waterwatch Facilitator will still enter the data for you as before. It will also give volunteers a chance to ask questions, upload photos and comment through the database.

Bushfire Recovery Day

Since February 2009 a number of government agencies have been working with the community to rehabilitate the bushfire affected communities off Boolarra, Calignee, Traralgon South and surrounding areas. Recently these agencies got together to hold two information days where the public were welcome to come along to learn more about the post fire recovery works.

Waterwatch and the WGCMA hosted a display that included images and maps of the TRACKfire project and the river rehabilitation works occurring along the Traralgon Creek.

Information hubs were set up in the Boolarra and Callignee townships allowing community members to come along to chat with the various departments about post fire recovery works and enjoy a snag from the BBQ.

Agencies included WGCMA, Waterwatch, Landcare, Parks Victoria, DSE, HVP, DPI, GippsTAFE and Vic Roads.



Drainwatch information session

A DrainWatch project information day was recently held at the Macalister Irrigation Farm. Supported by Southern Rural Water and the Victorian Government the objective of the new Drainwatch project is to collect data from farm drains to gain an understanding of the water quality of drains that collect irrigation and other runoff from farms. On some farms the runoff is also being collected and reharvested for use back on the land making it important to understand what water quality is being reused to help identify any future issues and properly account for all sources of nutrients on the farm.

The session started off with Sarah Killury from DPI giving a rundown of what was going on in the MID in regards to nutrient levels in drains and the programs that are making a change to farm water management, these programs aim to reduce nutrient loads in drains and waterways whilst helping improve farm productivity and efficiency.

Nicole Russell ended the session with information about the Drainwatch project and how landholders could get involved. The information session finished off with a delicious BBQ cooked by Maurie Harkins from the Cowwarr WGCMA Operations team.

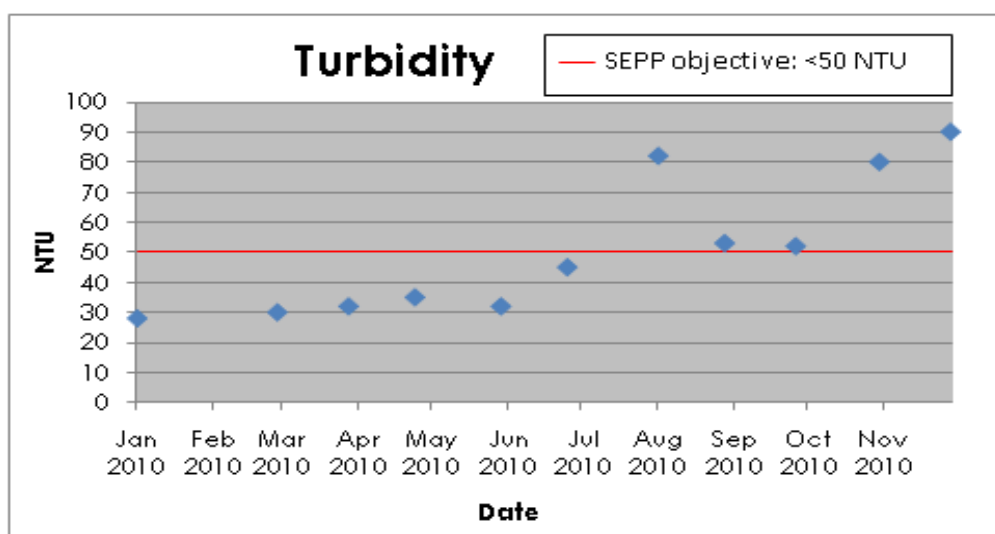
Data Results Snapshot

Site Code: LAT014

Site name: Latrobe River @ Thoms Bridge

Site results for 2010

Parameters: Turbidity and Reactive Phosphorous



The turbidity graph shows the changes that have occurred in turbidity throughout 2010. The red line indicates the SEPP limit for that site.

Reactive Phosphorous Legend

Legend	<0.015mg/L	0.015 - 0.06mg/L	0.06 - 0.14mg/L	>0.14mg/L
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Below are the results for reactive phosphorous throughout 2010. As there is only a SEPP limit for total phosphorous we are unable to analysis reactive phosphorous data against this so a chart is provided to display the changes over time.

Date	Jan	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Results	0	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015

West Gippsland Waterwatch Calendar

April 7th - Corner Inlet Connections present Estuaries Unmasked, Foster

April 9th - South Gippsland Sustainability festival, Coal Creek

April 16th - Agnes River Canoe Tour

April - May - ALT training

May 7th - Forest, Fire and Water school camp

West Gippsland Waterwatch Contacts



Nicole Russell

Facilitator
PO Box 1374, Traralgon 3844
Phone: 1300 094 262
Email: nicoler@wgcma.vic.gov.au



Marni Speed

Facilitator
PO Box 1374, Traralgon 3844
Phone: 1300 094 262
Email: marnis@wgcma.vic.gov.au



Michelle Dickson

River Health Team Leader
PO Box 1374, Traralgon 3844
Phone: 1300 094 262
Email: michelled@wgcma.vic.gov.au



Tanya Cowell

Facilitator
PO Box 1374, Traralgon 3844
Phone: 1300 094 262
Email: tanyac@wgcma.vic.gov.au

Key Stakeholders and Sponsors

