

Smart Water Fund

Final Report

Year 9 and 10 Conference

Prepared by:

**Gillian Vanderwaal,
Community Education Coordinator,
GWMWater**

With the support of the Smart Water Fund

31 May 2012

Executive Summary

GWMWater identified the need to provide an education program for secondary school students. The idea of a water conference based on an adult style conference was developed.

Students were asked to research their local water situation and investigate the question 'Is our water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond?'

Support was sought from the Ballarat University Horsham Campus for the use of facilities to accommodate the conference and broadcast it live across the internet to a world wide audience.

Over a three year period the conference has developed into a program to provide students with knowledge to prepare them as ambassadors for water wherever they go at the conclusion of their secondary education.

Teachers from the participating schools value the conference as part of their curriculum. Students appreciate being treated like adults. They enjoy the opportunity to learn more about the issue of water in their local area which consists of the Grampians, Wimmera and Mallee regions. Links with Melbourne and beyond provide them with information on water as an issue wherever you live.

The GWMWater conference program is highly recommended for water corporations wanting to provide an education program for secondary level students.

Table of Contents

BACKGROUND	3
INTRODUCTION	3
OBJECTIVES/GOALS	4
KEY STEPS / MILESTONES.....	4
MILESTONE DESCRIPTION	4
Milestone 1	4
Milestone 2	4
Milestone 3	5
Milestone 4	5
Milestone 5	5
Milestone 6	5
METHODOLOGY	6
RESOURCES.....	6
TIMING.....	6
FINANCIAL SUMMARY	7
FINDINGS/RESULTS/OUTCOMES	7
RISK MANAGEMENT	7
DISCUSSION/EVALUATION.....	8
RETURN ON INVESTMENT	8
CONCLUSION.....	8
RECOMMENDATIONS	9
REFERENCES	9
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	9
DOCUMENT STATUS.....	9
APPENDICES	10
APPENDIX 1: 2007 WATER CONFERENCE PLAN	10
APPENDIX 2: REPORT ON INAUGURAL YEAR 9 AND 10 WATER CONFERENCE, 2007 ..	12
APPENDIX 3: AWA WATER EDUCATOR'S CONFERENCE, PRESENTATION PAPER.....	14
APPENDIX 4: REPORT ON YEAR 9 AND 10 WATER CONFERENCE, 2008.....	18
APPENDIX 5: REPORT ON YEAR 9 AND 10 WATER CONFERENCE, 2009.....	21
APPENDIX 6: WATER CONFERENCE EVALUATION SHEETS.....	23
APPENDIX 7: GWMWATER MEDIA RELEASES	29
APPENDIX 8: YEAR 9 AND 10 CONFERENCE PROGRAM AND KEY QUESTIONS	32

Background

GWMWater serves a population of approximately 70,000 people with activities extending across 62,000 square kilometres, or around 30% of Victoria. The quality of water supplied varies from fully treated water supplied to larger towns, to untreated water delivered to some of our smaller towns and rural customers.

The region covers the driest part of the state and consequently our customers have always appreciated water as a precious resource. The ongoing period of lower than average rainfall has further increased everyone's awareness of the importance of water.

GWMWater is responsible for the implementation of the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline Project, with completion due in 2010. This \$688 million project will see 17,500kms of open earthen channels replaced with a 9,000km piped water distribution system.

GWMWater's schools education program is developed and tailored to suit local conditions, however traditionally it has concentrated on primary level students.

In 2006 we set ourselves the challenge of developing a program to reach students in Years 9 and 10. With the Victorian Education Department implementing the Essential Learning Standards, the time was right to develop a program that was relevant to student's study methods, as well as based around the most important issue facing us all – water scarcity.

Introduction

GWMWater identified that many programs surrounding the study of water were available to Primary Schools, but Secondary Schools were often difficult to engage. With the Victorian Essential Standards (VELS) implemented in schools, it was timely to identify and develop a program that covered the key aspects of VELs.

The aim of the water conference was to empower students with knowledge on water issues for them to become our ambassadors wherever they go in their future.

The intention of the Year 9 and 10 water conference was to invite participating schools who will be linked with an interstate school as identified by GWMWater. Through research, report writing, poster development, presentation and participation in focus groups, a program was developed that lead into an adult style conference.

Students were asked to research local water use and look at the impact on the individual, community and the environment. They then considered what changes needed to take place, if any, to ensure our water use is sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond.

Schools were encouraged to link up with a nominated school in Melbourne and have a conversation around their key issues, while also hearing what metropolitan students thought of the water issue.

With the support of the Ballarat University Horsham Campus and funding from the Victorian Government's Smart Water Fund, the program was initiated in 2007 to develop over a three year period. In this time it was anticipated the program would be established as a highly desirable event for Year 9 and 10 students in our region.

Five or six schools in the GMMWater region were involved in presentations for each conference. This was limited to enable all schools involved to attend the conference. Timeframes and auditorium capacity were prohibitive in allowing a larger number of schools to attend given the framework around the conference.

All schools in the GMMWater region, linked schools, as well as education and water organisations around the country were invited to watch the conference live via the University of Ballarat website. This was not entirely successful due to various problems with technology.

Objectives/Goals

- Deliver a water education program to secondary students in an adult style conference
- Invite six schools from a cross section of the GMMWater region to be involved
- Invite six Melbourne schools to be involved through the Water Live It –Learn It! Program
- Invite interstate schools to be involved through linking up with schools within the GMMWater region
- Arrange web casting of the conference through the Ballarat University, Horsham Campus facilities
- Invite a young keynote speaker to attend who has a water related story to tell (for example the winner of the Australian Junior Water prize)
- Invite media to report on the conference
- Prepare a conference book from students reports
- Conduct conference
- Produce a suite of DVDs as a tool to encourage future school involvement locally as well as a resource for other water corporations seeking to undertake a conference
- Encourage other water corporations to run similar conferences for secondary students through presentations at the AWA water educators conference and the Victorian Water Educators Network

Key Steps / Milestones

Milestone Description

Milestone 1

Detailed Project Plan and Communications Plan to be prepared by the Grantee and approved by the SWF by 31 March 2007. Refer Appendix 1

Milestone 2

Conduct conference in accordance with the detailed project plan.
Report to be prepared and submitted to SMF.

Milestone 3

Conference presentations placed on website

Visit www.gwmwater.org.au and type student conference in the search box.

Milestone 4

Presentations completed to VicWater Education Network Group, AWA Education Network Group, Metro Melbourne Water Business Education Committee and others.

A report was delivered at the Victorian Water Educators meeting held on 13 July 2007.

Gillian Vanderwaal presented a paper at the AWA Water Educators Conference held on the Gold Coast in April 2008. A verbal presentation was followed by viewing key parts of the conference DVD. The conference was attended by delegates from around Australia.

Refer Appendix 3

Gillian Vanderwaal delivered a presentation at the Victorian Water Educators Forum held at Cowes in February 2008. The forum was attended by delegates from water corporations in Victoria. A short verbal presentation was followed by viewing the conference DVD.

Gillian Vanderwaal spoke informally to the Victorian Water Educators Task Group on the success of the conference in 2007 and 2008. This provided the opportunity to identify Olivia Rajitt from Melbourne Water as a key note speaker for the 2008 conference.

The Water Live It – Learn It! Program Manager subsequently attended the 2008 conference and was actively involved in arranging links with Melbourne schools for the 2009 conference. This will be further improved in the 2010 conference as discussions include bringing students from Melbourne to attend and present in the future.

Milestone 5

Refer Appendix 4

Milestone 6

Refer Appendix 5

Methodology

Evaluation sheets were provided to students and teachers attending the conference each year. Attendees were encouraged to complete sheets prior to leaving the conference venue.

Refer Appendix 6

Resources

- Ballarat University Horsham Campus auditorium, classrooms and foyer/eating area
- Ballarat University IT Technician to oversee and operate webcasting and equipment
- Ballarat University cafeteria for food preparation and delivery
- Ballarat University video conferencing facilities
- Brown Video production staff and filming equipment to film day for both webcasting and production of DVD
- Marty Lieske Sound equipment and staff to ensure sound is compatible with webcasting, heard clearly around the auditorium which included roving microphones, as well as for DVD production
- GWMWater staff including:
 - Ø Sustainability Division staff – produced the skits as well as assisted with the general running of the day
 - Ø Communications Division staff – produced all pre-conference materials as well as post conference materials and ran the day
 - Ø Community Education Co-ordinator – program manager
 - Ø Engineers as actors in skit
 - Ø Managing Director participated in entire day
 - Ø Chairman conducted the opening address and participated in entire day
 - Ø Executive Manager Stakeholder and Governance participated in entire day
- MC – facilitated proceedings on the day
- Conference satchels provided for the day filled with items from GWMWater, Ballarat University, Dial-Before-You-Dig, and other ‘freebies’.
- Keynote speakers

Timing

Schools were approached at the end of the year prior to the conference. This is vital in ensuring they can plan for the conference in the coming year.

The conference was set for the end of the first semester. This time suited fitting in with University timetable for facility use, as well as school planning.

Financial Summary

Financial expenses include travel to conferences to deliver information.

Funding Summary for Milestone 2		
Source	Amount	
	\$	In kind
Smart Water Fund	34,500	0
GWMWater	10,000	30,000
Ballarat University	0	18,000

Findings/Results/Outcomes

Key feedback received included:

- Students generally believed that our current water use is not sustainable and that more needs to be done to ensure its sustainability into the future.
- More work needs to be done in regard to water substitution (reclaimed water use) and new technology (desalination), however there was little consideration given to the potential environmental impacts of these 'solutions'.
- The maintenance of sporting facilities is extremely important as these are seen to provide both social and economic benefits to their local communities.
- As future customers they would be prepared to pay more for water to ensure security of supply. The direct benefits that a secure water supply offers to regional communities, particularly in terms of quality of life for residents and tourism opportunities were identified.
- A belief that customers in our region generally rely on rainwater for drinking and household use.
- Very positive response to the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline, which they believe will go a long way to solving the regions current water situation.
- Students believe if storages become full we should never forget that Australia is a country of droughts and always have some form of water restriction.

Risk Management

A visual risk assessment of the venue was undertaken prior to the event to determine any potential risks.

The venue was booked early and for future conferences a letter of continued support has been received from the university.

Continual communication with schools encouraged them not to drop out of the program.

Technology break downs resulted in the web casting being interrupted. A phone link up was in place to allow students in Melbourne to continue with their presentation. For 2010 a Melbourne school will physically be presenting in Horsham to eliminate the problem of technology interrupting their presentation.

To alleviate the problem of students wandering off during meal breaks, these were kept as short as possible. The program was also kept tight to hold attendees interest during the day.

Discussion/Evaluation

The project has been continually developed to identify what has worked and what has not.

The linking to interstate schools did not work well and the linking to Melbourne schools has had problems. Teachers left it too late to link with each other to ensure the conversations took place prior to the conference. To overcome this in 2009 the 'Water Live It – Learn it!' Program Manager and team each nurtured a school to be involved. These schools then provided a short presentation of their findings via telephone link up. In 2010 one Melbourne school will be invited to attend and personally deliver their presentation at the conference.

In 2009 a video call link with a New Zealand school took place during the conference. This was extremely successful as students in NZ explained their water situation. Students attending the conference were amazed to hear about a six week drought that resulted in more severe water restrictions than in our region. Given that we have been in a twelve year drought it was very difficult for our students to comprehend the need to restrict toilet flushing for a six week drought! This is seen as a valuable addition to the conference and will be included in the future. Other potential countries are being considered for a short presentation in future conferences.

The conference program has proven itself as a tool to educate young people on the issue of water in the community, both locally and beyond. Students have taken the issue seriously and participated in presentations, discussion and reports.

GWMWater's management has taken the program seriously with attendance and participation at the conference at all levels from Board level through to Management and staff.

Return on Investment

N/A

Conclusion

Yr 9 and 10 Secondary School Students Water Conference has proven to be a successful education program. Through the work undertaken prior to attendance at the conference students have learnt a lot about their own area while at the conference itself they have learnt about the wider world we live in.

The students reports were comprehensive and showed an understanding of the key question 'is our water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond?'

While the links did not work in the way initially planned, further investigation will improve the communication stream and enable a flow of information between country and city.

A relationship between key players and the water corporation was needed to ensure the program was completed within the necessary timeframes.

Recommendations

Water corporations wanting to engage secondary students will find the conference program fits in with school curriculum.

A relationship needs to be developed between the teacher at each participating school and the water corporation conference coordinator to ensure successful participation.

The provision of conference satchels filled with giveaways provided students with a reminder of their participation.

Web casting the conference in entirety is not necessary to ensure information is provided to a wide audience. By placing material on websites it is available to those interested in the research.

References

N/A

Acknowledgements

GWMWater acknowledges the support of the Ballarat University Horsham Campus and the Victorian Government's Smart Water Fund.

The staff and management of GWMWater, teachers.

Document Status

Version No.	Author	Date
1.0	Gillian Vanderwaal, Community Education Officer	01/09/2009

Appendices

Appendix 1: 2007 Water Conference Plan

Details	Responsibility	Completion due	Progress
Prepare documentation for schools outlining program	GWMWater	August 2006	Completed
Ensure availability of venue	GWMWater, Uni of Ballarat Horsham campus	31 August 2006	Completed
Invite Facilitator	GWMWater	End of Feb 2007	Rod Gale from Galeforce Marketing has accepted.
Invite six regional and interstate schools to participate and secure commitment GWMWater region schools: Lake Bolac College, Rainbow Secondary College, Horsham College, Donald College, Murtoa College Interstate schools: St Mary's College Toowoomba Qld, Mountain Heights School Queenstown Tas, Alstonville College NSW, Kinross College WA.	GWMWater	End of 2006	Completed
Co-ordinate Melbourne Metropolitan Schools involvement. School to be advised	GWMWater, Kylie Scudamore City West Water	Jan 2007	Schools in Water LILI invited to submit an application to attend in 2007. Applications close 31 Mar 2007
Confirm date and availability with film production company.	GWMWater, Brown Video Productions	Jan 2007	Completed
Invite keynote speaker, Linda Van, Australian Junior Water Prize winner 2006	GWMWater	Jan 2007	Completed
Satchels ordered with logos	GWMWater	January.	Delivery due mid April
Investigate web cast facilities	Uni of Ballarat	18 May 2007	In Process
Send out detailed information to participating schools.	GWMWater	15 Feb 2007	Completed
Contact schools regarding their progress	GWMWater	March and April	ongoing
Identify satchel contents	GWMWater, Smart Water Fund, Uni of Ballarat	March 2007	commenced
Invite media	GWMWater	8 May 2007	

Details	Responsibility	Completion due	Progress
Papers for inclusion in conference book received.	GWMWater, participating schools	1 May 2007	
Print conference book	Wimmera Design and Print	12 May 2007	
School banners received.	GWMWater, participating schools	12 May 2007	
Conference satchels packed	GWMWater	17 May 2007	
Conference takes place	GWMWater, Uni of Ballarat, schools	18 May 2007	
Liaise with film company regarding final DVD production.	GWMWater, Brown's video production	July 2007	
Send out research papers and DVD to all schools in region, interstate participating schools, VicWater, AWA and interstate participating water authorities and VAEE.	GWMWater	July 2007	
Place on GWMWater website and Uni of Ballarat website	GWMWater, Uni of Ballarat	July 2007	
Present information to Victorian Water Educators meeting	GWMWater	Meeting date to be confirmed	
Present paper at AWA Water Educators conference.	GWMWater	April 2008	
Evaluation	GWMWater, Uni of Ballarat, schools	July 2007	

Appendix 2: Report on Inaugural Year 9 and 10 Water Conference, 2007

'Is OUR Water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond?' Year 9 and 10 water conference 18 May 2007

**Project Manager:
Gillian Vanderwaal, GMMWater**

The inaugural Year 9 and 10 water conference titled 'Is OUR water use sustainable today tomorrow and beyond?' was held at the Ballarat University Horsham Campus on Friday 18 May 2007.

Over 120 students attended the conference from across the region. Students provided written reports that were published in a conference book and delivered a fifteen-minute presentation on their findings. Banners and posters produced by the students were on display for viewing during meal breaks.

Students were also involved in focus groups, which discussed key questions on water sustainability. As part of their discussions they looked at the questions from their own perspective as well as the perspective of specific sections of the community. Community sectors were farming, women, local government, sports players and business owners.

Chief Executive Officer of GMMWater, Peter McManamon addressed students and took questions from them. Students were very pleased to see their opinion being valued by the management of their local water corporation.

Valuable feedback from students was recorded and reported to the board of GMMWater. This included:

- Ø concerns that current water use is not sustainable
- Ø that more work needs to be done in regard to water substitution and new technology
- Ø maintenance of sporting facilities is important in local communities
- Ø as future customers they would be prepared to pay more for water to ensure security of supply

Key note speaker Linda Van, winner of the Australian Junior Water Prize spoke to students about her experience in winning the prize and where it has taken her. Students and teachers are now investigating future participation in the Australian Junior Water Prize.

ABC radio recorded interviews with students for The Country Hour and breakfast programs.

Local print media provided coverage of the conference. Reports were published in the AWA's WEN news, Vicwater's Water Matters newsletter and GMMWater's Tapping In customer newsletter.

A report was delivered at the Victorian Water Educators meeting on 13 July 2007.

The conference was broadcast live across the internet. Invitations were extended to schools, Vicwater members, Australian Water Association members and educators from across the GWMWater region, in metropolitan Melbourne and interstate. Many hits were recorded throughout the conference presentations.

A DVD has been produced from the conference. The DVD is a vital tool to be used for encouraging schools to be involved in the 2008 conference.

Unfortunately we were unable to engage a Melbourne school for this year, however we are now planning the best way to involve several Melbourne schools for 2008.

Plans are now being formed to improve the 2008 conference to include a wider range of schools from the GWMWater region as well as the Melbourne metropolitan area.

Appendix 3: AWA Water Educator's Conference, Presentation Paper

EMPOWERING SECONDARY STUDENTS

Gillian Vanderwaal
GWMWater

ABSTRACT

GWMWater's program titled: *'Is OUR water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond?'* works with Year 9 and 10 students to empower them with knowledge to become water ambassadors.

The idea for the program came from attending the 2006 AWA water educator's conference in Alice Springs. Listening to the many presentations, it became obvious that there are many excellent programs for primary schools, but not so many for secondary schools.

To develop the program we have worked closely with the education department and teachers to provide a trans-disciplinary research project. Students cover the key question 'Is OUR water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond?' through research, report writing, poster development, banner production and graphic design.

The conclusion of the program takes the form of a one-day conference at our local university auditorium. The keynote speaker for 2007 was Australian Junior Water Prize joint winner for 2006, Linda Van.

In this presentation we will outline the steps taken to develop the program and the partnerships that have ensured it's success, as well as the things that did not work so well!

Keywords: Empower. Trans-disciplinary. Research. Ambassadors. Partnerships.

INTRODUCTION

GWMWater serves a population of approximately 70,000 people with activities extending across 62,000 square kilometres, or around 30% of Victoria. The quality of water supplied varies from fully treated water supplied to larger towns, to untreated water delivered to some of our smaller towns and rural customers.

The region covers the driest part of the state and consequently our customers have always appreciated water as a precious resource. The ongoing period of lower than average rainfall has further increased everyone's awareness of the importance of water.

GWMWater is responsible for the implementation of the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline project, with completion due in 2009-10. This \$688 million project will see 17,500kms of open earthen channels replaced with a 9,000km piped water distribution system.

GWMWater's schools education program is developed and tailored to suit local conditions, however traditionally it has concentrated on primary level students.

In 2006 we set ourselves the challenge of developing a program to reach students in Years 9 and 10. With the Victorian Education Department implementing the Essential Learning Standards, the time was right to develop a program that was relevant to student's study methods, as well as based around the most important issue facing us all – water scarcity.

STARTING POINT

The idea to run an annual conference for Year 9 and 10 students was borne in 2006. But where to start? How do we ensure a program is developed that secondary schools will embrace? What is essential to capture the enthusiasm for learning of Year 9 and 10 students and empower them with knowledge to ensure they are our ambassadors for water wherever they go in the future? What outcomes are we after?

We met with the Department of Education Central Highlands Region Senior Education Officer Graeme Sargent and Cluster Coordinator Marg Scott for direction and advice about our idea and they were very enthusiastic about the idea. After discussions about how to shape the idea into a program they put us in touch with teachers Murray Robinson and Steve Leach from Rainbow College, who were working on developing trans-disciplinary learning programs and implementing them into their school.

First we needed to come up with the key question for students to research. We then had to put some framework around the question and work out how it would fit within key learning areas. At the same time it was important that a flexible approach was taken to allow schools to fit it around their curriculum. Another important piece of advice was to approach schools before the end of the preceding school year. This way there was a greater chance of participation as many teachers plan the next year programs at the end of the current year.

PARTNERSHIPS

The University of Ballarat Horsham Campus was approached and readily agreed to be a partner in the program by providing the use of their auditorium, classrooms, foyer, IT specialist and video conferencing facilities.

An application to the Victorian Smart Water Fund was successful in obtaining a grant for three years to enable the program to become established in our region. A key criteria for the grant was to share the program with other Australian Water Industry educators. The Smart Water Fund also asked us to find ways to include Melbourne metropolitan schools.

IMPLEMENTATION

Considering all this advice, it was agreed that the inaugural conference would be held at the University of Ballarat's Horsham Campus on 18 May 2007

We developed the key question for the conference of 'Is OUR water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond?' Students were asked to research current water use in their local area, as well as projecting water use into the future based on today's practices. Things they were asked to consider included:

- Ø What are the impacts on the individual, community and environment?
- Ø What changes will make a difference?

Each school then prepared a report for inclusion in the conference book and prepared to deliver a presentation on their findings at the conference. Students also designed and produced a banner representing their school and a poster for display at the conference. Students also had the option of designing the front cover for the conference book.

Written reports, copies of the presentations, banners and posters were all received by GWMWater prior to the conference and a book was produced containing the reports for students to take away as a record of their research.

After weeks of research, report writing and preparation, students came together at the full day conference in Horsham, which was webcast through the Ballarat University's website.

We were fortunate to have the joint winner of the 2006 Australian Junior Water Prize, Linda Van from Brisbane, as the keynote speaker for the conference. School presentations, an interactive session with key GWMWater representatives and discussion groups all made up the remainder of the day. Galeforce Strategic Marketing from Melbourne generously provided the MC for the day

All attending students and teachers received a healthy lunch and morning tea and a backpack filled with items with an environmental theme.

To assist schools in attending GWMWater provided \$250 towards teacher release and there was no cost to attend. Transport costs were the responsibility of the schools.

ENCOUNTERED PROBLEMS (WHAT WE LEARNT?)

As part of the research for 2007, participating schools were asked to have a 'conversation' with an interstate school, with each school provided with contact details for an interstate school. Only one of the schools involved was able to successfully set up a discussion between themselves and their designated interstate school. For 2008 we are working with the 'Water Live It Learn It' team to set up a 'conversation' between each of our schools and six designated Melbourne schools. We also plan to have representatives from one of the Melbourne schools attend the conference.

Due to restrictions associated with the number of students we could fit in the conference venue, we only invited six schools to be involved. Each school we approached indicated their enthusiasm to be involved. Unfortunately two schools pulled out during Term One, leaving us with four participating schools. It was too late to invite another school to take part in the whole program.

We then invited a local school to attend the conference and present information on their sustainability programs including the new straw bale building that has been built on their school grounds. This was a solution that we do not have available each year.

Some of the school reports had inaccuracies and one report was over 30 pages in length. For 2008 we are providing criteria for the reports to address these issues.

Six schools from our region have been personally invited to participate in the 2008 program. The GMMWater Community Education Coordinator has visited each invited school to meet with the Year 9 Co-ordinator and Principal to outline the program and leave behind an information pack. They also receive a copy of the previous year's conference book and a DVD of the conference .

It is important participating schools commence their research as early as possible. Some schools left it until the last minute and found it a bit of a rush. For 2008 we will be recommending schools start early and, as encouragement, we are sending out the book 'Our Water Mark' with the compliments of the Victorian Women's Trust, as well as the books 'The Weather Makers' and 'An Inconvenient Truth' with the compliments of Pacific Hydro. We will also remain in regular contact with the participating schools to encourage them along their journey.

CONCLUSION

GMMWater was very pleased with the success of the 2007 conference. Schools approached to participate in the 2008 conference are very enthusiastic about the program.

In 2008 we plan to further utilise the webcast by providing students that are unable to attend, but have been involved in the research, with the opportunity to be involved in the conference by video conference.

Our water conference for Year 9 and 10 students has become an annual event.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The conference would not have been possible without the full support of staff and management at GMMWater, Ballarat University Horsham Campus and the Smart Water Fund.

CONTACT

Gillian Vanderwaal Community Education Coordinator GMMWater
PO Box 481 Horsham Victoria 3402 Tel: 1300 659 961
E-mail: gillian.vanderwaal@gmmwater.org.au

Website: http://www.gmmwater.org.au/com/water_conference.html

Appendix 4: Report on Year 9 and 10 Water Conference, 2008

'Is OUR Water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond?' Year 9 and 10 water conference 13 June 2008

**Project Manager:
Gillian Vanderwaal, GMMWater**

The second Year 9 and 10 water conference titled 'Is Our water use sustainable today tomorrow and beyond?' was held at the Ballarat University Horsham Campus on Friday 13 June 2008.

Background:

GMMWater identified that many programs surrounding the study of water were available to Primary Schools, but Secondary Schools were often difficult to engage. With the Victorian Essential Standards, VELs, implemented in schools, it was timely to identify and develop a program that covered the key aspects of VELs.

The aim of the water conference was to empower students with knowledge on water issues for them to become our ambassadors wherever they go in their future.

Through research, report writing, poster development, presentation and participation in focus groups, a program was developed that lead into an adult style conference.

Students were asked to research local water use and look at the impact on the individual, community and the environment. They then considered what changes needed to take place if any to ensure our water use is sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond.

Schools were encouraged to link up with a nominated Melbourne school and have a conversation around their key issues, while also hearing what metropolitan students thought of the water issue.

With the support of the Ballarat University Horsham Campus and funding from the Victorian Government's Smart Water Fund, the program was initiated in 2007 to develop over a three year period. In this time it is anticipated the program will be established as a highly desirable event for Year 9 and 10 students in our region.

Process:

Prior to the end of 2007, we secured a date with Ballarat University Horsham Campus for the 2008 conference. The Ballarat University IT staff were booked and the streaming of the conference secured. A sound professional and video filmmaker were engaged to ensure the conference streaming was heard and seen clearly over the internet.

A keynote speaker was identified, invited and secured early in Term one.

GWMWater visited schools in Term four of the year prior to the conference and personally invited the Principal and Year 9 and 10 Co-ordinators to participate in the conference. A comprehensive information pack was provided outlining the program and timelines.

Conference satchels were ordered and 'free stuff' with an environmental or health focus was sourced to place in the satchels for students.

Early in Term one further information was sent to the participating schools, along with some valuable books on water. In Term two personal visits to the classes of participating schools took place by GWMWater staff to highlight some of the discussion issues and answer any questions schools may have.

In the week prior to the conference email invitations were sent to Vicwater, Australian Water Association, Department of Education and other key organisations for distribution through their networks so anyone could access the conference throughout the day.

Over 90 students attended the conference from across the region. Schools participating in 2008 were Ararat, Edenhope, Dimboola, Horsham, Charlton and Warracknabeal.

Students provided written reports that were published in a conference book and delivered a fifteen-minute presentation on their findings. Banners and posters produced by the students were on display for viewing during meal breaks.

Students were also involved in focus groups, which discussed key questions on water sustainability. As part of their discussions they looked at the questions from their own perspective as well as the perspective of specific sections of the community. Community sectors were farming, women, local government, sports players and business owners.

Managing Director of GWMWater, Jeff Rigby and GWMWater Chairman Barry Clugston addressed students and took questions from them. Students were very pleased to see their opinion being valued by the management of their local water corporation.

Valuable feedback from students was recorded and reported to the Board of GWMWater. This included:

- Past generations may have wasted water but by acting now some certainty can be put in the future sustainability of water.
- Surveys showed that most people are saving water by having shorter showers.
- Some students believe the whole state of Victoria should be on Stage 4 water restrictions
- Further water saving technology should be developed
- With the onset of Global Warming we should be planning now sse we are prepared for what research and studies are predicting will happen in the future.

- More grants from the Government should be available for rainwater tanks.
- The Wimmera Mallee Pipeline is seen to be a positive step in saving water for the region.
- That current water use is not sustainable for farmers.
- When we return to secure water storage levels we should continue with water restrictions in preparation for the next drought cycle.
- Australia should consider treating wastewater to drinking water standards.

Keynote speaker Olivia Rajit from Melbourne spoke on her family experience with water growing up in Borneo.

The conference was streaming live across the internet through the Ballarat University website. Throughout the day many people took the opportunity to log on and watch the student presentations and through the internet, ask questions. Next year we anticipate using the technology to better value. We are currently investigating ways to involve more schools through access to the conference via the internet.

Issues Arising

The conference streaming did not work well this year, with only one school making the link work.

As part of the sharing of information, schools involved were encouraged to contact a linked Melbourne school to discuss findings. This did not work well this year with only one school making the link.

To improve this aspect of the sharing of information from the research, GWMWater is setting up a meeting with the 'Water Learn it! Live it!' program manager in Melbourne. Through the use of live web streaming we hope to have interacting on the conference day with Melbourne students in 2009.

Two of the participating schools had a student free day on the conference day. This meant the numbers were down slightly, though many students affected by this still attended.

Feedback from teachers stated the program was valuable and they would be involved again, but realised they needed to start work a bit earlier.

Appendix 5: Report on Year 9 and 10 Water Conference, 2009

'Is OUR Water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond?' Year 9 and 10 Water Conference 2 June 2009

**Project Manager:
Gillian Vanderwaal, GMMWater**

The third Year 9 and 10 water conference titled 'Is OUR water use sustainable today tomorrow and beyond?' was held at the Ballarat University Horsham Campus on Tuesday 2 June 2009.

Students from Ararat College, Birchip P-12 School, Dimboola Memorial College, Edenhope P-12 College and Horsham College attended the conference from across the region. Students provided written reports that were published in a conference book and delivered a fifteen-minute presentation on their findings. Banners and posters produced by the students were on display for viewing during meal breaks.

Students from Bayside College Altona, Pascoe Vale Girls College, Catholic Regional College Caroline Springs and Tauranga Girls School New Zealand, all linked in remotely to present information on water in their patch. Students attending were both amused and surprised to hear from the New Zealand students that they also had once experienced drought which saw the need for water restrictions— for six weeks!!

Keynote speaker Gwyllin Klippel-Cooper presented an informative talk on his journey to win the Australian Junior Water Prize which took him to represent Australia in Stockholm Sweden.

Research Fellow with Deakin University Warrnambool, Dr Michelle Graymore, gave a short presentation on her work for Wannon Water on the barriers to getting people to change habits with water use.

Executive Managers for GMMWater Andrew Rose and Stephen Jewell answered probing questions from the students on water issues in local areas and remained involved for the entire day.

GMMWater board member Bonnie Thompson opened and closed the conference.

The ABC radio rural reporter recorded interviews with students for The Country Hour and breakfast programs.

The conference was broadcast live across the internet. Invitations were extended to schools, Vicwater members, Australian Water Association members and educators from across the GMMWater region, in metropolitan Melbourne and interstate to log in to watch the presentations via their own computers.

A short advertisement style DVD will be produced from the conference. The DVD is a vital tool for encouraging schools to be involved in the 2010 conference.

Plans are now being formed for the 2010 conference with a view to tailoring the involvement of the metropolitan presentations and further fine tuning the running of the program.

Appendix 6: Water Conference Evaluation Sheets

Teachers responses

What to you see as the biggest benefit of today?

- Wonderful learning exercise – kids treated as ‘professionals’ – sharing was great.
- Learning experience.
- Sharing ideas, public speaking and presentation skills for kids.
- Sharing thoughts on this impact.
- Seeing the students work together to produce their presentation; starting to question thinking and ideas on water usage.
- Kids seeing the culmination of research.
- The overall experience – researching, putting info together, then coming together with other groups.
- Interaction, participating of the young minds.
- Interaction, sharing of ideas – respect given to students.

Did GWMWater provide sufficient assistance and if not, how can they improve?

- Yes – but I could have accessed more info.
- Yes.
- Excellent assistance – well done.
- Yes.
- Yes.
- Yes.
- Yes, problem was passing info from staff to staff in school.

Is there anything you would like to add?

- Group discussions too big – could halved each up – use teachers as additional facilitators.
- Top effort, well done.
- Thanks for opportunity.
- GWM needs to sponsor and publicize the young water competition.
- Could be suggested to schools that kids be informed re content before attending. Many kids surprised by questions and expectations – provoke of thought.

Students responses	Yes	No
--------------------	-----	----

Have you enjoyed the day?	78	4
Would you attend again?	63	19

Was enough time allowed for:		
- presentations	80	2
- group discussions	73	9
- question time for speakers	78	4
- question time for forum	79	3

Are you pleased with the sling bag and contents?	78	3
Comments about bag and contents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Super! • Very awesome • Yes! • Maybe food too 	

Morning tea: choice of 2 variety of muffins and/or fruit basket. **Lunch:** choice of ham or chicken salad roll, slice, piece of fruit, fruit box or previously arranged 'special diet' lunch.

Was the food sufficient?	71	9
--------------------------	----	---

If no is your answer,
please explain.

Yes:

- It was good. Maybe more sugar next time. J
- Great food!!! J
- Best.
- It was great.
- Yes, it's kool.
- Beautiful food! Thank you!
- Yummy!
- It tasted nice and there was a range of it.

No:

- I did not like the chicken!
- I didn't like it.
- I didn't like the lunch food.
- More meat, less salad.
- Something more tasty.
- The drinks weren't really my taste. I don't like ham.
- Bad food (KFC).

Other:

- Lunch was fine, but I think that there wasn't enough for morning tea.
- More muffins necessary.

What do you see as the biggest benefit of today?

- I do now.
- Free stuff. (4)
- Learning about different towns and their difficulty with water.
- Listening to different opinions.
- Learning more about the water sustainability and meeting and talking to other schools.
- Learning more about other people and their communities.
- Learning lots from others' views.
- Learning lots about other peoples towns.
- Learning lots about other peoples town.
- Day off school. (6)
- No school work.
- Awareness of water issues on a broader scale.
- Free stuff. Business cards.
- Learning about water. (2)
- Getting stuff.
- Learning stuff about different towns' water issues.
- Free stuff ... eh... er ... and free food.
- Learning how to save water.
- The bags.
- Seeing how the drought affected different communities.
- Learning how much water is important.
- Learning how much water is important.
- Understanding more about drought.
- Yea. Good.
- We walk out knowing what we didn't know.
- Learning about water.
- Learning.
- Learn about other towns problems.
- Learning about salinity.
- We finally get to see our hard work pay off.
- Seeing how other districts are affected.
- It was good.
- Water pollution and quality.
- Finding out about other situations around the area.
- Experience a conference; more aware of water problems.
- More knowledge on water.
- The pipeline.
- Learning about the affect of the drought and hearing all the ideas.
- Seeing how other communities in the Wimmera are coping with the drought.
- Everyone coming together and talking about saving water.
- Seeing what other people think of the drought.
- Learning.
- Sharing ideas.

What do you see as the biggest benefit of today? (continued....)

- Meeting people.
- Learning more.
- Hearing what others think.
- Learning about water.
- Learning about what other people think.
- Learning about the affect of water on our lives.
- Learning about water problems all around the region.
- That we have learned of the water crisis to a greater depth.
- Water use awareness.
- Information.
- Learned much about water.
- Seeing what different schools and towns are going through and what they are doing about it.
- All the youth coming together to present their presentation.
- Learning new things.
- Learning different views on the drought and water efficiency.
- Getting ideas and information from other people.
- Learning more about water.
- Learning.
- Learning about other schools, towns and their water situation.
- Learning about how the drought is in other places.
- Education of areas and problems other than our own.
- To experience the atmosphere of the conference. Hearing other peoples views.
- Sharing ideas and learning from other students.
- It may cheer up the professional water managing people seeing some youth with good ideas.
- Learning about different regions and their water problems.
- The laborious effects contributed from all different types of people were rewarding.
- The laborious efforts put in by all the schools.
- I learnt better was to conserve water.
- Expanding our knowledge of areas around Horsham and around Australia, and hearing/comparing water crisis'.
- We learnt about other areas.

Is there anything you would like to add?

- Thank you.
- Great day.
- Great.
- I think subject is very important and we need to act now!!
- Another day off.
- It was good.
- There is always water if you are willing to pay for it.
- It was a great day and very informative and fun.
- It felt extremely pressured the whole time. The information was good and the day enjoyable.
- I found the whole thing awesome!
- Didn't need so many business cards.
- I wasn't sure what to expect but it was fun and interesting.
- Motorbikes.
- Prizes for everyone.
- More toys.
- More food.
- More food.

Appendix 7: GMMWater Media Releases

Communications

The following media releases were prepared and forwarded to all local media, including print press and radio.

GMMWater Year 9 and 10 Water Conference

On Friday 18 May 2007 over 100 Year 9 and 10 students from Lake Bolac, Donald, Horsham, Murtoa and Rainbow will come together in Horsham to present their findings on the topic "Is OUR Water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond."

The conference, which will be held at the Ballarat University Horsham Campus auditorium, will commence with an address by Linda Van, joint winner of the 2006 Australian Junior Water Prize representing Australia in Stockholm, Sweden for the international Stockholm Junior Water Prize.

In preparation for the conference, students from the participating schools have fully researched local water use and the impact on the individual, community and environment.

Students will present their key research findings at the conference, which will be streamed live on the internet. Access by clicking on the link on the front page of the GMMWater website www.gmmwater.org.au.

This is an opportunity for young people to share their views on current water use and what changes may need to be made to ensure a sustainable water future for our region.

We are pleased to extend an invitation to representatives from your organization to attend the conference, which will commence at 9.50am and conclude at 3pm.

Issued: 9 May 2007

Students Streaming on Water

GWMWater is running a water conference for Year 9 and 10 students on 13 June 2008. The conference titled "Is OUR water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond" will be streaming live across the internet.

The conference is the second in a three-year program being run by GWMWater designed to empower secondary students with knowledge about water issues, while at the same time exposing them to an adult-style forum.

For several months students have been working on research to challenge their thinking about current water use for themselves as an individual and as part of a local community, but also as part of Australia and the big picture.

Prior to attending the conference students have investigated what changes, if any, need to be made to ensure a sustainable future for themselves and their children.

Dimboola, Charlton, Warracknabeal, Edenhope, Ararat and Horsham College students will all make presentations on their findings at the conference.

"It is often difficult to obtain the perspective of our young people in the community. Through this event GWMWater aims to obtain a youthful perspective of water issues and future directions," said GWMWater Managing Director Jeff Rigby.

"Students will also be provided with the opportunity to join a web based committee for a year to further discuss water issues, ensuring that the voice of youth continues to be heard by the GWMWater Board."

As part of the lead up to the conference students will submit a written report for publication and a poster for display.

Delivery of student findings at the conference and discussion groups will provide students with the opportunity to investigate questions posed on the day and provide valuable feedback.

Keynote speaker Olivia Rajit from Melbourne Water will address students on her experiences with water in her home country of Malaysia.

People interested in accessing the live stream should contact Gillian Vanderwaal at GWMWater on 1300 659 961.

The conference will be held at the University of Ballarat Horsham Campus and is supported by the Victorian State Government's Smart Water Fund.

Issued: 30 May 2008

Students present finding on Sustainable Water Use

GWMWater is running a water conference for Year 9 and 10 students on 2 June 2009. The conference titled "Is OUR water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond" will be streaming live across the internet.

Approximately 100 students from Dimboola, Birchip, Edenhope, Ararat and Horsham College will all be making presentations of their findings at the conference.

Students have been working on research to challenge their thinking about current water use for themselves as an individual, as part of a local community but also as part of Australia and the big picture, investigating what changes, if any, need to be made to ensure a sustainable future for themselves and their children.

Students from each school have submitted a written report for publication and a poster for display. Students will present their findings at the conference and discussion groups will provide students with the opportunity to investigate questions posed on the day and provide valuable feedback.

Keynote speakers Daffyd and Gwyllim Klippel-Cooper will talk to the students about their experience in entering and winning the Australian Junior Water Prize. As the Australian winners, they were flown to Stockholm in Sweden to represent Australia.

Students from Tauranga Girls School in New Zealand will also be taking part over the internet. Through a telephone link up, these students will provide a short insight into water where they live. Other remote links will be with students from Caroline Springs, Bayside and Pascoe Vale.

"It is important, and often a challenge, to engage with our young people in the community and gain their perspectives. Through this event GWMWater is seeking to obtain a youthful perspective of water and future directions", said Managing Director Jeff Rigby.

"Students will also be provided with the opportunity to join a web based committee for a year to further discuss water issues and ideas. This will ensure the voice of youth continues to be heard by GWMWater."

People interested in accessing the live stream should contact Gillian Vanderwaal at GWMWater on 1300 659 961. The conference will be held at the University of Ballarat Horsham Campus and is supported by the Victorian State Government's Smart Water Fund.

Issued: 29 May 2009

Appendix 8: Year 9 and 10 Conference Program and Key Questions

Program for 2008 as example

Year 9 and 10 Water Conference 13 June 2008
“Is OUR water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond?”

University of Ballarat Horsham Campus

MC Rod Gale from Galeforce Marketing, Melbourne

Program

- 9.15am** Registration
- 9.40am** Welcome - ***Barry Clugston Chairman GWMWater and Terry Lloyd Vice Chancellor Uni of Ballarat (5 minutes each)***
- 9.50am** School introductions - ***1 student from each school***
- 10.15am** Keynote Speaker Olivia Rajit from Melbourne Water
- 10.35am** Morning Tea (***in foyer of building opposite see the signs***)
- 10.50am** School presentations – ***Horsham, Dimboola, Charlton***
- 11.40am** Interactive session with GWMWater’s Chairman Barry Clugston and Managing Director Jeff Rigby
- 12noon** Lunch
- 12.30pm** School presentations - ***Warracknabeal, Ararat, Edenhope***
- 1.20pm** GWMWater’s Sustainability team presentation
- 1.30pm** Open forum (break into mixed groups) ***Name tags are colour coded. Please follow the person holding your colour card.***
- 2.15pm** Outcomes of discussion groups (***Nominate a student to report back***)
- 2.40pm** Presentations etc -
- ***Present cover winner with MP3 Player***
 - ***Web based committee and ask students to email their reflections of day to: youngideas@gwmwater.org.au***
 - ***Encourage students to consider Stockholm Junior Water Prize***
- 2.45pm** Closing - Everyone must complete an evaluation sheet before leaving!

2007 Conference Years 9 and 10

The key question

“Is OUR water use sustainable today, tomorrow and beyond?”

- Investigate current water use in your local area, as well as the future based on today’s practices.
- Look at your personal use, as well as your whole household’s use.
(Consider personal hygiene, gardens, kitchen, bathroom, laundry etc.)
- What ways is water used in the local urban community?
(Consider washing down buildings, cleaning, parks and gardens, recreational uses, swimming pools, footy ovals etc.)
- What ways is water used in the local rural community?
(Consider intensive industries such as pigs and chickens, stock, irrigation and other uses.)
- What are the impacts of today’s water use practices on you as an individual, your local community as well as the environment.
(Consider your future in your current location and where you may go to live if you move away.)
- Will your local town be the same in years to come – or will it either shrink or grow?
- Will crop and stock production change in local farming enterprises.
- What about local waterways as well as where your water originates from, flora and fauna.
(We encourage you to talk to your local Catchment Management Authority and other appropriate departments and local organizations.)
- What changes are needed to make a difference if any?
(Things you may consider are individual change in everyday activities, industrial or commercial changes (if applicable to your area), farm practices, water delivery and management, water harvesting.)
- Based on what you discover, do you think we are using water in a sustainable manner for both the near and distant future?
- Do you think your children will use water in the same manner that you do?

Contact your linked interstate school. **Compare their water situation with your own, using the dot points above as a guideline.**

P.T.O.

Prepare a written report on your findings for inclusion in the conference papers. (One per school). This will be distributed widely across Australia through the water industry as well as schools. This may be provided electronically as a word doc. If you are using photos they must be also provided as a jpeg file or original hard copy for reproduction. **Reports must reach GWMWater before 1 May.**

Produce a poster A1 in size for display at conference. (One per school). The poster is to be a short overview of your key findings. **This must be delivered to GWMWater before 11 May.**

Design and produce a banner representing your school for display at the conference. (One per school). We want everyone there to know you are present! We encourage creativity in the use of colour and design. Banner must be one metre wide and 1.5 metres long. You may do this in textiles, graphics or art. Remember, we need to be able to hang them up. **This must be delivered to GWMWater by 11 May.**

Optional: Design a front cover for the conference program. This needs to be A4 size and sent in to GWMWater electronically or on CD. **We will be providing an MP3 Player for the lucky student whose front cover is selected!** Please contact myself for more information.

You will be required to deliver a presentation, no more than 15 minutes in duration, at the conference. Your presentation will cover the key findings of your school's research. Please contact myself to discuss the format of your presentation. **If using power point, please provide CD or memory stick to GWMWater before 8 May.**

- The conference **will be recorded** and a **DVD produced**. The final DVD will be distributed to Victorian and National water industry organizations, as well as schools.
- The conference will be podcast.
- We are also investigating a **live webcast**.
- **Media** will be present during the day.

Students will take part in a forum at the conference. Be prepared to discuss where to from here!

We acknowledge Ballarat University Horsham Campus and the Victorian State Government's Smart Water Fund for their support of this program.

Gillian Vanderwaal
Community Education Co-ordinator
GWMWater