

# Planting a pathway

**In a little nursery in Orbost, Moogji Aboriginal Council has been growing big ideas.**

The greenhouse was recently built to raise seedlings to plant along the banks of the Snowy River as part of the Snowy River Rehabilitation Project, administered by East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (CMA).

"We're using seed collected from the same sites we'll plant them back in to," Bianca McLaren, from the Moogji works crew, said.

"It's quick and easy to collect the seed when we're working by the riverbanks."

Moogji Aboriginal Council has a long working relationship with the CMA and other partner agencies.

CMA chief executive officer, Graeme Dear, said involving Aboriginal people to improve the health of local rivers is a key priority of the Water Plan for Victoria.

Developing the greenhouse compliments the work they have been undertaking on the Snowy River Project and allows the organisation to continue to diversify.

This initiative has been established to involve young people, and the broader Aboriginal community, in growing plants as a pathway into upskilling and employment.

Latia LeSage has just started year 10, but spent her summer holidays doing work experience at the greenhouse helping to prepare and plant the seedlings.

"I don't have a green thumb at all, but I enjoy the work," she said.

"I like to come and plant the seeds and it's pretty cool to see them starting to grow."

"Growing plants is good for your soul," Bianca said.

"If we can provide on-the-job experience knowing that it's going to have a direct impact on the river we live near then everyone benefits."



**Bianca McLaren, Sam and Latia LeSage in the new greenhouse built by the Moogji Aboriginal Council in Orbost. (PS)**