

Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee
Outcomes - Meeting 36, 10 August 2010

1. Chairs introduction

The Chair welcomed members to the 36th meeting of the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure meeting.

2. Apologies

Ron Croker, Doug Joyner

3. Confirmation of outcomes from previous RFFTEC meeting

The draft outcomes of the 35th RFFTEC meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting. **Moved:** Max Graham **Seconded:** Tom Williams **Carried.**

4. Action Items from meeting 35

The progress of action items from the previous meeting was noted.

5. Recreational Fishing Trust Report

The status of the Freshwater Trust was presented. The Committee was advised that approximately \$13 million dollars had been received to the Trust from recreational fishing licence sales in 2009/10. The income to the Freshwater Trust in 2010/11 will be \$4 million dollars. Approved allocations in 2009/10 are approximately \$3.9 million..

6. Review of new 2010 Freshwater applications

New applications (large and small grants) for funding from the Freshwater Trust reviewed by the Committee's are shown in Tables 1-3 of the Appendix.

7. Trust program updates – presentations

a) *Freshwater compliance* – Mr Glenn Tritton provided an update on recreational compliance activities for 2009/10. The report included details on the top ten recreational fishing offences, compliance actions taken, seizures of illegal gear and significant court outcomes. Details were also provided on state wide operations held over this period and status of recruitment of new Fisheries Officers to inland and coastal areas.

b) *Inland Education Officer* - Mr Brett Smith provided a summary of education activities undertaken during the past 12 months. A total of 90 events have been attended and 22,000 contacts had been made. Events attended include fishing competitions, schools, major field events, fishing workshops and habitat restoration activities over this time. New shade sails have been installed at the Narrandera Fisheries Centre to provide sun protection for children where fishing workshops take place. A fishing workshop was recently run at the Australian Rural Education Centre Mudgee. This event was shown on WIN news and also featured in several newspapers. A DVD of the WIN news report was shown to the Committee.

c) *Recreational fishing calendar* - Ms Sarah Boyd provided a summary of the freshwater fishing calendar photo competition noting that over 300 entries have been received for the 2011 calendar. To date, the calendar has been matched with \$1.50 in sponsorship for every \$1 provided from the Trust. The Committee reviewed & commented on the proposed design / layout of the 2011 calendar. The Committee also viewed and ranked photographs for inclusion in the 2011 calendar.

e) *Gaden hatchery and tour guide* - Ms Kelly Reader advised that the hatchery guided visits are being advertised on six websites including Tourism Snowy Mountains. A monthly

advertisement is also being placed in the local newspaper and a full page advertisement has been arranged for Trade Travel which is sent to various seniors groups, including Probus clubs. The Visitors Information Centre is being upgraded to provide a more interactive, informative and enjoyable experience for the general public. An open day is planned at the hatchery on 11 November 2010. A meeting of the Gaden Hatchery Implementation Committee was held on 19 July 2010. The business plan for the hatchery is in the final stages of development and will be distributed to Committee members soon.

f) *Catch and release mortality* – Dr Karina Hall discussed the results of three field experiments assessing the fate of Australian bass after incurring barotrauma (at Lakes Glenbawn and St Clair, and Karangi Dam). The results showed a generally high rate of fish survival, despite fish being rapidly removed from depths greater than 10 metres. Ms Hall advised that fish that could re-submerge upon release should be left untreated. A deep weighted hook and line should be used for fish unable to re-submerge. Venting of swim bladders should only be undertaken by experienced operators to avoid accidental haemorrhaging in fish. Tag and release studies on survival of caught / re-released Australian bass, golden perch and Murray cod are continuing. A magazine article titled “Caught a tagged bass” detailing the benefits of this research has been published to encourage tag returns, particularly from non-tournament anglers.

f) *Effects of Stocking* – Dr Lee Baumgartner advised that a research program is being undertaken to investigate batch marking success of Murray cod stockings in the Murrumbidgee, Edward and Murray River in-conjunction with University of Adelaide and Arthur Rylah Institute. This study is using non lethal calcein marking techniques for hatchery produced fish in private and Government fish hatcheries to discriminate wild and stocked fish sampled from the wild. This study will help determine the overall contribution of stocking to the population of fish in each reach being sampled. A study investigating the recent changes in size limits on Murray cod in the Murrumbidgee and Murray rivers will be conducted in the future. An additional; study will look at size of Cod at maturity, recreational fishing take and the percentage of wild recruitment of Murray cod in the Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers

f) *Freshwater catfish genetics and future restocking* – Dr Meaghan Rourke provided a report on population genetic structure of freshwater catfish in NSW as a guide to future restocking programs. The results of research showed that the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB) is comprised of a single Ecological Sustainable Unit and that coastal populations in the Richmond, Clarence, Tweed and Brunswick form a distinct genetic clade to the populations in the MDB and coastal populations further south. The report recommended three separate broodstock collection & stocking zones for future stocking programs in the MDB, except stocking in populations above Tenterfield Falls and MacIntyre Falls. The report recommended that each coastal catchment be recognised as a separate broodfish collection & stocking zone, as each catchment, with the exception of the Macleay and Hastings catchments, was found to be comprised of a distinctive Ecological Sustainable Unit. An additional study to determine the habitat requirements for self sustaining freshwater catfish populations is being prepared and will include the requirements for gaining approval for a freshwater catfish stocking program.

8. General business

Ballina Habitat Forum

Mr Kevin McKinnon submitted a report on the outcomes of the Habitat Forum in Ballina on 18th and 19th of June.

Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme

A report updating progress of implementation of the Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme prepared by Mr Ian Lyall was circulated to members.

Purchase of residual water at dams for bulk storage

A stakeholder proposal was received from Mr Robert Lockwood regarding use of licence funds to purchase residual water at Pindari Dam to improve recreational fishing amenity and ensure a minimum of 10% of water capacity at the dam was maintained. The Committee did not support the purchase of water entitlements with recreational licence fees. Any ownership of water at the dam would also result in part responsibility for maintenance of dam infrastructure, which was considered beyond the scope/capacity of the Trusts. The State Water Corporation has advised that there are no immediate plans to reduce water levels in Pindari to critically low levels. The dam is currently at around 50% of storage capacity. As such, the purchase & maintenance of water was not considered a priority for funding at this time.

Action item: That a letter be written to Mr Robert Lockwood advising that the Committee does not support the use of licence funds to purchase residual water at Pindari Dam.

Monitoring of fishing competitions

Ms Danielle Ghosn, discussed the methodology of monitoring inland fishing events. Limits to program funding did not allow for vigorous assessment of fish populations on a catchment wide basis however data collected and submitted from volunteers was valuable as it provided a baseline snapshot of status of fish populations within these systems. The program manager is currently investigating statistical models to remove external factors (such as variations in weather, location, time of year, fishing gears etc) when analysing data to provide a more accurate measurement of fish population status. The project team is meeting with competition organisers to improve quality control in the data collection.

Management of fishing competitions

Mr Bryan van der Walt advised that the Chair of the Marine Parks Advisory Council has tasked I&I NSW with organising a working group to provide options to the Marine Parks Authority to facilitate the development of a policy for managing recreational fishing competitions in marine parks. A working group has met twice and a draft discussion paper has been developed by I&I NSW on the basis of these discussions. The paper may also include options for competitions outside of marine parks. A member of this Committee was invited to join the stakeholder working group to provide input on freshwater competitions.

RFFTEC appointments

I&I, NSW advised that an expression of interest seeking nominations for membership to fill vacancies arising on the Committee in May next year in regions 1, 4, 5, 7 & 8 will be released in the near future. Incumbents may wish to re-apply for upcoming vacancies on the Committee.

Request from the Land Based Aquaculture Industry to attend a future RFFTEC meeting

Cameron Westaway advised a request from the Aquaculture Industry had been received to attend a future expenditure committee meeting to discuss an increase in the dollar for dollar program budget to account for rising primary production costs. RFFTEC did not see a benefit in receiving a presentation noting that the Trust budget was currently fully subscribed, however Industry could provide a letter or written submission about funding for the program in the future.

Action item: That a letter be written to the Land Based Aquaculture Industry advising that a letter or written submission could be submitted to RFFTEC about funding for the aquaculture program in the future.

Government Licensing Service cost set to increase

The NSW Government Licensing Service has undertaken a pricing structure review and associated recreational fishing licence transaction costs will increase from October 2010. Concern was expressed regarding the proposed impact on the licensing administration budget. I&I NSW is currently looking at options to increase cost efficiencies of the system, including outsourcing sales to Australia Post Outlets and refining licence structure. More information will be provided at subsequent meetings.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Friday 29th of October, 2010 at the Gaden Trout Hatchery and Fishcare AGM in Jindabyne.

APPENDIX

Table 1 - New Trust Project Applications supported by RFFTEC for funding

Platform: Recreational fishing education

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
<p>'Fishing NSW' – iPhone App [FW and SW Trust Pre-proposal] To design and develop an iPhone app for fishing enthusiasts and a general audience to easily gain up-to date information on various fish species, rules and regulations that pertain to bag and size limits on recreational, salt and freshwater fishing within NSW. Motion: The Committee gave in principal support for the program to be developed via a tender process to ensure value for money and competitive selection of a preferred supplier. I&I NSW to submit a funding application for funding of the proposed tender contract. RFFTEC: Moved: Kevin McKinnon. Seconded: Debbie Lennon. Carried. RFSTEC: Moved: Geoff Shelton. Seconded: Lisa Terry. Carried. Note: Brian Hutchinson (RFSTEC) advised that the Apple University Consortium (AUC) operates a program where students from various universities carry out scientific studies relating to Apple Macintosh software which may significantly reduce the costs of this project.</p>	Image Mechanics	-		
Small Projects				
<p>Narrandera Fish and Family Fund Day To hold an open day at the Narrandera Fisheries Centre to showcase aspects of fish ecology, fish stocking and research projects and to involve the community in a range of fishing & research demonstrations / activities. Motion: RFFTEC supported funding for the project. Moved: Richard Ping Kee Seconded: Kevin McKinnon Carried</p>	Industry and Investment NSW	\$7,690		

Table 2 - New Trust Applications deferred by RFFTEC

Platform: Recreational fishing education

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Small Project				
<p>Building participation and awareness amongst students in the Northern Tablelands To host three sustainable fishing / fish habitat seminars at Pindari and Copeton Dams for 350 high school students from Inverell High School. Motion: RFSTEC requested that the application be deferred to the "Fishcare Volunteer", "Get Hooked – it's fun to fish" and "Fishing Workshops" programs for further development. Moved: Kevin McKinnon. Seconded: Max Graham Carried.</p>	Gwydir / Macintyre Resources Management Committee	\$9,800		

Table 3 – New Trust Project Applications *not supported* by RFFTEC

Platform: Fishing access and facilities

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
<p>Narromine wetlands carp eradication program To hold a recreational carp fishing competition to assist in take / removal of carp from a freshwater lakes system in Narromine and restocking of the Lakes with native fish species. Motion: RFFTEC did not support funding for this project. Moved: Kevin McKinnon Seconded: Tom Williams Carried. Note: It was noted that the Trust does not usually fund fishing competition aspects of programs. The Committee requested that the restocking component of the project be referred for assessment under the Dollar for Dollar Native Fish Stocking Program.</p>	Rotary Club of Narromine Inc.	\$500		
<p>Quirindi Carp muster To hold a recreational fishing carp muster at Rose Lee Park Quirindi, including promotion and merchandising, purchase of picnic area seating and stocking of native fish fingerlings. Motion: RFFTEC did not support funding for this project. Moved: Ron Butler Seconded: Kevin McKinnon Carried. Note: Richard Ping Kee abstained from voting on this proposal. The Committee did not consider the picnic seating to have recreational fishing benefits. It was noted that the Trust does not usually fund fishing competition aspects of programs. The Committee requested that the restocking component of the project be referred for assessment under the Dollar for Dollar Native Fish Stocking Program.</p>	Quirindi Fishing Club Inc	\$7,500		

Platform: Research on recreational fishing

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
<p>The effects of algal blooms and low water levels on impoundment fisheries To examine the effects of algal blooms on fish movements and angler catch rates in recreational fishing impoundments. Motion: RFFTEC did not support funding for this project. Moved: Richard Ping Kee Seconded: Ian Ward Carried. Note: The Committee acknowledged the benefits of algal bloom research however did not consider it a recreational fisheries research priority at this time. The Committee also noted that the effects of algal blooms are currently managed by other Government agencies so there may be opportunities for funding from other sources.</p>	University of Western Sydney	\$47,725	\$54,625	\$15,525
<p>Impacts to development of Australian Bass embryos when exposed to carbendazim fungicide and nonylphenol wetting agent at environmentally relevant concentrations. Testing the potential impacts of a common agrichemical combination (fungicide and wetting agent) on the development of Australian Bass embryos at a range of concentrations, which have been found in waterways. Motion: RFFTEC did not support funding for this project. Moved: Debbie Lennon Seconded: Tom Williams Carried. Note: The Committee acknowledged the benefits of research into factors affecting development of juvenile bass, however did not consider it a recreational fisheries research priority at this point in time. The Committee noted that the project also had implications for other states and territories and that contributing funding should be sought from other agencies and sources, including the Fisheries Research Development Corporation proposal.</p>	Future Fisheries Veterinary Service	\$21,062		