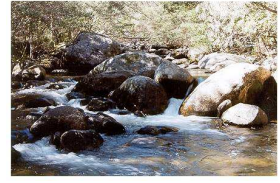


Climate change in the Victorian Alps: Can VET be a change agent?

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An abundance of water...



... I would judge the time of year by how it looked and the last 5 years I have been saying 'my God it looks like February' and we are only in November.

- Explored how adults in this area learn about & adapt to changes in water availability
- Strong understanding of direct and indirect impacts of dryness
- Opportunities for VET?



Community awareness & adaptation

- ... there's water flowing, it's quite impressive when you compare it to some other places.
- The dams ... are full now and they will fill up again in the winter with the snow, but the storage areas are dry, so we are only just getting enough to get by.
- ... we use the water from the washing machine three times before you put new water into the machine ... so that there is enough water to go around.



Industry – Water Harvesting

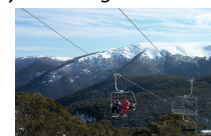


- ... we rely heavily on the flow of water in the rivers ... in our area there is no dam as such it is just relying on what's coming down the river. There is no real winter storage.
- ... in some years... it can be a good thing you can get enough water and we don't need to go on to restrictions, other years when you don't have those periods of rainfall and it can really go right down and then you are forced to go up to fairly high restrictions right away.



Industry - Tourism

- it is such a draw card for our towns and people notice ... if people come up from Melbourne ... they like to see greenery and like to relax so there are still those expectations that we should water our key parks.
- ... our major tourist time is summer which is when the river flows at its slowest so you have got like two competing demands there.



Industry – Park Management



- ... the trees are under a great deal of stress because we had two fires in fairly close proximity and drought on top of that ... The mountain ash ... in the higher elevations ... rely on fire to germinate their seeds. ... but if another fire comes through and kills off the smaller ones there is just not that seed back to germinate.
- Green Core run 6 months program for youths ... mainly focusing on willow removal and blackberry removal and re-vegetation

Industry - Agriculture



- ... the creeks are drying up ... there was a place up Mountain Creek had a swamp and now it's a drain in the last three years



- Quite a few of them have packed up and moved into the city because it is not working, we can't have the cows, we have to have water and we can't grow the grass because we can't irrigate so people are moving out.

Learning Strategies

- [Shire newsletters] ... showcase some things that Council are doing to save water which then flows on to what people can do at home.
- ... an in-schools community education officer ... works ... with students, but also with teachers
- I grew up with not being allowed to waste water ... and it's just a matter of habit.
- a lot of people find out about these things through water restrictions.
- there's not enough research and there's not enough information out there, so you can't make a valued judgement.



Opportunities for VET

- Integrate water issues into industry training using Training Packages units on sustainability
- Address water issues through community programs using Employability Skills framework
- Needs:
 - A coherent policy approach (federal & state)
 - Innovative curriculum design
 - Strategic focus on longer-term needs
 - It's time for VET to step up to the plate

Photos: Slides 1, 4, 7 & 9 by Annette Foley
Slides 2, 3, 5, 6, & 8 from: <http://www.alpinelink.com.au/gallery2/main.php> 12/ 3 /
2010