



**Recreational
Fishing Trusts**

***Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust
Expenditure Committee***

FINAL MINUTES

**17TH RFSTEC MEETING
16 June 2005**

**NATIONAL MARINE SCIENCE CENTRE
BAY DRIVE CHARLESWORTH BAY 2450
02 6650 9850**

**Seventeenth Meeting of the
Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee
DRAFT MINUTES
16 June 2005
8:30am-2:30pm
NATIONAL MARINE SCIENCE CENTRE
Bay Drive Charlesworth Bay**

Attendance

Chair

Bruce Schumacher

Committee Members

Bruce Mahony	Region 1 – Qld border to Evans Head
Lisa Terry	Region 2 – Evans Head to Woolgoolga
John Drew	Region 3 – Woolgoolga to Port Macquarie
Graham Harrison	Region 4 – Port Macquarie to Seal Rocks
Lionel Jones	Region 5 – Seal Rocks to The Entrance
David Turner	Region 6 – The Entrance to Wollongong
William Heaton	Region 6 – The Entrance to Wollongong
Greg Liddell	Region 8 – Narooma to Vic border

Malcolm Poole	Recreational Fishing Alliance
John Millyard	Australian Fishing Tackle Association
Anthony Moore	Nature Conservation Council
David Jones	NSW Game Fishing Association

Dr Steve Kennelly NSW DPI Chief Scientist

NSW DPI (observers)

Cameron Westaway, A/Program Manager, Recreational Fisheries
Jennifer Ranson, A/Manager, Recreational Fisheries

Business

Chair's introduction

Apologies

Confirmation of minutes from previous RFSTEC meeting

Agenda Items

1. Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust status report for 2004/05
2. Remaining funding from the Recreational Fishing Haven fisher buy-out \$20 million loan

3. Review of applications

Large Grant Applications

1. Sociological market survey – why people go fishing?
2. Kalang River Data Base
3. Supplementary funding for the project: Enhancing recreational fisheries through the responsible and optimal stocking of mulloway into estuaries.
4. Fish Cleaning Table at Gwandalan
5. 'Bluey' advisory trailer
6. Project Management for Coastal Habitat program
7. Evaluation of Ghost Shrimps

Small Grant Applications

8. Recreational Fishing Trust Promotional Video / DVD

Existing services budget

4. Project updates

1. Maximising survival of line caught fish
2. Artificial Reefs
3. Fish Aggregating Devices
4. Communications

5. NSW DPI research program on key recreational species

6. New reporting structure for programs funded through Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust

7. Action Items from previous meeting

8. General Business / Correspondence Received

9. Next Meeting

Meeting ends

Welcome by Chair

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming the Hon. Ian MacDonald MLC, Minister for Primary Industries and greeting members.

Passing of Warren Buchan

The Chair noted the sad passing of Warren Buchan in April 2005. Mr Buchan had been the representative for region 7 (Wollongong to Narooma) on the Expenditure Committee since 2001. The Chair noted that Mr Buchan had been a committed member and his strong involvement in the promotion of recreational fishing was applauded. The Chair advised that the Department had sent flowers and a letter of condolence to the Buchan family on behalf of RFSTEC.

Apologies

The Chair noted apologies from John Drew and advised that Doug Joyner was attending on behalf of John Millyard, Australian Fishing Tackle Association.

Order of Australia (OAM)

The Chair advised the Committee that Mr Peter Goadby, a previous representative on the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing (ACoRF), had been awarded an OAM for services to Recreational Fishing in Australia. Mr Peter Goadby has worked tirelessly in many significant representative roles within the recreational and commercial fishing sector and has been a committed and dedicated member of over 20 fisheries related committees and working groups at state and national level since the 1960's. Mr Goadby had also showed commitment to implementing rules and ethics within the recreational and commercial fishing industry and has had a substantial influence on the integrity of world class and Australian game fishing tournaments.

The Chair proposed that the Recreational Fishing Saltwater and Freshwater Trusts Expenditure Committee implement an award for contribution to recreational fishing in NSW. It was noted that the Recreational Fishing Trusts could fund the administration of the award. The Chair requested members to consider concepts for the award out of session.

Action item: NSW DPI to prepare a proposal for a recognition of services to recreational fishing in NSW award and to seek support from the Freshwater Expenditure Committee.

Minutes of RFSTEC meeting 16 held 6-7 April 2005

Dr Steve Kennelly requested minor amendments to the minutes (pages 16, 42 and 46) regarding the Australian Research Council linkage grants and to reflect the Committee's support of 50% funding to a Salmon biology research project pending approval of contributing funding from the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC). The Committee was advised that an amended salmon biology research application would be provided to the Committee following approval of the project by FRDC.

The draft minutes of the 16th RFSTEC meeting were accepted (with amendments) as a true and accurate record of the meeting. **Moved:** Malcolm Poole. **Seconded:** Bruce Mahony. **Carried.**

Business arising from the minutes

None.

Presentation by Minister for Primary Industries

The Hon. Ian MacDonald, Minister for Primary Industries thanked the Committee for the invitation to attend the meeting, noting that it was a good opportunity to meet each member and discuss issues related to recreational fishing and the Recreational Fishing Trusts. The Minister congratulated the Expenditure Committee for the good work being done to improve recreational fishing in NSW. The Minister advised that he had received many positive comments about the many beneficial programs funded by the Recreational Fishing Trusts, such as the Recreational Fishing Havens, Fish Aggregating Devices, fish habitat rehabilitation program, Gamefish Tagging program, research on the survival of released line-caught fish, mulloway stocking research and the small grants programs.

The Minister advised that the increase in the licence fee had been announced and would take effect from 1 July 2005 to ensure that the capacity of the Trusts to improve recreational fishing is maintained. From July 1, a 3-year licence will increase from \$70 to \$75, a one-year from \$25 to \$30, a one-month licence from \$10 to \$12 and a three-day licence will now cost \$6, up a dollar. The Minister stated that it was the first increase in the licence fee since the freshwater licence was reintroduced in 1998 and extended to all waters in 2001. Fishers will continue to benefit from a range of important projects as a result of this boost in funding for the two independent Trust funds.

The Minister advised that the Department of Primary Industries in consultation with the Department of Commerce would soon be calling for tenders for a state-of-the-art electronic licence sales system that will provide waterproof licences. Agents and anglers have asked for a more efficient system to speed up licence purchases particularly during peak times such as school holidays. The Minister requested that the Committee assist the Department with developing a waterproof plastic fishing licence.

The Committee discussed a proposal to direct funds collected from recreational fishing licence fines into the Recreational Fishing Trusts and additional buyouts of commercial fishing licences.

Action item: The Chair on behalf of the Saltwater and Freshwater Expenditure Committees to write to the Minister requesting that funds collected from recreational fishing licence fines be placed into the Recreational Fishing Trusts.

The Minister advised that the Department is working with the Expenditure Committees, ACoRF and the commercial industry to develop the further buyout of commercial fishers in areas of conflict.

The Minister gave a brief presentation on a research proposal for the artificial propagation of the endangered grey nurse shark via 'in-vitro' development. Intensive research over the past 6 years has shown that the east coast population is genetically different from populations occurring of South Australian and South Africa and comprises less than 500 individuals. The NSW Government is committed to ensuring that the species does not become extinct, by increasing the protection at critical habitat sites and using science to undertake a breeding program. The breeding program will be the first of its kind in the world. The Committee was provided with a copy of the research proposal.

Action item: The Chair on behalf of the Saltwater Expenditure Committee to send a thank you letter to the Minister for attending dinner and the meeting.

Issue

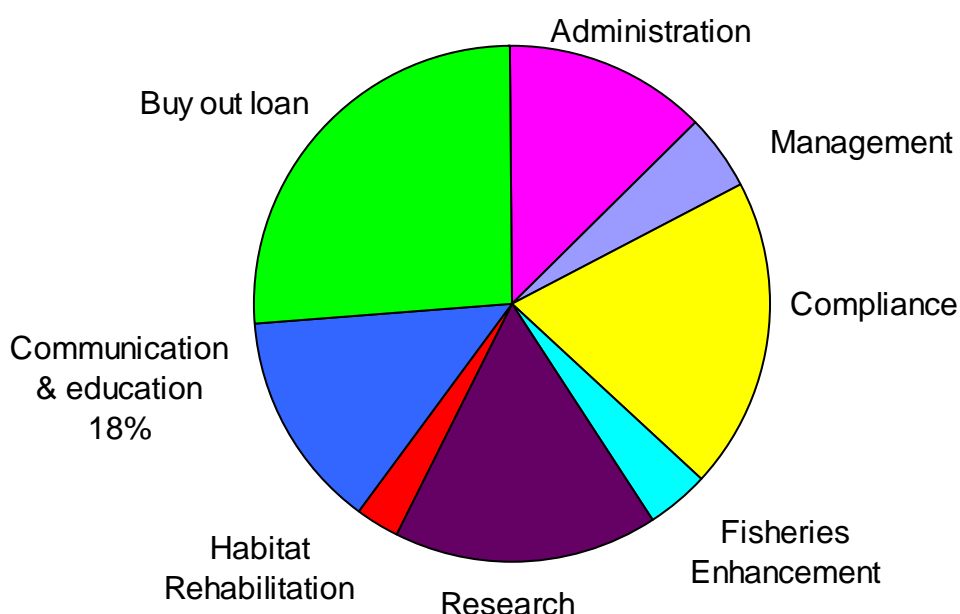
Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust report

Background

Status of the Saltwater Trust

At the April budget meeting the Committee supported budgets totalling \$9.7 million to a range of compliance, research, management and education programs to improve recreational fishing in 2005/06. This includes predicted carry-over from 2004/05. The 2005/06 financial tables are attached for the Committee's information. Total predicted income from licence sales in 2004/05 is approximately \$9.5 million.

The 2005/06 budgets for programs supported by the Expenditure Committee has been broken into various saltwater categories shown in the pie graph (see below).



Trust application assessment form

The Trust application assessment form has been simplified to assist members when considering new applications for funding. The Committee is requested to use the forms to consider funding for the new applications.

Saltwater priorities for funding

The saltwater research priorities list was compiled to assist RFSTEC during the consideration of applications and was provided to the Committee at the previous meeting for discussion. The list requires continual updating as new issues arise and other knowledge gaps become apparent. The Committee is requested to review the list and discuss possible additions to the list. The list will be attached to the annual expression of interest for Trust applications and the Trust application package to guide applicants and to ensure priorities are addressed.

Outcomes

Status of the Saltwater Trust

The Department advised that as of 31 May 2005 income from licence sales was \$9.3 million and that a balance of approximately \$1.4 million remained in the Saltwater Trust for new programs to improve recreational fishing in 2005/06.

The Committee discussed the breakdown of funding in 2005/06 for Saltwater Trust funded programs into various key categories illustrated in the pie graph. The Department noted that the increase in the licence administration portion was due to the contingency funding for the new electronic licence system and that the fisheries enhancement portion had decreased because funding for the Coastal Statewide Fish Habitat Rehabilitation program had been placed in a separate category.

Trust application assessment form

The Committee requested that the flow of benefits question be simplified. The Department advised that the form is a guide to assist the Committee in considering the suitability of each application for funding.

Action item: NSW DPI to simplify the Trust application assessment form.

Saltwater priorities

The Committee was advised that the priorities list had been compiled to include all priorities identified by ACoRF (not already listed on the Recreational Fishing Trusts funding guidelines and application form). The Committee requested that the priorities list be included in the guidelines and that a final draft document be provided to the Committee at the next meeting. The Committee also requested the inclusion of topics such as access, research related to prawn stocking, effects of catch and release on the fecundity of large fish and the impact of areas closed to recreational fishing. The Committee advised that the topic related to spearfisher catch was bias towards this sector. It was noted that at the April meeting the Committee supported funding to assess research priorities for recreational fishing in NSW, which involved the formation of a sub-committee comprised of members of the Expenditure Committee to develop these priorities.

Action item: NSW DPI to amend the Recreational Fishing Trust saltwater priorities list to include the priorities identified at this meeting. A final draft list to be provided at next meeting.

Issue

Remaining funding from the Recreational Fishing Haven fisher buy-out \$20 million loan

Background

At previous meetings the Committee has discussed options for the remaining funding from the \$20 million Recreational Fishing Haven fisher buyout loan. There is approximately \$1.3 million dollars available in the Saltwater Trust that could be committed to removing commercial fishing effort from high interaction areas such as the Clarence, Manning, Camden Haven and Hastings areas on the north coast and the area from Tuross through to Bermagui on the south coast. The Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing and RFSTEC has previously provided in principal support for further voluntary buyouts of commercial fishing entitlements and requested that the Department investigate options for this process.

The Chair wrote to the Minister requesting that the Department write to all commercial fishers seeking “without prejudice” expressions of interest from those wishing to be considered for possible buy-out. This method of consultation would facilitate identification of the best way to secure the optimal outcome through an open, transparent and voluntary process.

On 1 June 2005 as part of the recreational fishing fee increase media release, the Minister announced that the State Government is working with stakeholders to develop the further buyout of commercial fishing licences. The Department is currently developing a policy framework for future buyouts. The current buy back scheme used in the previous RFH process is being reviewed to address factors such as the cost effectiveness of the buy out formula, inclusion of a no re-entry clause, surrendering of commercial fishing gear, the effects of future buy outs associated with Marine Parks and latent effort. The Committee is requested to formally provide advice on aspects/rules of any future buyout process for inclusion in the policy framework currently being developed.

The first introductory meeting of the newly formed Seafood Industry Advisory Council was held in early June. Buyouts (as part of fishery adjustment programs) were discussed.

The Minister has noted that his preference is for a small number of members (3 each) from both ACoRF and SIAC to meet as soon as practicable to discuss matters of mutual interest. Buybacks are regarded as one of those matters. It should be noted that this process does not commit trust funds in any way. This would remain subject to consideration by RFSTEC and ACoRF in making their recommendations to the Minister.

Outcomes

The Committee discussed and agreed that the remaining funding be used for a focussed voluntary buy out of commercial fishers in estuarine areas of conflict. The Committee discussed potential areas for buyouts. The Chair noted that he had sent a letter to the Minister requesting the Department send an Expression of Interest to all commercial fishers seeking interest in voluntary buy out.

The Department requested that the Committee put forward the names of several members for consideration by the Minister to participate on the joint group. The Committee nominated the Chair, Malcolm Poole, Bill Heaton and Graham Harrison as potential members. **Moved:** Lionel Jones. **Seconded:** Bruce Mahony. **Carried.**

Issue

Review of applications

Background1. Defining and measuring a quality recreational fishing experience.

At the previous meeting, the Committee recommended deferring the late grant application titled 'Defining and measuring a quality recreational fishing experience' to enable members to fully assess the program. The Committee also requested that the applicant resubmit the proposal in the required format with specific advice about the funding requested and other sources of funding. The University of Technology has applied for funding to undertake research to define and measure a quality recreational fishing experience. For a variety of reasons, including improved fisheries management, it would be of interest to be able to understand, rigorously define and measure the concept of a "quality recreational fishing experience". The information from the study and model will assist in management of recreational fisheries. The University will prepare the survey and employ individuals to carry out the survey and prepare a report.

2. Kalang River Data Base

Brendan Maher has applied to the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust for three years funding to build a database for the Kalang River. The database will record fish, water quality and environmental conditions. The Database will act as a model for all NSW rivers and be available for viewing on the internet. The proponent will use line, trap and net fishing methods to determine the fish in the river as well as liaising with public to build on information gathered. The applicant will also set up a forum for the public to discuss the health of the river in a chat room and undertake advertising to promote the project.

3. Supplementary funding for the project: Enhancing recreational fisheries through the responsible and optimal stocking of mulloway into estuaries.

At the previous meeting, the Committee supported funding of \$358,304 over three years from the Saltwater Trust to extend the mulloway stocking and research project. The project proposal offered the following four options for the purchase of fish and the number of fish to be stocked:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. 60K*50mm fish + 30K*100mm fish per year | \$73,500 per year |
| 2. 50K*50mm fish + 25K*100mm fish per year | \$61,250 per year |
| 3. 40K*50mm fish + 20K*100mm fish per year | \$49,000 per year |
| 4. 30K*50mm fish + 15K*100mm fish per year | \$36,750 per year |

The Committee supported option 4, which will allow enough fish to be stocked in two rivers only (Tweed and Richmond). The Committee recommended that the proponents seek additional funding from other sources to supplement funding for the purchase of fish. The University of NSW has liaised with the Richmond and Clarence River Co-Op, however they are unable to support any purchase of fish. The Richmond River Co-Op has committed to provide funding for habitat restoration in the area as part of the Statewide Habitat Grants program.

The Port Stephens Fisheries Centre will be producing fingerlings for aquaculture initiatives and fingerlings can be purchased (at cost recovery prices) from the marine hatchery. It is planned to purchase the maximum number of fingerlings to ensure fish are stocked in at least four RFHs. The fish will be sourced from either the commercial hatchery or Port Stephens taking into account factors such as costs, brood stock origin, transport and marking logistics. For examples fingerlings for Botany Bay, the Manning River or the Hastings River may be purchased from Port Stephens and fingerlings for Tweed and Richmond rivers may be purchased from a northern NSW commercial hatchery.

The University intends to rigorously pursue additional funding for fingerlings for the 2nd and 3rd year from the Australian Research Council and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, however if funding is successful from these sources it will not come online until 2007 as the current funding rounds (for funding commencing in 2006) have closed. **For this reason the University is requesting supplementary funding from the Recreational Saltwater Fishing Trust to pay for additional fish for stocking in 2006 only.** Should the Committee support the additional funds, mulloway will also be stocked in Botany Bay and the Hastings or Manning Rivers. Stocking the highest number of fish will maximise the findings and benefits of the research.

4. Fish Cleaning Table at Lions Park Gamban Road Gwandalan

The Lions Club of Gwandalan has applied for funding to build a fish cleaning table at Gwandalan. The proposed site for the table is the prime boat launching ramp with ancillary facilities (toilet block, BBQ and picnic areas) for southern Lake Macquarie. Two local fishing clubs and visiting anglers use the boat ramp and facilities regularly. The Lions Club has held preliminary talks with the Wyong Shire Council who has provided in-principal support for the project. The Council will also provide water and sewerage connections. The aim of project is to provide updated, standardised, quality fish cleaning facilities where recreational fishing is a major attraction to both local and visiting anglers.

5. 'Bluey' advisory trailer

In 2003 the saltwater trust approved funding for three advisory trailers, affectionately known as 'bluey on wheels', which are managed by the trust funded education officers. The trailers have been an outstanding success both in terms of education and trust profile enhancement. They are a vibrant example of fishing fees at work! These eye-catching, versatile communications tools have been out and about along the coast, spreading the message of responsible fishing. The units are used at coastal events such as schools presentations, fishing clinics, field days and high profile fishing events. The main purpose of the trailers is to display advisory material (including videos) and dry touch tanks. The trailer also has a storage capacity to hold advisory equipment such as foldable chairs, tables, posters, fishing rods, etc. Currently the saltwater trailers are rotated around regional Fishcare groups to ensure coverage across the whole region. The new trailer will be housed at Newcastle for use around the central coast region.

6. Funding for project management of the coastal habitat grant program.

A proposal for the management of the habitat grants program supported by this Committee in April 2005 was provided to the Committee prior to the meeting.

Small Grant

7. Recreational Fishing Trust Promotional Video / DVD

The Department uses a number advisory methods to inform and educate fishers about the Recreational Fishing Trusts, including advertising, advisory brochures, media releases, Fishcare Volunteers, Fisheries Officers, Newscast and the informative Recreational homepage on the website. It has been recognised that additional strategies are required to get the message out to the common fisher. At the previous meeting, the Committees proposed a series of roadshows, which have extensive logistical requirements. In 2004, the Committee did not support funding of \$40,000 (\$28,000 from Saltwater Trust and \$12,000 from Freshwater Trust) for the production and distribution of a Recreational Fishing Trust Video. The Committee considered the funding proposal excessive.

The Recreational Management Team have investigated options for the production of a Trust video at a reduced cost (approximately \$5,000) using existing footage from a number of currently funded recreational fishing Trust programs, including fish aggregating devices, mulloway stocking and effectiveness of recreational fishing havens as well as some new footage.

The funding requested by each applicant is listed in the table below:

Program	Applicant	Funding 2005/06	Funding 2006/07	Funding 2007/08
1. Defining and measuring a quality recreational fishing experience.	University of Technology, Sydney	\$10,400		
2. Kalang River Data Base	Brendan Maher	\$208,000	\$185,000	\$185,000
3. Enhancing recreational fisheries through stocking of mulloway into estuaries	University of NSW	\$36,750		
4. Fish Cleaning Table at Lions Park Gamban Road Gwandalan	Gwandalan Branch of Lions Club	\$9,010		
5. 'Bluey' advisory trailer	NSW DPI	\$28,591		
6. Project Management of the Coastal Grant program	NSW DPI	\$40,000		
7. Evaluation of Ghost Shrimps	University of Newcastle	\$6,840		
8. Recreational Fishing Trusts Promotional Video / DVD	NSW DPI and Immersion	\$5,000		

Existing services budget

At the previous meeting, RFSTEC recommended that the existing services budget of \$1.5 million be adjusted to include a new Recreational Publications program to enhance transparent reporting and accountability. Previously, only the ACoRF meeting expenses and the Gamefish Tagging programs have had separate Saltwater Trust cost centres with funding for the remaining programs transferred to existing, relevant Department cost centres.

Recreational Management plans to facilitate the setting up of separate cost centres for each program funded under the existing services budget to address the Committee's concerns about accountability and expenditure of these programs. With these arrangements in place, the Department would like to use the budget previously approved by RFSTEC and ACoRF for five years till the end of 2005/06 (as set out in the table below). It is proposed that the Communications program budget will be used for direct production costs of Recreational Publications in 2005/06.

Program	Funding Allocation
Nine Coastal DPI- Fisheries Officers	\$1,053,475
ACoRF Consultation	\$16,500
Gamefish Tagging	\$120,000
Communications Management (propose Recreational Publications in 2005/06)	\$142,500
Recreational Fisheries Management	\$75,000
Recreational Research	\$92,525
Total	\$1,500,000

Outcomes

1. Defining and measuring a quality recreational fishing experience.

The Committee acknowledged that the program would provide a basis to standardise future surveys. However, the Committee agreed that it was more important to understand why people no longer fish or why anglers don't renew their licences. The Committee recommended that the application be amended and resubmitted for consideration at the next meeting. **Moved:** Doug Joyner. **Seconded:** Bill Heaton. **Carried.**

2. Kalang River Data Base

The Committee was concerned with the total amount requested for the program, noting that a large component was for salaries. The Committee also noted that the program had a narrow focus.

3. Supplementary funding for the research project: Enhancing recreational fisheries through the responsible and optimal stocking of mulloway into estuaries.

The Committee acknowledged the popularity of this high profile program with anglers and supported the stocking of additional Recreational Fishing Havens. The Committee noted that because the Richmond and Tweed Rivers were partially closed havens commercial fishers would also benefit from the program. The Department advised that the applicant would be seeking contributing funding from FRDC for the second and third years of the program. The Committee requested that the Chair write to the SIAC to request contributing funding for the program and assistance from commercial fishers by providing samples of mulloway caught within the stocked rivers. The Committee supported the stocking of the Hastings or Manning Rivers.

Action item: The Chair on behalf of the Saltwater Expenditure Committee to write to SIAC to request funding support for the research mulloway stocking program.

4. Fish Cleaning Table at Lions Park Gamban Road Gwandalan

The Committee noted that the amount of funding requested was considerably higher than previous grants for fish cleaning tables. However the representative for region 5 (Seal Rocks to The Entrance) advised that the Lion Clubs would provide matching funding to the program.

5. 'Bluey' advisory trailer

The Department advised that Fishcare Volunteers on the central coast had repeatedly requested their own trailer as the Sydney based Bluey is currently used extensively around the Sydney metropolitan region. The Committee acknowledged that the budget supported for the Fishcare Volunteer program in 2005/06 included funding for a part-time education officer for the Newcastle area, who would be responsible for management of the additional trailer.

6. Funding for project management of the coastal habitat grant program.

The Chair advised that a letter had been written to the Minister regarding the level of cost recovery for NSW DPI programs. The Committee acknowledged that the amount of administrative duties associated with the Coastal Fish Habitat Rehabilitation project would be greater than the Clarence Pilot Habitat program. The Committee recommended that a separate cost centre be created for the administration component or that another process be set up to enable tracking of expenditure.

Moved: Malcolm Poole. **Seconded:** Graham Harrison. **Carried.**

7. Evaluation of Ghost Shrimps for Aquaculture

The Committee noted the commercial nature of the program, but acknowledged that the supply of fresh bait for anglers was limited. The Committee deferred the application to the next meeting and recommended that the application focus on the biology of the species and include a literature review. **Moved:** David Turner. **Seconded:** Lisa Terry. **Carried.**

Small Grants

8. Recreational Fishing Trust Promotional Video / DVD

The Department advised that contributing funds would be sought from the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust for the program. The Committee reiterated concerns about the name Recreational Fishing Havens and requested that this issue be resolved prior to the production of the video.

Action item: NSW DPI to implement the change in name from Recreational Fishing Havens to Recreational only Fishing Areas (RoFAs).

Existing services budget

The Committee noted the need for separate cost centres for each of the programs funded under this budget, which would provide for transparent reporting and accountability. The Committee requested a list of all current recreational fishing publications.

Action item: NSW DPI to provide list of all current recreational fishing publications.

Recommendations

That funding of \$208,000 in 2005/06, \$185,000 in 2006/07 and \$185,000 in 2007/08 from the Saltwater Trust for the program 'Kalang River Database' **not be supported**. **Moved:** Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Bruce Mahony. **Carried.**

That funding of \$36,750 in 2005/06 from the Saltwater Trust for supplementary funding to purchase fingerlings for the project 'Enhancing recreational fisheries through the responsible and optimal stocking of mulloway into estuaries' **be supported**. **Moved:** Graham Harrison. Seconded: Anthony Moore. **Carried.**

That funding of \$5,000 in 2005/06 from the Saltwater Trust for the program 'Fish Cleaning Table at Lions Park Gamban Road Gwandalan' **be supported**. **Moved:** Lionel Jones. Seconded: Bruce Mahony. **Carried.**

That funding of \$28,591 in 2005/06 from the Saltwater Trust for the program 'Bluey Advisory Trailer' **be supported**. **Moved:** Lionel Jones. Seconded: Anthony Moore. **Carried.**

That funding of \$40,000 for salaries for the 'NSW Coastal Fish Habitat Rehabilitation' program be taken from the funding of \$200,000 previously approved by the Committee in 2005/06 from the Saltwater Trust **be supported**. **Moved:** Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Graham Harrison. **Carried.**

That funding of \$5,000 in 2005/06 from the Saltwater Trust for the program 'Recreational Fishing Trust Promotional Video' **be supported**. **Moved:** Lionel Jones. Seconded: Greg Liddell. **Carried.**

That the 'Existing Services' Budget for the following programs: Nine coastal Fisheries Officers (\$1,053,475), ACoRF Consultation (\$16,500), Gamefish Tagging (\$120,000), Recreational Research (\$92,525), Recreational Management (\$75,000) and Recreational Fishing Publications (\$142,500) **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust in 2005/06. **Moved:** Lionel Jones. Seconded: Malcolm Poole. **Carried.**

Issue

Project Updates

Background**Maximising survival of line caught fish**

In 2003, the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust allocated funding for the two-year project entitled "Using recreational anglers to estimate and maximise the survival of released line-caught fish". The project involved 3 experiments in the field (as part of recreational fishing events held in Botany Bay, the Hawkesbury and Woolli Rivers) and 5 experiments in the aquaria. The work aims to estimate the short-term post-release survival of snapper, trevally, mulloway, sand whiting, and yellowfin bream and the key contributing factors. The results will provide important information for improving the survival of these key species. Dr Broadhurst will give a presentation summarising the results of the study, the current work and the future work being undertaken and the Committee will be given a tour of the research site, including the aquaria used for the experiments.

Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs)

At the previous meeting, the Committee acknowledged the popularity of the FADs program by anglers, particularly by the common angler who is able to experience direct benefit from the licence funds. The Committee was highly supportive of continuing the program in the future following the completion of the 3 year pilot program and supported funding for the program for 3 additional years. The FADs program coordinator, Heath Folpp, will give an update on the current and future work to be carried out on the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust funded FADs.

Artificial Reefs Management

At the previous meeting, the Expenditure Committee supported the Department's recommendation to separate the artificial reefs 3 year pilot program into:

1. management (involving obtaining necessary approvals, undertaking environmental assessments, Reef Ball construction, stakeholder consultation, site selection and deployment) and
2. research (involving monitoring and ecological assessment) components.

The program commenced in 2004/05 and funding has been allocated for another two financial years. Heath Folpp, program coordinator, will provide an update on the artificial reefs management program.

Communications Update

In May a sub-committee of RFSTEC members met to discuss the strategy for the distribution of fishing guides and fishing rules and regulations summaries for 2005/06. The committee endorsed the proposal to survey agents regarding their requirements for advisory material and to distribute the advisory material prior to Easter and at Christmas. Due to the concerns raised by the Committee regarding the effectiveness of the licence awareness program a strategy has been developed and is provided to the Committee for discussion and endorsement.

Outcomes

Maximising survival of line caught fish

During three recreational fishing events more than 125 recreational fishers caught and released a total of 555 fish into sea cages. These fish were monitored for up to 10 days. Sufficient numbers of yellowfin bream, snapper, sand whiting and trevally were caught to provide estimates of their survival and the key contributing factors, including anatomical hook location and time spent in on-board holding tanks. During 4 aquaria experiments using conventional hooks and bait, 255 mulloway and 115 yellowfin bream were caught, handled in a variety of ways, and then released into the sea cages. The effects of air exposure, anatomical hook location and hook removal were examined for their influence on survival and stress for up to 5 days. Survival rates varied considerably, according to anatomical hook location and the post-capture handling techniques. Preliminary results showed that mouth-hooked mulloway and yellowfin bream generally have greater post-release survival rates than gut-hooked individuals. A 5th aquarium experiment aimed to provide some estimate of the physiological changes and longer-term survival of yellowfin bream after swallowing typical hooks. Of 20 hook-ingested fish, 17 survived more than 8 weeks, with 13 passing hooks after approximately 20 days. Matt Broadhurst also discussed preliminary experiments to assess the effects of hook design on anatomical location and planned future work for the project which includes a recreational fishing event targeting mulloway on the Hawkesbury River in late 2005. The Committee was advised that 5 papers had been published or submitted to fishing magazines (such as 'Fishing World') and 2 papers completed for international journals.

Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs)

The Committee was advised that 2004/05 had been the most successful season to date in terms of the longevity of the FADs and angler catches which had resulted in high usage and reduced capital costs. The Committee was provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct for Fishing around FADs. The Code had been developed in response to reports of usage conflict, predominantly between spearfishers and anglers. The Committee was requested to provide comments to the program coordinator out of session.

Removal of the Recreational Fishing Trust FADs from NSW coastal waters for winter maintenance had commenced with the Jervis Bay FAD removed on 11 May 2005. The Department of Environment and Heritage permit requires all FADs to be removed from the water over winter. The FADs will be redeployed in September/October 2005.

At the April budget meeting the Committee supported funding for extension of the program, which will involve the deployment of 5 additional FADS. Approval for these additional FADs will be sought from DEH. Preliminary sites for the deployment of the additional 5 FADs for 2005/06 are currently being amended. Two additional sites are proposed for Sydney (Botany Bay wide and Port Jackson). The final three sites will be used to service regional locations along the NSW coast, with Evans Head, Ballina, Bermagui and Eden currently short-listed.

Artificial Reefs Management

NSW DPI and Lake Macquarie City Council (LMCC) staff had conducted a site inspection of the proposed Lake Macquarie, Galgabba Point reef site in May 2005. LMCC had requested additional information for inclusion in the current Development Application (DA), which is being provided. NSW DPI staff were also asked to attend and present an update on the Artificial Reefs Pilot Study to the Lake Macquarie Coastal and Estuary Management Committee (LMCEMC) in June 2005. Heath Folpp, Program Coordinator presented the committee with an update of the progress and objectives of the project and detail concerning the survey design for associated research was presented by Dr Michael Lowry. Approval for the Botany Bay phase of the project has progressed with a Draft 'Review of Environmental Factors' (as per NSW Maritime requirements) is currently being reviewed by NSW DPI staff. It is expected that the formal application for deployment of the artificial reef structures will be submitted to the NSW Maritime Authority (as the consenting authority) by the end of June 2005. Work on the St Georges Basin approval application will begin soon. Three complete reefs (90 reef balls) have been constructed and are being stored at Cronulla.

Communications Update

The Department noted that the campaign outlined in the table below will be complimented by: comprehensive information on the Department's website; promoting the fishing licence, how fees are spent and responsible recreational fishing at major events such as the Sydney Fishing Show, Sydney Boat Show, Royal Easter Show, and smaller local events; media releases and articles at key times; articles and advertisements in key fishing publications; and responding to thousands of responsible fishing and licence enquiries via the advisory line. The Region 1 representative (Qld border to Evans Head) requested that the strategy also include a billboard on QLD/NSW border also.

Method	Timing	Cost
Newspaper advertising	25 ads in total (17 coastal and 8 inland papers including Murray Cod opening, Victoria long weekend and at Christmas)	\$31,000
Newspaper advertising (multicultural)	4 articles in total in Vietnamese, Arabic, Chinese and Korean newspapers at Christmas	\$5,000
Billboards at Victorian and South Australian Borders	2 - 3 sites (dependant on rental costs) 4 x 2 metre	\$4,000 for construction (possible rental costs)
Fishing Magazine Advertising	Christmas and Easter plus other key issues	\$6,000
Travel maps with NSW Tourism	As available	\$1,000 (\$500 per map)
NSW Marine Directory	Yearly	\$1,500
NSW Boating Handbook	Yearly	\$2,500
Miscellaneous Opportunities (eg magazine inserts, radio advertising - 'Tide Lines', internet - 'Fishnet')	As available	\$20,000

Issue

NSW DPI research programs on key recreational species

Background

Charles Gray, NSW DPI, Research Leader, Wild Fisheries, will give a brief overview of scientific studies being done by researchers in the NSW DPI Wild Fisheries Program (Science & Research Division).

The Program has three units:

- ◆ Fisheries Technology,
- ◆ Fisheries Biology, and
- ◆ Fisheries Assessments.

The studies being carried out in each of these units will be summarised, including fishing gear developments, biological and ecological studies on estuary and coastal fish species (e.g. Mulloway, Garfish, Flathead, Luderick, Bream and various mullet), the development of fishery-independent surveys for estuarine fisheries and current developments in resource assessment strategies.

Outcomes

The 10 projects currently being undertaken in the Fisheries Technology unit aim to develop and test fishing gears and practices to reduce bycatch and improve selectivity and efficiency. Research on the survival of line caught fish funded by the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust is within the Fisheries Technology unit as well as two projects funded by FRDC on discarding of small prawns and bycatch in the prawn fishery and maximizing the survival of bycatch released from estuarine commercial fishing.

Currently 22 projects are being undertaken in the Fisheries Biology unit. This unit undertakes research on the biology, ecology and life history characteristics of key species and fisheries interactions. The Recreational Fishing Trust is funding studies in this unit on age, growth and reproduction of key species (such as mulloway, luderick, bream, sand whiting, garfish, dusky flathead, mullet, blue swimmer crabs and tarwhine), appropriate harvest sizes of key species and artificial reefs.

The Fisheries Assessment unit undertakes stock assessments and fishery interactions. The Department currently has 15 projects within this unit, including tournament monitoring and Recreational Fishing Haven research funded by the Recreational Fishing Trusts. The FRDC are funding projects in this unit including, development of fishery independent surveys for estuarine fisheries and spanner crab assessments.

Issue

New reporting structure for programs funded through the Recreational Fishing Trust

Background

The three 'Gantt' tables and status tables for NSW DPI programs and external large and small grants have been updated and are provided for the Committee's information. The 'Gantt' tables list each program, proponent and funding amount and graphically show dates for:

- ◆ issue of approval advice
- ◆ payments (date(s) cheques were issued), and
- ◆ expected / completion dates.

The Gantt tables clearly illustrate the time taken for each program to be completed. The status tables provide a brief summary of the progress and activities of each program since the previous meeting.

The new reporting structure will reduce the amount of reading material and the requirement for proponents to complete lengthy milestone reports.

A demographic table has also been provided to show the amount of funding that has been allocated to each of the seven coastal regions.

Outcomes

The Committee acknowledged the reduced amount of reading material and the effective use of colourful graphs to show the progress of each program. The Committee supported the provision of the new reporting format for future meetings.

The Committee noted advice that the Marine Discovery Centre had been closed due to a refurbishment and requested that the December meeting be held at the Centre so that the Committee could assess the programs progress.

Action item: NSW DPI to organise for the December RFSTEC meeting to be held at the Marine Discovery Centre, Bondi Beach.

Dr Steve Kennelly noted that Dr Ron West was providing an independent report on the progress of the Southern Cross University project 'Effectiveness of Recreational Fishing Haven in Northern NSW' and that a report was due at the end of July, which would be distributed to the Committee out of session.

Action item: NSW DPI to distribute to the Committee the report prepared by Dr West on the Recreational Fishing Trust funded program 'Effectiveness of Recreational Fishing Haven in Northern NSW'.

Agenda 7. Action Items from meeting 16

Agenda Item 8

NSW DPI

Issue

General Business / Correspondence received

Membership on RFSTEC

An Expression of Interest for the vacancies arising from the expiry of terms in regions 1, 6a, 7 and representatives of major stakeholder groups was advertised in May 2005 in the Sydney Morning Herald, Ballina North Coast Advocate, Wollongong Illawarra Mercury, on the Department's website and Newscast. The closing date for submissions is 24 June 2005.

Media

In May and June the Department released three media articles on programs funded by the recreational fishing licence to increase the community's understanding of how licence fees are spent and on the fee increase. Copies of the media releases are attached for the Committee's information.

Correspondence received

Email from Mr Ladislav Safarik regarding Aquabaits, which currently produces a variety of live baits for recreational fishers. They are looking at expanding their services for anglers in NSW. Aquabaits seeks in-principal support to submit an application for small grants funding to improve supply of live bait to recreational fishers.

Outcomes

Membership on RFSTEC

The Department encouraged existing members that had received a letter from the Minister regarding expiration of terms of appointment to reapply for their positions.

9. Next Meeting date proposed for 8 September 2005

Meeting Ends

16th RFSTEC Meeting – 6 and 7 April 2005
ACTION ITEMS

Item	Agenda Item Number	Agenda Item Title	Action	Team Responsible	Status
1	1	Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Report	NSW DPI to amend and simplify the Trust application assessment form.	Recreational Management	Completed
2	1	Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Report	NSW DPI to provide the Committee with a summary of the current research projects being undertaken by the Department related to key recreational species.	Dr Steve Kennelly	Completed
3	1	Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Report	NSW DPI to compile a Gannt summary table and an associated report on all programs at future meetings.	Recreational Management	Completed
4	1	Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Report	The Chair to ask the Minister to direct NSW DPI to write to all commercial fishing business owners seeking EOIs for participation in a voluntary buy out process.	Chair, RFSTEC	Completed
5	5	Review of joint Trust applications for ongoing NSW DPI programs	The Chair on behalf of the Saltwater and Freshwater Expenditure Committees to write to the Minister expressing concern about the level of cost recovery associated with NSW DPI programs.	Chair, RFSTEC	Completed
6	5	Review of joint Trust applications for ongoing NSW DPI programs	NSW DPI to form a sub-committee to develop an improved approach for promoting the licence and recreational fishing regulations	Recreational Management	Completed
7	5	Review of joint Trust applications for ongoing NSW DPI programs	NSW DPI to send to RFSTEC and RFFTEC members angling research competition reports for each tournament recently monitored.	Tim Park	Ongoing
8	6	Review of new applications	NSW DPI to investigate additional funding sources for the supply of mulloway fingerlings for the stocking program.	Dr Steve Kennelly /Recreational Management	Completed
9	6	Review of new applications	NSW DPI to formulate a process to recoup funds arising from infringement notices issued by the mobile squad (and other Fisheries Officers) related to recreational fishing.	Recreational Management/ Compliance	
10	6	Review of new applications	NSW DPI to advise the Greater Taree Council that the Committee provided in-principal support for a fishing platform or fishing signage and for the Council to contact the NSW Maritime Authority to be part of a larger program with joint funding through their WADAMP program.	Recreational Management	Completed
11	6	Review of new applications	NSW DPI to form a sub-committee to determine how to effectively develop recreational scientific programs in the future.	Recreational Management/ Dr Steve Kennelly	
12	8	Other programs – Annual Reports	NSW DPI to release 50% of second year funding to SCU for the program 'Effectiveness of Recreational Fishing Havens in Northern NSW' and release payment of the video grant upon receipt of a tax invoice.	Recreational Management	Completed
13	10	General Business / Correspondence received	NSW DPI to send Recreational Fishing Trust plaques to Lake Macquarie City Council.	Recreational Management	Completed
14	10	General Business / Correspondence received	The Chair to send a letter to Mr Trevor Calmar advising that the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust has supported many applications for funding to build or upgrade fish cleaning tables as they are regarded as a direct benefit to recreational fishing.	Chair, RFSTEC	Completed

17th RFSTEC Meeting – 16 June 2005
ACTION ITEMS

Item	Agenda Item Number	Agenda Item Title	Action	Team Responsible
1		Chair's Introduction	NSW DPI to prepare proposal for a recognition of services to recreational fishing in NSW award and seek support from the Freshwater Expenditure Committee.	Recreational Management
2		Chair's Introduction	The Chair on behalf of the Saltwater Expenditure Committee to write to the Minister requesting that funds collected from recreational fishing licence fines be placed into the Recreational Fishing Trusts.	Chair, RFSTEC
3		Chair's Introduction	The Chair on behalf of the Saltwater Expenditure Committee to send a thank you letter to the Minister for attending dinner and the meeting.	Chair, RFSTEC
4	1	Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust report	NSW DPI to simplify the Trust application assessment form.	Recreational Management
5	1	Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust report	NSW DPI to amend the Recreational Fishing Trust saltwater priorities list to include the priorities identified at this meeting. A final draft list to be provided at next meeting.	Recreational Management
6	3	Review of applications	The Chair on behalf of the Saltwater Expenditure Committee to write to SIAC to request funding support for the mulloway research stocking program.	Chair, RFSTEC
7	3	Review of applications	NSW DPI to implement the change in name from Recreational Fishing Havens to Recreational only Fishing Areas (RoFAs).	Chair, RFSTEC
8	3	Review of applications	NSW DPI to provide list of all recreational fishing publications.	Recreational Management
9	6	New reporting structure for programs funded through the RFT.	NSW DPI to organise for the December RFSTEC meeting to be held at the Marine Discovery Centre, Bondi Beach.	Recreational Management
10	6	New reporting structure for programs funded through the RFT.	NSW DPI to distribute to the Committee the report prepared by Dr West on the Recreational Fishing Trust funded program 'Effectiveness of Recreational Fishing Haven in Northern NSW'	Recreational Management