
Thursday, 10 September 2009

SPORT AND YOUTH BIG WINNERS IN \$5 MILLION GRANTS

Sport, education, tourism and the environment are the big winners in Melbourne Water's \$5 million Regional Benefits Grants Program.

Representing the Minister for Water, Tim Holding, at an event at Yea High School, Member for Seymour, Ben Hardman, today announced 31 separate community projects would receive grants.

Mr Hardman said the community had responded very strongly to the program with 88 applications from 69 community groups being received.

The program is designed to offset some of the inconvenience from construction of the Sugarloaf Pipeline, which is one of the biggest infrastructure projects underway in Victoria.

Mr Hardman said the selected projects would enhance the leisure and sporting opportunities in many communities, provide improved facilities and benefit thousands of people of all ages.

One significant project to receive funding of \$300,000 is a skate park in the heart of Yea, which is expected to benefit young people from as far away as Glenburn, Kinglake, Murrindindi, Flowerdale and the Highlands.

Mr Hardman said the application for the skate park was from a small community group who believed the facility would help the town engage disengaged youths and combat child obesity.

Another successful project is the upgrade of the Yea High School oval, which had become unsafe and therefore unusable due to drought and water restrictions.

He said the \$127,000 upgrade would include the installation of facilities, including rain water tanks, to water the sports field so students no longer had to use neighbouring school facilities. The upgrade would also include a fully equipped fitness circuit.

Another project partially funded is a wetlands environmental education and tourism centre in Yea. This project is conditional on securing additional funding from other sources.

Mr Hardman said an independent panel with strong regional representation had nominated the projects based on criteria that stressed significant ongoing value to regional communities impacted by the pipeline.

The Committee is made up of individuals from the local community and representatives of key organisations – Regional Development Victoria, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, the shires of Murrindindi and Yarra Ranges and Melbourne Water.

"We had such a strong response to the program that we unfortunately were unable to commit to all of the great projects and we are sorry that some have missed out," Mr Hardman said.

"There are also other projects that are subject to special conditions being met before they can proceed.

"Those that have been successful are, however, fantastic projects and will significantly benefit many people in the communities for many years to come."

REGIONAL BENEFITS GRANTS

Regional community groups who received \$250,000+

1.	Dixons Creek Community	\$250,000	Upgrade to Dixons Creek reserve sporting pavilion and playground
2.	Glenburn Hall and Progress Association Inc.	\$250,000	Upgrade to hall facilities
3.	Shire of Yarra Ranges – Yarra Glen Hall	\$452,381	Upgrade to hall and facilities
4.	Yarra Glen Football & Netball Club and Yarra Glen Junior Football Club	\$350,000	Upgrade to pavilion and facilities
5.	Yea Football/Netball Club	\$250,000	Renovations and upgrade to netball club facilities. Installation of gymnasium equipment
6.	Yea, Let's Skate!	\$300,000	Construction of a skate park facility in Yea township to support local youth
7.	Yea Tennis Club Inc.	\$300,000	Renovation and upgrade of tennis club facilities
8.	Yea Wetlands Trust	\$500,000	Construction of an environmental education and tourism facility

Regional community groups who received between \$100,000 and \$250,000

9.	Friends of Yea Railway	\$104,000	Upgrade to public areas, including a BBQ and
10.	Shire of Yarra Ranges	\$100,000	Skate park and playground upgrades
11.	Steels Creek Community	\$200,000	Upgrade to Steels Creek Community Centre
12.	Toolangi District Community	\$150,000	Construction of CJ Dennis Centennial Walking
13.	Yarra Glen & District Township	\$232,000	Construction of walking tracks through Yarra Glen
14.	Yarra Ranges Regional	\$124,000	Melba Festival advertising and implementation
15.	Yarra Valley Dressage Club Inc.	\$245,000	Construction of an outdoor equestrian centre
16.	Yea High School Council	\$127,050	Installation of rainwater harvesting equipment
17.	Yea River Catchment Landcare Group	\$112,000	Restoration works to reserves along the Yea River
18.	Yea Shire Hall Committee of	\$224,000	Upgrade works to hall

Regional community groups who received between \$25,000 and \$100,000

19.	Friends of Yea Cemetery	\$89,000	Installation of a gazebo and watering system within the
20.	Homewood Community	\$40,000	Upgrade to hall facilities
21.	Yarra Glen Girl Guides	\$38,788	Upgrade of hall and facilities
22.	Yea Community Services	\$80,000	Upgrade to the 'Mens Shed'
23.	Yea Racecourse Recreation Reserve Committee of	\$38,155	Upgrade to watering systems
24.	Yea Bowls Inc.	\$36,000	Upgrade to shelter facilities and installation of water
25.	3717 Watch Inc.	\$75,000	Construction of a community playground and BBQ

Regional community groups who received less than \$25,000

26.	Australian Platypus	\$2420	Platypus count monitoring project in Yea and
27.	Permaculture Kinglake Ranges	\$9000	Community gardening and permaculture trailer
28.	Yarra Glen & District	\$4500	Purchase of equipment to copy, record, store and
29.	Yea Business and Tourism	\$15,000	Marketing costs associated with Autumn Fest Festival
30.	Yea & District Community	\$10,000	Feasibility study for community bank
31.	Yea Pre-School Inc.	\$5000	Parenting library and parenting course for locals

The Regional Benefits Advisory Committee decided to hold a contingency of \$286,706 to shore-up the successful projects if required.