

# PROTECTING OUR PONDS 2016-2020

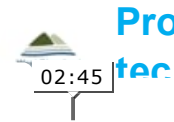
The Chain of Ponds within Providence Ponds, the Perry River and their tributaries are a unique waterway and form one of the most intact systems in Victoria.

Chain of Ponds systems were once common across South-eastern Australia but are now very rare.

No fully intact Chain of Ponds systems are known to currently exist. The ponds have been affected by historic land clearing, stock access, weeds, pest animals, erosion and excavation for use as dams.

Since 2016, the WGCMA and partners have been working to protect and improve these Chain of Ponds with a range of agreements, works and initiatives.

To gain an overview of the works completed a [yearly highlights brochure](https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/WGCMA-ProtectingOurPonds-2020-final-web.pdf) is developed (<https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/WGCMA-ProtectingOurPonds-2020-final-web.pdf>).



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## NEED

### What is a Chain of Ponds?

At first glance, a 'chain of ponds' waterway could look like a series of dams, yet they are more complex and interesting. They are a waterway system of irregularly spaced, often oval shaped ponds linked by shallow floodways.

### Why are they important?

Chain of Ponds systems were once common across South-eastern Australia but are now very rare.

> No fully intact Chain of Ponds systems are known to currently exist as post-European changes in land use have resulted in a loss or modification of these waterways.

> The Providence Ponds and Perry River catchment is unique as it contains sections of intact ponds, as well as ponds that are recovering from erosion.

## PLANNING

The Perry River catchment is identified as an area for priority attention in the West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (<https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/our-region/regional-catchment-strategy>), as it contains these important and unique environmental features.

In 2016 the Victorian Government announced funding of \$1.6 million of through its Our Catchments, Our Communities (OCOC) Program to undertake an integrated catchment management project in the Providence Ponds and Perry River catchment area over four years.

A Strategic Directions Statement (<https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/WGCMA-PR-StrategicPlan-final-web3.pdf>) was created in 2017 to help identify the most critical threats to the health of the ponds and priority areas for attention. It represents a shared understanding of the concerns of

## WORKS

On-ground actions undertaken to date include:

- > Eighteen kilometres of fencing (encompassing 165 ha) to exclude stock from the ponds and remnant native vegetation
- > installed seven troughs to provide off-stream watering for stock
- > planted almost 60 ha of native vegetation to increase habitat in the catchment
- > over 3,500ha of works to control high threat weeds on public and private land
- > pest animal control work on 46.6ha on private land
- > establishment of controlled grazing regimes on over 100ha to lessen grazing pressures on the ponds
- > remediation of 21 priority erosion sites.

## OUTCOMES

Our aim is to protect and rehabilitate the chain of ponds and improve habitat connectivity in the Providence Ponds and Perry River Catchment.

Occasional media releases about the project can be found [here](https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/news/la-news/rain-transforms-chain-of-ponds) (<https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/news/la-news/rain-transforms-chain-of-ponds>).

> The catchment and its ponds are home to many threatened plant and animal species such as Dwarf Galaxias, Pygmy Perch, Green and Golden Bell Frog, Gaping Leek-orchid and Prostate Cone-bush.

### Why do they need protecting?

The Chain of Ponds health is at risk from threats including:

- > Changing land use
- > Habitat fragmentation due to historic land clearing
- > Erosion
- > Pest plants and animals

natural resource management agencies and members of the community. It represents long term priorities for managing the Providence Ponds and Perry River catchment.

An implementation plan was then developed in collaboration with our delivery partners which include Trust for Nature, HVP Plantations, Wellington Shire Council, and Maffra and Districts Landcare Network.

Sub-projects to be implemented by June 2020 were identified to help protect and rehabilitate the ponds. This [project summary](https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Protecting-Our-Ponds-project-summary_web.pdf) ([https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Protecting-Our-Ponds-project-summary\\_web.pdf](https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Protecting-Our-Ponds-project-summary_web.pdf)) outlines some of the works that will take place as part of the Protecting Our Ponds project.

Further information can be found in this [highlights brochure](https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/WGCMA-ProtectingOurPonds-2020-final-web.pdf) (<https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/WGCMA-ProtectingOurPonds-2020-final-web.pdf>).

Read more about the work we are doing with Trust for Nature and HVP Plantations to protect and rehabilitate this unique waterway system.

[Trust for Nature and HVP Partnership case study](https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/news/latest-news/unique-partnership-protection) (<https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/news/latest-news/unique-partnership-protection>)

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