


Ebbs and flows on the Wonnangatta



Murray Gibbs has seen plenty of ebbs and flows on the Wonnangatta. 

Murray Gibbs is more familiar than most with the changing face of the Wonnangatta River.

A fifth generation farmer he's seen firsthand what nature can do, especially to the 10 kilometres of river frontage that runs through his property.

"When a flood comes down it just rushes on through," Murray said.

"The Pinnacles reach 5000 feet and there's not much between them and me, so it's a fairly big roof.

"It's got a large gable on it so the water rushes down and then it's gone in 24 hours."

Gone, but not forgotten, leaving a path of debris along the riverfront paddocks.

"The 2007 flood was a particularly big one but the river flats have always been a changing

thing and they always will be when you get those big ones," Murray said.

He's spent the last decade working alongside the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority to help reduce flood damage to his properties.

By using rock to stabilise the riverbank and replanting several hundred metres of his frontage, the riverbank has become more resilient to the forces of nature and fencing ensures that his cattle are off the river allowing the plants to take hold and grow and help to manage his stock.

"It makes the farm management quite easy, the rocking has had a good effect and the trees are taking well, so I think this is working," he said.