



MEDIA RELEASE

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Western wetland an outstanding success

The South Australian Jockey Club has backed a winner with the wetland at Alan Scott Park Morphettville, providing significant savings on its watering costs.

The 3.5 hectare, \$2.5 million wetland, celebrating its fifth birthday, is a joint project between the SAJC and the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board.

As well as providing major water savings, the wetland, situated in the middle of the racecourse, is also delivering key benefits for the environment by reducing the run-off of polluted stormwater to Gulf St Vincent, reducing pressure on the underground aquifer and creating a diverse aquatic ecosystem.

The General Manager of the AMLRNRM Board, Mr Kym Good, said the project had achieved remarkable results.

“It plays a vital role in preventing pollutant nutrients, heavy metals and suspended solids from reaching the Patawalonga Basin and the marine environment,” he said.

Mr Good said the project had the potential to deliver 500 megalitres of treated stormwater annually into the aquifer beneath the racecourse, during winter, for use in summer. The racecourse needs about 120ML a year to keep the track in top condition.

“It’s a showcase on stormwater reuse and industry innovation in stormwater management in a built-up residential area,” he said.

The Operations and Facilities Manager of the SAJC, Brenton Wilkinson, said the project was proving to be an “outstanding success.”

“It is providing us with major savings because we don’t need to use mains water to water the racecourse,” he said.

“We are now using the ASR water for irrigating the majority of Allan Scott Park Morphettville with plans to extend the system to irrigate the whole venue.”

Mr Good said work on the aquifer started in 2001/2002 and the first stormwater was injected in 2003.

The catchment area for the wetland is about 460 hectares, with the stormwater flowing from two drains in Bray Street, south of the racecourse. Water enters a sediment pond where floating litter is collected in a net and large materials settle out.

The water is then piped into the wetland, where it is filtered through a series of deep and shallow marshes before being injected into the tertiary limestone aquifer beneath the surface of the racecourse via two 65 metre-deep wells.

During the summer months the water in the aquifer is recovered and used for irrigation of the racecourse.

Mr Wilkinson said more than 100,000 indigenous plants had been planted to create a natural ecosystem to filter the stormwater and also provide a home for birds, fish, tiny water creatures (macroinvertebrates) and frogs.

Thousands of frogs of different species had been introduced and they were thriving, which was a good indicator of the quality of the water.

“We now have billions of them. We have them everywhere,” Mr Wilkinson said.

“At night you can hear the Banjo frogs everywhere. The frogs are breeding really well.”



