

**Sixth Meeting of the
Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee
FINAL MINUTES
19/9/02
9:30am to 3.30pm
Cronulla Sharks Leagues Club
Captain Cook Drive, Wooloware**

Attendance

Chair

Bruce Schumacher

Committee Members

Bruce Mahony

Lisa Terry

John Drew

Graham Harrison

Lionel Jones

David Turner

William Heaton

Warren Buchan

Region 1 – Qld border to Evans Head

Region 2 – Evans Head to Woolgoolga

Region 3 – Woolgoolga to Port Macquarie

Region 4 – Port Macquarie to Seal Rocks

Region 5 – Seal Rocks to The Entrance

Region 6 – The Entrance to Wollongong

Region 6 – The Entrance to Wollongong

Region 7 and 8 – Wollongong to Vic border

John Paton for Geoffrey Woolley

Malcolm Poole

John Millyard

Anthony Moore

NSW Game Fishing Association

Recreational Fishing Alliance

Australian Fishing Tackle Association

Nature Conservation Council

NSW Fisheries (observers)

John Diplock, Principal Manager, Recreational Fisheries

Bryan van der Walt, Manager, Recreational Fisheries

Presenters:

NSW Fisheries staff

Mathew Taylor, Keep Australia Beautiful NSW

Dr Alistair McIlgorm, Dominion Consulting

Dr Iain Suthers, University of NSW

Apologies

Anthony Moore

Geoff Woolley

Bruce Mahony

Business

Welcome by Chair

Apologies

Minutes of RFSTEC meeting 29.5.02

Business arising from the minutes

NSW Fisheries report

Agenda Items

1) Saltwater trust fund report

2) NSW Fisheries program updates

1. Recreational fishing havens
2. Licence sales
3. Compliance
4. Communications
5. Gamefish Tagging Program – New tag development
6. Fishery Management Strategy for Recreational Fishing

3) Angel rings

4) Touchcorp marketing campaign

5) Striped marlin economic survey

6) Recreational fishing expenditure patterns survey

7) Report on Recreational Fishing Havens

8) Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust applications

Deferred programs:

1. Impact of restocked fingerlings in NSW estuaries
2. Patterns of abundance, size structure and smallscale movement of Luderick (small grants program)
3. Sponsorship of the Clean Beach Challenge
4. Coffs Harbour fishing information web site (small grants program)
5. Impact of leatherjackets and luderick on seagrass beds in NSW
6. Life history and biology of Black Bream (*Acanthopagrus butcheri*) in NSW
7. Age validation and growth of key recreational fish species
8. Jervis Bay Recreational Fishing Access

New programs:

9. Fish cleaning table-Tuncurry (small grants program)
10. Reefscience Australia (small grants program)
11. Monitoring the benefits of the Lake Macquarie recreational fishing haven

9) Habitat grant program

10) Action Items from meeting 5

11) General Business

Business

Welcome by Chair

The Chair opened the meeting by greeting members and noting a full agenda for the meeting. The Chair welcomed back members who had recently been re-appointed to the Committee and also welcomed Mr Heath Folpp who will be working on the Trust funded Fish Aggregating Devices program.

Minutes of RFSTEC meeting 5. Held 29.05.02

NSW Fisheries requested that funding of \$170,952 for 2004/05 for the recreational harvest of baitfish program in NSW supported by the Committee at meeting 5 be amended to \$92,261.

The draft minutes of the 5th RFSTEC meeting including the amendment recorded above were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Moved: David Turner. Seconded: Malcolm Poole. **Carried.**

Business arising from the minutes

None

NSW Fisheries report

NSW Fisheries updates and comments considered on an agenda item basis.

Issue

Saltwater trust fund report

Background

A Saltwater Trust cashflow table of expenditure for 2001/02 (including acquittals) and proposed expenditure for 2002/03 will be presented.

Outcomes

NSW Fisheries presented a table of cashflow from the Saltwater Trust since the implementation of the recreational fishing licence, for the Committee's information. Total revenue received from licence sales in 2001/02 was over \$8.1 million. Agent returns for this period are still being collected. This revenue figure does not include agents' commission, bank charges, income from interest and net registrations or administration costs. Total funds allocated to saltwater programs during 2001/02 were over \$4.3 million. After transfer of \$2.5 million to the Freshwater Trust, the closing balance of the Saltwater Trust as at 30 June 2002 was over \$2.4 million.

For information.

Issue NSW Fisheries program updates**Background**

1) Recreational fishing havens

To date, 241 commercial fishers have voluntarily surrendered their entitlements to NSW Fisheries as part of the Recreational Fishing Haven process. This includes eight fishers who surrendered their entitlements due to the creation of a haven in the Clarence River. Thirty Recreational Fishing Havens have now been established in NSW.

On 23 August 2002, an acquisition declaration for the remaining 10 businesses with Botany Bay prawn trawl entitlements was published, with compensation at market value offered. Those fishers have until 20 September 2002 to advise whether or not they agree with the compensation being offered. The process of establishing a Compensation Review Panel is underway in order to conduct reviews in the event that any fishers disagree with the compensation offered.

2) Licence sales

The amount of money collected from the recreational fishing fee from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 was \$8.1 million. The number of the different types of licences sold during this period are as follows:

Approximately

21,000 three year licences;

207,000 one year licences;

72,000 one month licences; and

152,000 three day licences.

A report of monthly licence sales since the implementation of the licence will be presented.

3) Compliance

An update on this program including other compliance issues will be presented.

4) Communications

- The production of 200,000 saltwater fishing guides is underway, with distribution to anglers scheduled for late November. The draft text has been sent to the Committee out of session for input.

- Angler participation in the Fishcare Volunteer Program has tripled in the past year, with 260 volunteers trained by the end of August 2002. 177 of these volunteers are based in saltwater areas.

- All three education officers are on board in Nowra, Sydney and Maclean. Besides expanding the Fishcare Volunteer Program, the officers are running community information nights and coordinating local education events.

- The community continues to be informed about the fishing licence through 8 roadside billboards on key NSW roads, brochures, media stories, and web information. A new

primary schools education kit is being trialed in October which introduces children to the joys of responsible fishing.

- Approximately 200 signs are being installed across the 30 Recreational Fishing Havens informing anglers that the local waterways are protected from commercial fishing.

5) Gamefish Tagging Program

Additional funding of \$15,000 from the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust was allocated to the Game Fish Tagging Program in 2001/02. This allocation has supported several new initiatives which will result in a significant enhancement of the program. These have included the employment of an additional part time staff member for a 6 month period in 2001/02, the publishing of tagging results in a popular game fishing magazine and the upgrading of the Game Fish Tagging database. An upgraded database will improve the acquisition of tagging data, the output of tagging results to game fishing clubs and organisations, and provide a possible web based tag reporting facility.

Another recent initiative is the development of a new marlin tag. It is planned to implement the new tag before the next marlin season. These double barbed tags used by the US based Billfish Foundation are being manufactured by Floy Tag and Manufacturing and are regarded as the 'worlds best' design. The introduction of the new tag will ensure that the NSW Game Fish Tagging Program utilises the best available tag design and that the program continues to provide high quality tagging data. A further additional allocation of \$15,000 from the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust for 2002/03 is sought to continue the enhancement of the Game Fish Tagging Program.

6) Fishery Management Strategy for Recreational Fishing

Proposed costs and the consultative process involved in the preparation of the recreational fishing environmental impact statement were discussed at the previous Committee meeting on 29 May 2002. The Committee recommended contingency funding of \$300,000 for the two financial years (2002/03 and 2003/04), based on a pro-rata funding arrangement with the freshwater trust, for the preparation of the fishery management strategy and associated environmental assessment for recreational fishing.

Since the last meeting, NSW Fisheries has sought additional resources (staff) for the environmental impact process, and following their appointment the drafting of the management strategy will commence.

Outcomes

1) Recreational fishing havens

For information.

2) Licence sales

NSW Fisheries presented a report on licence sales since the implementation of the licence in March 2001. The Committee discussed trends in licence sales and was advised that agent returns for licences sold in 2001/02 are still being collected. To facilitate financial reporting, all income from agent returns received during a financial year (irrespective of when the licences were sold) are included as revenue for that financial year. Licence sales figures are continuously updated as agent returns are received.

3) Compliance

NSW Fisheries updated the Committee on the Recreational Marine Compliance Program during the 6 month period from March to August 2002. A total of 2,003 Fisheries patrols were carried out. Overall, activity reports had indicated that target levels for voluntary compliance had been achieved during this period. This included compliance with the recreational fishing fee and with recreational bag and size limits.

The Committee was advised that an Operational Strategy for Recreational Fishing Havens had been set up. The mission of the strategy was to remove all commercial fishing activity from the havens as of 1 May 2002, and ensure ongoing compliance with the ban.

Committee representatives were concerned that commercial oyster growers were stripping native oysters from Tuross Lake.

Action item: NSW Fisheries to investigate the harvesting of native oysters in Tuross Lake and to report back to the Committee.

The Committee advised that reports of illegal netting in Tuross Lakes had been received. NSW Fisheries advised that Fisheries Officers were very active in this area and that all reports should be referred to the local Fisheries Office so that they can be investigated. Allegations of illegal fishing by commercial fishers in Lake Macquarie were also raised.

NSW Fisheries advised that recruitment for the recreational mobile squad is expected to commence soon. This squad will be dedicated to recreational fishing compliance activities with a big focus on recreational fishing havens and suspected illegal commercial fishing.

It was reported that NSW Fisheries had been advised by National Parks and Wildlife that a temporary dam structure had been built across the Bega River.

Action item: NSW Fisheries to refer the issue of a temporary dam on the Bega River to the Office of Conservation for action.

4) Communications

The Committee was advised that the Saltwater Fishcare Volunteer Program has grown from 12 to 177 active volunteers in 11 months. Training courses at Maclean and

Narooma are planned in the next 2 months. Apart from 'face b face' education of recreational fishers, volunteer activities have also included angler surveys, club presentations, fishing clinics, visits to tackle shops and tours such as those in the Long Reef Aquatic Reserve.

NSW Fisheries are producing saltwater and freshwater fishing guides. The text of the saltwater guide has been drafted and reviewed. Revenue to be gained from advertising in the guide has doubled the original number of copies (200,000) to be printed. The guide will be made available to recreational fishers in November 2002.

The national primary school program "Get hooked-it's fun to fish" is being piloted from August to December 2002.

Promotion of the recreational fishing licence is continuing using billboards, radio ads at peak fishing times and a number of websites including NSW Fisheries, Fishnet and Sportsfish. A flyer on trust fund expenditure is also being drafted. Over 200 signs are being erected in the 30 recreational fishing havens and numerous brochures and flyers have been made available for anglers.

Action Item: NSW Fisheries to provide a detailed expenditure report for all communications programs to the Committee out of session.

5) Gamefish Tagging Program

The Committee was advised that NSW Fisheries had received the first batch of the new marlin tag from Floy Tag and Manufacturing. Distribution of the new tag will commence in November 2002. It was reported that the introduction of this new tag was made possible by an additional allocation of \$15,000 from the Saltwater Trust in 2001/02.

6) Fishery Management Strategy for Recreational Fishing For information.

Recommendation

Motion: That funding of \$15,000 for the Gamefish Tagging Program-new tag development in 2002/03 **be supported**. Moved: Lionel Jones. Seconded: Bill Heaton.
Carried.

Issue Angel rings

Background

ANSA has reported that the Guardian Angel Lifering project is progressing well. Funding from the Saltwater Recreational Fishing Trust will allow 40 new assemblies and 20 replacement rings to be installed at rockfishing 'blackspots' along the coast. Moulding of the buoys has begun and posts for the rings have been produced. A picture disk of the Recreational Fishing Trust logo has been purchased from the USA. It is anticipated that the rings will be ready for installation soon. Sportfishing clubs will be responsible for the installation and maintenance of the rings.

Outcomes

NSW Fisheries advised the Committee that the placement of angel rings by ANSA in some areas had raised the issue of ownership of rock platforms and responsibility for safety on these platforms. This issue may need to be addressed by ANSA.

NSW Fisheries also reported that the Waterways representative on the SafeWaters Committee is compiling information on rockfishing fatalities in NSW. Safewaters is a NSW Government water safety initiative. Coroner records are being accessed to provide details of drownings, including social aspects and ethnicity of victims. This project aims to determine the causes of rockfishing fatalities so that they can be addressed and prevented in the future. Further information including results of the study will be provided to the Committee as it becomes available.

For information.

Issue Touchcorp marketing campaign**Background**

On 22 March 2002, NSW Fisheries and Touchcorp Limited (Shell Australia) entered into an agreement whereby NSW Recreational Fishing Licences would be sold via touchscreen machines in approximately 290 Shell Select service stations throughout Eastern Australia.

Under the agreement, Touchcorp is paid the standard agent's commission of 5% of all licences sold as well as \$0.12 per transaction to cover the costs of materials. The agreement also included a 2 month in-store marketing campaign whereby the recreational fishing licence would be promoted via the touchscreen machines. In addition, NSW Fisheries funded \$11,000 (including GST) for the building of the Recreational Fishing Licence software application.

To maintain customer acquisition momentum, Touchcorp have requested funding of \$10,000 for a 3 month in-store marketing campaign.

Outcomes

NSW Fisheries advised the Committee that an application for funding from the Saltwater Trust had been received from Touchcorp for advertising. Touchcorp congratulated NSW Fisheries and the Recreational Fishing Trust on the success of the sale of electronic fishing licences via the Shell Touch network. Touchcorp have proposed an investment of \$10,000 from the Trust for a three month in-store advertising campaign designed to increase market penetration for licence sales. It is expected that this campaign would increase the distribution and reach of recreational fishing licences.

The Committee discussed the proposal and assessed the total number of licences sold through the Touch network since its introduction in March 2002. While it was recognised that advertising may increase market penetration, considering NSW Fisheries already tries to promote the facility where possible and the current level of licence sales through the network did not justify the proposed funding allocation requested by Touchcorp.

Recommendation

Motion: That funding of \$10,000 for the Touchcorp marketing campaign in 2002/03 **not be supported.** Moved: Lisa Terry. Seconded: Malcolm Poole. **Carried.**

Issue Striped marlin economic survey**Background**

Striped marlin *Tetrapturus audax* is a popular recreational species widely distributed in tropical, subtropical and temperate waters of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. They are targeted by the East Coast Tuna Boat fleet, which is a Commonwealth managed fishery. Striped marlin commonly occur in oceanic waters, but sufficient numbers are found adjacent to the continental slope to support commercial and recreational fisheries. The number of fishers and the size of the catch of striped marlin off the east coast of Australia have risen over the past decade which has led to concerns about the long term sustainability of the fishery.

The Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee previously supported the funding of a survey to assess the comparative economic and social benefits of the use of the striped marlin resource by commercial and recreational fishers in waters off NSW. NSW Fisheries recently called for expressions of interest to survey the striped marlin fishery.

The successful consultant will be selected according to the relative merits of the application, and the applicant's knowledge, experience and capability. It is expected that the survey will be completed within 4 months of the granting of the contract. On completion of the survey and analysis of data collected, the consultant will submit a written report detailing the findings of the survey. The consultant will also provide progress reports during the survey and a verbal presentation of its findings.

Outcomes

NSW Fisheries advised the Committee that the closing date for submission of tenders for the economic survey had passed. A number of applications for the striped marlin economic survey had been received and are currently being evaluated. Information on the selection process will be presented to the Committee at the next meeting.

For information.

Issue Recreational fishing expenditure patterns survey**Background**

At the 5th RFSTEC meeting on 29 May 2002, the Committee recommended the funding of a recreational fishing expenditure patterns survey from the Saltwater Trust. The aim of the survey is to identify the recreational fishing expenditure patterns of Sydney's recreational fishers and the economic and social importance of this expenditure in regional NSW. The Committee requested further specific information with regard to the locality of the survey. Similarly, at the 23rd meeting of the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing on 4 July 2002, the Council requested clarification of the intention of the Dominion Consulting application. The Council believed 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. Dominion Consulting will provide further details on the expenditure patterns survey.

Outcomes

Dr Alistair McIlgorm of Dominion Consulting presented further details on the proposed expenditure patterns survey of Sydney's recreational fishers. The Committee was advised that a telephone survey of anglers randomly selected from the Recreational fishing licence database would be used to obtain detailed information from Sydney's anglers on expenditure in the metropolitan area. Expenditure by these anglers in other areas will also be determined and this information will be able to be incorporated into future surveys of other areas within the state. This will provide a greater understanding of expenditure throughout the whole state rather than of separate coastal regions or centres.

For information.

Issue Report on Recreational Fishing Havens

Background

NSW Fisheries recently held meetings with local councils along the NSW coast to discuss recreational fishing havens. The outcomes of these meetings will be presented. Generally local Councils were very enthusiastic about the creation of recreational fishing havens and the potential tourism the havens could attract. Councils were supportive of joint projects to provide facilities at the havens and to promote recreational fishing havens.

Outcomes

NSW Fisheries informed the Committee that the purpose of the meetings were to inform Councils of programs funded by the Trust, including the benefits of recreational fishing havens for local tourism. A further aim was to assess existing services provided by Councils for recreational fishers and how these services could be improved. It was clearly apparent that councils were interested in improving services for anglers, for example, providing fish cleaning tables etc. The excessive number of signs at boat ramps was identified as 'visual pollution' which needed to be addressed. This could possibly be achieved by consolidation of existing signs into information booths. Opportunities for co-operative programs with council committees were also discussed, including the provision for matching funding for recreational fishing facilities, such as fish cleaning tables.

For information.

Issue Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust applications**Background**

At the 5th RFSTEC meeting on 29 May 2002, the Committee reviewed applications for programs to be funded from the saltwater trust. A total of 49 saltwater applications were received after an extensive advertising campaign. The Committee recommended deferring a number of applications to a future meeting, including 4 artificial reefs programs, to enable a more coordinated approach to common activities proposed. A draft policy regarding the creation and deployment of artificial reefs is being developed by NSW Fisheries and once finalised will be distributed to the artificial reefs applicants.

Three applications for Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) were also deferred by the Committee to enable the development of a more consolidated approach. The Committee previously approved a NSW Fisheries pilot study on FADs, which has recently commenced, and there is scope for these 3 applications to be involved in the current NSW Fisheries program.

Deferred programs to be reviewed at this meeting include:

1. Impact of restocked fingerlings in NSW estuaries.
2. Patterns of abundance, size structure and small-scale movement of Luderick.
3. Sponsorship of the Clean Beach Challenge – Keep Australia Beautiful will present a short presentation on their application.
4. Coffs Harbour fishing and maritime information web site - the region 3 member will report back on this program after consultation with the applicant.
5. Impact of leatherjackets and luderick on seagrass beds in NSW.
6. Life history and biology of Black Bream (*Acanthopagrus butcheri*) in NSW - the Committee requested the applicant undertake a desktop study of past and current studies on black bream to establish the relevance of the program.
7. Age validation and growth of key recreational fish species - NSW Fisheries will provide further information regarding this program.
8. Jervis Bay Recreational Fishing Access - the zoning plan for Jervis Bay Marine Park was released on 25 June 2002.

Three new applications have been received by NSW Fisheries for consideration under the small grants program:

9. Fish cleaning table at Tuncurry.
10. Reefscience Australia catch and release facilities.

11. Monitoring the benefits of the Lake Macquarie recreational fishing haven.

The total funds requested by each applicant are summarised below:

Title	Proponent	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Impact of restocked fingerlings in NSW estuaries	University of NSW	\$75,020	\$54,645	\$40,460
Patterns of abundance, size structure and smallscale movement of luderick.	NSW Fisheries	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Sponsorship of the Clean Beach Challenge.	Keep Australia Beautiful NSW	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Development of a Coffs Harbour fishing information web site.	Robert Thorsby	\$4,997		
Impact of leatherjackets and luderick on seagrass beds in NSW.	University of Technology	\$14,000	\$14,000	
Life history and biology of Black Bream (<i>Acanthopagrus butcheri</i>).	NSW Fisheries	\$124,067	\$124,456	\$103,849
Age validation and growth of key recreational fish species.	NSW Fisheries	\$21,626	\$22,313	
Jervis Bay Recreational Fishing Access.	NPWS	\$10,000		
Fish cleaning table-Tuncurry	Great Lakes Council	\$4,850 (per unit)		
Catch and release facilities	Reefscience Australia	\$5,000		
Monitoring the benefits of the Lake Macquarie recreational fishing haven	University of Newcastle	\$65,116	\$94,627	\$68,287

Outcomes

Dr Iain Suthers from the University of NSW presented details of the proposal to investigate the impact of restocked mulloway fingerlings in NSW estuaries, including Smiths Lake, Lake Macquarie and the Tuggerah/Budgewoi/Munmorah Lake complex. The Committee was informed that this study would assess the environmental impacts of saltwater stocking and provide information on appropriate levels of stocking.

The Committee was introduced to Mr Mathew Taylor, who recently received a PhD scholarship. If funding support for this program was received from the Trust, there was the potential for Mr Taylor to contribute to the program by undertaking a genetic comparison study between stocked and wild mulloway fish.

Mr Matt Taylor of Keep Australia Beautiful presented the proposal for sponsorship of the Clean Beach Challenge. The Committee was advised that Keep Australia Beautiful was a non-profit organisation and that the Clean Beach Challenge was a program that encouraged and recognised thousands of volunteer hours donated by community

mindful individuals/groups. The program enhanced the visitors experience to the beach and promoted initiatives to reduce litter and its impact on the beach. A number of reward categories were available for sponsorship, including a natural heritage award which would be most relevant to the recreational fisher. This award category recognises commitment to the natural environment through the preservation of flora and fauna. The Committee was advised that an award category could be renamed to be more relevant to recreational angling. The benefits to recreational fishers could include the promotion of environmentally sound fishing practices such as catch and release, and responsible disposal of bait. The Committee was advised that the deadline for confirming sponsorship of an award category is February 2003. **The Committee recommended deferring this application to the next meeting.**

The Committee acknowledged the need for research on luderick as an important recreational fishing species. The proposal for a small project to investigate patterns of abundance, size structure and movement of luderick was discussed, however it was suggested that additional and more comprehensive research investigating the life history of the species, including migration using recreational tagging, is needed.

Action item: NSW Fisheries to develop a research proposal on luderick for consideration by the Committee out of session.

Dr Charles Gray of NSW Fisheries provided information on the proposal to investigate the life history and biology of black bream. In particular, the Committee was advised that research completed in Victoria and Western Australia had indicated that there was variation in the life history of this species between regions and that recruitment was sporadic and heavily dependent on environmental conditions. The effects of hybridisation with yellowfin bream were also unknown. For these reasons, separate studies on stock structure were required in each region/state. Black bream has also been identified as a potential future stocking species, particularly because it remains in the estuary. Contributory funding from the trust fund is requested, with NSW Fisheries providing part of the staff requirements and all sampling equipment such as boats and nets. The program will also involve tagging of black bream by recreational anglers to investigate migration and growth of the species.

Dr Gray also advised the Committee that NSW Fisheries had been successful in obtaining funding from FRDC to investigate the decline of the commercial and recreational fisheries for mulloway in NSW. It was planned to involve recreational anglers in the sampling process to obtain ageing material to complement commercial samples.

The Committee discussed the proposal for a fish cleaning table at Tuncurry to be funded from the Saltwater Trust. NSW Fisheries advised that at the 5th meeting, the Committee reviewed other funding applications for capital works programs, including fishing cleaning tables, submitted by Eurobodalla Shire Council. At that time the Committee did not recommend funding for capital works programs. The Committee agreed that recreational anglers would benefit greatly from programs, such as erecting fish cleaning tables. Providing that matching funding from councils/organisations was available, the Committee recommended that such programs should now be supported from the Trust.

Action Item – NSW Fisheries to cost a standardised Recreational Fishing Trusts label to be placed on trust funded capital works.

The Committee noted that a program assessing the effectiveness of recreational fishing havens had been previously supported by the Committee on 17 January 2002.

The Committee thoroughly discussed and considered each application for funding from the Saltwater Trust, including the following applications reviewed at the previous meeting:

Title	Proponent	Total Funds Requested 2002/03
Upgrade to the Mystery Bay boat ramp.	Mystery Bay Fishing Club/ Eurobodalla Shire Council	\$50,000
Upgrade to facilities at Moruya River Park Jetty.	Eurobodalla Shire Council	\$25,000
Erection of fish cleaning tables for Mill Bay, Narooma and Korner's Park, North Batemans Bay.	Eurobodalla Shire Council	\$10,000
Protection of Durras Lake from sedimentation through erosion of banks caused by uncontrolled access.	Eurobodalla Shire Council	\$10,000
Provision of better directions to the Hanging Rock Boat Ramp.	Eurobodalla Shire Council	\$4,000

Recommendations

Motion: That funding of \$75,020 in 2002/03, \$54,645 in 2003/04 and \$40,460 in 2004/05 for the University of NSW to investigate the impact of restocked mulloway fingerlings in NSW estuaries **be supported**. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: John Millyard. **Carried**.

Motion: That funding of \$5,000 in 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05 under the small grants program, to investigate patterns of abundance, size structure and smallscale movement of luderick **be supported**. Moved: Lisa Terry. Seconded: Warren Buchan. **Carried**.

Motion: That funding of \$100,000 in 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05 to investigate the life history and biology of black bream **be supported**. Moved: Lionel Jones. Seconded: Bill Heaton. **Carried**.

Motion: That funding of \$21,626 in 2002/03 and \$22,313 in 2003/04 to validate age and growth of key recreational species **be supported**. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Warren Buchan. **Carried**.

Motion: That matching funding of \$2,425 under the small grants program in 2002/03 for the Great Lakes Council to erect a fish cleaning table at Tuncurry **be supported**. Moved: Graham Harrison. Seconded: John Drew. **Carried**.

Motion: That matching funding of \$5,000 under the small grants program in 2002/03 for the Eurobodalla Shire Council to erect 2 fish cleaning tables at Batemans Bay and Narooma **be supported**. Moved: Bill Heaton. Seconded: Lisa Terry. **Carried**.

Motion: That funding of \$4,997 for the development of a Coffs Harbour fishing information web site **not be supported**. Moved: John Drew. Seconded: David Turner. **Carried**.

Motion: That funding of \$14,000 in 2002/03 and 2003/04 for the University of NSW to investigate the impact of leatherjackets and luderick on seagrass beds in NSW **not be supported**. Moved: Bill Heaton. Seconded: David Turner. **Carried**.

Motion: That funding of \$10,000 in 2002/03 for Recreational Fishing Access in Jervis Bay **not be supported**. Moved: Warren Buchan. Seconded: Lisa Terry. **Carried**.

Motion: That funding of \$5,000 in 2002/03 for ReefScience catch and release facilities **not be supported**. Moved: John Drew. Seconded: Graham Harrison. **Carried**.

Motion: That funding of \$65,116 in 2002/03, \$94,627 in 2003/04 and \$68,287 in 2004/05 for monitoring the benefits of the Lake Macquarie recreational fishing haven by the University of Newcastle **not be supported**. Moved: Lionel Jones. Seconded: Warren Buchan. **Carried**.

Motion: That matching funding of \$12,500 in 2002/03 for the Eurobodalla Shire Council to upgrade facilities at the Moruya River Park Jetty **not be supported**. Moved: Lisa Terry. Seconded: Warren Buchan. **Carried**.

Motion: That matching funding of \$5,000 in 2002/03 for the Eurobodalla Shire Council to protect Durras Lake from sedimentation **not be supported**. Moved: John Drew. Seconded: Bill Heaton. **Carried**.

Motion: That matching funding of \$2,000 in 2002/03 for the Eurobodalla Shire Council to provide better directions to the Hanging Rock boat ramp **not be supported**. Moved: Warren Buchan. Seconded: Bill Heaton. **Carried**.

Motion: That matching funding of \$25,000 in 2002/03 for the Mystery Bay/Eurobodalla Shire Council to upgrade the Mystery Bay boat ramp **not be supported**. Moved: Lisa Terry. Seconded: Graham Harrison. **Carried**.

Issue Habitat grant program**Background**

An overview of current funding sources available for fish habitat rehabilitation projects, and current levels of funding successfully sought by the Office of Conservation habitat program from these sources will be presented. An assessment of the proposal to investigate the impact of leatherjackets and luderick on seagrass beds (submitted by the University of Technology) will also be discussed.

Outcomes

NSW Fisheries advised the Committee that NSW Fisheries' Office of Conservation had received over \$2.9 million of funding from external sources for habitat programs over 3 years. These funds had been approved from a number of sources, including the Natural Heritage Trust, the Environmental Trust, the Fish Conservation Trust Fund, Sate Water, the Recreational Fishing (Freshwater) Trust and others.

It was reported that the Catchment Board had recently agreed to a proposal for a Fish Habitat Grant Program and was seeking \$120,000 from the Natural Heritage Trust to match the contribution of \$120,00 supported by the Committee for the Clarence region habitat program in 2002/03 and 2003/04. These funds do not include contributions from councils, farmers and Corporate sponsors.

A new state-wide Fish Habitat Grant Program was proposed seeking seed funding of \$200,000 per annum over 3 years from the Saltwater Trust. It was emphasised that catchment blueprints required seed funding for aquatic habitat rehabilitation actions. The types of projects would include fish habitat rehabilitation such as aquatic habitat mapping, barrier mapping, prioritisation of sites for rehabilitation on ground works as well as community education and awareness and monitoring of marine and estuarine health.

Recommendations

Motion: That funding of \$200,000 in 2002/03 for the Fish Habitat Grant Program **be supported**. Moved: Lionel Jones. Seconded: John Drew. **Carried**.

Motion: That all proposals for the Fish Habitat Grant Program be presented to the Committee for approval, prior to funding. Moved: Lionel Jones. Seconded: John Drew. **Carried**.

10. Action items from last meeting

(See attached summary)

NSW Fisheries advised that its policy on artificial reefs and fish aggregating devices is currently being finalised and will be distributed to all applicants who submitted proposals on artificial reefs. The Committee was informed that the Trust funded Fish Aggregating Devices program has commenced.

11. General Business

General business items for discussion are as follows:

Graham Harrison (region 4) has reported that the NSW Fishing Party is prepared to start legal proceedings against NSW Fisheries with regard to the introduction of the recreational fishing fee. Bob Smith of the fishing party has received extensive coverage of his campaign through sending letters to regional newspapers and getting them printed in the letters column.

The chairperson advised the Committee that Bruce Mahony (region 1) had reported that the Ballina Shire and Lennox Head Councils intend to have the outflow for their new sewerage treatment works in Emigrant Creek just below the Dam. If this proceeds, this will increase the total number sewerage outlets to 30 in the Richmond system.

Action item: NSW Fisheries to refer the issue of increased sewerage outflow into the Richmond River system to the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing.

Correspondence received

1) Email correspondence from Mr Bruce Grossey (gold agent)

Mr Grossey has recommended that agents, particularly Gold agents, should receive an incentive to compensate for the amount of time & cost involved in selling licences & preparing monthly returns etc. His suggestion was for a complimentary annual fishing licence for each agent.

Action Item: NSW Fisheries to investigate an incentive scheme for Gold Licence agents.

2) ABC online posted: Wed, 28 Aug 2002:

Divers recover boy's body

Divers have retrieved the body of a boy who was swept from rocks while fishing on the NSW far south coast over the weekend. Dylan Willis, 9, of Batemans Bay, was rock fishing with his family on Saturday morning when a big wave washed him into the sea. Rough seas initially hampered the search. Sergeant Steve Mawson from Batemans Bay police says five professional divers who are friends of the family volunteered to

search the area, which is known locally as "the washing machine". He says they found Dylan's body this morning.

For information.

3) Email correspondence from Mr Gary Heather

Mr Heather has recommended that licence renewals or reminder notices be sent to recreational licence holders.

NSW Fisheries advised the Committee that a number of options for sending out renewal notices to licence holders had been explored. However, none of these were cost effective in achieving the Government's commitment to keep administration costs of the licensing system below 10 percent of funds generated. Members suggested applying to Treasury for supplementary funding of a recreational fishing education program, including bag and size limit brochures and a licence renewal/reminder notice system was raised. NSW Fisheries will continue to explore options for a cost effective renewal system.

NSW Fisheries requested feedback from the Committee on the desired format for reporting on trust funded projects. The Committee recommended that all trust funded project managers prepare milestone reports to be presented to the Committee at each meeting. The format of the report, including progress updates, milestones achieved and actual expenditure, should be developed by NSW Fisheries.

NSW Fisheries advised the Committee that a prawn hatchery in northern NSW had developed cost-effective technology to breed prawn larvae. The possibility of stocking intermittently opening intertidal lagoons with hatchery-reared prawn larvae was being explored by NSW Fisheries. This would involve assessing growth rates of stocked prawns in the lagoons and then opening the prawn fishery for harvesting by recreational fishers at the appropriate time. For information.

Recommendation

Motion: That all trust funded project managers prepare milestone reports to be presented to the Committee at each meeting. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Bill Heaton. **Carried.**

12. Next Meeting

Thursday 5 December 2002