



healthy Waterways

River Health Incentives Program

Stream Frontage Management Program

2014/15

The Stream Frontage Management Program (SFMP) aims to improve the environmental, social and economic values of rivers and creeks by protecting and enhancing streamside vegetation and minimising erosion and stock access. SFMP assists private landowners to manage their stream frontage land by providing grants for works including fencing, weed control, revegetation, and off-stream stock watering. The Program aims to establish long-term relationships with landholders to assist with ongoing frontage management.

SFMP provides successful applicants with advice, training opportunities and funding contributions for on-ground works. The landowner is responsible for the delivery of those works and for the ongoing maintenance of the project site and any structures erected with the funding.

- Landowner participation in SFMP is voluntary.
- Funding can be ongoing so that projects can be funded and implemented in stages.
- Funding is paid at the beginning of the project period.
- Projects must be implemented within 12-months of the date of payment.
- Projects are assessed and audited by a SFMP site assessor on-site (no detailed written project proposal or project report by the landowner is necessary).
- A formal written contract (*Stream Frontage Management Agreement*) is provided to document Melbourne Water's and the landowner's role and responsibilities. Both parties must sign this document before payment is made.
- Participation in SFMP does not change the title status of the waterway frontage where the SFMP project is undertaken, or confer any change in access rights to the site.

Standard Funding Items

Fencing of stream-side areas

SFMP funds permanent standard rural post and wire (s) or electric (e) fencing. Higher funding contributions apply for greater set-backs from the top of the stream bank, with the **minimum** fundable set-back being an average of 10 m. Current funding rates are:

- \$6.00 p/m (s) or \$5.00 p/m (e) for an average set-back of **10 m** from the top of the stream bank
- \$7.80 p/m (s) or \$6.50 p/m (e) for an average set-back of **15 m** from the top of the stream bank
- \$9.60 p/m (s) or \$8.00 p/m (e) for an average set-back of **20 m** or greater from the top of the stream bank
- Property boundary fences are not funded.

Weed Control

- Funding towards the purchase of herbicide and/or for engaging a professional contractor.
- Chemcert Farm Chemical User Course rebates.

Revegetation

- Funding to purchase indigenous native plants and plant materials, and/or towards the cost of direct seeding.
- Melbourne Water orders plants in advance on the landowner's behalf from the nearest indigenous nursery.

Off-stream stock watering

- Funding for the average cost of trough(s) and pipe for off-stream stock water points in riverside paddocks where the total exclusion of stock from the river by a SFMP fencing project necessitates an alternative supply.
- Header tanks may be considered (contributions generally no more than up to 50% of cost).

- Off-stream stock water projects must comply with current State Government regulations and controls on water diversion.

Training opportunities as available

- Funding is available to subsidise SFMP participants to take part in courses related to land management practices. Information on these courses is often available through your local council.

The Landowner's Role

- Submit an Expression of Interest.
- Attend a site inspection to determine the scope of the project and provide additional information if required.
- Organise, implement and complete the agreed works within 12 months of receiving payment.
- Contribute additional funds where necessary.
- Spend the funds as agreed with their site assessor and stipulated in their *SFMP Agreement*.
- Retain proof of expenditure for auditing and attend an on-site inspection of the project site when requested at the end of the 12-month agreement period.
- Provide long-term care and maintenance for the project site, with a minimum maintenance period of 5 years from the end of the 12-month Agreement period.
- Keep livestock out of the project site for at least the minimum maintenance period.
- Use sympathetic land management practices on land adjacent to the project site.
- Assist with promoting the SFMP where possible and display an SFMP sign in a prominent location on the property.

A full list of the landowner's responsibilities is documented in the SFMP Agreement

How and when to apply for funding

- The timing of funding periods varies from year to year.
- Landowners may apply by contacting Melbourne Water and requesting an Expression of Interest form.
- If funding is not available when the Expression of Interest is submitted the application will be held

on file for consideration during the next available funding round.

How are projects selected?

- Each Expression of Interest is examined to select those most appropriate for further assessment. Further information may be requested.
- Those properties that best meet program criteria are selected for assessment by on-site inspection.
- Once inspected, projects are considered according to program criteria to determine which are to receive funding.
- The project site must be private freehold or leased Crown Land water frontage owned or formally managed by the applicant.
- Priority is given to rural frontages of greater than 50m length or clusters of urban properties.

Melbourne Water SFMP contact details

ADAM BARBER

River Health Officer

Ph. (03) 9679 7421

Mb. 0407 199 709

adam.barber@melbournewater.com.au

Stream Frontage Management Program
Melbourne Water
Reply Paid
PO Box 4342

Melbourne VIC 3001

www.melbournewater.com.au

***Disclaimer:** This information aims to be of assistance to you and is intended as a guide only. It is not intended to be comprehensive and may not be entirely appropriate for your particular purposes. Melbourne Water is not responsible to you or anyone else for any loss or other liability, which may arise as a result of your relying on any of the information in this publication (SEPTEMBER 2009).*