
From: Out of scope
Sent: Thursday, 5 November 2020 9:30 AM
To: Out of scope; OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist
Cc: Out of scope
Subject: RE: Lead in duck samples - heads up

Thanks Out of scope – Good news!

Regards

Out of scope

Out of scope
Environmental Public Health

Environment Protection Authority Victoria
200 Victoria St, Carlton
Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au | www.epa.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at EPA. If I'm sending this message outside of normal business hours it's because it suits me. There is no expectation that you will respond outside your working hours.

Follow us    

A healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria, now and always.

From: Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au
Sent: Thursday, 5 November 2020 9:15 AM
To: OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist <OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>
Cc: Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au; Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au;
Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au
Subject: RE: Lead in duck samples - heads up

Hi Out of scope

Thanks for your email. I had a lovely Melbourne Cup day though I don't follow the races to be honest 😊

I understand the uncertainties with the budget (all fingers crossed for November!). I do have good and fresh news regarding this investigation. Yesterday, I received an email from Out of scope at ARI. Out of scope was able to confirm that there are several ducks in their freezers. I'm now organising the analysis of these ducks so hopefully we get results before Christmas. I'm waiting for more information from Out of scope but we probably won't need to collect new ducks, phew!

I'll keep OCES updated as the investigation progresses.

Regards,

Out of scope

Out of scope
Water Sciences

Environment Protection Authority Victoria
Centre for Applied Sciences, Macleod

Out of scope [redacted] @epa.vic.gov.au | www.epa.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at EPA. If I'm sending this message outside of normal business hours it's because it suits me. There is no expectation that you will respond outside your working hours.

Follow us    

A healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria, now and always.

From: OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist <OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 5:44 PM

To: Out of scope [redacted] @epa.vic.gov.au

Cc: Out of scope [redacted] @epa.vic.gov.au; Out of scope [redacted] @epa.vic.gov.au;

Out of scope [redacted] @epa.vic.gov.au; OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist

<OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Lead in duck samples - heads up

Hi Out of scope [redacted]

I hope you're well and you had a nice Melbourne Cup.

Just wanted to send an update regarding this email from early October. Unfortunately we have no further clarification regarding future funding for emerging contaminants.

We are expecting some budget announcements in late November (24/11 approximately).

Kind regards

Out of scope [redacted]

Out of scope [redacted]

Applied Science & Chief Environmental Scientist

Environment Protection Authority Victoria
200 Victoria St, Carlton

Out of scope [redacted] @epa.vic.gov.au | www.epa.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at EPA. If I'm sending this message outside of normal business hours it's because it suits me. There is no expectation that you will respond outside your working hours.

Follow us    

A healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria, now and always.

From: OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist <OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 7 October 2020 4:41 PM

To: Out of scope [redacted] @epa.vic.gov.au; OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist

<OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>

Cc: Out of scope [redacted] @epa.vic.gov.au; Out of scope [redacted] @epa.vic.gov.au; Out of scope [redacted]

@epa.vic.gov.au; Out of scope [redacted] @epa.vic.gov.au

Subject: RE: Lead in duck samples - heads up

Thanks for your thoughts, Out of scope [redacted]

There are some EPA-wide discussions currently occurring on a new EPA Emerging Contaminants Program. Andrea will hopefully have information to share with us soon regarding any funding.

Let's hold tight and hopefully I can provide an update by the end of the week 😊

Kind regards

Out of scope

Applied Science & Chief Environmental Scientist

Environment Protection Authority Victoria
200 Victoria St, Carlton

Out of scope [@epa.vic.gov.au](mailto:Out of scope@epa.vic.gov.au) | www.epa.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at EPA. If I'm sending this message outside of normal business hours it's because it suits me. There is no expectation that you will respond outside your working hours.

Follow us    

A healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria, now and always.

From: Out of scope [@epa.vic.gov.au](mailto:Out of scope@epa.vic.gov.au)
Sent: Wednesday, 7 October 2020 4:21 PM
To: OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist <OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>
Cc: Out of scope [@epa.vic.gov.au](mailto:Out of scope@epa.vic.gov.au); Out of scope [@epa.vic.gov.au](mailto:Out of scope@epa.vic.gov.au); Out of scope [@epa.vic.gov.au](mailto:Out of scope@epa.vic.gov.au); Out of scope [@epa.vic.gov.au](mailto:Out of scope@epa.vic.gov.au)
Subject: RE: Lead in duck samples - heads up

Hi Out of scope

Yes, I've been considering monitoring options for these two wetlands in case there are no more archived samples that we can access for re-testing (ARI staff is not allowed to get into the building which means they haven't been able to check their freezers yet).

In terms of understanding health and environmental risk, sampling will need to include the collection of ducks and environmental (water, sediment, soil) samples. In terms of how this is delivered, I think there are two options:

Option 1

Engage ARI to do the fieldwork. I believe this is the most viable option, especially when considering the permits and approvals (such as the Animal Ethics). We engaged ARI for our biota emerging contaminants project in 2018 so we have good connections and experience working with them. I'm unsure about the situation for them with current COVID conditions and future uncertainties but, in the past, ARI coordinated all fieldwork, including the collection and dissection of ducks, preparation of Animal Ethics, permits, safety procedures, and site access approvals by land managers (if required). This option is the quickest and most effective way to obtain the samples. Depending on COVID restrictions, we might be able to get samples and do a risk assessment before the duck hunting season next autumn.

In terms of costs, laboratory analysis will be low as we are only analysing for lead. For example, 20 ducks will be around \$1500. Fieldwork will take most of the cost. To give you an idea, ARI charged EPA \$150,000 for all fieldwork in our 2018 biota project. This covered all the cost for 19 wetlands in the state. This time we're considering only two wetlands. I've put together the below table with some estimations based on fieldwork costs from 2018 (please note that I'll need to confirm with ARI).

Task	Cost
Field sampling and sample processing	10000
Animal Ethics, permits, approvals	?
Laboratory analysis for 20 ducks, water, sediment and soil	2000
	> \$12,000.00

I'm coordinating a meeting with [Out of scope] from ARI to talk about the feasibility, alternatives, costs, etc. I'll be able to give you more information after that.

Option 2

The other option to deliver the sampling is EPA leading fieldwork. , i.e., accepting ducks from hunters through F&GA, processing ducks, etc. The risks that I see with this option are the possibility of identifying a high risk in the middle/end of the hunting season (so health risk and also reputational risk) and of completely missing the hunting season if cancelled due to COVID. Laboratory costs will be the same as option 1 but fieldwork will be lower.

Finally, how do we get the resources to pay for this (either option) is the big question. I think once we have an idea of costs we can think about alternatives and I'll very much appreciate your help on this. I do recall that for the 2018 biota emerging contaminants project we were expecting the contribution of other members of the Interagency Working Group, which unfortunately didn't happen. This doesn't mean we won't get support this time, but I do think we have to be realistic, especially given the current situation with COVID.

As soon as I get more information I'll let you know. It is a challenge to engage with other agencies under COVID and everything takes more time than it would do under normal life. Also, Leon is on leave at the moment, but I hope I can discuss these options with him next week (given that he coordinated the 2018 sampling).

Let me know if you have any questions/thoughts.

Kind regards,

[Out of scope]

[Out of scope]

Specialist Applied Scientist - Freshwater Water Sciences

Environment Protection Authority Victoria

Centre for Applied Sciences, Macleod

[Out of scope] @epa.vic.gov.au | www.epa.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at EPA. If I'm sending this message outside of normal business hours it's because it suits me. There is no expectation that you will respond outside your working hours.

Follow us 

A healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria, now and always.

From: OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist <OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 5 October 2020 5:58 PM

To: [Out of scope] @epa.vic.gov.au; OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist <OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>

Cc: [Out of scope] @epa.vic.gov.au; [Out of scope] @epa.vic.gov.au; [Out of scope] @epa.vic.gov.au; [Out of scope] @epa.vic.gov.au; [Out of scope] @epa.vic.gov.au

Subject: RE: Lead in duck samples - heads up

Thanks, [Out of scope] (and no need to apologise – I hope you had some lovely leave!)

Are you able to provide an indication of how much consideration has been given to more environmental monitoring in the interim and how this could be delivered? Would be great to understand any further thoughts on next steps if possible 😊

Kind regards

Out of scope

Applied Science & Chief Environmental Scientist

Environment Protection Authority Victoria
200 Victoria St, Carlton

Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au | www.epa.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at EPA. If I'm sending this message outside of normal business hours it's because it suits me. There is no expectation that you will respond outside your working hours.

Follow us    

A healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria, now and always.

From: Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 5 October 2020 3:25 PM

To: OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist <OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>

Cc: Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au>; Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au>; Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au>; Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au>; Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Lead in duck samples - heads up

Hi Out of scope

I'm sorry for the delay in getting back to you, I was on leave last week.

I've been in conversations with NMI and ARI to locate duck samples from the two wetlands that we are investigating. Unfortunately, NMI has already used the few samples that they had stored. ARI has still to confirm if they have any ducks in their freezers, although this seems to be unlikely. I've also contacted Field & Game Australia but they haven't responded yet.

In summary, it seems that we won't have any archived duck samples to re-analyse. I'll follow up with ARI and Field & Game Australia this week. I'll keep you posted on this. I'll also start mapping options in case we need and decide to collect new samples.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

Out of scope

Out of scope

Water Sciences

Environment Protection Authority Victoria
Centre for Applied Sciences, Macleod

Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au | www.epa.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at EPA. If I'm sending this message outside of normal business hours it's because it suits me. There is no expectation that you will respond outside your working hours.

Follow us    

A healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria, now and always.

From: OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist <OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 1 October 2020 1:00 PM

To: Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au>; OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist

<OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>

Cc: Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au; Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au

Subject: RE: Lead in duck samples - heads up

Hi Out of scope

Just following up – do we have any further information on this one at all?

Kind regards

Out of scope

Applied Science & Chief Environmental Scientist

Environment Protection Authority Victoria

200 Victoria St, Carlton

Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au | www.epa.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at EPA. If I'm sending this message outside of normal business hours it's because it suits me. There is no expectation that you will respond outside your working hours.

Follow us    

A healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria, now and always.

From: Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au

Sent: Wednesday, 23 September 2020 12:22 PM

To: OCES - Office Chief Environmental Scientist <OCES@epa.vic.gov.au>

Cc: Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au; Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au; Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au; Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au; Out of scope @epa.vic.gov.au

Subject: Lead in duck samples - heads up

Hi Out of scope

I'm sending this email as a heads up about a potential issue with lead in ducks in two wetlands in north central Victoria. Out of scope and I have been working on this issue after I revisited the duck results from the 2018 biota emerging contaminants project and found that some duck samples had high lead concentrations. The concentrations were above FSANZ guidelines for lead.

The laboratory NMI did the original analysis and had a few samples stored from the two wetlands. Last week, we requested a re-analysis of these samples. The new results came on this Monday and confirmed high levels of lead in duck tissue. Again, well above the FSANZ. However, the samples were limited and Rob, Leon and I agreed that the new results are insufficient to make any conclusions about health risk (more so because some results look quite strange and we have concerns about their accuracy). Therefore, we need to analyse more duck samples from the two wetlands to understand what's going on.

I'm currently trying to locate more of the old samples. We know that NMI doesn't have any more left but there is a chance that ARI has some. If this is not the case and we can't find any of the old samples, the last option will be to collect and analyse a new set of ducks from the two wetlands. For this, we will need the approval from Andrea to proceed.

I hope I can have a clearer picture soon. In the meanwhile, please feel free to contact me if you need more information or have any questions.

Out of scope – please feel free to add to this email if you feel I'm missing something.

Kind regards,

Out of scope

Out of scope

Water Sciences



Environment Protection Authority Victoria
Centre for Applied Sciences, Macleod

Out of scope

[@epa.vic.gov.au](https://twitter.com/epa.vic.gov.au) | www.epa.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at EPA. If I'm sending this message outside of normal business hours it's because it suits me. There is no expectation that you will respond outside your working hours.

A healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria, now and always.

Follow us    



EPA acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and we pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We're an inclusive workplace that embraces diversity in all its forms.

