



**Advisory Council on
Recreational Fishing**

Final Minutes

23rd MEETING (03/2002)
9:30am, 4 July 2002

Conference Room, Cronulla Fisheries Centre
202 Nicholson Parade, Cronulla

Members

Chair

Bruce Schumacher

Members

Elaine Garvey

Peter Goadby

Mark Umbers

Lionel Jones

Neil Ryan

Lisa Terry

Anthony Moore

Scott Mitchell

Terry Maloney

Mel Brown

Graham Moore

Ann Lee

Steve Dunn, Director, NSW Fisheries

Observers

Margaret Dodson, Charter Fishing sector

Gary Henry, A/Principal Manager Recreational Fisheries

Nick James, Manager Recreational Fisheries

Bryan Van Der Walt, Manager Recreational Fisheries

Susan Wildgoose, Fisheries Management Officer

Agnes Yi, Adviser, Minister's Office

Business

Welcome by Chair

It was noted that some agenda items would be discussed out of order due to the availability of presenters.

Apologies

Lionel Jones

Steve Dunn, Director, NSW Fisheries

Agnes Yi, Adviser, Minister's Office

Absent

Graham Moore

Minutes of previous meeting

Recommendation:

The minutes are an accurate record of discussions at meeting 22 of ACoRF.

Moved: Peter Goadby

Seconded: Elaine Garvey

CARRIED

Business arising from the minutes

- Proposed NPWS closure in North Harbour to protect fairy penguins

Action item Provide ACoRF with an update on this issue at the next meeting.

- Angel Ring Program

Action item NSW Fisheries to prepare a media release to highlight the function of angel rings and associated rock safety issues.

- Indemnity of Council members

NSW Fisheries is seeking legal advice regarding indemnity and will advise members in the near future.

Agenda Items

1. NSW Fisheries report (Director or delegate)
2. Trust expenditure recommendations from the 5th RFSTEC meeting (BVDW)
3. Trust expenditure recommendations from the 13th RFFTEC meeting (27/6/02) (AS)
4. Regional Services (compliance) update (GT)
5. Making more fish naturally - fish habitat rehabilitation projects (SF)
6. *Caulerpa taxifolia* update (BC)
7. Progress report on the Recreational Fishing Haven process (GW)
8. Proposed Acquisition of Remaining Botany Bay Prawn Trawl Licences (GW)

Other Business

- *Feedback from FRDC workshop on a National Strategy for the survival of released line caught fish*
- *Recreational Fishing Management Planning Committees*
- *Request from Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (USA) to use tag-recapture information from the NSW Fisheries Gamefish Tagging Program*
- *Correspondence received*
 - *Dr Steve Kennelly - regarding an application for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts for a small project, "Age validation and growth of key recreational fish species."*

Next meeting

Thursday 17 October 2002 (was proposed for 26 September 2002 – RFFTEC meeting)

Agenda Item 1

NSW Fisheries

Issue

NSW Fisheries report.

Outcomes

NSW Fisheries updates and comments considered on agenda item basis.

Issue

Recommendations from the 5th Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee meeting.

Background (NSW Fisheries)

An extensive advertising campaign was conducted to promote the expression of interest process. A media release was widely reported by radio, newspapers and magazines. The expression of interest application form was also circulated to universities, councils and all fishing clubs registered on the NSW Fisheries database, and was also advertised through the licence sales network via the fisheries "Newscast".

The expression of interest invited applications for programs to be funded from the freshwater and saltwater trusts. Proposals must enhance recreational fishing and would receive priority where: the benefits to geographic areas or numbers of anglers were maximised; there was matching funding from other sources; and where programs addressed a major research, compliance or management need in relation to recreational fisheries. This year, the community was invited to submit proposals for saltwater projects under the small grants program or as a more general project. Only programs via the small grants program were considered for freshwater projects given that the carry-over of existing programs from previous years will mean the 2002/03 budget for the freshwater trust is likely to be fully committed.

Proposals for funding from the saltwater trust have been received for the following projects:

NSW Fisheries

1. Maximising the survival of discarded mulloway and snapper after capture by hook-and-line.
2. Investigation into recreational use of baitfish in NSW marine waters.
3. A pilot artificial reefs comparative study.
4. The Saltwater Anglers Catch Research Program.
5. Undertake a study of the life history and biology of Black Bream, *Acanthopagrus butcheri*, in NSW, that will provide advice on the future management of this species.
6. Provide a validated ageing technique for key recreational fish species, including luderick, sand whiting, dusky flathead, yellowfin and black bream and sweep.
7. Management and use of recreational fishing competition data collected in the Solitary Islands Marine Park.
8. Patterns of abundance, size structure and small-scale movement of Luderick on estuarine and exposed rocky reefs.
9. Recreational Fishing Havens GIS Mapping (RFH-GIS).
10. Fish habitat grant program.

Other Organisations/Individuals

1. Proposal from University of Sydney to investigate the sustainability of ecological biodiversity around Fish Attraction/Aggregation Devices.

2. Proposal from University of Sydney to design appropriate and powerful studies that may answer the attraction or production of Fish Attraction/Aggregation Devices (FADs).
3. Proposal from University of Sydney to investigate the value of marinas and associated structures as habitat for fish.
4. Proposal from the Australian Angling Association to hold the 2003 Australian Angling Association Championships and Convention at Yamba.
5. Proposal from the Manning River Sustainable Recreational Fishing Steering Committee to establish artificial reefs in the Manning River and Fish Aggregation Device Systems (FADS) offshore.
6. Proposal from Rob Paxevanos for funding support to produce safety and responsible fishing segments for the Fishing Australia TV program.
7. Proposal from Iluka Landcare/Dunecare group to restore degraded mangrove and coastal vegetation in areas of the Clarence River and Estuary.
8. Proposal from Charles McInnes and Emily Saxon for funding support to provide artificial reefs for abalone in areas where there is an abundance of food but little habitat.
9. Proposal from Mystery Bay Fishing Club and Eurobodalla Shire Council to upgrade the Mystery Bay boat ramp.
10. Proposal from John Windle to build a boat ramp on Kooragang Island.
11. Proposal from National Parks and Wildlife Service for Jervis Bay Recreational Fishing Access.
12. Proposal from the Bega Valley Shire Council to conduct a recreational fishing creel survey in Wallaga Lake on the South Coast of NSW.
13. Proposal from the Water Research Laboratory, University of NSW, to undertake a project aimed at understanding ocean processes at rock shelf platforms for safe fishing practices.
14. Proposal from Dominion Consulting to identify the recreational fishing expenditure patterns of Sydney's recreational fishers and its economic and social importance in regional communities of NSW.
15. Proposal from the Eurobodalla Shire Council to upgrade facilities at Moruya River Park Jetty.
16. Proposal from the Eurobodalla Shire Council to erect fish cleaning tables for Mill Bay, Narooma and Korners Park, North Batemans Bay.
17. Proposal from the Eurobodalla Shire Council to protect Durras Lake from sedimentation through erosion of banks caused by uncontrolled access.
18. Proposal from Rodney Monk to produce a 15 minute Fishing video to educate anglers on the "culture" of fishing and safe and responsible fishing practices.
19. Proposal from Clive Doreian to promote Hooksafe removable hook and lure covers.
20. Proposal from the University of Technology to assess the impact of leatherjackets and luderick on seagrass beds in shallow estuarine lakes in NSW.
21. Proposal from the University of New South Wales to study the predatory impact of re-stocked fingerlings on the forage fish and prawns in NSW estuaries.
22. Proposal from Nambucca Heads Offshore Fishing Club for funding support for a pilot study and the development of engineering plans to establish a safe exit to the ocean by connecting several bomboras off the headland to form a mini breakwater.
23. Proposal from Mr Aaron Thew to use recreational fishing equipment as a catalyst to promote healthy relationships between men and boys: A strategic plan.

24. Proposal from Southern Cross University to publish the proceedings of the Stock Enhancement of Marine and Freshwater Fisheries workshop.
25. Proposal from Southern Cross University to undertake a study on the stock structure and population genetics of the yellowfin bream *Acanthopagrus australis*.
26. Proposal from the Maclean Shire Council to erect a Recreational Fishing Platform at Ford Park, Yamba.
27. Proposal from Keep Australia Beautiful New South Wales for sponsorship of the Clean Beach Challenge.
28. Proposal from Smith's Hill High School to design a student guide, worklog and teaching supplement for the purpose of teaching students safe and sustainable fishing skills, knowledge and attitudes.
29. Proposal from Brooms Head Reserve Improvement Committee to construct a marine educational information booth in support of the declaration of the invertebrate habitat protection zone at Brooms Head Lagoon.
30. Proposal from the Lake Macquarie Concerned Anglers Group Inc. to undertake an artificial reefs project in Lake Macquarie.
31. Proposal from the University of Newcastle to investigate the effect of fragmentation of seagrass beds on fish and invertebrates.

Small grants programs:

1. Proposal from Byron Bay Services Deep Sea Fishing Club for funding support to establish a second Fish Aggregation Device and associated bottom structure off Byron Bay.
2. Proposal from the University of Technology to assess health and reproductive output of a common estuarine fish in 4 rivers in Sydney: A pollution bio-indicator study.
3. Proposal from Robert Thorsby to develop a Coffs Harbour fishing and maritime information web site.
4. Proposal from the University of Technology to undertake a project investigating the importance of location and habitat structure in determining juvenile fish assemblages in Botany Bay with emphasis on recreationally important species.
5. Proposal from the Eurobodalla Shire Council to provide better directions to the Hanging Rock Boat Ramp.
6. Proposal from Southern Cross University to develop an angler education pamphlet on fish handling for FishCare Volunteers.
7. Proposal from Julian Pepperell to undertake monitoring and research on landed fish at game fishing tournaments in NSW.
8. Proposal from the Lake Macquarie Police and Community Youth Club to educate young, disadvantaged youth with the knowledge and skills to participate in recreational fishing activities.

The budget recommendations from RFSTEC are summarised below:

Table 1. Proposed expenditure allocations from the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust Fund for ongoing NSW Fisheries programs.

Program	2001/02 Predicted carryover	2002/03 RFSTEC budget recommendation	2002/03 Allocation
Advisory and education	\$230,000	\$250,000	\$20,000
Expenditure Committee meeting expenses	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000
Licence research database	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
Small grants program	\$38,000	\$50,000	\$12,000
Recreational fishing havens	\$163,000	\$704,261	\$541,261
Fishcare volunteer program	\$110,000	\$500,000	\$390,000
Recreational mobile squad	\$0	\$351,00	\$351,00
Billboards & promotional material	\$0	\$46,933	\$46,933
Total	\$541,000	\$1,631,194	\$1,090,194

Table 2. Proposed expenditure allocations from the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust Fund for new programs by RFSTEC.

Title	Proponent	2002/ 03	2003/04	2004/05
Recreational harvest of baitfish in NSW marine waters.	NSW Fisheries	\$106,064	\$107,641	\$92,261
Saltwater Anglers Catch Research Program.	NSW Fisheries	\$149,930		
Restoration of degraded mangrove and coastal vegetation in areas of the Clarence River and Estuary.	Iluka Landcare/ Dunecare group	\$5,000	\$7,150	
Identification of the recreational fishing expenditure patterns of Sydney's recreational fishers.	Dominion Consulting Pty Ltd.	\$89,500		
Publishing the proceedings of the Stock Enhancement of Marine and Freshwater Fisheries workshop.	Southern Cross University	\$10,000		
Study on the stock structure and population genetics of the yellowfin bream <i>Acanthopagrus australis</i> .	Southern Cross University	\$6,000		
Monitoring and research on landed fish at game fishing tournaments in NSW.	Pepperell Consulting Pty Ltd	\$18,000		
Development of an angler education pamphlet on fish handling for FishCare Volunteers.	Southern Cross University	\$4,480		
FMS/EIS for Recreational fishing	NSW Fisheries	\$300,000	\$300,000	
Total		\$688,974	\$414,791	\$92,261

Outcomes

Council thoroughly discussed and considered the expenditure proposals for ongoing NSW Fisheries programs (outlined in table 1) and new programs (detailed in table 2), as recommended by RFSTEC. Programs not recommended by RFSTEC, as well as programs recommended to be deferred, were outlined and discussed. NSW Fisheries also presented a summary of the saltwater trust cashflow for 2002/03, for council's information.

In particular, the chair advised members that the appointment of 3 additional Fisheries Officers (ie the proposed recreational mobile squad) in 2001/02 had been delayed until a clearer picture of expected revenue from the recreational fishing fee was obtained. Recurrent revenue information for the 2001/02 financial year is now available and this program has been included in the 2002/03 expenditure budget for the Saltwater Trust.

Recreational fishing licence renewals - NSW Fisheries is looking into the best and most economical option for anglers to renew their licence. It was agreed that a renewal notice of some sort is necessary and suggested that licence holders have the opportunity to directly renew their licence via a credit card payment option on the renewal notice.

The advisory council requested clarification of the intention of the Dominion Consulting application. Council believe the aim of this economic survey should be to determine the value of all recreational fishing activities in the Sydney region, as opposed to the expenditure patterns of Sydney's recreational fishers.

Non-supported applications – it was suggested that the black bream application could be combined with the proposal for yellowfin bream, to look at the interaction between these species. It was noted that studies have been undertaken on black bream in Western Australia.

There was general support for the development of an educational pamphlet, in addition to the saltwater guide, to advise the public of the bag and size limits for commonly caught species, protected species in NSW and could also provide information on, for example, hook-related fish mortality when using different types of hooks including, for example, circle, barbless and suicide. It was suggested that the pamphlet should not generalise on fish handling techniques (due to the variation between species), but should include general safety tips. A draft pamphlet will be presented to council for comment prior to publication.

Recommendations

1) ACoRF support the proposed funding allocations for ongoing NSW Fisheries programs, as outlined in Table 1.

Moved: Anthony Moore

Seconded: Neil Ryan

Carried

2) ACoRF support the funding proposals for new programs, as detailed in Table 2.

Moved: Peter Goadby

Seconded: Scott Mitchell

Carried

Issue
 Recommendations from the 13th Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee meeting.

Background (NSW Fisheries)
 The 13th meeting of the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee was held on Thursday 27 June 2002. The committee met to consider the renewal of existing freshwater trust programs and contingency funding for the preparation of the recreational fishing management strategy, fish stocking fishery management strategy and associated environmental assessments.

The Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee made a number of funding recommendations for the 2002/03 financial year and beyond. This is based on the annual freshwater contribution of \$2.5 million from the recreational fishing fee and funds to be carried over from the previous financial year. Freshwater expenditure recommendations will be presented at the meeting.

Outcomes

Table 1: Summary of proposed expenditure allocations from the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Fund for 02/03 financial year.

Program	01/02 predicted carryover (\$'000)	02/03 supported budget (\$'000)	2002/03 allocation (\$'000)
Purchase of native fish from private enterprise	20	200	180
Enhanced departmental fish production	10	304	294
Freshwater recreational management	10	222	212
Fishcare volunteer program	154	306	152
Licence administration	0	250	250
Inland fisheries officers	4	608	604
Regional fish habitat (inland)	0	254	254
Weir removal / fish passage	0	102	102
Effectiveness of stocking program	100	253	153
Angler catch monitoring	150	253	103
Angler expenditure survey	65	65	0
Small project enhancement program	18	20	2
Impoundments access/fishouts	54	0	0
Bass habitat	40	102	62
Wetland restoration	100	100	0
Eastern cod stocking program	N/A	20	20
Recreational fishing fisheries management strategy contingency	N/A	125	125
Fish stocking fisheries management strategy contingency	N/A	140	140
Total (\$'000)	725	3,324	2,653

Table 2: Programs supported by the Committee to be funded from the small grants program

Project title	Project proponent	Recommended funding level, 02/03 year	Funding conditions
Tamworth Native Fish Hatchery (non profit community fish hatchery)	Mr Geoff Simpson	Dollar-for-dollar pro-rata to the average commercial sale price per fingerling, to a maximum of \$5,000	Funding to be supplied dollar-for-dollar pro-rata per fingerling stocked, to a maximum of \$5,000. Pro rata amount based on the average commercial sale price per fingerling.
Manilla Fishing Club Hatchery (non profit community fish hatchery)	Mr Ian Ward	\$1,500	Funding to be spent on capital works only. Proof of expenditure to be supplied by the proponent at a future meeting.
Fishing platform at Lake Canobolas	Mr Rodney Tonkin (Institute of freshwater anglers)	\$4,700	Recreational Fishing Trust sponsorship to be clearly identified by the project. Proof of expenditure including the contribution by the Orange Cit Council, to be supplied by the proponent at a future meeting.

NSW Fisheries distributed information and outlined each expenditure recommendation from the recent freshwater trust expenditure meeting. Members considered the proposed expenditure allocations from the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Fund for 2002/03, as outlined in table 1, and programs supported by RFFTEC to be funded from the small grants program (detailed in table 2). Programs not recommended for funding through the small grants program were also discussed.

Funding for the recreational fishery Fisheries Management Strategy is to be divided between the freshwater and saltwater trust funds. NSW Fisheries is seeking approval of \$125,000/yr for two years for the recreational fishing strategy and \$140,000/yr for three years to develop the fish stocking strategy. These proposals were supported by the freshwater committee. This funding will be spent on consultation with stakeholders and consultants and NSW Fisheries staff employed to undertake various parts of the environmental impact statements for these activities.

Snowy Lakes Management Strategy – the Snowy Lakes working group should meet annually. NSW Fisheries advised that costs would be funded from NSW Fisheries' Recreational Freshwater Management budget.

Action Item: Andrew Sanger to review the current status of this working group and advise members of the next meeting.

Recommendations

- 1) ACoRF support the expenditure recommendations for 2002/03 from the Freshwater Trust, as proposed by the freshwater expenditure committee (Table 1).

Moved: Scott Mitchell

Seconded: Anthony Moore

Carried

2) ACoRF support the recommendations for expenditure from the small grants program budget, as outlined in Table 2.

Moved: Peter Goadby

Seconded: Scott Mitchell

Carried

Issue

Regional Services (compliance) update.

Background (NSW Fisheries)

A general overview of NSW Fisheries' current education and compliance programs related to recreational fishing will be provided.

Outcomes*Recreational fishing compliance strategy*

Regional Services develop operational plans that ensure thorough planning and execution of compliance activities. Additionally, officers frequently participate in conflict management and cultural awareness training to improve interview techniques and minimise conflict between user groups and departmental staff.

Council suggested that more fisheries officers would assist recreational fishing compliance efforts. Members were advised that recruitment action for the Fisheries mobile squad will commence in the near future. This will result in three dedicated officers based in the one location, with a roving commission. The advisory council may have the opportunity to comment on the location of the mobile squad.

Compliance strategy for Recreational Fishing Havens

As part of the strategy to ensure commercial fishers comply with the rules for recreational fishing havens, Regional Services recently sent letters to all NSW commercial fishers to confirm the areas closed to commercial fishing since 1 May 2002 and advise that compliance action will be taken against any operator who does not adhere to the closures.

Marlin identification information

The Regional Services team is in the process of developing advisory material to assist with the identification of black, blue and striped marlin. At present there are different rules between NSW and the Commonwealth relating to the capture of striped marlin. To avoid confusion about what and where marlin can be caught/are actually caught by commercial fishers, it is necessary for people to be able to accurately identify each marlin species.

For information.

Issue

Making more fish naturally – issues and opportunities for recreational fisher involvement in fish habitat rehabilitation projects.

Background (NSW Fisheries)

Sarah Fairfull, Principal Manager Habitat, will present an overview and update on the fish habitat rehabilitation projects managed by the Habitat section of the Office of Conservation.

Discussion will also focus on strategic issues and challenges facing the Conservation branch. These include the need to engage recreational fishers across the state in fish habitat rehabilitation projects and securing future investment in habitat rehabilitation from a range of sources.

Outcomes

The fish passage project has been expanded to review all barriers to fish passage. The weir review project investigated the main priority structures across state and developed options for each site. Every catchment area has been included in a catchment blueprint to identify and address barriers to fish passage. Funding to conduct amelioration work in each area will be channelled and considered through the catchment blueprint process.

Some stakeholders are concerned that the removal of weirs will result in a loss of amenities, particularly water availability. NSW Fisheries works with the community to determine the best options for each stream to improve fish passage. The Freshwater Trust funds a dedicated Conservation officer to assist this process.

NSW Fisheries recently negotiated a memorandum of understanding with State Water, relating to fishways. This provides the opportunity to investigate options to reduce costs associated with fishway development, to allow more to be constructed at existing barriers. The rock ramp fishway is an example of the development of fishway designs.

NSW Fisheries is also working with farmers to determine the best way to actively manage floodgates throughout the state. There are currently eight demonstration sites in each catchment area, to allow farmers to view active floodgates. This has built effective communication channels and relationships with farmers and has helped to progress the broader issues. Additionally, research is being conducted to determine the benefits of active floodgates to fish populations.

Federal funding has been used to redesign and rebuild a road crossing structure on the Clarence River. This has achieved a significant drop in the velocity of local currents, which resulted in a 20% increase in fish numbers.

The NSW Government recently announced the allocation \$522,500 from the NSW Environmental Trust to assist the prevention of fish kills on the State's North Coast. The two-year \$522,500 NSW Fisheries project will use floodgate management to improve the passage of native fish and water quality in northern NSW. This project compliments NSW Fisheries' recent success with the use of floodgates, which has resulted in 85 km of waterways being opened up,

improving fish access and water quality. This extra funding will open another 50 floodgates, doubling the number of floodgates currently being managed in this region.

The Environmental Trust has also allocated \$250,000 to fund research into the impact of releases of cold water from dams into rivers – known as cold water pollution – on the breeding patterns of native fish and habitats. The allocation of \$250,000 to study the impact of cold water pollution will support a joint project between the Department of Land and Water Conservation and NSW Fisheries.

Since 1995, the Environmental Trust and its predecessors has allocated \$22 million to help tackle environmental challenges in inventive ways.

For Information.

Issue

Caulerpa taxifolia update

Background (NSW Fisheries)

Dr Bob Creese, Principal Conservation Scientist, presented an overview of the issues associated with the infestation of caulerpa in NSW at the 19th ACoRF meeting, held 27 September 2002. Discussions from that meeting are outlined below.

Caulerpa taxifolia is a very widely used plant in aquariums because it reproduces asexually (grows very well in tanks) and fish do not eat it. It tolerates dirty water, temperature fluctuations and grows amongst sea grasses or on bare substratum. The exposed plant cannot tolerate freshwater, but its roots are not effected and can survive indefinitely.

Extensive surveys are currently been conducted in Lake Macquarie, which have indicated increased growth around the power station outlet. However, the weed is also growing in areas of cold water and other cold water lakes.

Publications and articles on the Internet indicate that *Caulerpa taxifolia* is very harmful to sea life and is severely damaging the Mediterranean. However, evidence in Australia indicates that this weed does not kill off seagrasses and does not have a huge effect on sea life. Although there hasn't been any detrimental effects documented in Australia so far, the weed is exotic and must be eradicated as a precautionary approach to prevent any problems that may arise in the future.

Currently in NSW there is a ban on the sale of *Caulerpa taxifolia* in the aquarium trade. However, the weed may be bought from other states, such as Queensland, where it is treated as a naturally occurring weed and is legally sold in aquarium shops.

Concerns were raised on the effect that *Caulerpa taxifolia* has on recreational fishing. Outbreaks of the weed usually cause fishing closures and there is the potential for change in bio-diversity and the food chain in the area. Additionally, areas of infestation include some RFA areas, which may cause *Caulerpa taxifolia* eradication to fall back on to recreational sector.

Restrictions have been introduced to restrict haul and other net activities in accordance with the attached information sheet. Options for control are being evaluated on an ongoing basis. Further restrictions will only be considered if necessary. Detailed consultation will occur if this is proposed.

In the recent 2002/03 State Budget, the Government announced that \$1 million on going annual recurrent funding would be given to NSW Fisheries to establish an aquatic pests taskforce, and carry out on the ground work to control and reduce the area affected by caulerpa.

The Council requested an update on the current status of the infestation, as well as results of eradication and/or control efforts conducted by NSW Fisheries.

Outcomes

Caulerpa taxifolia research and monitoring projects are ongoing and generally focus on estuaries that were previously identified as being infested. No new outbreaks have been found

since early 2001. In infested areas, unless you remove the entire patch of weed, including the root system, caulerpa will grow back to its original abundance.

Populations of caulerpa in Port Hacking have expanded at each site, but the weed is still only in a few isolated spots. Even at sites where dense caulerpa populations are found there are still native seagrasses present. Lake Conjola has the most extensive distribution of the weed, including some areas totally devoid of seagrass.

The Carr Government recently allocated almost \$1 million to control the spread of the noxious weed *Caulerpa taxifolia* and other aquatic pests in NSW waterways. The Budget funding will build on work already undertaken to control the spread of caulerpa in NSW waterways. An allocation of \$923,000 will be used to continue research into caulerpa and to employ four specialist staff to work with local communities on aquatic pest issues. The program will initially focus on caulerpa in Lake Macquarie, Botany Bay and Lake Conjola and will extend to other waterways including Port Hacking, Burrill Lake and Narrawallee Inlet. An extensive community education campaign has been implemented as part of this program in areas where the weed has been found.

Options for eradication

- The use of salt is currently the most viable option. It works quickly and is a natural substance that dissolves after a short period of time. Trials are being undertaken to determine the best concentration of salt to successfully eradicate *Caulerpa* but allow the native seagrasses to remain.
- Manual - hand picking is effective but is very time consuming and labour intensive.
- Biological - nudibranchs (sea slugs etc) have been observed feeding on caulerpa and their potential use as an eradication method is being investigated.

The Office of Conservation will be recruiting people to assist the eradication process using salt concentrations. Shallow areas will be addressed first, starting in the centre of an infestation and working outwards to the edges of the infestations.

For information.

Issue

Progress report on the Recreational Fishing Haven process.

Background

To date, 223 commercial fishers have voluntarily sold their licences back to NSW Fisheries. 29 recreational fishing havens commenced on 1 May with the 30th haven in the Clarence River to be implemented by September 2002.

There are still 19 Botany Bay Prawn Trawlers who have not yet been able to reach agreement. See item 8 on the agenda for more information.

The Minister for Fisheries, Eddie Obeid, has also announced that a recreational fishing haven will be created on the Clarence River. A further 6-9 fishers will be bought out of the Clarence, at an estimated cost of \$500,000. NSW Fisheries is seeking Registrations of Interest from Clarence fishers who wish to be considered as part of the buy out. The haven on the Clarence will come into effect on 1 September 2002.

The decision on the Profish appeal was handed down on Monday 21 May and their appeal was dismissed.

Graeme White, Senior Manager Fisheries Resources, will provide a progress report on issues related to the Recreational Fishing Haven process.

Outcomes

NSW Fisheries will be sending out approximately 70 invitations for the voluntary buy-out of commercial fishing effort in the Clarence River, as a result of the recent decision to introduce a recreational fishing haven in that area.

Botany Bay – NSW Fisheries has operations on all havens to police commercial fishing presence. The department is also working with Waterways to assess the status of moorings, previously issued to commercial fishers, in areas that are now declared recreational fishing havens.

Council sought assurances about the possible transfer of effort from havens to other areas, and associated conflict. It was mentioned that conflict has recently occurred between 3 long-term users of Wallaga Lake and 5 fishers who recently moved their estuary fishing activities into the lake. NSW Fisheries advised that a significant number of the completed buy-outs involved the acquisition of entire fishing businesses to reduce these opportunities, but that the situation would be monitored.

For information.

Issue

Proposed acquisition declaration - opportunity to make a submission

Background

A proposed acquisition declaration has been prepared under the *Fisheries Management Act*.

The proposed declaration will permit the cancellation and acquisition of 19 specified commercial fishing entitlements held by the owners of fishing businesses that include an endorsement authorising the taking of prawns by the method of trawling in the waters of Botany Bay, other than for entitlements in relation to the lobster or abalone fisheries.

A copy of the proposed declaration and the public notice inviting submissions has been sent to all members of ACoRF and ACCF. The *Fisheries Management Act* expressly recognises the role of ACoRF in advising on whether an acquisition declaration should proceed.

Members of the community may also make submissions. Advertisements were placed in the Daily Telegraph on 29 June 2002 and in local newspapers on 2 July 2002. Submissions must be received by Friday 7 August 2002 and should be sent to: Proposed Acquisition Declaration, NSW Fisheries, PO Box 42, WICKHAM NSW 2293.

Outcomes

The chair advised the council that the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee had previously supported the expenditure of \$500,000 from the Treasury advance for signage to publicise the recreational fishing havens. A final budget of \$100,000 for signage has now been determined, which is substantially less than the amount approved.

Costs associated with the compulsory acquisition of the remaining operators will include the establishment and administration of an independent valuation panel, costs of NSW Fisheries staff to oversee the process, and any associated legal costs. These costs are not a component of the budget supported for the recreational fishing haven program in 2002/03.

No additional money is sought in relation to payments to commercial fishers. It is expected that existing funding allocated to buy-out commercial fishing entitlements will be sufficient to meet the obligation to fairly compensate the commercial fishers whose entitlements are acquired.

The Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee provided out-of-session support for the allocation of \$400,000 from the signage budget to fund the necessary administration costs associated with the compulsory buy-out in Botany Bay. Funds would only be expended if they were required for the purpose of bringing the acquisition process to conclusion. Unused funds would be repaid to the Trust. A report on expenditure and advice on any unspent funds will be provided.

Recommendation

That the re-allocation of additional funds from the \$20 million advance to the acquisition of remaining commercial fishing entitlements relating to Botany Bay be supported. Council supports the proposed acquisition of entitlements in Botany Bay.

Moved: Neil Ryan

Seconded: Lisa Terry

Carried

Other Business

- *Feedback from FRDC workshop on a National Strategy for the survival of released line caught fish (attached).*

- *Recreational Fishing Management Planning Committees*

The council was updated on the process of establishing the freshwater and saltwater recreational management planning committees. The council was given the opportunity to comment on the process by which members will be appointed to the saltwater committee. The council agreed that an expression of interest process should be conducted to allow the council to nominate potential recreational fishing representatives. It was agreed that it is important to have recreational fishing experts that represent the various angling sectors, including for example, shore-based angling, ocean beach/rock activities and gamefishing, on the saltwater management planning committee. Therefore, sectors to be represented should be specified in the advertisement.

- *Request from Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (USA) to use tag-recapture information from the NSW Fisheries Gamefish Tagging Program*

Dr Michael Hinton, Senior Scientist, at the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (USA) is carrying out a study on the stock structure and stock status of striped, blue and black marlin in the Indo-Pacific/Pacific region, in collaboration with other scientists from the US National Marine Fisheries Service and the Japan National Research Institute of Far Seas Fisheries. Dr Hinton has made a request to Dr Steve Kennelly, Chief Scientist NSW Fisheries to use tag-recapture data on these species from the Gamefish Tagging Program. Appropriate acknowledge of the data will be given to NSW Fisheries and the Recreational Fishing Trusts. NSW Fisheries will also be given the opportunity to review and comment on results developed using the data prior to submittal for publication.

The release of this information was not supported. Members wished to know exactly what the data will be used for and requested to see the proposal. It was confirmed that the information will be used to help determine stock structures. Council deferred the proposal until further information is provided.

- *Belmore River bass closure*

A proposal to renew this closure, including background information, was previously sent to members out-of-session.

Recommendation

ACoRF supports the renewal of the Belmore River bass closure for a period of 5 years.

Moved: Mark Umbers

Seconded: Scott Mitchell

Carried

Correspondence received

- *Dr Steve Kennelly - regarding an application for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts for a small project, "Age validation and growth of key recreational fish species."*

It was previously recommended that this application be forwarded to FRDC for funding. However, due to the small amount requested (significantly less than most funding requests made to FRDC) and the associated timeframes (it is intended to conduct the study in the near future; there is an expected delay of 18 months while the proposal is considered by FRDC) the

application has been referred back to the advisory council for consideration to fund this proposal entirely with Saltwater Trust funds.

Outcome

ACoRF noted this request and advised that the new information should be forwarded to the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee, for further consideration.

Around the table

- Since joining the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing as a media representative earlier this year, Neil Ryan stated that he has gained a significant appreciation of the job this council does. The public does not generally see the advisory council in a favourable light because they are not aware of the commitment and effort of each member of the council. Neil proposed to write an editorial on the advisory council and requested approval and guidance from the council. Council supported of this proposal and provided comments.
- The council was advised that NSW Fisheries would present feedback on the results of community submissions to the draft *Grey Nurse Shark Recovery Plan* at the next meeting.
- NSW Fisheries distributed copies of the NSW Fisheries *Gamefish Tournament Monitoring Report 2002* and the expression of interest for the dollar for dollar fish stocking program, to council members for information.
- NSW Fisheries advised council of the commencement of a program to investigate angler access to NSW impoundments, with an aim of producing a booklet on recreational fishing access in freshwater impoundments in NSW. A book titled "Freshwater Fishing in Queensland – A Guide to Stocked Waters", produced by the Queensland Fisheries Service, was distributed to members for information.

Next Meeting

Thursday 17 October 2002 (was proposed for 26 September 2002 – RFFTEC meeting)

Issue

FRDC workshop on a 'National Strategy for the survival of released line caught fish' held in Sydney on 20 March 2002.

Background

In the 2001/02 round of FRDC funding, there were a number of applications from around Australia that related to aspects of the survival of released fish. One of these applications was from NSW Fisheries on 'Reducing the impacts of hooking on discarded snapper and mulloway'. To determine a strategy on how to progress these applications, the FRDC held a workshop at Cronulla in May 2001. The outcome from that workshop was the funding of a desktop study (Keith Jones, SARDI) to review the current literature and to determine the status of research in this area.

On 20 March 2002, the FRDC held another workshop (at the Sydney Airport Hilton) to examine the work done by Keith Jones and to develop a national strategy for the survival of released line caught fish. Representatives of the Directors of Fisheries in each state and the Commonwealth, fisheries research agencies and key bodies from the recreational sector attended the workshop. The workshop involved presentations from Keith Jones on his desktop study; Mr Bill Sawynok on a proposal to develop a communication strategy; and Mr Frank Prokop (Recfishwest) on an FRDC funded project on 'Maximising survival of released undersized West Coast reef fish'. Following the presentations there was a detailed discussion on strategic directions and the development of an action plan for the national strategy.

Current Position

The main outcomes from the March 2002 workshop were:

- ? Keith Jones' project to be finalised by May 2002. The final report to incorporate data from the National Recreational & Indigenous Fishing Survey and to include recommendations on the priority of projects based on species groups and mortality issues.
- ? Development of a 2-stage communication project by Mr Bill Sawynok. The first stage of the project proposal to focus on a national TV campaign that targets the recreational sector and promotes best practices for handling fish. The second stage is to extend the results of specific research projects developed as part of this initiative (see below). The project proposal to be submitted to FRDC in August 2002.
- ? Development of collaborative research projects that target species groups based on tropical and temperate areas and specific mortality issues (eg. hooking). New projects to be submitted to the FRDC from August 2002.
- ? Establishment of a steering committee to oversee and guide the national strategy and to provide advice on specific project proposals. Most members of the steering committee were agreed to at the workshop. The committee will comprise an independent Chair (Mr Ross Winstanley, VIC), representatives from research (Steve Kennelly), management (Richard Sellers, NT – interim), communications (Bill Sawynok), recreational (Frank Prokop), commercial (tba by ASIC), tackle (Doug Joyner, NSW), media (Julian Pepperell, QLD), FRDC (Patrick Hone) and an international advisor (Jon Lucy, USA).

Information submitted by Dr Steve Kennelly, Chief Scientist, for the information of the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing.

Outcomes

Information was noted by council.