

Haining Farm Community Update

October 2019

Works at Haining Farm slowed down over winter, but have geared up again for a busy few months. The revegetation of the wetland cells is complete, a planned burn has removed the burn piles and pest animal control has commenced.

All project information remains available on the Engage Victoria Haining Farm webpage at: www.engage.vic.gov.au/haining-farm.

Burn piles

August was cold and wet, but not too wet to get an effective planned burn of the two piles that have been growing over the past couple of years. Experienced Forest Fire Management Victoria staff made sure that the piles were burnt safely and with minimal disruption to the local community.



Burn Pile 2 from Don Rd

Woodland buffers

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the community engagement process in 2018 which involved the community in the selection of the tree species for the open woodland buffers.

The outcomes of the community engagement were published in the *Detailed Design Phase Community Engagement Report 2018*.

The following native species will be used in the paddock areas:

- River Red Gum
- River Sheoak
- Brush Box

The following deciduous species will be used around the main visitor area:

- Spanish Oak
- Sugar Maple

There have been some concerns that the trees won't establish as quickly as the other vegetation and that this may impact their effectiveness as a bushfire mitigation tool.

The trees are mature stock, not seedlings, carefully sourced and ordered many months ago. It is expected that these will have similar growth rates to the rest of the revegetation on site. The trees are individually guarded to protect against damage from deer and wallabies while they continue to establish.

Pest animal control

An ongoing pest control program has commenced at the site with a focus on controlling populations of foxes and rabbits.

There have been some concerns raised about the method of control being used and Parks Victoria wants to assure you that we take all steps to minimise any potential impact on native species. We have also adjusted our methods of control in response to the concerns raised.

The control program will be undertaken by very experienced, local contractors and we have had extensive discussions about methods, timing and other details. Parks Victoria staff will continue to work directly with concerned residents about the control program.

Alpine school update

The area east of Don Rd has progressed in its transition to the Department of Education & Training, who will be developing a School for Student Leadership. The tender for the building works finished in July.

Other works programs

A high priority for the coming months is getting the site ready to open to the public. This includes removing the old toilet block, further asbestos removal, improving access gates and tree risk works in the north-east corner.



The old toilet block will be removed shortly

Wet season

With the high levels of rainfall over the last three months, the Yarra River has broken its banks several times and water has inundated areas of the farm. This is consistent with what the farm has historically done and is a large part of what makes the site so special for conservation.

There was also some localised flooding in the north-west corner caused by a blockage to a temporary culvert. Parks Victoria staff responded quickly to the issue to reduce the impact on the neighbouring property. The temporary culvert will be removed while the Don Rd crossover constructions are underway. In the meantime, the drain is regularly cleared to allow water flow.

Deer fence tested

The deer fence has been tested with a recent breach by a couple of deer. The deer quickly left the site and there was no impact to the recently planted vegetation.

The fence is designed to deter deer from entering the site, but also to be easily repairable in the event of a breach. The fence has proven successful in that it was quickly repaired following the breach and remains intact.

Greening Australia update

Recently Greening Australia facilitated Don Valley Primary School's involvement in the Melbourne Water River Detectives Program.

Teachers, aids and students from the school have visited the Don River on Haining Farm to learn about the importance of monitoring local river health and then entered data on the Water Watch website.



Don Valley PS students about to conduct testing on the Don River

Want to get involved & keep in touch?

If you would like to be contacted about activities happening at Haining Farm, or directly emailed our newsletters and other information that comes up, please send a message requesting to be put on a contact list, to hainingplan@parks.vic.gov.au.

What next?

Over the remains of spring, the following works will occur:

- Removal of the old toilet block
- Watering and monitoring of the woodland trees
- Pest animal control
- Asbestos removal
- Construction of the two Don Rd vehicle crossings
- Installation of fire signage
- Frog and bird surveys
- Slashing and weed control

For further information please call 13 1963 or email hainingplan@parks.vic.gov.au.