



MORNINGTON
PENINSULA
Shire

RECYCLED WATER

What we are asking

Help the Mornington Peninsula secure a high-quality alternative water supply for agriculture and other uses, through \$50 million recycled water supply infrastructure upgrades for the Tyabb-Somerville Recycled Scheme.

Our Unique Advocacy Context

The Mornington Peninsula is covered by 70% Green Wedge rural land with unique attributes including a fertile maritime climate, diverse soil types that are critical to Victoria's food economy and security,

yielding the second highest value food production region per hectare in Victoria.

The Eastern Treatment Plant discharges about 370 million litres per day of high-quality recycled water at Gunnamatta (equivalent to filling the MCG every 4 days), via a large pipeline running the length of the Peninsula. This volume is anticipated to increase 30% by 2050 to 474 million litres per day.

Tapping into that recycled water would greatly increase our resilience to climate change by drought proofing sustainable food production and grow the local nursery and garden industry.

KEY POINTS

- \$5M to prepare detailed design, cultural heritage and planning approvals
- \$45M to construct Tyabb-Somerville Recycled Water Scheme
- Second highest value food production region per hectare in Victoria
- Victoria's nursery and garden industry worth \$2.5 billion, employing over 24k people (2020/21).
- Support 5,300 agricultural jobs, 11% of local economy
- Reduce wastage of 370M litres of Class A recycled water each day
- Infrastructure investment to protect the circular food economy





Why this is important

We are a world-class agricultural region and an integral part of Melbourne's food bowl, producing large volumes of high-quality fruit and vegetables year-round.

Across the Mornington Peninsula, agriculture:

- contributes \$225 million in gross value
- represents 11% of the local economy
- provides 5,300 jobs, or 12.5% of total employment.

The ongoing sustainability of our \$1.3 billion agriculture, food and beverage sector, one of the key local growth industries, is under threat from lack of access to water.

The discharge of Class A recycled water through the South-Eastern Outfall is an untapped opportunity to:

- deliver a water supply, resilient to changes in climate, that reduces reliance on limited drinking and natural water, increases drought-resilience, promotes economic growth in the agricultural sector, supports sustainable farming and food supply and enhances our natural environment.
- reduce the impact of outflow water on sensitive marine environments, currently being discharged into Bass Strait at Boags Rocks, Gunnamatta.

The opportunity to make better use of recycled water produced by the Eastern Treatment Plant and local wastewater treatment plants is a step towards a more circular economy and has been widely embraced by industry stakeholders and the wider community.

The Benefits – Supporting Evidence and Strategies

A Business Case and Investment Logic Map was developed by Frontier Economics for the Tyabb-Somerville Recycled Scheme in 2020, demonstrating the economic value of the scheme. The viability of the project is supported by the Victorian Integrated Water Management Forums, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and South East Water.

The Mornington Peninsula is rich in scale and diversity of food systems, emphasised by quality and seasonality. Regions suited to agriculture, close to markets and with reliable water supply are becoming increasingly valuable.

There is significant interest and support for the benefits of recycled water:

Industry Groups include Mornington Peninsula Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) Branch; AusVeg Victoria; Nursery and Garden Industry Victoria; Mornington Peninsula Wine; Food Economy and Regenerative Agriculture Taskforce; Tourism Board MPRTB; Hinterland Tourism Association; Red Hill Agriculture and Horticulture Society.

Environmental Groups include Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network; Westernport Catchment Landcare Network; Southern Peninsula Indigenous Flora and Fauna Assoc; Clean Ocean Foundation; Surf Riders Association; Save Tootgarook Swamp.

Access to recycled water will grow the economic potential of the local agricultural sector. The Tyabb-Somerville region is critical to supplying Melbourne with vegetables and nursery plants. The benefits extend beyond farms – infrastructure investment will supply water to community sporting and recreational grounds that require water throughout the year and supply our emergency services with water, across a bushfire prone area

Alignment to Council Plan

Theme 2: A robust, innovative and diverse economy, including agricultural growth. Strategic objective 2.2 includes fostering a strong Mornington Peninsula food economy and supporting farmers, through a variety of food business.

