

**Ninth Meeting of the
Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee
Final Minutes
22/05/03
9:30am to 3.30pm
Cronulla Fisheries Centre
202 Nicholson Parade, Cronulla**

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 & 8 – Wollongong to Vic border

Geoffrey Woolley

Malcolm Poole

Doug Joyner for John Millyard

Anthony Moore

NSW Game Fishing Association

Recreational Fishing Alliance

Australian Fishing Tackle Association

Nature Conservation Council

NSW Fisheries (observer)

John Diplock, Principal Manager, Recreational Fisheries

Business

Welcome by Chair

Apologies

Minutes of RFSTEC meeting 13.02.03

Business arising from the minutes

Agenda Items

- 1) Saltwater trust fund report
- 2) Recreational Fishing Trusts Executive Officer
- 3) NSW Fisheries ongoing programs
 1. Fish Aggregating Buoys
 2. Licence Administration
 3. Communications
 - a) Advisory and Education
 - b) Fishing promotion (billboards)
 - c) Fishcare Volunteer Program
 4. Compliance
 5. Recreational fishing havens administration
 6. Licence Research database
 7. Gamefish Tagging program
 8. Striped marlin economic survey
 9. Small grants program
 10. Recreational harvest of baitfish
 11. Pilot habitat program
 12. Recreational fishing haven survey
 13. Saltwater Anglers Catch Research Program
 14. Recreational Fishing Fisheries Management Strategy
 15. Life history and tagging of black bream and luderick
 16. Impact of restocked mulloway fingerlings (NSWF/UNSW)
 17. RFSTEC meeting expenses
- 4) External programs progress reports
- 5) Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust - new program applications
- 6) Action Items from meeting 8
- 7) General Business
- 8) Next meeting

Business

Welcome by Chair

The Chair opened the meeting by greeting members and noting a full agenda for the meeting.

Minutes of RFSTEC meeting 8. Held 13.02.03

The Committee asked that the request for information regarding funds available from the \$20 million advance loan for additional buyouts made at the meeting be included under agenda item 6.

The draft minutes of the 8th RFSTEC meeting including the amendment recorded above were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Moved: John Drew. Seconded: Lionel Jones. **Carried.**

Business arising from the minutes

None

Issue

Saltwater trust fund report

Background

A Saltwater Trust cashflow table for 2001/02 and 2002 /03 has been provided for the Committee's information (see Attachment 1). Total funds allocated to saltwater programs approved by RFSTEC and the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing during 2002/03 to date is over \$8 million. A Freshwater Trust table is also provided showing details of shared programs.

Outcomes

NSW Fisheries presented a financial table summarising the Saltwater Trust fund cashflow since implementation of the recreational fishing licence, for the Committee's information. Total funds allocated to saltwater programs approved by RFSTEC and the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing during 2002/03 to date is over \$6.8 million. However, it is predicted that some programs will have carryover of funds into the next financial year.

The Committee requested that this financial table be circulated to members prior to each meeting.

Action item: That NSW Fisheries circulate the Trust Fund financial table to members prior to each meeting.

For information.

Issue

Recreational Fishing Trusts Executive Officer

Background

At the last meeting, the Committee discussed the level of service provided to the Expenditure Committee and other sub-committees of the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing by NSW Fisheries. It was acknowledged that the role and work performed by the Recreational Fishery Management team had increased considerably since the introduction of the recreational fishing licence. It was proposed that an Executive Officer's position be established to oversee the Saltwater Expenditure Committee and the Advisory Council which would provide the service delivery expected by the Committees and ensure transparent reporting. A position description and budget for the Executive Officer has been provided for the Committee's consideration (see Attachment 2). As well as supporting the committee the position would have responsibility for communicating the work of the committee to clubs and the broader community, and provide a conduit for anglers views into the committee.

Outcomes

The Committee was informed that this position would ensure effective Trust program management and will be directly responsible for this Committee. The position will also be responsible for overseeing the budget of the Saltwater Trust. The Committee requested clarification of the oncosts component of the Executive Officer's position budget. NSW Fisheries advised that oncosts were calculated using a set formula which is standard for all NSW Fisheries programs.

Recommendation

That funding of \$132,255 in 2003/04, \$135,834 in 2004/05 and \$141,178 in 2005/06 for a Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust Executive Officer **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Geoffrey Woolley. **Carried.**

Issue NSW Fisheries ongoing programs**Background**1. Fish Aggregating Buoys

The program is aimed at improving fishing opportunities for recreational game, sport and offshore anglers. A series of 10 buoys have been deployed along the NSW coast this summer. Regular data collection is being undertaken through the use of angler logbooks to monitor angler catches and to determine the effectiveness of the buoys in attracting pelagic fish. Clubs on the North Coast assisting with the program have indicated that they would like the buoys deployed all year round with periodic maintenance.

It is anticipated that no funds will be carried over into 2003/04. Funds of \$90,669 from the Saltwater Trust have been approved by this Committee, ACoRF and the former Minister for Fisheries for this program in 2003/04. A revised budget for 2003/04 and 2004/05 is provided in the attached progress report for this program (see Attachment 4). Additional funding in 2003/04 and a one year extension on the program is essential to achieve the objectives of this pilot research program.

It is recommended that a revised funding allocation of \$139,448 in 2003/04 and funding of \$138,403 in 2004/05 for the Fish Aggregating Buoys program be supported from the Saltwater Trust.

2. Licence Administration

The amount of money collected from the recreational fishing fee from 1 July 2002 to 31 March 2003 was nearly \$6.4 million. Please note that agent returns are still being collected. The number of the different types of licences sold during this period is as follows:

Approximately

14,000 three year licences (4.0%);
162,038 one year licences (46.3%);
55,478 one month licences (15.9%);
108,381 three day licences (31%); and
10,030 prepaid three day licences (2.9%).

A report of monthly licence sales since the implementation of the licence is provided for the Committee's information (see Attachment 3).

At the last meeting of the Committee the region 6a representative proposed the introduction of a lifetime (or 20 year) recreational fishing licence. Such a licence is widely used in the United States and is very popular. This proposal will be reviewed by the Committee at the meeting.

It is anticipated that no funds will be carried over into 2003/04. Funds of \$600,00 from the Saltwater Trust have been approved by this Committee, ACoRF and the former Minister for Fisheries for this program in 2003/04. No further allocations are required.

Currently, administration costs include the costs of agents' commissions. This has limited the amount of funds available for other administrative costs and the potential to make improvements to the current licensing system, such as issuing plastic licences.

3. Communications

a) Advisory and Education

A 3 year proposal for the printing of the recreational fishing guides will be presented to the Committee at the meeting. A strategy for raising the awareness of multicultural communities about recreational fishing, including bag and size limits, will also be presented.

b) Fishing promotion (billboards)

It is anticipated that no funds from this program will be carried over into 2003/04. A proposal for continuing the program will be presented to the Committee at the meeting.

c) Fishcare Volunteer Program

The program has expanded to 15 regions (Batemans Bay, Botany Bay, Coffs Harbour, Jervis Bay, Lake Illawarra, Lake Macquarie, Long Reef, Middle Harbour, Port Macquarie, The Entrance, Maclean, Narooma, Eden, Tweed Heads, Wallis Lakes) and involves a total of 221 volunteers. The 3 Coastal Education Officers have been busy holding information nights, running fishing clinics, attending open days and implementing the schools curriculum program. Since July 2002 nine training sessions have been conducted for coastal Fishcare Volunteers. Annually, volunteers participate in an average of 8 community events, make 360 individual contacts, fill out 250 fishing surveys and dedicate around 84hrs to the program.

The volunteers and Education Officers are involved in a range of activities including the hatchery fishing clinic program, which has expanded to Grafton Research Station. Indigenous and disabled clinics have also been initiated and managed by the Officers, with volunteers assisting. The Program achieved a commendation at the 2002 Volunteer Awards.

It is anticipated that no funds will be carried over into 2003/04. A revised 3 year budget is provided in the attached progress report for this program (see Attachment 4).

It is recommended that funding of \$623,572 in 2003/04, \$611,230 in 2004/05 and \$609,630 in 2005/06 for the Fishcare Volunteer Program be supported from the Saltwater Trust.

4. Compliance

The Saltwater Trust is currently funding nine Fisheries Officers based in the following regions: Clarence, Hastings, Port Stephens, Hunter, Sydney North and South, Illawarra, Batemans Bay and the Far South Coast. It is anticipated that all allocated funds for this program will be expended in 2002/03. Funds of \$1,050,000 from the Saltwater Trust have been approved by this Committee, ACoRF and the former Minister for Fisheries for this program in 2003/04. No further allocations are required for this coming year.

The recreational mobile squad was also funded by the Trust in 2002/03. Recruitment for the squad has been completed and the three Fisheries Officers are operating out of Brooklyn. The mobile squad will be high profile and be heavily involved in recreational compliance activities.

It is anticipated that funds of \$126,000 will be carried over into 2003/04. **It is recommended that funds of \$240,000 in 2003/04 and \$351,000 in 2004/05 and 2005/06 for the recreational mobile squad be supported from the Saltwater Trust.**

5. Recreational fishing havens

The compulsory acquisition of 10 Botany Bay prawn trawl businesses has been completed, including the review of all 10 matters by a Compensation Review Panel formed for that purpose. Ongoing claims for accelerated depreciation, retraining and relocation costs are being received and processed.

It is anticipated that funds of \$198,261 will be carried over into 2003/04. However, the total budget required for 2003/04 is \$102,550. A budget is provided in the attached progress report for this program (see Attachment 4). **It is recommended that funds of \$95,711 be returned to the Saltwater Trust for allocation to other programs.**

6. Licence Research database

Data entry of one year and three year licence holders has continued. The database has been used in economic surveys, including the Sydney metropolitan recreational fishing survey and the National Angling survey, for a recent mailout of an information package, including a licence reminder, to anglers and for issuing replacement licences. At the last meeting, the Committee requested that NSW Fisheries investigate options for outsourcing data entry. Quotations for external data capture will be presented to the Committee at the meeting. A contingency should be made for this item if appropriate.

7. Gamefish Tagging program

Data entry of tagged fish and recaptures and distribution of plastic and steel tags to game fishers has continued. NSW Fisheries research staff have collected catch data at NSW tournaments to date. Distribution of the new marlin tag is continuing in collaboration with the Gamefishing Association of Australia. It is anticipated that all allocated funds for this program will be expended in 2002/03. Funds of \$122,797 from the Saltwater Trust have been approved by this Committee, ACoRF and the former

Minister for Fisheries for this program in 2003/04. No further allocations are required for the coming year.

8. Striped marlin economic survey

The striped marlin survey commenced at the Port Stephens Interclub Tournament in February 2003. A survey form was developed and given to all Interclub participants to complete. A total of 3,500 survey forms were distributed to game fishing clubs, with the assistance of the NSW Gamefishing Association. The survey form is also available on the NSW Fisheries website. Gamefishing clubs are being encouraged to participate in the survey. Data is also being obtained on the commercial fishery for striped marlin off the NSW coastline. A brief expenditure survey for charter boat operators is also being developed. No further funding allocations are required for this program in 2003/04.

9. Small grants program

Five small grants programs are being funded from the Saltwater Trust in the current financial year. These include:

- a) Fishcare volunteers pamphlet, Southern Cross University
- b) Fish cleaning table, Tuncurry-Great Lakes Council
- c) Fish cleaning tables, Batemans Bay and Narooma-Eurobodalla Shire Council
- d) Smallscale movement of luderick, James Cook University
- e) Four fish cleaning tables, Shoalhaven-Shoalhaven Council.

It is anticipated that funds of \$23,000 will be carried over into 2003/04. **It is recommended that additional funds of \$27,000 in 2003/04 be supported from the Saltwater Trust.**

10. Recreational harvest of baitfish

The Blue (slimey) Mackerel Assessment Program, co funded by FRDC and the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust, is well under way and has been supported by the recreational and charter fishers who have provided samples of fish. All samples are being used to obtain information on spawning activities, patterns of egg and larval development, and patterns of age, growth and reproduction.

Over 1000 blue mackerel samples have already been collected, covering a broad size range of fish from 130 - 406 mm in length. Preliminary indications show a clear pattern of distribution based on sex with many more males found in the north of the state than in the area south of Port Stephens. It is difficult to say at this early stage how representative this pattern is. Changes in the size and sex of slimeys with changes in season and location will become clearer as the study continues.

A series of port meetings to advise charter operators of the need to provide information regarding bait use have been undertaken. There has been consultation with the gamefish sector at a state and regional level through attendance at tournament briefings. A total of 15 tournaments have been monitored in the 2002/2003 season with an additional focus on bait use.

This program commenced in January 2003 and project milestones and budgets have been adjusted to account for the new starting time. Funds of \$107,641 from the Saltwater Trust have been approved by this Committee, ACoRF and the former Minister for Fisheries for this program in 2003/04. No further allocations are required.

11. Pilot habitat program

An expression of interest calling for applications for the Pilot Habitat Grant Program was advertised in February 2003. The Committee requested that all proposals for the Pilot Habitat Grant Program be presented to the Committee for consideration, prior to the allocation of funding.

NSW Fisheries received ten applications. One of these, from the Iluka Landcare group (\$5,000 for 2002/03), was previously supported by this Committee and the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing. The remaining applications have been assessed against the criteria for assessment. A summary of NSW Fisheries' recommendations with a priority ranking and a map showing the location of each of the project sites will be provided at the meeting.

Funds of \$60,000 from the Saltwater Trust have been approved by this Committee, ACoRF and the former Minister for Fisheries for this program in 2003/04. No further allocations are required.

12. Recreational fishing haven survey

The main task of the project up to June 2003 was to gather fisheries statistics (fish catch, fishing effort, species composition) on recreational fishing in NSW with particular emphasis on the Recreational Fishing Havens (RFHs). National Angling Survey data is currently being used to assess the status of recreational fishing in NSW before the establishment of the havens.

The next phase of the survey will collect recreational data after declaration of the RFHs and a comparison of "before and after" data will reveal the benefits of the process. It would be appropriate to co-ordinate the starting time of the "after" data collection season to provide sufficient time for the RFH process to generate an effect. As a result of this, project milestones and budgets have been adjusted to account for the new starting time. No further allocations are required.

13. Saltwater Anglers Catch Research Program

Fourteen annual saltwater fishing events have been monitored since January 2003. The program has received excellent support from angling groups throughout the state. All data collected has been entered onto the anglers' catch data base. Angling clubs and associations are receiving feedback by way of angling research competition reports. Assistance from Fishcare Volunteers has proved invaluable and a video has been produced for training purposes. This will accelerate the expansion of the project into other areas of the State

It is anticipated that funds of \$120,000 will be carried over into 2003/04. **It is recommended that funds of \$29,178 in 2003/04 for the Saltwater Anglers Catch Research Program be supported from the Saltwater Trust.**

14. Recreational Fishing Fisheries Management Strategy

The project commenced in March 2002. By the end of July 2003, it is expected that a description and review of the existing fishery and a preliminary risk assessment of the fishery will be completed. A Recreational Fishing Saltwater Management Planning Committee to assist in the development of the draft Fishery Management Strategy has also been formed.

Funds of \$300,000 from the Saltwater Trust have been approved by this Committee, ACoRF and the former Minister for Fisheries for this program in 2003/04. No further allocations are required.

15. Life history and tagging of black bream and luderick

Recruitment of staff for these two programs is currently being undertaken and the starting date for both projects will be 1 July 2003. No allocated Trust funds were expended in 2002/03.

These studies will provide immense benefits to recreational anglers and the general community in NSW as they will provide the necessary information to make informed decisions concerning the sustainable management of black bream and luderick. The information generated will also be extremely beneficial to the environmental assessment of the NSW recreational fishery. The projects will provide an excellent avenue for recreational fishers to participate in an extremely valuable management-orientated research project, thereby directly contributing to the management of their fishery. The involvement of recreational fishers throughout the project will ensure its success and the acceptance of the study.

Project milestones and budgets have been adjusted to account for the new starting time. Funds of \$107,641 for the luderick program and \$100,000 for the black bream project from the Saltwater Trust have been approved by this Committee, ACoRF and the former Minister for Fisheries in 2003/04. No further allocations are required.

16. Impact of restocked mulloway fingerlings (NSWF/UNSW)

NSW Fisheries is trialing the stocking of mulloway fingerlings into estuaries as part of a \$170,000 three-year research project with the University of NSW. A total of 120,000 mulloway fingerlings were stocked into Smiths Lake near Forster-Tuncurry and Botany Bay on 8 May 2003. This represents the most significant marine fish stocking for research undertaken in NSW estuaries. The stocked fingerlings have been marked so that scientists can distinguish them from wild mulloway. With growing community interest in marine stocking, research gathered from this project will help NSW Fisheries make informed decisions on marine stocking. A small trial stocking of mulloway was undertaken in 1997 at Smiths Lake to determine whether hatchery produced fish survived. The trial was a success with large numbers of stocked fish surviving and

recaptured. Recreational fishers in the long term will benefit directly from more stocks of fish and increased catch rates of targeted species.

No funds from this program will be carried over into 2003/04. Funds of \$54,645 from the Saltwater Trust have been approved by this Committee, ACoRF and the former Minister for Fisheries for the program in 2003/04. No further allocations are required.

17. RFSTEC meeting expenses

The Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee oversees expenditure from the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust. Three meetings have been held in 2002/2003 so far. A number of out of session meetings were also held during the year. Expenses associated with Committee meetings include sitting fees, air fare/vehicle expenses, accommodation and lunches.

It is anticipated that funds of \$8,000 will be carried over into 2003/04. **It is recommended that funds of \$22,000 in 2003/04 for RFSTEC meeting expenses be supported from the Saltwater Trust.**

Outcomes

1. Fish Aggregating Buoys

NSW Fisheries reported that this program had received excellent media coverage on regional radio and television and statewide papers and that the response from anglers had been very positive. It was noted that the aim of deploying these buoys within reach of trailer boat anglers had been achieved. NSW Fisheries had also been actively promoting the participation of angling clubs in logbook monitoring program to enable the effectiveness of the program to be assessed. Excellent catches of dolphin fish have been reported around all ten buoys and a black marlin had been tagged around the Coffs Harbour buoy. The Committee congratulated Heath Folpp on his excellent management of the project.

2. Licence Administration

NSW Fisheries presented a report on licence sales since the implementation of the licence in March 2001. It was noted that sales over the Christmas holiday period exceeded sales during the same period in 2001/02. Over 69,000 one year licences were sold in December 2002 and January 2003. The Committee was advised that NSW Fisheries has successfully negotiated with Kmart to sell the licence. The Committee also requested that NSW Fisheries investigate the potential for Big W to sell the licence. The possibility of introducing a lifetime (or 20 year) recreational fishing licence was also discussed.

Action Item: NSW Fisheries to write to Treasury to gain support for the introduction of a 20 year fishing licence.

3. Communications

a) Advisory and Education

A 3 year budget for the recreational fishing guides was presented to the Committee. The Committee was advised that the next edition of the freshwater and saltwater

guides will be combined into one document. The production of the guide will be put out to tender.

NSW Fisheries advised the Committee that a number of tenders had been received for the manufacture of 3 advisory trailers. Funds allocated to the trailer program in 2002/03 are unspent and will be carried over to the next financial year. A budget for holding fishing clinics along the NSW coast was also presented. This would include the purchase of materials such as hats, T-shirts, drink bottles, stickers and brochures and the re-printing of the popular height ruler. It was also noted that the new Fish 'n' Kids webpage had just been launched on the NSW Fisheries website.

Action Item: NSW Fisheries to advise schools of the new Fish 'n' Kids webpage.

b) Fishing promotion (billboards)

The Committee discussed the promotion of the licence using billboards and did not recommend the continuation of this method of advertising. An alternative advertising budget using fishing and boating magazines and regional newspapers was presented to the Committee. This would involve advertising during peak fishing periods in magazines and 14 coastal newspapers. The campaign would also include additional advertising in non-English speaking background newspapers (2 Chinese, 2 Vietnamese and 3 Arabic newspapers) to raise and maintain awareness of the licence.

c) Fishcare Volunteer Program

The Committee was informed that volunteers participated in the Easter Show at the NSW Fisheries stand and have also been attending stands in shopping malls in areas of low licence numbers. It was noted that the Education Officer position in Sydney is currently vacant and recruitment for this position will commence soon. The total number of volunteers had recently increased following a training weekend in Jervis Bay. It is anticipated that the number of volunteers will total approximately 420 by the end of the 2002/03 financial year.

The Committee was informed that a review of the program will be undertaken in the next financial year to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. It is proposed to appoint a consultant to evaluate and consolidate the program.

Action Item: NSW Fisheries to present the freshwater budget for the Fishcare Volunteer Program at the next meeting.

4. Compliance

NSW Fisheries advised that recreational licence compliance/advisory activities over the Easter period resulted in over 4,000 anglers being checked by Fisheries Officers along the NSW coast. The overall compliance rate was 89% which was very close to the target level of 90%. This indicates ongoing acceptance of the licence by anglers. A total of 48 written cautions and 85 infringement notices were issued during the Easter period.

Recent compliance apprehensions have included:

- Two Port Macquarie men caught using an illegal prawn trawling net on the Hastings River (recreational fishing haven) were fined a total of \$5,800 in Port Macquarie Local Court.
- A Sydney man caught in possession of illegal commercial fishing equipment in Botany Bay (recreational fishing haven) had his 4.7 metre boat and outboard motor siezed at Penrhyn Road boat ramp. A 123 metre gill net was also seized as well as over 50 tailor and undersized kingfish and whiting. The man will be summonsed to appear in court for allegedly being in possession of illegal commercial fishing equipment and illegally taking fish from the recreational fishing haven.
- A Clarence River commercial fisher was caught trawling in a closed area on the Clarence River. NSW Fisheries staff seized the fisher's 8.9 metre commercial prawn trawler in the Broadwater, 2 prawn trawl nets and 26 kilograms of live school prawns. The man will be summonsed to appear in court and faces a number of charges including fishing in closed waters.
- Another Port Macquarie man caught with three times the legal recreational limit of prawns on the Hastings River was fined \$3,400 in Port Macquarie Local Court.

The Committee was advised that the recreational mobile squad based at Brooklyn was now in operation. The Officers have been equipped with the latest investigative equipment including UHF hand held and vehicle radios, mobile phones, digital cameras, SLR and night cameras, mag light torches, spot lights, night viewing devices, binoculars and safety gear.

Action Item: NSW Fisheries to provide information out of session to the Committee on Trust labelling on mobile squad uniforms.

5. Recreational fishing havens

For information.

6. Licence Research database

The Committee was informed that data entry of one and three licence holders was ongoing. A budget for outsourcing data entry was also presented to the Committee. NSW Fisheries advised that scanning technology to capture images of each licence was being investigated as an alternative to data entry. Once scanned, licence images can be filed by licence number enabling efficient agent reconciliations and re-issuing of replacement licences.

For information.

7. Gamefish Tagging program

For information.

8. Striped marlin economic survey

For information.

9. Small grants program

The Committee discussed the small grants program and it was noted that the recent expression of interest calling for projects to be funded under the program will most likely result in the full allocation of \$50,000 being awarded to successful applicants in the next financial year. The Committee recommended that funding from the Trust be allocated to this program in 2003/04.

10. Recreational harvest of baitfish

For information.

11. Pilot habitat program

NSW Fisheries discussed the assessment and priority ranking of the ten applications received for projects to be funded under the Pilot habitat program. It was noted that all applications had matching funding including 3 programs with funding from local councils. This will hopefully encourage other councils to get involved in habitat programs.

The Committee noted that most of the programs focussed on improvement of riparian vegetation and questioned the benefits of this activity to recreational fish populations. NSW Fisheries advised that rivers with healthy riparian zones have healthy fish communities. This is evident from research studies which have been replicated all over the world. The Committee was advised that the application from Swing Mooring pontoons will be re-submitted under the small grants program.

12. Recreational fishing haven survey

For information.

13. Saltwater Anglers Catch Research Program

The Committee was informed that interviews for a scientific officer to oversee the freshwater and saltwater programs will be held soon. The Officer will be jointly funded by the Freshwater and Saltwater Trusts.

14. Recreational Fishing Fisheries Management Strategy

The composition of the recently formed Recreational Fishing Saltwater Management Planning Committee was presented to the Committee. NSW Fisheries is currently preparing draft guidelines for the strategy which will be reviewed by the Planning Committee.

15. Life history and tagging of black bream and luderick

The Committee was informed that interviews for a scientific officer to oversee both programs will be held soon.

16. Impact of restocked mulloway fingerlings (NSWF/UNSW)

The Committee was informed that the release of 70,000 mulloway fingerlings (less than 12cm) into Botany Bay and Smiths Lake received excellent television and newspaper media coverage. A progress report on the program has been attached for the Committee's information

17. RFSTEC meeting expenses

The Committee recommended that funding from the Trust be allocated to RFSTEC meeting expenses in 2003/04.

Recommendations

That additional funding of \$48,779 in 2003/04 and funding of \$138,403 in 2004/05 for the Fish Aggregating Buoys program **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Geoffrey Woolley. Seconded: Lionel Jones. **Carried.**

That funding of \$79,000 in 2003/04 for the licence promotion (advertising) **budget be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Geoffrey Woolley. Seconded: John Drew. **Carried.**

That funding of \$100,000 in 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06 for the recreational fishing guide program **budget be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Anthony Moore. **Carried.**

That funding of \$64,000 in 2003/04 for the fishing clinics **budget be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Anthony Moore. **Carried.**

That funding of \$39,000 in 2003/04 for the advisory trailers **budget be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Lionel Jones. **Carried.**

That funding of \$623,572 in 2003/04, \$611,230 in 2004/05 and \$609,630 in 2005/06 for the Fishcare Volunteer Program budget **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Doug Joyner. Seconded: Bruce Mahony. **Carried.**

That funding of \$240,000 in 2003/04 and \$351,000 in 2004/05 and 2005/06 for the recreational mobile squad **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: John Drew. Seconded: Lionel Jones. **Carried.**

That funding of \$91,521 for the Recreational fishing havens program **be returned** to the Saltwater Trust for allocation to other programs. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Doug Joyner. **Carried.**

That funding of \$27,000 for the small grants program in 2003/04 **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: John Drew. Seconded: Warren Buchan. **Carried.**

That funding of \$29,178 in 2003/04 for the Saltwater Anglers Catch Research Program **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: John Drew. Seconded: Malcolm Poole. **Carried.**

That funding of \$22,000 in 2003/04 for RFSTEC meeting expenses **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Bruce Mahony. **Carried.**

Information

External program updates

Background

Progress reports

The following external programs are being funded from the Saltwater Trust in 2002/03:

1. Recreational fishing expenditure patterns survey, Dominion Consulting
2. Stock Enhancement workshop proceedings, Southern Cross University
3. Population genetics of bream, Southern Cross University
4. Gamefish monitoring and research at tournaments, Pepperell Consulting
5. Ford Park recreational fishing platform, Maclean Shire Council

The following programs are being funded under the small grants program:

6. Fishcare volunteers pamphlet, Southern Cross University
7. Fish cleaning table, Tuncurry-Great Lakes Council (yet to commence)
8. Fish cleaning tables - Batemans Bay and Narooma, Eurobodalla Shire Council
9. Smallscale movement of luderick, James Cook University
10. Four fish cleaning tables, Shoalhaven-Shoalhaven Council

Projects 7-10 will commence soon. Trust funded project managers have prepared milestone/progress reports for this meeting. These reports include details on project activities since the last meeting, expenditure to date and any variations to the project. Reports for each program are attached for the Committee's information (see Attachment 4).

Outcomes

Dr Alistair McIlgorm presented an update on the economic survey titled "Identifying the recreational fishing expenditure patterns of Sydney's recreational fishers and their economic and social importance in regional communities of NSW."

The presentation reviewed fishing activity among NSW licence holders, as well as their knowledge and use of Recreational Fishing Havens. Roy Morgan research were used to complete telephone surveys of 1,250 rec fishing licence holders (800 country, 450 city). Details of how frequently saltwater anglers fish and how often anglers fish in recreational fishing havens were presented to the Committee. Future presentations will cover the following:

- Saltwater angling trips and travelling behaviour
- Trip expenditure, trips away from Sydney and community benefits
- Recreational fishers expectations and socio-economic characteristics

For information.

Issue

Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust - new program applications

Background

With a view to assisting consultative arrangements with recreational fishers and to increase transparency in the trust fund application process, an invitation to the community to submit proposals for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts was advertised in March 2003. NSW Fisheries conducted an extensive advertising campaign across a wide variety of mediums to promote the expression of interest process. A press release was forwarded to media agents throughout NSW, including radio, newspapers and magazines, and the advertisement was subsequently aired on a number of radio stations.

The expression of interest invited applications for programs to be funded from the freshwater and saltwater trusts. The expression of interest advised that 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. This was because it was not considered appropriate to invite submissions for more general projects given that the carry-over of existing programs from previous years will mean that the 2002/03 budget for the freshwater trust is likely to be fully expended. Proposals for funding from the saltwater trust have been received for the following projects:

NSW Fisheries Program					
Program		Proponent	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
1	Using recreational anglers to estimate and maximise survival of released fish	NSWF	\$152,769	\$146,574	
2	Fish and fish habitats of the Clarence River system, with reference to the noxious fish the banded grunter.	NSWF	\$46,261	\$41,266	\$13,893
Small grants – External Programs					
Capital works programs					
3	Hawkesbury Esplanade Reserve, Sylvania Waters-Fish cleaning facilities	Sutherland Shire Council	\$5,000		
4	Swallow Rock Reserve, Grays Point-Fishing cleaning facilities	Sutherland Shire Council	\$5,000		
5	Merimbula Big Game and Lakes Angling Club slipway project	Merimbula Big Game and Lakes Angling Club	\$5,000		
6	Brunswick Heads fish cleaning table and facilities upgrade	Brunswick Angling and Deep Sea Fishing Club	\$2,500		
7	Balmoral boat ramp-fish cleaning table	City of Lake Macquarie	\$2,500		
8	Belmont South boatramp-fish cleaning table	City of Lake Macquarie	\$4,000		
9	Outdoor display centre for recreational fishers at Harrington	Harrington/Crowdy Head Chamber of Commerce	\$2,500		
10	Fish cleaning table-Marine Drive, Tea Gardens	Great Lakes Council	\$2,500		
11	Narrawallee Inlet Boat Ramp Light and fish cleaning table	Narrawallee Inlet Social Fishing Club	\$3,500		
Education and advisory programs					
		Proponent			
12	Moorebank Fishing Club-participation	Moorebank Fishing Club Inc	\$5,000		
13	Engage NSW Recreational Fishing Industry in the uptake of nationally accredited training	Mr Adam Goss-Sport and Recreation Training Australia	\$5,000		
14	Fishing for alternatives	The Fact Tree Youth Service Inc.	\$4,270		
15	Family fishing festival	APP Corporation	\$5,000		
16	Clarence River Banded grunter education program	Big River Bass Fly Fishing Club	\$1,600		
17	NSW Pro Bass Association/Recreational Fishing Trusts Supa trailer	NSW Pro Bass Association	\$4,070		
Habitat programs					
		Proponent			
18	Improving fish passage and restoring riparian vegetaion, Brooks Creek, Kanahooka	Wollongong City Council	\$5,000		
19	Impacts of a mooring anchor device (MAD) on aquatic habitats, NE NSW	Swing Mooring Pontoons	\$5,825		
Research programs					
		Proponent			
20	A genetic and experimental assessment of the frequency and importance of hybridisation of black and yellowfin bream	University of Wollongong	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
21	Extent and severity of metals in fish exposed to contaminated sediments in Sydney Harbour and the Parramatta River	ANSTO	\$5,000		

Trust Fund – External Programs					
	Capital works programs	Proponent	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
22	Swallow Rock Reserve, Grays Point-Mangrove boardwalk	Sutherland Shire Council	\$57,500		
23	Recreational fishing craft for the disabled and frail aged	North Coast Injury Service	\$68,000		
24	St George Sailing Club Pier, Deck and Wharf reconstruction	St George Sailing Club	\$387,900		
Education and Advisory programs		Proponent			
25	Brighton Le Sands Amateur Fishermen's Association Ltd	Junior Fishing Club	\$28,400		
26	Recreational fishing leadership program	All things fishy	\$26,310	\$48,468	\$47,568
27	Capacity development for recreational fishing committee representatives	Dominion Consulting	\$28,100		
28	Fishing Clinics and Seminars (additional \$5,000 sought from Freshwater Trust)	David Hodge	\$16,000		
29	Bringing sustainable recreational fishing to Sydney schools and Communities through the Marine Discovery Centre Bondi Beach	Marine Discovery Centre	\$50,000	\$50,000	
Research and habitat programs		Proponent			
30	The importance of recreational fishing expenditure to the economies of two coastal towns in northern and southern NSW	Dominion Consulting	\$88,760		
31	Reconciling and validating existing recreational fishing survey information in NSW	Pepperell Research & Consulting	\$38,400		
32	Monitoring and Research on Landed Fish at Game Fishing Tournaments in NSW	Pepperell Research & Consulting	\$22,000		
33	Restoration of riparian fish habitats-Shoalhaven River estuary	Shoalhaven Riverwatch	\$13,150	\$13,150	\$13,150
In-principle support only					
34	Moorebank Fishing Club-support for upgrade of selected boat ramps	Moorebank Fishing Club Inc	-		
35	Moorebank Fishing Club-support for additional angel rings and fish aggregating buoys	Moorebank Fishing Club Inc	-		
36	Recreational fishing – a series of units aimed at junior and senior students in secondary school	Frank Davis	-		
37	Australian Underwater Federation-funding support for an Executive Officer	Australian Underwater Federation	-		

Outcomes

The Committee discussed each proposed program and made one of the following recommendations:

1. Program to be supported by the trust
2. Program deferred to a future meeting
3. Program not supported by the trust at this time

Supported programs were generally considered to be a high priority for fisheries management with direct benefits to recreational fishing. Programs were deferred for a variety of reasons outlined below. Programs that were not supported were considered

to be too costly; low priority for recreational fisheries management; or of minimal benefit to recreational fishing.

Programs recommended for funding/deferral by the Committee are summarised below:

Table 1: Programs recommended by the Committee to be funded from the Saltwater Trust

Program	Proponent	2003/04	2004/05
Importance of recreational fishing to the economies of two coastal towns in NSW	Dominion Consulting	\$88,760	
Reconciling and validating existing recreational fishing survey information in NSW	Pepperell Research & Consulting	\$38,400	
Monitoring and Research on landed fish at game fishing tournaments in NSW	Pepperell Research & Consulting	\$22,000	
Maximizing the survival of released line-caught fish	NSWF	\$152,769	\$146,574
Total		\$301,929	\$146,574

Table 2: Programs recommended by the Committee to be funded under the small grants program

Program	Proponent	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Brunswick Heads fish cleaning table and facilities upgrade	Brunswick Angling and Deep Sea Fishing Club	\$2,500		
Balmoral boat ramp-fish cleaning table	City of Lake Macquarie	\$2,500		
Belmont South boatramp-fish cleaning table	City of Lake Macquarie	\$4,000		
Outdoor display centre for recreational fishers at Harrington	Harrington/Crowdy Head Chamber of Commerce	\$2,500		
Fish cleaning table-Marine Drive, Tea Gardens	Great Lakes Council	\$2,500		
Narrawallee Inlet Boat Ramp Light and fish cleaning table	Narrawallee Inlet Social Fishing Club	\$3,500		
Improving fish passage and restoring riparian vegetation, Brooks Creek, Kanahooka	Wollongong City Council	\$5,000		
A genetic and experimental assessment of the frequency and importance of hybridisation of black and yellowfin bream	University of Wollongong	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Total		\$27,500	\$5,000	\$5,000

Table 3: Programs recommended by the Committee to be deferred to the next meeting.

Program	Proponent	2003/04	2004/05	Action required
Hawkesbury Esplanade Reserve, Sylvania Waters-Fish cleaning facilities	Sutherland Shire Council	\$5,000		Provide more budget details.
Swallow Rock Reserve, Grays Point-Fishing cleaning facilities	Sutherland Shire Council	\$5,000		Provide more budget details.
Capacity development for recreational fishing committee representatives	Dominion Consulting	\$28,100		Provide more details on methods.
Bringing sustainable recreational fishing to Sydney schools and communities through the Marine Discovery Centre Bondi Beach	Marine Discovery Centre	\$50,000	\$50,000	To present at the next meeting.

Recommendation

Motion: That funding for programs listed in Table 1 and 2 for the specified financial years **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Bruce Mahony. **Carried.**

6. Action items from last meeting

(See attached summary)

7. General Business

The Committee reiterated their support for an Artificial Reefs program to be funded by the Saltwater Trust. NSW Fisheries advised that a policy on Artificial Reefs is being drafted. An ACoRF subcommittee has also been formed to review the draft policy. It is envisaged that an Artificial Reefs program will involve a pilot research study (similar to the Fish Aggregating Buoys Program). A key question that needs to be addressed is do artificial reefs create habitat and produce more fish or do they merely aggregate fish and make them easier to catch?

The Committee discussed the Fishcare Volunteer Program in further detail and agreed that terms of reference should be developed for the program which should be reviewed by the Committee. It was noted that the budgets for the freshwater and saltwater programs could be potentially combined to improve transparency and reporting.

Recommendation

Motion: That the Fishcare Volunteer Program be supervised by Recreational Management. Moved: Doug Joyner. Seconded: Lionel Jones. **Carried.**

The Committee discussed the consideration of issues out of session. The Committee agreed that it preferred to consider all expenditure issues at scheduled meetings and that out of session meetings should be reserved for urgent consideration of issues.

The Committee discussed the potential for additional buyouts of commercial fishers. NSW Fisheries advised that this matter is being considered by the Fisheries Resource Conservation and Assessment Council. No further action is required from RFSTEC until that advice has been considered and RFSTEC has been advised.

The region 6 representative advised the Committee of a report on benthic environments being subject to a 99 year lease plan in the United States. The Committee questioned the potential significance of this issue to recreational fishing havens in NSW.

Action item: NSW Fisheries to investigate the feasibility of leasing of benthic environments in the United States and report back to the Committee.

Anthony Moore updated the Committee on the progress of his Fishcare pamphlet program and advised that the pamphlet will include information on how to tag fish. He also noted that a program assessing whether recreational fishing havens improve recreational fishing in NSW will be submitted to the Committee.

It was discussed that a mission statement for the Recreational Fishing Trusts should be developed. It could include the role of the Trust Funds and the Expenditure Committees and priorities for expenditure to guide applicants.

8. Next Meeting

Tuesday 12 August 2003