REGIONAL RAIL REVIVAL | SHEPPARTON

Annual Environment Compliance Report 2024

Shepparton Line Upgrade

VICTORIA'S BIG BUILD

First Nations Acknowledgement

Regional Rail Revival respectfully acknowledges and recognises the Taungurung, Wurundjeri and Yorta Yorta peoples as the Traditional Owners of this land and waterways and pays respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Environmental Vision

Regional Rail Revival's Environmental Vision is to be an industry leader in managing environmental impacts with a demonstrated commitment to continuous improvement in delivering major infrastructure projects.

To achieve this Environmental Vision, Regional Rail Revival is committed to:

- Embracing care for environment as a core value of our organisation;
- Promoting a culture of exceptional environmental management and place responsive design;
- Empowering our people to conserve and enhance Victoria's biodiversity and reduce the risk of harm to human health and the environment associated with our activities;
- Delivering urban design and public art outcomes that reflect and respond to local environmental, heritage and cultural values;
- Encouraging innovation and ensuring all our delivery partners meet or exceed our environmental management requirements and integrate best practice into their activities;
- Maintaining a framework for managing all environmental aspects of our work that promotes continuous improvement; and
- Providing staff with information, training and support to respond appropriately to environmental and place-based challenges including managing risk under our general environmental duty.

To give effect to this Policy, our people will:

- Establish and implement practices to fulfill environmental compliance requirements, including all applicable environmental legislation, regulations, objectives and targets;
- Implement departmental and Regional Rail Revival environmental plans, objectives and targets;
- Listen to Traditional Owner and First Nations perspectives and promote opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate connections to environment and place;
- Engage with local communities and endeavour to protect and conserve the local and regional environment;
- Design with transport users and local communities in mind to ensure personal safety, inclusion, and human health and wellbeing are considered as we develop and deliver our projects; and
- Effectively manage the environmental impacts including social and community impacts, waste, water and energy use.

1.2 Purpose

As part of the delivery of the Shepparton Line Upgrade (the Project), Regional Rail Revival is required to prepare an Annual Environmental Compliance Report and publish it on the Project's public website.

The previous 2022 and 2023 reports can be found here:

Annual Environment Compliance Report 2022

Annual Environment Compliance Report 2023

The aim of this report is to show the progression and performance of the Project over the past twelve months from a planning and environment perspective.

1.3 About the Shepparton Line Upgrade

The Shepparton Line Upgrade (the Project) has already delivered benefits for passengers, with Stage 1 enabling 10 extra weekly services on the Shepparton Line and 29 additional coach services per week between Seymour and Shepparton.

Stage 2 of the Project has given passengers more reliable services, as well as modern trains, by allowing VLocity trains to run to and from Shepparton for the first time in late 2022.

As well as extended platforms and improved accessibility and amenities at Mooroopna, Murchison East and Nagambie stations, Stage 2 delivered 59 level crossing upgrades between Donnybrook and Shepparton.

Major construction on Stage 3 of the Project is complete, including the extension of the Murchison East passing loop and an expansion of the new Shepparton stabling facility to accommodate extra trains.

Goulburn Valley passengers are also enjoying smoother and more reliable journeys with the completion of major track upgrades between Shepparton and Seymour.

Mooroopna's recently completed new walking and cycling path, the Broad Way, has lighting and safety fencing, and connects Mooroopna Station and the existing footpath along Young Street.

Signalling upgrades are continuing to enable nine return services on weekdays for Shepparton, Mooroopna, Murchison East and Nagambie, almost doubling the number of services each weekday.

An alliance comprising Acciona Rail and KBR along with Regional Rail Revival and V/Line is delivering the project.

The Project is part of the Regional Rail Revival program, a more than $4 billion investment by the Victorian and Australian governments to upgrade every regional passenger rail line in Victoria, delivering more frequent and reliable services, and creating 3,000 jobs and supplier opportunities.

Refer to **bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/shepparton-line-upgrade** for further information about the Project.

Total investment in the Shepparton Line Upgrade is more than

$750m+

Creating

600

jobs over its three stages

Stage 1

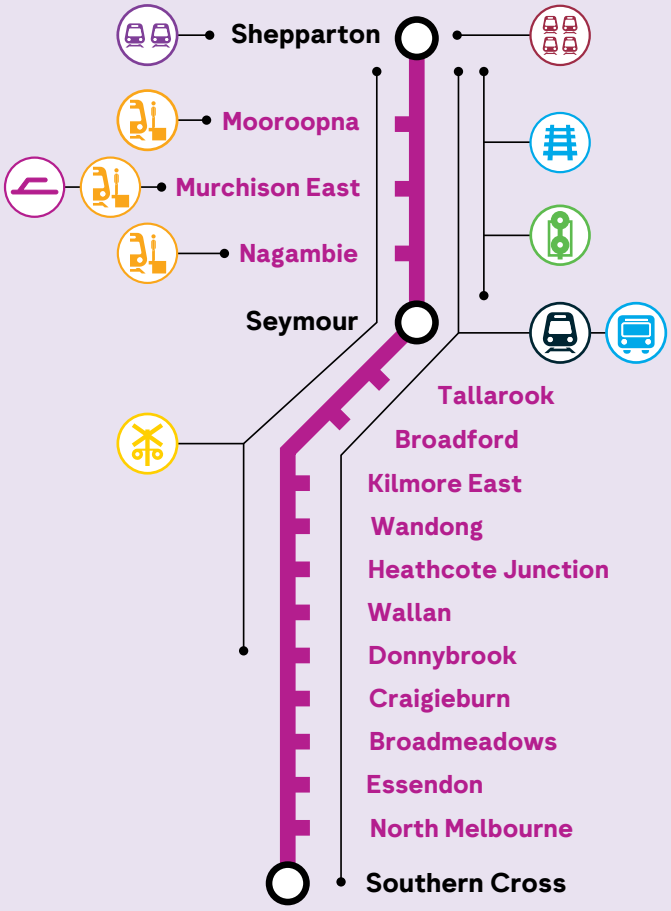
Fast-tracked to enable an additional **10 weekly services** on the Shepparton Line in 2019.

Stage 2

Work enabled **modern and reliable** VLocity trains to run on the line in 2022.

Stage 3

Signalling and track upgrades to enable **nine return services a day.**



Stage 1

- Additional train services
- Stabling upgrade
- Coach services

Stage 2

- Platform extensions
- Crossing loop extension
- 59 level crossing upgrades
- Stabling for VLocity trains

Stage 3

- Track upgrades
- Signalling upgrades
- Expanded stabling

2 Environmental Management Framework

An Environmental Management Framework (EMF) was developed to ensure that environmental aspects of the Project are managed effectively.

The EMF is a document that supplies a list of environmental standards and outcomes, referred to as Environmental Management Requirements (EMRs). The Framework guides the design and construction works of the Project, ensuring compliance with critical planning, environmental, and heritage conditions. RRR works closely with our delivery partners throughout the Project to ensure conformance to all the requirements set out in the EMF.

2.1 Independent Environmental Audits

The project is independently audited at regular intervals to ensure compliance with the EMF. This provides a snapshot allowing us to see where we are performing well and allows us to identify opportunities for improvement. Under the EMF, audits are required to be undertaken within three months of construction beginning, and then on a six-monthly basis (or as agreed upon by RRR) until the completion of the Project. Some examples of what is evaluated during an audit include:

- The Project's compliance with planning, environment, and heritage approvals
- Project management plans and reports
- Site based audit to review implementation of environmental controls
- The Alliance's response to non-conformances, incidents, and complaints received.

To date, six audits have been undertaken, and as shown in the table below, corrective actions have been applied in response to two non-conformances. The key findings concluded by the Independent Environmental Audit can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of independent environmental audits completed for the Project.

Audit date	Audit Scope	Key findings
July 2021	28 environmental criteria were assessed	✓ No non-conformances
January 2022	18 environmental criteria were assessed	✓ No non-conformances
July 2022	18 environmental criteria were assessed	✓ No non-conformances
May 2023	Stage 2 completion audit Stage 3 pre-commencement audit	✓ No non-conformances
October 2023	18 environmental criteria were assessed	One since-resolved non-conformance[1] identified.
April 2024	15 environmental criteria were assessed	One non-conformance[2] identified and has been resolved.

1 The identified since-resolved non-conformance related to the description in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) of the management of independent Utility Providers performing works within the Project site.

2 The identified non-conformance relates to the preparation of a Revegetation/Remediation Plan.

3 Environmental Performance

By adopting RRR's Environment Policy and applying best practices, our delivery partners have not only met, but exceeded our environmental targets and objectives.

Within the last 12 months, our partners have demonstrated a strong ability to seek and take advantage of opportunities to manage the Project's environmental risks and decrease the environmental impact.

3.1 Protecting the Natural Environment

3.1.1 Growling Grass Frog Habitat Rehabilitation

Habitat restoration works near Donnybrook Station helped conserve a large population of Growling Grass Frogs and proved a major win for the project.

Donnybrook is one of the key habitat areas for the Growling Grass Frog, a listed vulnerable species under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) 1999.

During the construction of the Combined Service Route for Shepparton Line Upgrade, the Project identified a significant find of Growling Grass Frogs, and performed habitat restoration works at Spring Road, Donnybrook in agreement with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

Site dominated by Phalaris Grass, very thick making it difficult for frogs to move around foraging.

Reduced biomass and newly planted native tussock species.

This included weed removal, waste and rubbish clean-up, installation of waste prevention fencing, placement of stacks of repurposed wood logs and sunbathing rocks, and planting 160 terrestrial, 80 semi-aquatic and 160 aquatic species.

Rubbish was removed and chicken wire placed over the existing fence to prevent rubbish blowing into the site

Some of our frog log hotels.

Rock pile habitat on the water's edge for the frogs for basking and calling.

Fish hotel at one of GBCMA's lagoon rehabilitation sites.

3.1.2 Repurposing Logs to become Fish Hotels & Tree Hollow Project

The Project continues to support initiatives that help protect flora and fauna and the broader environment.

So far on the Project, our contributions have included:

- donating dozens of salvaged timber logs to the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) as part of their Fish Habitat Improvement Project. The timber logs were used to create a microhabitat, or "fish hotel", in Hughes Creek featuring deep holes scoured out of the sand to encourage endangered Macquarie Perch to breed. These 'fish hotels' artificial reefs provide shelter for threatened fish in the Goulburn River keep freshwater fish safe from strong currents and predators.
- installing 53 hollows in 30 trees to create safe habitats for wildlife at Murchison East. Tree hollows are important for the wellbeing and safety of wildlife, providing vital shelter and nesting locations for many different species. As opposed to the traditional style of nest box, hollows that are drilled into trees don't require any ongoing maintenance. They also provide better thermal insulation and provide a closer resemblance to a natural hollow, making them more appealing to local fauna.

A hollow to be reattached.

Two ringtail possums sharing a hollow.

3.1.3 Recycled Water use for Construction Activities

The Project's use of recycled water for dust suppression, material conditioning, compaction, material stockpile dust suppression and other construction activities proved a successful initiative in conserving resources of potable water.

Faced with the requirement to suppress dust on the many unsealed roads around the project in regional Victoria, the project deploys water trucks to spray water for dust suppression and washing. Instead of using water from reservoirs or rivers which would waste a scarce resource that could be used for domestic consumption or crop irrigation, the Project approached the local water authority, Goulburn Valley Water (GVW), to determine if non-potable water from one of its wastewater treatment facilities could be used.

> With a positive response, the Project procured and installed a standpipe and upgraded the GVW Reclaimed Water Facility at Nagambie to enable recycled water use.

With such installation, water trucks were able to make extensive use of recycled water during construction works. In addition, the Project has also implemented the use of a water-based polymer soil binding agent mixed with recycled water for dust suppression on access roads across the Project area.

With track and civil works in the area now complete, the project is donating the equipment to GVW as a project legacy to promote and enable the future use of recycled water in the region by community, farmers and other projects. Prior to the handover, the Project also upgraded access tracks to the standpipe and filled potholes, and repaired road damage. This means that water trucks for any other local project, such as council road maintenance, can refill from the standpipe as can the local fire brigade in the event of a bushfire or grass fire.

A letter of acceptance of the asset from GVW was received upon handover in mid-2024. GVW acknowledge the partnership and are supportive in the communication initiatives to promote and encourage similar partnerships to achieve more sustainable water practices.

The Project is not just preserving scarce drinking water in its own practices, it is leaving behind infrastructure to help sustain local water reserves permanently into the future.


HEMMINGS HIRE


40
AHEAD

3.1.4 Construction Spoil Reuse in Contaminated Mine Remediation

The remediation of the former Old New Moon Gold Mine, a legacy gold mine in Bendigo, represented one of the major waste management wins for the project due to the use of spoil from the rail formation, drainage lines and culvert material.

Historic weed spraying in the rail corridor had resulted in areas of elevated arsenic within the rail formation, material that is classified as reportable priority waste. Given the existing levels of arsenic at the mine site, the remediation contractor received approval from the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to use arsenic-impacted material.

This presented a perfect opportunity for the Project to reuse the spoil for remediation of the gold mine, which included capping of a former tailings dam and re-profiling of the surface, without changing the risk to the environment or human health at the mine site.

> As of May 2024, approximately 17,410 m^3 of spoil material has been sent to aid in the remediation of the mine.

Old New Moon Gold Mine

3.1.5 Tree Planting Day at Mooroopna Station

On 13 June 2024, a group of Project team members volunteered to help do some landscaping work around the newly constructed walking and cycling path installed by the Project at Mooroopna Station.

The day started with the toolbox talk on correct planting technique by an Arborist from Active Green Services, followed by supervision and guidance on planting throughout the day.

The landscaping works comprised on planting 2,090 plants over an area of 700 m2, which were supplied by Billabong Garden Nursery (social enterprise - Connect GV) in Shepparton.

The list of the plant species planted are in Table 2 on the following page.

Table 2: Plant Species Composition

Scientific Name	Common Name	Plant Type	Height of plants at maturity m	Density plants/ m^2
Carpobrotus Rossi	Karkalla	Ground cover	0.1	3
Dianella Longifolia	Pale Flax Lilly	Flowering Herb	0.75	3
Myoporum Parvifolium	Creeping Boobialla	Ground Cover	0.1	3
Themeda Triandra	Kangaroo Grass	Grass/Sedge	0.3	2
Poa Sieberiana	Tussock Grass	Grass/Sedge	0.5	2
Atriplex Semibaccata	Berry Saltbush	Ground Cover	1	1
Einadia Nutans	Nodding Saltbush	Ground Cover	0.2	2
Enchylaena Tomentosa	Berry Saltbush	Ground Cover	0.2	2
Lomandra Longfolia	Spiny head Mat-rush	Grass/Sedge	1	1
Chrysocephalum Apiculatum	Common Everlasting	Flowering herb	0.6	2
Pycnosorus Globosus	Drumsticks	Flowering herb	1	2
Wahlenbergia Sp.	Bluebell	Flowering herb	0.2	3

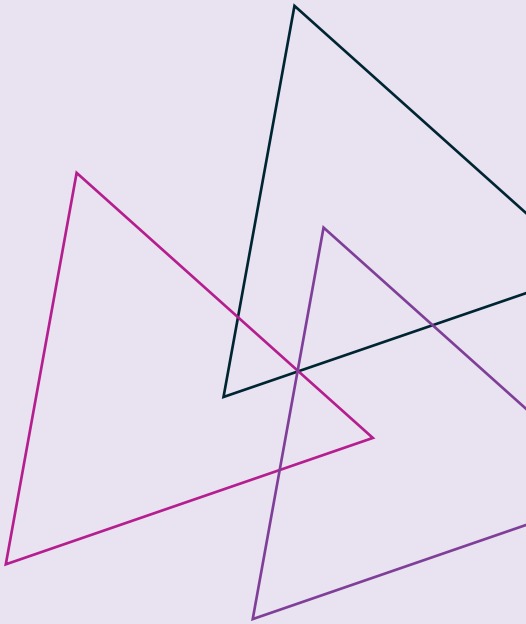
The planting day turned out to be a success with the landscaping works being completed on the day, achieving a positive outcome for the Project.

4 Continuing our Environmental Excellence

The upcoming planning and environmental commitments for the Project include:

- To fulfill obligations to our Environmental Management Framework (EMF) and deliver our environmental management requirements (EMR).
- To continue monitoring and improving environmental conditions on site through audits, site inspections, and procedures.
- To implement environmental controls and measures on site to minimise impact to the environment.

As the Project progresses, we are confident that the lessons learned will allow us to improve and drive even better environmental outcomes towards completion.



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