

Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee
Outcomes - Meeting 37, 29 October 2010

1. Chairs introduction

The Chair welcomed members to the 37th meeting of the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure meeting.

2. Confirmation of outcomes from previous RFFTEC meeting

The draft outcomes of the 36th RFFTEC meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting. **Moved:** Kevin McKinnon **Seconded:** Tom Williams **Carried.**

3. Action Items from meeting 36

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 \$13.2 million dollars had been received to the Trust from recreational fishing licence revenue in 2009/10. The balance of the Freshwater Trust in 2009/10 was around \$234,000. The income to the Freshwater Trust in 2009/10 was \$4 million dollars. Approved allocations in 2010/11 are approximately \$3.9 million dollars.

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 Michael Piontech provided an overview of recent compliance actions undertaken in the Snowy Mountains region including significant enforcement outcomes. Major operations were held within the Thredbo and Eucumbene Rivers over winter to detect and deter illegal fishing for trout and salmon during the annual spawning closure. An enforcement operation is planned during the Snowy Mountains Trout Festival, to ensure fishers adhere to recreational fishing rules.

b) *Habitat Grants* – A summary of Habitat Grant applications received in 2010/11 was provided. Habitat Grant applications were forwarded to the Technical Panel for review on 18 November 2010. Recommendations arising from the Technical Panel meeting will be forwarded to RFFTEC out of session for consideration. Applications will also be provided on a CD to Trust Committee members for review.

An update on progress of Habitat Grants funded in 2009/10 was provided. It was noted that 6 of the 24 projects funded in 09/10 had been completed with many of the remaining 18 projects in the final stages of on-ground works. The 2nd Fishers for Fish Habitat Forum was held at Swansea RSL, Lake Macquarie on the 4-5 June, 2010. Over 100 recreational fishers met to discuss recent habitat research and involvement in habitat projects. Anglers took part in riverside tree planting at Kooragang Island on the Hunter River. A summary of Forum outcomes is provided on the Habitat Network's website.

c) *Breeding and native fish* – Mr Matt McLellan advised that the Murray cod breeding program was on track to meet this year's target. To date, minimum spawnings have been met for all Murray cod zones other than the Macquarie zone, however additional spawnings from fish from this zone are anticipated. Golden perch spawnings are yet to commence. Approximately 25,000 Trout cod larvae were recently transferred to grow-out ponds at the hatchery. When these larvae develop into fry, they will be stocked into the upper Macquarie

River catchment. These stockings will occur in November or December. Ovulation of captive held female Macquarie perch has been observed, however fertilisation of eggs has so far been unsuccessful.

d) *Narrandera Fish and Family fun day* – Mr Matt McLellan advised that over 35 exhibitors had presented at the Narrandera Fisheries Centre open day. Activities at the open day included fisheries research demonstrations, aquarium displays, cooking demonstrations & fishing competitions. The family fun day was attended by celebrity chef Paul Mercurio. Almost 500 people toured the native fish hatchery. The event was well reported in local media.

e) *Conservation Manager, South West NSW* - Mr Luke Pearce discussed developments and plans that had been assessed over the past 6 months, to ensure no net loss of fish habitat & their compliance with fish habitat legislation. Examples of recent developments in south west NSW involving drainage re-diversions and associated fish habitat outcomes were presented. Mr Pearce had recently re-discovered the Yellow Spotted Bell Frog, which had been presumed extinct, while undertaking research on the Southern Pygmy Perch. Various radio and television interviews had been conducted regarding this re-discovery, which had also received international media coverage.

d) *Trout/Salmonid Research Lakes Jindabyne & Eucumbene & Oberon Dam* – Trout research in the Thredbo and Eucumbene Rivers shows good natural recruitment of rainbow and brown trout within these two fisheries, with rainbow trout stocking contributing to the rainbow trout populations in these systems. Most spawning rainbow trout in Lakes Jindabyne and Eucumbene are two or three year old fish with a good condition factor rating. Results of sampling at Oberon Dam show that stockings of rainbow trout do not appear to be contributing significantly to the overall population of rainbow trout in the dam. The cause of this outcome is unclear however the recent discovery of Redfin in the dam could explain this survey result. Juvenile brown trout are continuing to be captured in the spawning runs within the Fish River, suggesting good natural recruitment of brown trout within that fishery. Trout monitoring in these catchments will continue in the near future.

e) *Fish Stocking Programs* - Almost 5 million fish were stocked in 2009/10 season comprising 2,980,780 salmonids and 1,941,000 native fish. Trout stockings comprised 2,042,780 rainbow trout, 644,000 brown trout, 44,000 brook trout and 250,000 Atlantic salmon. Native stockings comprised 185,000 Australian bass, 996,000 golden perch, 295,000 Murray cod and 392,000 silver perch. Dollar for dollar stocking proposals for 2009/10 have been assessed and stocking groups have been notified on outcomes of their stocking applications. Australian bass stocking will commence by mid-October 2010 and golden perch and Murray cod from late-December 2010.

There is a growing interest in the community to participate in fish releases as part of their cultural practice. I&I NSW are working with such groups to ensure responsible stocking takes place. Dr Stewart Fielder has advised that some samples of bass produced at the Government's hatchery at Port Stephens sent to the Elizabeth Macarthur Institute for Nodavirus testing this year returned a positive test to the Nodavirus infection. These fish were asymptomatic carriers of the virus and unfortunately needed to be euthanised due to their positive status. I&I, NSW is discussing opportunities for research with other hatcheries and virologists to further understand Nodavirus infection in bass and ensure the long-term viability of bass production for stocking in NSW. A letter from Dr Fielder explaining this issue was tabled at the meeting. This letter has also been forwarded to the Council of Freshwater Anglers, Southern Bass Fishing Club and the Far South Coast Bass Stocking Association.

f) *Gaden hatchery update*: The hatchery business plan was distributed for the information of the Committee. A new Gaden Hatchery website is up and running and a new Introductory DVD is being produced for screening at the theatre. An operations manual is also being developed. The Chair noted that a community open day was being held at the hatchery on 11 November 2010, to showcase the hatchery and associated programs. The Chair also noted that the Principal Director had confirmed the agreement between Trust and Government expenditure at the hatchery; namely that costs associated with major capital works and significant maintenance at the hatchery was the responsibility of I&I,NSW and that Trust Funding at the hatchery was based on operational costs and some minor maintenance.

Mr Doug Joyner noted future potential investment opportunities for the Visitor Centre e.g. development of a coffee shop or café at the Visitors Centre to increase the profile and tourism use of the facility. It was noted that the primary purpose of the hatchery is fish production and that any such development at the Visitors Centre would require significant commercial investment. However, the Implementation Committee could consider this issue once essential resources required for the Visitors Centre and production facility were in place.

f) *Gaden hatchery & angler access guided tours* – A tour of the Gaden hatchery facility and angler access sites on the Thredbo River and Lake Jindabyne was undertaken.

8. General business

RFFTEC appointments

I&I, NSW advised that applications for new membership to the committee for positions falling vacant in regions 1, 4, 5, 7 & 8 in May next year have now closed.

Uniforms for expenditure committee members

Mr Max Graham questioned whether a collared shirt and cap similar to that currently worn by Fishcare volunteers could be produced for expenditure committee members to wear at official functions and club outings, to increase the profile of the Trust and its expenditure committees.

Action item: For I&I, NSW to investigate the purchase of a uniform for expenditure committee representatives for wearing at appropriate events.

Accreditation of Manilla Fish Hatchery

Mr Ian Ward advised that the Manilla Fishing Club hatchery had recently been updated to meet stocking accreditation standards and club members were now re commencing breeding of golden perch for stocking into local Lakes and rivers.

Adjustment to budgets for ongoing programs

Mr Bryan van der Walt advised that some ongoing Trust funded programs within the Investment Plan approved at the commencement of the Investment Plan in 2008/09 may require budget adjustments at the 2011/12 budget meeting,

Limited fishing for Murray cod in dams during the closed season

Mr Richard Ping Kee queried whether there was capacity to make an application for limited fishing of Murray cod in impounded waters during the closed season, to help reduce illegal fishing pressure in rivers over this time. I&I NSW advised that recreational fishing laws relating to Murray cod will be reviewed during the next bag and size limit review.

Fishing information for Indigenous fishers

Mr Richard Ping Kee suggested the provision of additional education on fishing for Indigenous fishers and whether there was capacity to appoint Indigenous Fishing Rangers to facilitate the

dissemination of fishing information amongst Indigenous communities. The Chair noted that this issue could be referred to the new Indigenous Fishing Council for future consideration.

Action item: That the issue of disseminating fishing rules and information amongst Indigenous fishers be referred to the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Council for future consideration.

Schools fishing workshop at Lake Mulwala

Mr Kevin McKinnon advised that the fishing workshop held at Apex Park on Lake Mulwala on the 27th of October 2010 was a great success with school children from Corowa, Lowesdale, Barooga and Tocumwal taking part in the program.

Draft Freshwater Recreational Fishing Guide

The Committee nominated Mr Kevin McKinnon to review the draft version of the 2011 freshwater fishing guide out of session.

Action item: To send a draft copy of the freshwater fishing guide to Mr Kevin McKinnon for feedback / comments prior to publication.

9. Next Meeting

To be confirmed subsequent to the next ACoRF and RFSTEC meetings.

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
Small Projects				
Freshwater Fishing Safety DVD To publish & distribute a Freshwater Fishing Safety DVD to anglers. Motion: RFFTEC supported funding for the project. Moved: Tom Williams Seconded: Ron Croker Carried I&I, NSW noted that the DVD could also be downloaded from the RFA website free of charge.	Council of Freshwater Anglers / Recreational Fishing Alliance	\$5,000		

Platform: Fishing fee coordination and payment network

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Small Projects				
Recreational Fishing Fee administration Following an increase in the Freshwater Trust allocation to \$4 million in 2009/10, it is proposed to increase the freshwater Trust contribution to Recreational Fishing Fee administration budget to \$400,000 (10% of revenue) in 2010/11. Motion: RFFTEC supported funding for the project. Moved: Ian Ward Seconded: Kevin McKinnon Carried	Industry and Investment NSW	\$100,000		

Platform: Recreational fishing enhancement programs

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Small Projects				
Species Impact Statement and Ministerial order for limited recreational fishing for Trout Cod in stocked impounded waters To undertake a Species Impact Statement and prepare a Ministerial order to enable limited recreational fishing of Trout cod in stocked impoundments. Motion: RFFTEC supported funding for the project. Moved: Ian Ward Seconded: Debbie Lennon Carried	Industry and Investment NSW	\$30,000		

Platform: Research on fish and recreational fishing

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Small Projects				
Investigations into captive breeding techniques for Macquarie perch & future conservation stocking program – Phase 2 To continue to maintain the rescued population at Narrandera Fisheries Centre by installing netting over Pond 24 and artificial stream to prevent cormorant predation. Motion: RFFTEC supported funding for the first year of funding for the project Moved: Kevin McKinnon Seconded: Richard Ping Kee Carried	Industry and Investment NSW	\$10,000		
Age and growth of Murray cod and golden perch from the Edward – Wakool fish kill, 2010 To set and section otoliths, collected from deceased Murray cod and golden perch of the Edward & Wakool River systems, to estimate and verify age of fish. Otoliths were removed from Murray cod and golden perch killed by a natural flooding event that occurred recently in the Edward & Wakool River systems. Motion: RFFTEC supported funding for the project. Moved: Kevin McKinnon Seconded: Richard Ping Kee Carried	Industry and Investment NSW	\$1,200		

Table 2 - New Trust Applications deferred by RFFTEC

Platform: Recreational fishing education

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Small Project				
Development of an iPhone and iPod application Tender process to develop an iPhone & iPod service on recreational fish species and fishing rules Motion: RFFTEC recommended that the application be deferred for consideration at the 2011/12 annual budget meeting Moved: Ian Ward Seconded: Kevin McKinnon Carried	Industry and Investment NSW	\$30,000 FW \$70,000 SW		

Platform: Research on fish and recreational fishing

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Small Projects				
Investigations into captive breeding techniques for Macquarie perch & future conservation stocking program – Phase 2 To continue to investigate captive breeding techniques of Macquarie perch & to continue to monitor the impacts of the redfin perch invasion in the upper Lachlan catchment on the Macquarie perch population and native fish communities. RFFTEC recommended that funding for this component of the program, (years 2 and 3 of the budget) be deferred for consideration at the 2011/12 annual budget meeting Moved: Kevin McKinnon Seconded: Richard Ping Kee Carried	Industry and Investment NSW		\$32,358	\$33,328

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Small Projects				
An assessment of the Australian bass stockings in the Snowy River To finalise research on recent Australian bass re-stocking efforts in the Snowy River by performing otolith microchemistry analysis on known wild and sampled bass. RFFTEC recommended that funding for the program be deterred for consideration at the 2011/12 annual budget meeting. Moved: Debbie Lennon Seconded: Ron Croker Carried	Southern University	Cross \$10,000		

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

Platform: Fishing access and facilities

Project Title	Organisation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Build a fishing club room and fish cleaning facility for the Euston Resort Fishing Club To build a fishing club clubhouse for Euston Resort fishing club functions and to construct a fish cleaning table adjacent to the Murray River at Euston. Motion: RFFTEC did not support funding for this project. Moved: Debbie Lennon Seconded: Ron Croker Carried The Committee considered the construction of fishing club facilities to be the responsibility of the club. It was noted that the fish cleaning table component of the application appeared to be part of the overall design of the fishing club clubhouse. The Committee recommended that the angling facilities manager contact the applicant with a view to developing an application for a fish cleaning table at a nearby reserve, for resubmission to the Trust at a future meeting.	Euston Resort Fishing Club	\$44,000		
Fishing access track upgrade, property “Bundi” To upgrade a private road through property “Bundi” to a popular fishing destination on the Macquarie River known as “Gardeners Hole” near Hill End. Motion: RFFTEC did not support funding for this project. Moved: Kevin McKinnon Seconded: Debbie Lennon Carried The Committee did not consider this project a priority for funding as the access track to “Gardeners Hole” was located on private property and a fee was charged by the property owner to use the track. The Committee also considered the proposal may only provide a temporary solution to the erosion problem, as the application did not specify erosion control measures such as the use of gravel or road base to fill in wash out areas or low spots along the track.	Bundi Fishing Club	\$10,000		