



Inc. #A0003010B

09 April 2025

Chief Executive Officer,
Mount Alexander Shire
and
Councillors,
Mount Alexander Shire

The need for improved stormwater management.

The Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club is a volunteer group of people with a strong interest in our natural environment and the protection of our local flora and fauna. We have a membership of more than 100 and a supporter base of 275, almost entirely from within the Mount Alexander Shire.

In recent months there have been several major projects commenced that will improve the environment along Campbells and Forest Creeks. Campbells Creek provides important habitat for Platypus (Vulnerable under Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act) and Rakali. In addition to these species, the habitat improvement brought about by the work of local Landcare groups has enabled the release of captive bred, threatened fish such as Pygmy Perch into the creeks.

Our club strongly supports the efforts of the local Landcare groups such as Friends of Campbells Creek and Castlemaine Landcare to make our creeks a more attractive place for both people and wildlife.

To maintain the momentum of habitat and amenity improvement it is necessary to improve the water quality of stormwater runoff from the urban areas of Castlemaine.

The main causes of poor water quality in our creeks are:

- Sediment runoff from building and construction sites
- Litter and other pollution from construction sites
- Sediment runoff from existing suburbs where there is exposed ground
- Litter and other pollution in the stormwater drains along roadsides throughout the town.

All pollution reduces overall water quality in streams and rivers. Pollution from sediment (clays and silt) blocks the gills of aquatic fauna and smothers aquatic flora resulting in death and the loss of a food source for other animals in the food chain. Sediment buildup in the creek channel may also restrict water flow and exacerbate the risk of flooding. In this region sediment runoff may contain toxic chemical residues from the gold mining era which can poison wildlife. Pollution from litter and road runoff includes plastics and numerous chemicals that may be spilt in the environment. This form of pollution can also poison aquatic fauna. Plastics and other litter may be mistaken for food by some wildlife and cause choking or starvation when ingested.

We strongly encourage the MASC and employees to implement water sensitive design features such as those in Section 56.07-4 of the **Mount Alexander Planning Scheme**, Clause 22 of the **2022 Local Government Infrastructure Design Manual**, Section 19 of Council's **2020 Integrated Water Management Plan** and Council's **2018 Urban Waterways Management Plan**. Implementation of these clauses along with ensuring compliance by developers and others will address the first three points above and have a positive effect on the quality of our creeks and improve their amenity value for the population of Castlemaine.

We would also like to see improved management of stormwater drains within the urban area so that there is less street litter reaching our creeks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Euan Moore'.

Euan Moore

President,

Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club