



Newscast



An information bulletin for recreational fishers

Edition 43, August 2005

Have your say on proposed changes to fishing rules

Recreational fishers in NSW are invited to have their say on proposals to change some recreational fishing rules, including modifications to size limits, bag limits, fishing methods and proposals for fishing competitions. NSW DPI have distributed 75,000 discussion papers throughout NSW using many bait and tackle shops, Fishcare volunteers, DPI Fisheries Offices, Licence Agents and direct mail to stakeholder groups, fish cooperatives and fishing clubs. Copies of the papers and quick response forms can also be found online at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au or phone the information line on 1300 550 474. Submissions close **30 September 2005** and should be sent to: Fishing Review, NSW DPI, PO Box 21, Cronulla, NSW, 2230, faxed to (02) 9527 8576 or emailed to fish.review@fisheries.nsw.gov.au.

Reduction in abalone bag limit

On 1 July 2005 the abalone bag limit for recreational fishers was reduced to 2. The total allowable catch (TAC) for commercial abalone fishers has also been reduced. The decision to reduce both catches was based on the latest science, which indicates abalone stocks are at critical levels due to illegal poaching, the effects of the Perkinsus parasite, and natural environmental changes. An education program is in place to enable recreational fishers time to adjust to the new limits. The new bag limit will remain in place subject to a review being undertaken by an independent taskforce.

Recreational fishing worth millions to NSW coastal communities

A new survey funded by the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust has revealed that the recreational fishing sector is worth more than \$20 million to the economy of individual coastal communities every year. The study involved almost 1000 anglers and focused on two popular fishing areas: Port Macquarie and Bermagui/Narooma. It examined the daily spending habits of anglers, including expenditure on items such as bait, tackle, transport, accommodation, boat hire and dining out. Local anglers in both areas spent between \$42 and \$52, while tourists spent about \$200 per day of fishing. The survey found that recreational fishing is worth almost \$25 million each year to the Bermagui/Narooma district, supporting 260 jobs and \$23 million each year to the Port Macquarie area, supporting 276 jobs. A full copy of the report is available on the website.

New closure at Tilligerry Creek, Port Stephens

To protect public health a closure prohibiting the recreational harvest of all shellfish in the upper 6km of Tilligerry Creek, Port Stephens came into affect on 26 August 2005. The closure is due to high levels of human waste detected in the Creek. The contamination in the Creek is likely to have resulted from the failure of septic systems in the catchment area and the consumption of oysters, cockles, crabs, prawns, worms, limpets, sea urchins and lobsters poses potentially serious health risks.

General information 1300 550 474

Agent enquiries or changing contact details: 02 9527 8589, Fax 02 9527 8409

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au



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Operation fish rescue: stranded Aussie bass saved

Almost 70 Australian bass of various sizes have been rescued and successfully relocated following identification of low dissolved oxygen levels in the waters downstream of Rocky Creek dam, north-west of Lismore. The bass entered the pool during the recent floods and became trapped when the flows receded.

From the courts

NSW DPI is reminding recreational fishers to follow the rules or pay the price. The message comes after several people appeared in the Nowra and Wollongong Courts charged with several fisheries offences:

- Three people from Sydney appeared in the Nowra local court after their vehicle was found with 4960 pipis at Seven Mile Beach, near Gerroa. The pipis were seized and returned to the beach. All three pleaded guilty to the possession of pipis taken contrary to a closure, exceeding their bag limits and failing to have fishing licences. They were ordered to pay a total of \$3320 in fines and costs and for each to complete 100 hours of community service.
- A man from Barrack Heights pleaded guilty to the possession of undersize abalone and lobsters, exceeding the possession limits for abalone and taking abalone from closed waters. The man was caught after diving near Walkers Beach, Gerringong and ordered to pay \$6,190 in fines and costs; dive gear was also forfeited by the magistrate.

Anyone with information on illegal fishing activity is encouraged to contact their local DPI Fisheries Office or call the Fisher's Watch line on 1800 043 536.

New "bible" for inland fishers released

A comprehensive new guide to inland fishing in NSW is set to become the new "bible" for freshwater recreational fishers. A *Guide to Stocked Lakes and Dams in NSW* has been jointly produced by NSW DPI and the Australian Fishing Network. The guide details 93 inland waterways which have benefited from the State Government's fish stocking program offering great fishing opportunities. It outlines valuable information for both local and visiting anglers, including the size of each waterbody, accommodation, stocking history, fish species and fishing and boating information. It has also been designed as an educational tool with information on pest species, size and bag limits, and general fishing rules. The book costs \$25 and is available through the website at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Funds now available to restore fish habitats

Community groups, individuals, fishing clubs, Landcare and Rivercare groups and local councils interested in restoring fish habitats are invited to apply for a new round of funding through the NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts. A total of \$360,000 is available for the 2005/2006 financial year. Interested groups are invited to apply for funding for projects that help rehabilitate fish environments and encourage native fish back into our waterways. Up to \$30,000 is available for individual projects on a matching dollar-for-dollar basis. Groups or individuals may match funds either with in-kind support, cash or a combination of both. Applications for funding close on **28 October 2005**. Application forms can be found on the website or by calling the DPI on (02) 6765 4591.