

CLIENT: Fulton Hogan Ecodynamics - Melbourne Water
PROJECT: Site regeneration through weed control and revegetation
DATES: December 2012 – 2015 (estimated)

Background

The area of scope, situated between Launching Place and Millgrove (Yarra Valley, VIC), is adjacent to the popular Lilydale – Warburton bike trail and stretches along the Yarra River. The area has been assessed as holding considerable value from both an ecological and recreational point of view, and Platypus has been engaged to carry out its regeneration. When handed over, the site was invaded by numerous species of environmental weeds (e.g. honeysuckle and blackberry) and the river banks were densely populated by willow trees. Furthermore, a number of old fences were stretched across the site.

Implementation

The regeneration of the area has been carried out through the following steps:

Removal and disposal of all willow species – All willows falling within the 4km project area have been controlled and subsequently removed, ensuring their permanent inability to re-grow.

Weed control – At the start of the project, many environmental weeds were present in the area with significant cover-abundance. All identified weeds are now under control and neither represent a threat to native plant species (provided that maintenance is carried out over a 2-3 year period) nor impact on the visual component of the landscape.



Woody weeds removed with cut and paint methods

Removal of existing fences – All the existing fencing between water edge and new fence line have been removed and disposed of, in accordance with the client’s guidelines.

Site preparation for Revegetation - Control of weeds and grasses is a crucial component of a successful revegetation project. The zones of the project area destined to be repopulated with native species have been prepared through spot-spraying and weed control. This is to ensure that plants benefit from sufficient nutrients and light exposure during the first (and most crucial) months following installation.

Revegetation - This step has been rolled out during the month of May 2013. A wet autumn and the mild winter that followed have contributed to the survival of the large majority of the tubestocks (roughly 10,000), which have been installed with jute matting and plastic guards to tackle weed growth and stop local fauna/cattle from disturbing the plants. To avoid pollution further downstream, all the plants installed within flood reach have not had a guard applied.



New trees planted and protected with guards

Follow up – maintenance

The site is currently undergoing regular maintenance – specifically weed control, replacement of guards (where needed) and fence monitoring to prevent cattle from hampering plant growth. The environmental weeds within the scope of the project are now within the established cover-abundance targets. The highly successful implementation of the process has attracted the attention of the River Basin Management Society, who has nominated it for the “*Outstanding Waterway Management Project*” Award – read more about this in the [news](#) section of the website.