

Greater Wallan-Merri State/Regional Park:

A living landscape for a liveable Melbourne

Introduction

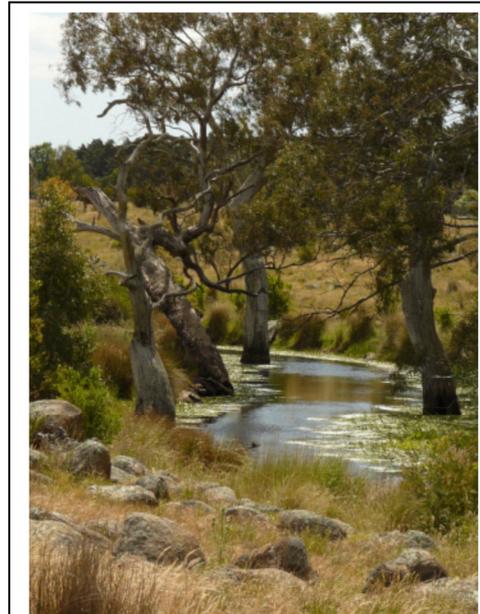
We have a once in a life-time opportunity to create a living legacy for our children and grandchildren: a major park that benefits all Melbourne residents, attracts visitors and protects natural and cultural heritage.

Merri Creek through the northern suburbs of Melbourne, and Taylors and Wallan Creeks in Wallan are now well-loved bushland havens, thanks to community-driven transformations. In between, the Northern Growth Corridor will accommodate 300,000 new residents and at least 83,000 jobs. We need to plan now for a major park at a scale that conserves nature in the metropolis and creates a green spine linking Wallan to inner Melbourne.

Benefits of the Greater Wallan-Merri State Park

- A major asset for Melbourne's northern suburbs that protects special natural areas and landscape features.
- An open space network for residents, workers and visitors to northern Melbourne that encourages healthy outdoor recreation.
- A long-distance trail network that connects with other trails in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria and acts as a focal entrance point to Greater Melbourne.
- Protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- Wildlife habitat and movement corridor that will sustain migratory and resident native species.
- Flood buffering and water quality treatment to reduce the impacts of urban growth on the Merri Creek downstream.
- Enhanced liveability and distinctive identity for planned suburbs in the Northern Growth Corridor.
- Large expanses of vegetation and wetlands that will help mitigate the high temperatures expected with climate change.
- Opportunities to protect high-quality native vegetation as offsets for clearing.

This Park proposal builds on recent planning for northern Melbourne that has identified a number of disparate sites for conservation and open space. A magnificent public asset can be created if these are linked and managed in an integrated way. We invite your support for this concept. **Commitment and planning must occur now, if we are to achieve this intergenerational landmark legacy.**



Scenic Merri Creek at Merriang, a core part of the proposed Greater Wallan – Merri Park.



Wildflower grasslands of the volcanic plains – an endangered plant community that will be protected in a Greater Wallan-Merri State Park.

Greater Wallan- Merri Park Components

Wallan At the northern end of the park, a major destination node on part of the former Hernes Swamp would re-establish a wetland of national significance supporting thousands of ducks, geese, swans and other wildlife. It would be a magnet for outdoor recreation such as picnicking and bike-riding, as well as environmental education and eco-tourism. The important roles of the Swamp in buffering floods and improving water quality would be enhanced to meet growing needs due to urbanisation and climate change.



The Park on the southern edge of Wallan would embrace the inter-urban break between Wallan and Beveridge, flood-prone land unsuitable for development, part of the soon to be redundant Wallan Sewage Treatment Plant and an endangered wetland vegetation community to the southeast.

A Regional Trail Hub As a regional trail hub, the Wallan part of the Park would connect with trails leading to Melbourne, along the five creeks that drain into the Swamp, and into the Dividing Range and regional Victoria via the planned Heathcote-Wallan rail trail.



Four volcanic cones Green Hill, Springs Hill, Mt Fraser and Bald Hill are striking landscape features of the upper Merri catchment and the source of the basalt rock that underlies the area. The cones would be protected and linked with open space corridors and trails.

Merri Creek Heading south from Wallan, Merri Creek forms a major north-south biodiversity corridor providing important habitat and connectivity. A special corridor along the Creek has already been

designated by the State Government to protect the endangered Growling Grass Frog. This would become public land and part of the Park. Additional land would be added to the frog corridor in places such as Merriang and the proposed Cloverton town centre, to support recreation uses and landscape value.

Other designated Conservation Areas already form a logical part of the State Park concept and link to the Merri Creek corridor spine as part of a habitat corridor network. These areas include high quality nationally significant native grassland, ancient River Red Gum woodlands and endangered fauna species. What's needed to make the Park a reality is to make sure these areas become public land.

To the south The Greater Wallan – Merri State Park would connect to the proposed Marran Baba Parklands south of Craigieburn East Road, and to the Merri Creek bushland and trail corridor through the northern suburbs.

Show Your Support

Contact Merri Creek Management Committee admin@mcmc.org.au, Wallan Environment Group rob.eldridge.au@gmail.com 0414 399 954 or Friends of Merri Creek merricreek@bigpond.com Further information www.mcmc.org.au