



**Recreational  
Fishing Trusts**

***Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust  
Expenditure Committee***

**MINUTES**

**13<sup>TH</sup> RFFTEC MEETING  
27 June, 2002**

**CRONULLA FISHERIES CENTRE  
202 Nicholson Parade, Cronulla**

**Thirteenth Meeting of the NSW  
Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee  
MINUTES  
27.6.02, 9:30am to 3.30pm  
NSW Fisheries, Cronulla Fisheries Centre,  
202 Nicholson Parade, Cronulla**

**Attendance**

**Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee Members**

Bruce Schumacher	Chair
Janine Rudder	Region 1
Doug Joyner	Region 2
Steve Tooley	Region 3
Elizabeth Brodbeck	Region 4
Keith Woolbank	Region 5
Debbie Lennon	Region 6
Richard Ping Kee	Region 7
Kevin McKinnon	Region 8

**NSW Fisheries (observers)**

Andrew Sanger, Regional Manager Fisheries Services Western  
Marcel Green, Conservation Manager Environmental Assessments  
Craig Watson, Fisheries Manager Recreational Fisheries

## **Business**

### **Meeting agenda Items**

1. The Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust fund budget position (Andrew Sanger)
2. Renewal of existing trust funded programs (Andrew Sanger)
3. Funding for the preparation of the Recreational Fishing Management Strategy and associated environmental impact statement (Marcel Green)
4. Funding for the preparation of the Fish Stocking Management Strategy and associated environmental impact statement (Marcel Green)
5. Draft five-year expenditure budget for the Recreational Fishing (Freshwater) Trust Fund (Andrew Sanger)
6. Proposals for budget expenditure via existing freshwater trust funded programs (invitation to the community to submit proposals funded by Recreational Fishing Trusts and the small grants program) (Craig Watson)

### **Other business**

## **Business**

### **Chair's welcome**

The Chair welcomed members to the 13th meeting of the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFFTEC) and noted a full agenda for the meeting.

### **Minutes from previous meeting**

#### **Recommendation**

The draft minutes of the previous RFFTEC meeting (held 25 March 2002) were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**Issue**

The Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust fund budget position

**Background**

Since the decision to introduce the general recreational fishing fee, income to the freshwater trust fund has been maintained at \$2.5 million per year. Income to the freshwater trust to the end of 2001/2002 has been \$10.404 million dollars. Of this a total of \$9,947 million has been allocated to date. This leaves a balance of \$457,000.

With income of \$2.5 million dollars for 2002/2003, it is estimated that a maximum of \$2,95 million is available for allocation in the forthcoming year.

**Outcomes**

Budget projections will be based on the annual contribution of \$2.5 million dollars of licence fees, the unallocated balance of \$457,000 and the amount of carry over of unexpended funds within existing project budgets. RFFTEC can take this amount into consideration, along with commitments in future years, when considering the renewal of existing programs and funding of new programs for the 2002/2003 year and beyond.

**Recommendation**

Noted.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing programs

**Background**

RFFTEC has supported a number of programs over the four years since reintroduction of the recreational freshwater fishing licence. These programs have achieved a range of benefits for recreational fishers and fish habitat in freshwater lakes and rivers in NSW.

A brief summary of programs currently funded is provided in agenda items 2a to 2m to assist the committee's deliberations. This information is provided to update new members on the range of funded projects along with requests for renewal of funding commitments to those ongoing programs.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries asked the Committee to consider renewing the funding for the existing trust fund programs listed below. These projects will be discussed in more detail under the following agenda items, to assist the committee in its deliberations.

**Freshwater Trust Ongoing Programs:**

- Enhanced Government Fish Production
- Purchase of Fish from Private Hatcheries (\$ for \$ program)
- Freshwater Recreational Management (advisory and education program)
- Fishing Fee Administration
- Inland Fisheries Officers
- Fishcare Volunteer Program
- Small Grants Program
- Freshwater Recreational research projects (anglers catch research program, effectiveness of stocking research, hooking mortality study)
- Inland Fish Habitat protection and restoration (regional conservation manager program)
- Weir Removal Program (fish passage program)
- Eastern Freshwater cod stocking
- Australian bass habitat mapping
- Habitat Restoration project

There was some discussion amongst committee members in relation to the assessment of cost centre reports for each of the ongoing programs. RFFTEC proposed that a working group be established to investigate options for project account reporting. NSW Fisheries advised they welcomed scrutiny about project costs including salaries, overhead and shared costs. Capital expenditure and operational costs could be reported for each trust funded program. However, too much detail could be costly to the trust in terms of monitoring costs.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that a joint freshwater and saltwater trust working group be established to investigate options for project account reporting. Working group membership to include Mr John Diplock, Mr Doug Joyner, Mr Richard Ping Kee and Mr John Milliard.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Enhanced Government fish production

**Background**

RFFTEC has supported provision of \$300,000 per annum for enhanced fish production at NSW Government hatcheries. Since implementation of the program, the production of fish from departmental hatcheries has increased substantially, to the current output of approximately 6.8 million fish per annum. This total is comprised typically of 4 million trout and 2.8 million native fish.

Funding has been allocated to four Government hatcheries - Port Stephens (Australian bass), Narrandera (Murray cod, golden perch, silver perch, and trout cod), Jindabyne (brown trout, rainbow trout, Atlantic salmon, brook trout) and Ebor (rainbow trout and brown trout). Support for these hatcheries, as well as Grafton (silver perch) will be considered in the forthcoming year.

NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider renewal of the enhanced Government fish production program at a funding level of \$304,000 on a recurrent basis.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries advised the Committee that the freshwater trust provision is supplemented by a core funded allocation that is distributed between the four Government hatcheries located at Jindabyne, Ebor, Narrandera and Port Stephens. The enhanced fish production allocation has been valuable in terms of providing extra operational funds at these hatcheries to support additional production costs including feeding and stocking expenses. Enhanced fish production funds have also been used for a number of capital works projects such as the construction of the broodstock holding shed at Narrandera and pond works at Ebor.

RFFTEC confirmed its support for this program and recommended that the enhanced fish production program be renewed at a funding level of \$304,000 on a recurrent basis.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that the enhanced fish production program be continued at a funding level of \$304,000 from the freshwater trust, on a recurrent basis.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Purchase of fish from private hatcheries

**Background**

The dollar for dollar native fish stocking program has been enthusiastically supported by angling groups and other community organisations since its introduction. The program has supported stocking of Murray cod and golden perch into inland rivers, and Australian bass into coastal rivers in NSW on a dollar for dollar matching funding basis.

Funding of \$200,000 per year has been available on the basis of \$140,000 for inland native fish (Murray cod and golden perch) and \$60,000 for Australian bass. The take up of funds for inland native fish has been good, with almost all of the available funding used. The take up of funds for Australian bass has not been as good. Some unused bass funds have been used to support purchase of eastern cod for conservation stocking in the 01-02 year.

The expression of interest for the dollar for dollar program for the 02-03 year has just been released. NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider renewal of the dollar-for-dollar program (Purchase of Fish from Private hatcheries) at the existing funding level of \$200,000, on a recurrent basis.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries advised that community interest in the dollar-for-dollar program has been continuing to grow. A number of councils and angling clubs are pooling resources in order to raise the minimum level of funding required to apply for the dollar-for-dollar grant. This year, there had been a marked increase in the number of bass released compared to previous years. Some stocking organisations transferred their orders from Murray cod over to golden perch, due to a shortfall in the supply of Murray cod fingerlings. This resulted in record numbers of golden perch being released in western drainage areas this year.

The application form inviting regional communities to submit expressions of interest for the 2002/03 stocking season has recently been released, and a large number of applications have been received.

NSW Fisheries is seeking the endorsement of the Committee to continue the dollar for dollar program in the future at the existing funding level. RFFTEC confirmed its support for this program and recommended that the dollar-for-dollar native fish stocking program be renewed at the existing funding level of \$200,000, on a recurrent basis.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that the dollar-for-dollar native fish stocking program (Purchase of fish from private hatcheries) be continued at the existing funding level of \$200,000 from the freshwater trust, on a recurrent basis.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - freshwater recreational management

**Background**

The advisory and education freshwater recreational management position was originally established in 1998 following the reintroduction of the freshwater fishing fee. The initial duties of this position were to develop the introduction of the licence and the freshwater licence agent network. The position was also responsible for setting up and running the children's freshwater fishing clinic program at government hatcheries. Since the commencement of the general recreational fishing fee in March 2000, responsibilities associated with the co-ordination and promotion of the licence have been initiated through the department's communications branch. The branch also has responsibility for the management of the statewide fishing clinic program, which includes children's clinics at the hatcheries.

The position is now chiefly responsible for management activities associated with the co-ordination of community and government fish stocking programs, support of recreational fishing fee consultative bodies, community liaison, and correspondence with fishing clubs and other key stakeholder groups, response to angler enquiries and collation of submissions on key issues. The position plays a key role in other freshwater fisheries endeavours such as the development of signage and the updating and amending of publications.

For consistency with the equivalent position funded by the saltwater trust, and to avoid confusion with advisory and education activities conducted by the communications branch, it is proposed that the title of this program be changed from "advisory and education" to "freshwater recreational management". NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider renewal of the freshwater recreational management program at a funding level of \$222,000, on a recurrent basis.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries noted that the roles and responsibilities of this position have changed since the introduction of recreational fishing fee. A number of the education functions that were formerly the responsibility of the freshwater fisheries manager are now conducted through the NSW Fisheries communications branch. For instance, the new regional education officers are responsible for co-ordinating the children's fishing clinic program at Government hatcheries.

The freshwater fisheries manager is now chiefly involved in management duties associated with statewide fish stocking programs, community submissions on key freshwater management issues and freshwater fisheries regulations review. It was therefore considered appropriate to rename the title of the program to better reflect the functions of the duties of the position.



**Outcomes continued - freshwater recreational management**

RRFTEC confirmed its support for this program and agreed with the proposal to change the title of the position to "freshwater recreational management" in line with the title of an equivalent position funded by the saltwater trust. RRFTEC recommended that the program be renewed at a funding level of \$222,000 on a recurrent basis.

**Recommendation**

RRFTEC recommended that the freshwater recreational management program be continued at a funding level of \$222,000 from the freshwater trust, on a recurrent basis.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Fishing fee administration

**Background**

The administration of the licensing system involves a wide range of data entry services, management of funds, support for licence sales agents, support for fisheries officers and recreational fishers in maintaining a library of licence records, and maintaining financial records to satisfy Treasury and auditing requirements.

The Minister has made the commitment that licence fee administration will not exceed 10% of income. Income to the freshwater trust is currently fixed at \$2.5 million. NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider renewal of the freshwater fishing fee administration program at an existing funding level of \$250,000, on a recurrent basis.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries confirmed that licence administration funds are used to provide a service to agents in the delivery of licence books, processing returns and for telephone sales and internet services. Funding is also provided from the saltwater trust for fishing fee administration.

NSW Fisheries advised that allocation from the freshwater trust is a fixed amount and that the Minister for Fisheries is committed to ensuring that licence administration costs will not exceed 10% of funds accrued from sales of the recreational fishing licence.

NSW Fisheries is seeking the endorsement of the Committee to continue with the allocation for fishing fee administration at the existing funding level of \$250,000.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that the fishing fee administration allocation be continued at a funding level of \$250,000 from the freshwater trust, on a recurrent basis.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Inland fisheries officers

**Background**

Six Fisheries Officer's positions were created after reintroduction of the freshwater fishing fee to restore inland numbers to the level that had existed prior to the loss of the licence in 1988. The six positions are currently located at Inverell, Bathurst, Wellington, Cooma/Jindabyne, Albury and Buronga.

The Wellington and Cooma/Jindabyne officers currently operate as mobile positions, providing targeted support throughout their respective zones (Central West and Southwest zones). The other four positions are currently located within core funded districts.

Additional operational support has also been provided to all inland fisheries officers from the trust allocation. This support has been used to fund targeted operations on illegal activities in a range of fisheries and locations. These include operations on Murray crayfish, trout, the Murray cod closed season, and illegal commercial fishing. Additional equipment has also been provided to all inland fisheries officers from this allocation.

NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider renewal of the inland fisheries officers program at a funding level of \$608,000, on a recurrent basis.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries advised that a further six full time fisheries officers were employed in inland NSW, as a result of the funding for this program. These officers are stationed at Inverell, Buronga, Albury, Bathurst, Wellington and Jindabyne.

Dr Andrew Sanger provided a synopsis of current duties of the inland fisheries officers. Increased operational funding has provided additional resources for compliance and has included some aerial surveillance for specific targeted operations. Overall compliance with the requirement to hold a freshwater licence has been high. Additional equipment has been supplied to all districts to assist with the gathering of evidence for prosecutions and to improve communications capabilities.

RFFTEC confirmed its support for this program and recommended that it be renewed at a funding level of \$608,000 on a recurrent basis.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that the inland fisheries officers program be continued at a funding level of \$608,000 from the freshwater trust, on a recurrent basis.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Fishcare Volunteers

**Background**

The Fishcare Volunteer program has been substantially restructured since implementation of the general recreational fishing fee. There is now a State Co-ordinator, Ms Dee McElligot, and five regionally based education officers have been appointed. Two of these officers are located at inland locations (Tamworth and Albury). The State Co-ordinator's position is jointly funded by the saltwater and freshwater trusts. The two inland education officers' positions are funded by the freshwater trust. The Tamworth officer has commenced duty and the Albury officer is about to commence. With the additional staff on board, a large increase in the number of Fishcare groups to be trained and receive ongoing support in inland regions is now possible. Regional education officers will also provide support to other educational programs, including fishing clinics, school visits, community group presentations, and displays at major advisory shows. NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider renewal of the Fishcare volunteer program at a funding level of \$306,000, on a recurrent basis. NSW Fisheries also requests that RFFTEC consider an additional allocation of \$30,000 to fund motor vehicle costs for the inland education officers' positions.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries confirmed that the Fishcare Volunteer Program has undergone significant structural change in recent times as part of the expansion of the program into regional NSW. Five education officers have been appointed. Two of these positions are located in the inland region, at Tamworth and Albury. The Education Officers will provide greater interaction with regional volunteers and will be responsible for their training and assessment. Volunteer training weekends are expected to occur in a number of regional centres such as Orange, Dubbo and Moree, over the coming months.

NSW Fisheries noted that the cost of motor vehicle lease fees for the inland education officer positions had not been included in the initial budget (that had previously been presented to the joint freshwater and saltwater trust working group) to expand and integrate the Fishcare program across the State. Subsequently, NSW Fisheries requested RFFTEC consider an additional allocation of \$30,000 in this budget, to fund motor vehicle costs for the inland education officers' positions.

RFFTEC did not agree to this additional allocation and requested that motor vehicle lease fees for the inland education officers be funded through other sources. RFFTEC however confirmed its support for the overall program and recommended that it be renewed at a funding level of \$306,000 on a recurrent basis.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that the Fishcare Volunteer program be continued at a funding level of \$306,000 from the freshwater trust, on a recurrent basis. RFFTEC did not support an additional allocation to fund motor vehicle costs for the inland education officers' positions.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Small Grants Program

**Background**

The small grants program is designed to provide seed funding for community groups and other organisations for projects designed to enhance freshwater recreational fishing opportunities.

Take up of this funding to date has been limited. However, with greater awareness of the availability of the funding, particularly as a result of public advertising and direct marketing of the scheme to interested stakeholders (fishing clubs, licence agents etc.), NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider renewal of the Small Grants program at the existing funding level of \$20,000, on a recurrent basis.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries advised that it had recently conducted an extensive expression of interest process, inviting community nominations for small grants project funding. As a result of this process, the department had received sixteen small grants project applications, which would be considered by the Committee later in the meeting.

The small grants program allocation has been set at \$20,000 per annum. Funding proposals are limited to \$5,000 and should be matched by funds from the applicant or other sources. Successful applicants will be required to provide proof of expenditure to the committee at future meetings. NSW Fisheries is seeking concurrence from RFFTEC to continue to provide seed funding through the small project enhancement program (small grants program) at the existing funding level of \$20,000, on a recurrent basis.

RFFTEC confirmed its support for this program and recommended that the small grants program be renewed at a funding level of \$20,000, on a recurrent basis.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that the small project enhancement program (small grants program) be continued at the existing funding level of \$20,000 from the freshwater trust, on a recurrent basis.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Freshwater Recreational Research projects.

**Background**

A number of freshwater recreational research projects have been funded for the last three years. These projects have included:

- Experimental assessment of two new methods for marking hatchery produced trout and native fish;
- Development of batch marking protocols for one of these methods (alizarin complexone marking);
- Assessment of the success of stocking of trout into selected impoundments (ongoing);
- Assessment of the success of stocking trout into selected rivers (ongoing);
- Assessment of the success of stocking native fish into selected impoundments (ongoing);
- Monitoring of angler catches at selected fishing competitions rivers and lakes in coastal, highland and inland lowland catchments (ongoing);
- Monitoring of spawning runs at major highland trout fisheries (ongoing);
- Experimental assessment of hooking mortality in silver perch using different hook and gear types

Several scientific papers have been submitted for publication, and there have been a number of reports in popular angling magazines. Staff have presented many oral presentations at angling club meetings, scientific meetings and other public gatherings to publicise the results of their work.

There is a strong expectation that a number of the above projects will continue, and that additional projects will be included in the work program of the freshwater recreational research group. This research capacity will be particularly important in order to fill some of the knowledge gaps that may be identified in the recreational fishing and freshwater stocking fisheries management strategies.. NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider renewal of the freshwater recreational research program for a further three years at a funding level of \$253,000 per annum, for assessment of stocking success, and \$253,000 per annum, for freshwater monitoring.

**Outcomes**

It was noted that researchers are working closely with the freshwater recreational fishing community to obtain angler catch data from freshwater fishing competitions. Major tournaments are being attended on impoundments and rivers throughout NSW. The data is being used to monitor the status of fish populations over time and to assess the success of the stocking programs, and also provides important information in terms of identifying long term trends in these fisheries. This project has been extremely well received by anglers and there is a strong expectation by the community that the anglers catch research program will continue. The saltwater trust has provided additional funding to expand the program into saltwater areas.

**Outcomes continued**

The effectiveness of the stocking research project is assessed by identifying the contribution of stocked native fish and trout to the fisheries and to angler catch. Marked bass fry have recently been sampled in the Hastings River. Sampling of other stocked populations of marked fish will continue at a number of locations across NSW, over the coming months. Researchers have also been involved in a hooking mortality study at the Grafton Research Station. The study is comparing the percentage mortality of silver perch hooked using different kinds of hooks and lures.

NSW Fisheries advised that the stocking program is presently holding a vacancy, which accounted for the large amount of carry-over of unexpended funds during the 01/02 year. As a result, the amount required to renew this program is significantly less than the total budget for this program.

RFFTEC confirmed its support for the freshwater recreational research projects and recommended that both the anglers catch research program (freshwater monitoring program) and the assessment of stocking success program be renewed at a funding level of \$253,000 per annum, for a further three years.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that the freshwater recreational research program continue at a funding level of \$253,000 p.a. for assessment of stocking success, and \$253,000 p.a. for freshwater monitoring from the freshwater trust, for a further three years.

**Issue**

Renewal of ongoing program - Inland fish habitat protection and restoration

**Background**

Two Conservation Managers have been funded by the freshwater recreational fishing licence to undertake fisheries habitat management and conservation responsibilities in the north-west and south-west of NSW for a three-year period. Since these positions commenced there has been a considerable increase in the awareness of inland native fish conservation issues by the general public and local councils. It is intended that the future work of the conservation managers will include: identification of areas where habitat rehabilitation is required to enhance native fish populations through the development of fish habitat action plans, ensuring that environmental flows are targeted towards native fish populations and habitat enhancement, applying for, or assisting recreational fishers and clubs to apply for funding from various avenues to protect and rehabilitate fish habitats and ensuring the effective and efficient expenditure of the fish habitat grant program.

NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider renewal of the inland fish habitat and restoration program at the current funding level of \$254,000 p.a. for a further three years.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries advised that the conservation managers based at Narrandera and Inverell are working with local councils and other government agencies in inland areas, to mitigate the impacts of developments on fish and fish habitat and to promote the rehabilitation of degraded habitats. As part of the water reforms process, much of the time of these two managers has been spent negotiating with the inland river management committees in relation to the amount of water that will be allocated for environmental flows. Other responsibilities have involved assessing development applications, dredging and reclamation applications and Environmental Impact Statements.

As a result of the appointment of further conservation management staff through the water reforms program, there has been a freeing-up of some of the former duties of the two conservation managers. These new appointments give the existing conservation managers more opportunities to concentrate on liaison with recreational angling bodies. The new staff are located at Tamworth, Wellington and Albury.

RFFTEC confirmed its support for this program and commended the conservation managers: Ms Sharon Molloy and Ms Michelle Perry, for their efforts to date. RFFTEC supported a continuation of the inland fish habitat and restoration program at a funding level of \$254,000 per annum for a further three years.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that the inland fish habitat protection and restoration be continued at a funding level of \$254,000 per annum from the freshwater trust, for a further three years.



**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Weir Removal Program

**Background**

RFFTEC has previously recognised the importance of addressing the issue of fish passage through providing funds for the assessment of 3200 licensed barriers throughout NSW. This was followed with the funding of a Project Officer (Weir Removal) to carry out detailed assessments of barriers recommended for decommissioning and facilitate the process of weir removal. Both initiatives have brought significant improvements to our management of freshwater systems through the creation of a barriers database and allowing the identification of priority sites for decommissioning. RFFTEC funding has already facilitated the removal of Muswellbrook weir on the Hunter River, as well as several small barriers in the Central West Catchment on Mandagery Creek, and Cudgegong River. Progress is being made on a further 10 priority sites for barrier removal on both coastal and inland streams as a result of detailed investigations carried out by the Project Officer. The bulk of the funding for weir removal costs will be gained from other sources.

NSW Fisheries is seeking the concurrence of the Committee to extend the tenure of the current Project Officer (Weir Removal) position for a further three (3) years.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries confirmed that the fish passage project officer is involved in carrying out detailed assessment of the barriers that were identified during the Initial Weir Review process as having potential for removal, and in facilitating the process for having them decommissioned. The project officer is undertaking consultation and education with councils and landowners to address all potential impacts of the removal of weirs and other barriers to fish passage such as road crossings. The project officer is also responsible for assisting with the preparation of funding applications and on-ground permits to aid in weir removal.

NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider renewal of weir removal program at the current funding level of \$102,000 per annum for a further three years. RFFTEC confirmed its support for this program and commended the project officer, Ms Milly Hobson, for her efforts to date. RFFTEC supported a continuation of the weir review program at a funding level of \$102,000 per annum, for a further three years.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that the fish passage (weir review) program be continued at a funding level of \$102,000 per annum from the freshwater trust for a further three years.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Eastern Freshwater cod stocking

**Background**

Eastern cod is listed as 'endangered' under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*. Some breeding and stocking has been undertaken since 1989, but the program has only become a significant recovery action since 1997 when Booma Fisheries, a privately operated hatchery near Dorrigo, developed cod breeding techniques which can produce the quantity of fingerlings required for an effective conservation stocking program - minimum 30,000 per year. Since 1997, Project Big Fish Inc, a group of concerned anglers from the North Coast region, have actively raised funds from both community and corporate sources to support the stocking program, but have recently experienced difficulty in securing sufficient funds to significantly contribute to the stocking program. NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC consider funding of an eastern cod stocking program for three years at a funding level of \$45,000.

**Outcomes**

As part of an agreement between NSW Fisheries and Booma Fisheries, eastern cod fingerlings are bred by Booma Fisheries on an annual basis for release into areas of the upper Clarence and Richmond River catchments, in accordance with the guidelines of the Eastern cod recovery plan. Booma Fisheries, a privately operated hatchery near Dorrigo, is the only hatchery in NSW Fisheries that is currently able to supply the minimum of 30,000 fingerlings per year, for this activity. The charge imposed by Booma Fisheries to supply this number of fish is \$1.50 per fingerling – hence the required funding level of \$45,000. While eastern cod cannot currently be considered a recreational species due to its endangered status (hence totally protected), it is expected that a concerted effort towards stocking and other recovery actions may eventually see the species removed from the threatened species listings and some level of recreational angling introduced.

RFFTEC has previously supported purchase of eastern cod fingerlings for the conservation stocking program. Last year, with the approval of RFFTEC, support for purchase of fingerlings for the eastern cod stocking program came from unexpended funds in the dollar for dollar program. NSW Fisheries is now seeking to formalise the funding arrangement for purchase of eastern cod fingerlings over the next three years.

RFFTEC did not support the use of freshwater trust funds to finance the entire eastern cod release program. RFFTEC instead recommended that the existing level of finance (\$20,000), already provided as contributory funding towards this project, be maintained over the next three years. RFFTEC asked for this amount to be matched dollar-for-dollar from other sources.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that \$20,000 dollars per annum be contributed from the freshwater trust over the next three years towards the purchase of fingerlings for the eastern cod conservation stocking program.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Bass habitat mapping

**Background**

RFFTEC has supported provision of \$100,000 per annum for two years to fund a project aimed at mapping juvenile bass habitat in selected streams. The project got underway in 2001/2002. Results of the project will be reported to RFFTEC in future meetings.

NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC confirm support for the second year of the juvenile bass habitat mapping program at a funding level of \$102,000.

**Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries advised that bass habitat mapping in the Macleay River had commenced to identify habitat characteristics. A geographic information system is being used to map habitat features such as distribution of native and exotic vegetation, character and length of the foreshore, location of natural features such as snags, and the presence and status of installed features such as weirs. The project manager is commissioning local angler involvement to assist in Macleay habitat assessments. A sub-committee has been formed to oversee the project.

RFFTEC confirmed its support for this program and recommended that the bass habitat mapping program be renewed at a funding level of \$102,000, for a further year.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that the bass habitat mapping program be continued at a funding level of \$102,000 per annum from the freshwater trust for the second year of the two-year program.

**Issue**

Renewal of funding for ongoing program - Habitat restoration program

**Background**

RFFTEC has supported provision of \$100,000 per annum for three years to fund a project that provides matching funding to community organisations for freshwater fish habitat restoration projects. A similar project is being supported by RFSTEC for marine/estuarine habitat restoration in the Clarence catchment.

Results of the project will be reported to RFFTEC in future meetings. NSW Fisheries requests that RFFTEC confirm support for the second year of the habitat restoration program at a funding level of \$100,000.

**Outcomes**

The draft Expression of Interest form and draft set of assessment criteria for the restoration of aquatic habitats program is in the final stages of preparation for public release. The Expression of Interest will invite submissions from a range of stakeholder groups such as angling clubs, local councils and Rivercare and Landcare groups, to undertake on-ground habitat rehabilitation projects in collaboration with NSW Fisheries. Participants in the program must demonstrate that they have been able to gain matching funds to support the proposed project.

NSW Fisheries advised that the commencement of this project has been delayed in order to combine it with announcement of a similar program from the Saltwater Trust, and enable the department to more widely advertise the call for applications.

RFFTEC confirmed its support for this program and recommended that the habitat restoration program habitat be renewed at a funding level of \$100,000 for a further year.

**Recommendation**

RFFTEC recommended that funding from the freshwater trust be continued for the habitat restoration program at the existing funding level of \$100,000 for the second year of the two-year program.

**Issue**

Funding for the preparation of the recreational fishing management strategy and associated environmental impact statement.

**Background**

Costings for the preparation of the recreational fishing management strategy and associated environmental impact statement have been prepared and will be discussed in broad terms at the meeting. NSW Fisheries will be seeking support from the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee, the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee and the Marine and Estuarine Recreational Charter Management Advisory Committee to allocate funding from the relevant trusts towards this project.

The printing and distribution costs related to the consultation phases of the recreational fishing management strategy and associated environmental impact statement is a major component of the total cost. NSW Fisheries will present a number of options for various levels of consultation. NSW Fisheries will discuss costings and seek a funding contingency, to allow the commencement of this program.

**Outcomes**

The benefits of the fishery management strategy and environmental impact statement project were discussed and it was acknowledged that this project would place NSW at the forefront of recreational fishery management, with a clear vision for the future of recreational fishing in NSW. The cost of the combined freshwater/saltwater/charter fishing boat recreational fishing management strategy and environmental assessment was discussed in broad terms. Indicative figures were provided to the committee with funding alternatives based on various levels of consultation.

The Committee was supportive of the funding option that involved the distribution of the full environmental assessments to the 34 or so major angling bodies and consultative groups, with multiple copies of summaries forwarded to all angling clubs and licence agents.

The Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFSTEC) had previously supported a pro-rata funding arrangement of 6:2.5, based on an estimate of the proportion of funds accrued from sales of the recreational fishing licence. NSW Fisheries was seeking RFFTEC's endorsement with respect to this funding arrangement and for the Committee to consider the allocation of contingency funding of \$125,000 per annum for two years (2002/2003 and 2003/2004) for this project.

NSW Fisheries is to report on the expenditure of funds on this project at future Committee meetings. NSW Fisheries will identify any required re-allocation of existing resources from within the overall recreational fishing program for this project, and report back to the Committee prior to any such re-allocation.

**Recommendation**

That contingency funding of \$125,000 for the two financial years (2002/2003, and 2003/2004) be made available from the freshwater trust for this program.

**Issue**

Funding for the preparation of the freshwater fish stocking fishery management strategy and associated environmental impact statement.

**Background**

Costings for the preparation of the freshwater fish stocking fishery management strategy and associated environmental impact statement have been prepared and will be discussed in broad terms at the meeting. NSW Fisheries will be seeking support from the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee to allocate funding from the trust towards this project.

The printing and distribution costs related to the consultation phases of the freshwater fish stocking fishery management strategy and associated environmental impact statement is a major component of the total cost. NSW Fisheries will present a number of options for various levels of consultation. NSW Fisheries will discuss costings and seek a funding contingency, to allow the commencement of this program.

**Outcomes**

The benefits of the freshwater fish stocking fishery management strategy and environmental impact statement project were discussed. The fish stocking environmental impact statement is due for completion by December 2003. Saltwater stocking would not be considered as part of this assessment.

The cost of the freshwater fish stocking fishery management strategy and environmental assessment was discussed in broad terms. Indicative figures were provided to the committee with funding alternatives based on various levels of consultation.

The Committee was supportive of the funding option that afforded the same level of community consultation provided for the recreational fishing environmental impact statement project, being distribution of the full environmental assessments to the 34 or so major angling bodies and consultative groups, with multiple copies of summaries forwarded to all angling clubs and licence agents.

NSW Fisheries was seeking RFFTEC's endorsement to consider contingency funding totalling \$420,000.

NSW Fisheries is to report on the expenditure of funds on this project at future Committee meetings. NSW Fisheries will identify any required re-allocation of existing resources from within the overall recreational fishing program for this project, and report back to the Committee prior to any such re-allocation.

**Recommendation**

That contingency funding be made available of \$420,000 at a minimum rate of \$140,000 for the three financial years (2002/2003, 2003/2004 and 2004/2005) from the freshwater trust for this program, or lesser period if cash funds are available.

**Issue**

Draft five-year expenditure budget for the Recreational Fishing (Freshwater) Trust Fund

**Background**

A draft budget table will be prepared and presented to the Committee for consideration, based on the recommendations of RFFTEC for renewal of funding for existing projects and consideration of new proposals for funding.

The budget position predicted from the initial recommendations will be compared against available funds. If necessary, approvals for programs, and / or allocations to each program may need to be reviewed in order to achieve a balanced budget. Budget forecasts for coming years will also be presented.

**Outcomes**

A draft budget table was developed in consultation with RFFTEC and presented to the Committee for consideration. The budget table listed the levels of expenditure for ongoing programs and new proposals as recommended by the Committee. Budget figures were evaluated against available funds within the Freshwater trust.

Budget calculations were also presented for those programs that had been recommended to continue beyond the 02/03 financial year. Carryover of unexpended funds during the 01/02 year in some existing projects contributed to their annual funding requirements. As a result the total amount required to renew some existing projects was substantially less than the total budget for each program.

The budget recommendations from RFFTEC are summarised in Table 1 (over page).

**Recommendation**

Table 1: *Proposed expenditure allocations from the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Fund for 02/03 financial year*

<b>Program</b>	<b>01/02 predicted carryover (\$'000)</b>	<b>2002/03 allocation (\$'000)</b>	<b>02/03 supported budget (\$'000)</b>
Purchase of native fish from private enterprise	20	180	200
Enhanced Government fish production	10	294	304
Freshwater recreational management	10	212	222
Fishcare volunteer program	154	152	306
Licence administration	0	250	250
Inland fisheries officers	4	604	608
Regional fish habitat (inland)	0	254	254
Weir removal / fish passage	0	102	102
Effectiveness of stocking program	100	153	253
Angler catch monitoring	150	103	253
Angler expenditure survey	65	0	65
Small project enhancement program	18	2	20
Impoundment access / fishouts	54	0	0
Bass habitat mapping	40	62	102
Wetland restoration	100	0	100
Eastern cod stocking program	0	20	20
Fish stocking fisheries management strategy contingency	N/A	140	140
Recreational fishing fisheries management strategy contingency	N/A	125	125
<b>Total (\$'000)</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>2,653</b>	<b>3,324</b>



**Issue**

Invitation to the community to submit proposals funded by Recreational Fishing Trusts and the small project enhancement program (small grants program).

**Background**

Small grants program: This year, the community was invited to submit proposals for freshwater projects via the small grants program only. 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 saltwater projects could be submitted under the small grants program or as more general projects.

The small grants program enables fishing clubs, councils and other community members to submit freshwater and saltwater proposals for small, local or regional projects to enhance recreational fishing. Funding proposals are limited to \$5,000 and should be matched by funds from the applicant or other sources. The small grants program allocation has been set at \$20,000 per annum. A number of applications for funding have been received and are presented to the Committee for consideration. Successful applicants will be required to report to the expenditure committees on a regular basis.

Small grants program applications:

- (a) Proposal for funding support of the Tamworth Native Fish Hatchery (a non profit community fish hatchery)
- (b) Proposal for funding support of the Manilla Fishing Club Hatchery (a non profit community fish hatchery)
- (c) Proposal to provide dollar-for-dollar matching funding of \$1,000 through the existing small grants program for a weir removal
- (d) Proposal by the Alpine Activity Centre to run recreational fishing tours on Lake Jindabyne and lake Eucumbene
- (e) Establishment of barbecue facilities and amenities block at the Wilanthry camp site, on the Lachlan River at Wilanthry Bridge, near Hillston
- (f) Proposal from the Bingara Murray Cod Fish Hatchery for funding support to produce native fishes for public stocking
- (g) Request for funding support for the installation of an artificial breeding reef at Copeton dam
- (h) Promotion of the inaugural Brewarrina carp fish-out to be held at Brewarrina in July 2002
- (i) Proposal by the Lake Macquarie Police and Community Youth Club to conduct a 12-week training program to introduce disadvantaged youth to freshwater and saltwater recreational fishing
- (j) Promotion of a family fishing event to be held on the Murray River by the Barham District Anglers Club, Barham
- (k) Proposal by the Yetman Fishing Club for funding support to stock silver perch into the McIntyre River
- (l) Proposal by the Singleton Fly Fishing Club for funding support to release brown trout fry into the Barrington Tops area
- (m) Proposal for funding support to build an access platform for anglers with disabilities at Lake Canobolas
- (n) Proposal by Jeff Prell to run recreational fishing tours on two private property lakes in the Southern Highlands near Crookwell, through the existing small grants program

**Background continued**

- (o) Proposal by the Narrabri Amateur Fishing Club for funding support to stock fish into the Namoi River
- (p) Proposal by Robert Thorsby to set up a Coffs Harbour Fishing and Maritime Information website

**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 that were not supported were considered to be too costly, low priority for recreational fisheries management or of minimal benefit to recreational fishing. One program was deferred to a future meeting. Further information on this project is required in relation to costings, approval notifications from relevant authorities and on the outcomes of the proponent's grant application to the Natural Heritage Trust.

Project summaries for each small grant application are included at the back of this document. The recommendations of the Committee for each program are summarised in Tables 2-4 (over page).

**Recommendation**Table 2: *Programs supported by the Committee to be funded from the small grants program*

<b>Project title</b>	<b>Project proponent</b>	<b>Recommended funding level, 02/03 year</b>	<b>Funding conditions</b>
Tamworth Native Fish Hatchery (non profit community fish hatchery)	Mr Geoff Simpson	Dollar-for-dollar pro-rata to the average commercial sale price per fingerling, to a maximum of \$5,000	Funding to be supplied dollar-for-dollar pro-rata per fingerling stocked, to a maximum of \$5,000. Pro rata amount based on the average commercial sale price per fingerling.
Manilla Fishing Club Hatchery (non profit community fish hatchery)	Mr Ian Ward	\$1,500	Funding to be spent on capital works only. Proof of expenditure to be supplied by the proponent at a future meeting.
Fishing platform at Lake Canobolas	Mr Rodney Tonkin (Institute of freshwater anglers)	\$4,700	Recreational Fishing Trust sponsorship to be clearly identified by the project. Proof of expenditure including the contribution by the Orange Cit Council, to be supplied by the proponent at a future meeting.

Table 3: *Program recommended by the Committee to be deferred*

<b>Project title</b>	<b>Project proponent</b>	<b>Total funds requested</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Installation of breeding reef at Copeton Dam	St Kilda Fishing Club	Not specified	Further information required in relation to project costings. RFFTEC sought notifications of approval to install from relevant authorities, and information relating to the outcome of the grant application to the Natural Heritage Trust, before re-submission.

**Recommendations continued**

Table 4: *Programs not-supported by the Committee for funding through the small grants program*

<b>Project title</b>	<b>Project proponent</b>	<b>Total funds requested</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Removal of Banarway Creek Crossing	Twynam Pastoral Company	\$1,000	Funds to be accessed from within the existing weir review program allocation.
Recreational fishing tours on Lakes Eucumbene and Jindabyne	Alpine Activity Centre – fishing tours	Not specified	Does not meet guidelines – commercial enterprise.
BBQ facilities and amenities block, Wilanthy	Anthony Milne	\$5,000	Does not meet guidelines – does not enhance recreational fishing.
Bingara Murray Cod Hatchery	Ray Neal	Not specified	Funding support already provided through the dollar-for-dollar stocking program.
Promotion of Brewarrina carp fish-out	Brewarrinna NAIDOC committee	\$5,000	Donation from carp management project to be arranged by NSWF
Fish training program for disadvantaged youth	Lake Macquarie Police and Community Youth Club	\$5,000	Does not meet guidelines – does not enhance recreational fishing.
Promotion of a fishing event on the Murray River	Barham District Anglers Club	\$2,175	Does not meet guidelines – does not enhance recreational fishing.
Stocking of silver perch into the McIntyre River	Yetman Fishing Club	Not specified	Does not meet threatened species guidelines
Stocking of brown trout into the Barrington Tops area	Singleton Fly Fishing Club	\$5,560	Trout stocking conducted in association with the trout acclimatisation societies only. Refer the application to NETAS for consideration.
Recreational fishing tours, Southern Highlands	Jeff Prell	\$1,500	Does not meet guidelines – commercial enterprise.
Fish stocking in the Namoi River	Narrabri Amateur Fishing Club	\$200,000	Does not meet guidelines – amount requested in excess of small grants allocation
Coffs Harbour Fishing website	Robert Thorsby	\$500	Does not meet guidelines – does not enhance recreational fishing.

## **Other business**

### **Issue**

Funding for advisory trailers in north-western NSW

### **Discussion**

Mr Richard Ping Kee discussed the possibility of NSW Fisheries purchasing an education and advisory trailer, which could be accessed by angling clubs and Fishcare Volunteers for use at open days and field events in border areas. It was proposed that the advisory van could be housed in a lock up facility in Moree.

### **Action**

For the Chair to discuss the status of inland advisory trailers with the manager, communications branch.

### **Issue**

Placement of the small grants application form on the internet for public use

### **Discussion**

Mr Richard Ping Kee suggested that the small grants program trust fund application form could be made available in electronic form on the internet, to assist applicants in applying for small grants project funding. Applications for funding via the small grants program can be received at any time.

### **Action**

NSW Fisheries to ensure that the small grants application form is available on the website for public use.

### **Issue**

Report of a recent illegal stocking of Australian bass into Tallowa dam

### **Discussion**

Mr Steve Tooley advised the Committee of reports of a recent illegal stocking of Australian bass into Tallowa dam. NSW Fisheries advised that Tallowa dam is not presently being stocked with bass as research staff are planning to determine the effectiveness of the proposed high level fishway at Tallowa dam in restoring fish passage to the Shoalhaven River, once the fishway has been installed. The illegal fish release could potentially compromise the validity of the future monitoring program planned for this facility, if the reports are authenticated.

### **Action**

NSW Fisheries will investigate the matter further.

## **Next meeting**

The next RFFTEC meeting was scheduled for Thursday 26 September 2002 at the Cronulla Fisheries Centre from 9.30am – 3.30pm.

Meeting concluded at 3.25pm.

## PROJECT APPLICATION SUMMARIES, SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

### **Project**

Proposal for funding support of the Tamworth Native Fish Hatchery, through the existing small grants program.

### **Project summary**

The Tamworth Native Fish Hatchery Association was formed in 1996 as a joint enterprise between local fishing clubs and the Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School. The hatchery was established for the purpose of producing fish for public stocking into the Peel River and to provide an aquaculture facility and training site for secondary school students. The Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School has been issued with class H (hatchery) permit to produce golden perch, Murray cod and silver perch.

The hatchery site works to date have been financed by family fish out days, raffles, donations of money, materials, and time by local businesses and tradesmen. Assistance has come from NSW Fisheries at Narrandera and Grafton through the provision of technical advice on design, construction and operation.

The Tamworth Native Fish Hatchery is seeking funding through the small grants program to cover the cost of site works - to date around \$40,000. Currently, seven dams are completed with an estimated volume of 11 megalitres, comprising a supply reservoir at the top, 5 breeding ponds and an overflow / collection dam at the bottom. All underground drainage trenches are completed with pipes in place. Inflow water pipes are completed and all valves, monks and headwalls have been purchased and put in place. Electricity has been run to the top of each monk to enable the use of aerators on each plankton pond. Three spawning tanks and three hatching tanks have been acquired for the laboratory and power, water and air has recently been installed above each tank for heating and aeration. All man-proof fencing around the hatchery is completed. Turtle proofing materials have also been acquired and fencing is completed.

### **Project**

Proposal for funding support of the Manilla Fishing Club Hatchery, through the existing small grants program.

### **Project summary**

The Manilla Hatchery is a non-profit community aquaculture facility, established by the Manilla Fishing Club for the purpose of producing fish for public stocking into local dams and rivers. The community hatchery has been operating for around 20 years. It consists of four breeding ponds and three plankton ponds, which were constructed by the Manilla Shire Council. Club volunteers carried out the necessary work to complete and set up operations, with technical assistance from NSW Fisheries. The land on which the hatchery is located is owned by the Manilla Shire Council. Current hatchery operations are financed by raffles and donations of money from fishing clubs.

**Project summary continued - Manilla Fishing Club Hatchery**

During the 2001/02 stocking season, the hatchery produced 42,000 golden perch and 1,000 Murray cod which were released into Lake Keepit near Gunndedah and Split Rock dam near Manilla. Since the commencement of operations, the hatchery has produced almost a quarter of a million fish for the benefit of the fishing public. Fish are not bred for commercial use in any form.

The Manilla Fishing Club and Hatchery is seeking funding through the small grants program to cover ongoing operational expenses. The hatchery operating expense for the 2001/02 financial year to date is \$4,122. Average annual running costs are recorded as being in the order of \$5,500 dollars per annum.

**Project**

Proposal to provide dollar-for-dollar matching funding of \$1,000 for a weir removal, through the existing small grants program.

**Project summary**

The Tywnam Pastoral Company has applied for dollar-for-dollar matching funding of \$1,000 through the small grants program, to remove a weir on Banarway Creek. The proponents have agreed to remove the structure to help restore fish habitat within the Gwydir Catchment. Banarway Creek is an ephemeral stream that plays an integral role in linking the lagoon system and provides breeding habitat and transport paths for many fish species. Fish such as Silver Perch, Catfish and Bony herring are some species that may benefit from the removal of the structure and the resulting unimpeded passage through the lagoon system and into the Barwon River.

The Initial Weir Review identified Banarway Creek Crossing, a private structure originally constructed as a multi-purpose weir/crossing, as a fish passage impediment to be considered for removal.

**Project**

Proposal by the Alpine Activity Centre to run recreational fishing tours on Lake Jindabyne and Lake Eucumbene, through the existing small grants program.

**Project summary**

The Alpine Activity Centre situated at Jindabyne is an established Snowy Mountains tourist venue. The activity centre provides backpack style accommodation and lodgings for holidaymakers and is a fully equipped venue with all of the standard facilities expected of a tourist establishment. The centre caters for outdoor recreational pursuits such as skiing and snowboarding in the winter and white-water rafting and horse riding in the summer.

The Alpine Activity Centre has applied for financial assistance under the small grants program to set up a commercial fishing guide business on Lake Jindabyne and Lake Eucumbene. The aim of the trout guide business is to educate children in methods of trout fishing and the conservation of fisheries resources. Funding assistance for this project is provided by the Scout Association of Australia.

**Project**

Establishment of barbecue facilities and amenities block at the Wilanthry campsite, on the Lachlan River at Wilanthry Bridge, near Hillston.

**Project summary**

Mr Anthony Milne, President of the Hook, Line and Sinker Committee, Hillston has applied for financial assistance (\$5,000) under the small grants program to set up three covered tables with bench seating, two barbecues, a water tank and toilet facilities for members of the public at the Wilanthry camp site, on the Lachlan River at Wilanthry Bridge, near Hillston. The area is used by recreational fishers and campers and is a point of access to the Lachlan River.

**Project**

Proposal from the Bingara Anglers Club Hatchery Committee for funding support to produce native fish at the Bingara Murray Cod Fish Hatchery for public stocking

**Project summary**

The Bingara Murray Cod Fish Hatchery is a community aquaculture facility, established by the Bingara Angler's Club for the purpose of producing fish for public stocking into local dams and rivers (principally the Gwydir River). The Bingara hatchery has been operating for around 20 years. The land on which the hatchery is located is owned by the Bingara Shire Council. The hatchery consists of four breeding ponds and three plankton ponds, which were constructed by the Postmaster Generals Board and the Bingara Shire Council. Club volunteers carried out the necessary work to complete and set up operations (e.g. installation of a laboratory, incubation tanks and fry troughs, power and site fencing) with technical assistance from NSW Fisheries. Current hatchery operations are financed by raffles and donations of money from fishing clubs, materials, and time by local businesses and tradesmen. Since the commencement of operations, the hatchery has produced more than one million fish for public stocking.

The Bingara Murray Cod Fish Hatchery has been issued with class H (hatchery) permit to produce golden perch, Murray cod and silver perch. The hatchery has been producing fish on a commercial basis for a number of years. During 01/02, Bingara Murray cod hatchery produced 12,120 fish for stocking and received \$3,000 in matching funding from the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust account, through the Dollar-for-Dollar Native Fish Stocking Program.

The Bingara Anglers Club Hatchery Committee has applied for financial assistance under the small grants program to enhance the production capacity of the Bingara Murray Cod Fish Hatchery and hence augment fish releases in the Gwydir River valley.



**Project**

Request for funding support through the small grants program for the installation of an artificial breeding reef at Copeton dam

**Project summary**

The St Kilda Fishing Club has applied for funding support through the small grants program to install an artificial breeding reef at Copeton dam. The project aims to provide habitat and breeding areas for native fish through the construction and emplacement of a shoreline structure consisting of concrete blocks, earthenware pipes and rocks. The proponent has advised that both the Department and of Land Water Conservation and the Environment Protection Authority have no objections to this project.

This proposal has been considered by RFFTEC on a previous occasion. At this time, the Committee recommended that a decision on a funding allocation via the small grants program be deferred until the results the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) 2001 grant application were known. The proponent has advised that the Natural Heritage Trust has since notified the applicant that the NHT 2001 grant proposal has been unsuccessful, but has recommended that the proposal be again submitted to the NHT for consideration during 2002.

**Project**

Promotion of the inaugural Brewarrina carp fish-out to be held at Brewarrina on 13 July and 14 July 2002, as part of the National Aboriginal Islander Day of Celebration (NAIDOC).

**Project summary**

The Brewarrina NAIDOC committee, in association with the Brewarrina Royal Hotel Fishing Club, is staging a "Carp Bash" on July 13 and 14 2002, as part of NAIDOC celebrations. In order to gain the recognition and community participation required (given Brewarrina's isolated locality) to make the fish-out an environmental success, the application seeks funding support to promote this inaugural event in the lead up to NAIDOC week. Benefits to recreational fishing include the potentially significant reduction in carp numbers in an area where the population of this introduced species is highly abundant. In addition, a reduction in carp numbers should result in an increase in the water quality (carp having been shown to increase turbidity). Improved water quality will provide added benefits to the Brewarrina community in terms of its use of the Barwon River for town water and for other recreational purposes.

The promotion of the Brewarrina carp fish-out will take the form of newspaper and radio advertising campaign in combination with an organised display of visual media (e.g. flyers, posters and banners). It is proposed that prizes will be awarded to successful competitors (e.g. largest carp caught, largest number of carp caught).

The proponent is seeking a \$5,000 allocation for this project. Additional funding sources have been identified as follows: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC - \$2,000), Brewarrina NAIDOC committee (\$2,000), Brewarrina Shire Council (\$1,000).

**Project**

Proposal by the Lake Macquarie Police and Community Youth Club to conduct a 12-week training program to introduce disadvantaged youth to freshwater and saltwater recreational fishing.

**Project summary**

The Lake Macquarie Police and Community Youth Club has been set up to assist young people to develop leadership qualities in the community and to help them to avoid becoming offenders. It provides programs for youth that are designed to develop personal relationships, to prevent crime and to reduce problems associated with drugs and alcohol.

One of the core programs of the Lake Macquarie Police and Community Youth Club involves working with sporting and recreational bodies to provide young people with access to entertainment and recreational opportunities otherwise not available. To that end, the proponent has applied for funding assistance through the small grants program to introduce disadvantaged youth from the Lake Macquarie area to recreational fishing. The project will involve taking the young people on fishing trips to Lake Macquarie, Stockton Beach, Port Stephens, Newcastle and the upper Hunter River catchment. Children will be taught basic fishing skills such as equipment selection and rigging. Instruction and training in fish biology, fish identification and fisheries research and management will be provided, through linkage with the NSW Fisheries Port Stephens Fisheries Centre and the Sydney Aquarium. Support in principle for the project has been obtained from the Department of Community Services (Eastlake Youth Centre), Hunter Sports High School, Hunter Renewal (Premiers Department) and the Lake Macquarie Council. The project is set to commence in July and be completed by December this year.

The proponent is seeking a \$5,000 dollars allocation from the Freshwater Trust and \$5,000 from the Saltwater Trust (total \$10,000) for this project. The Lake Macquarie Police and Community Youth Club will provide \$4,419 dollars in funding for this project.

**Project**

Promotion of a family fishing event to be held on the Murray River by the Barham District Anglers Club, Barham.

**Project summary**

The Barham District Anglers Club is seeking \$725 dollars per annum for three years to promote a family fishing event, to be held in October on the Murray River near Barham. The family fishing event will be co-ordinated by the Barham District Anglers Club. The aim of the event is to introduce children from Barham to recreational fishing and to promote responsible fishing practices.

The Barham District Anglers Club will contribute \$500 dollars per annum for three years towards this project.

**Project**

Proposal by the Yetman Fishing Club for funding support to stock silver perch into the McIntyre River.

**Project summary**

The Yetman Fishing Club has applied for funding support to stock silver perch into the McIntyre River near Yetman, with fish sourced from private enterprise.

Large numbers of silver perch fry have been stocked into impoundments, and smaller numbers of fish stocked into rivers in the Murray Darling Basin. However, at most of these locations stocking has not succeeded in establishing self-sustaining (reproducing) populations. The independent Fisheries Scientific Committee that recommended that silver perch be listed as a threatened fish in NSW noted that the species was once widespread and abundant throughout the Murray-Darling basin, but now no longer breeds in most of its former range, except for a population downstream from the Torrumbarry Weir on the Murray River and possibly another in the Edward River.

**Project**

Proposal by the Singleton Fly Fishing Club for funding support to release brown trout fry into the Barrington Tops area

**Project summary**

Mr Lawrence Blackburn of the Singleton Fly Fishing Club is proposing to stock Brown trout into the Barrington Tops area with fish supplied by the NSW Fisheries Dutton Trout Hatchery. The Singleton Fly Fishing Club is seeking a funding contingency of \$5,560 for three years through the small grants program, for this project.

The trout release program for the Barrington Tops area is determined in cooperation with the New England Trout Acclimatisation Society (NETAS). Stocking in this area is currently carried out by volunteers from the Barrington / Gloucester branch of NETAS. The Barrington / Gloucester branch of NETAS regularly receives an allocation of brown trout fry for release into the Manning River near Gloucester.

**Project**

Proposal for funding support to build an access platform for anglers with disabilities at Lake Canobolas

**Project summary**

Mr Rodney Tonkin, secretary of the Institute of Freshwater Anglers (IFA), in conjunction with the Orange Trout Acclimatisation Society (OTAS), has applied for funding support to construct a pathway, ramp and casting platform at Lake Canobolas Reserve to enable fishing access for the disabled.

The proponent is seeking \$3,700 dollars for materials for deck construction and \$1,000 dollars to build the path link from the car park to the access ramp (total \$4,700). The pathway, ramp and deck will be constructed by volunteers from OTAS, IFA and the Orange Green Corps. The Orange City Council will oversee the project to ensure the ramp and deck meet required safety standards.

**Project**

Proposal by Jeff Prell to run recreational fishing tours on two private property lakes in the Southern Highlands near Crookwell

**Project summary**

Mr Jeff Prell operates a commercial tourist business from a property situated in the southern highlands near Crookwell, offering fly-fishing and accomodation packages (homestead bed and breakfast and budget-style accomodation) for travellers and holiday makers. Fly-fishing tours are conducted on a private basis at two lakes on the property that have been stocked with trout. Mr Jeff Prell has applied for financial assistance under the small grants program to restock the two lakes with trout (\$500 dollars) and to install solar-powered pumps at each lake to reticulate the water (\$1,000) through each of these lakes.

The proponent has advised that public access is provided for recreational fishing at the lakes by appointment and that there is no charge for catch and release fishing at this site. Monies collected for trout that are caught and kept are put towards the restocking of the dams.

**Project**

Proposal by the Narrabri Amateur Fishing Club for funding support to stock fish into the Namoi River

**Project summary**

The Narrabri Amateur Fishing Club has applied for funding support to extend its current fish release program in the Namoi River. The Kamilorio Aboriginal Centre has been identified as an additional funding source. The Narrabri Amateur Fishing Club is one of number of north-western fishing clubs involved in restocking the Namoi River, as part of the Dollar For Dollar Native Fish Stocking Program.

**Project**

Proposal by Robert Thorsby to set up a Coffs Harbour Fishing and Maritime Information website

**Project summary**

Robert Thorsby is seeking funding support through the small grants program to set up a maritime and fishing website for the Coffs Harbour Region in an area extending from Red Rock to Urunga and west to Ebor on the New England tablelands. The aim of the project is to set up a "one stop shop" for residents and visitors to the Coffs Harbour region, which will provide comprehensive information on saltwater fishing, freshwater fishing and water based activities, with special emphasis on safety and compliance to regulations.

The website is partly established on-line through a private address. The proponent is seeking \$250 dollars per annum for two years (total \$500 dollars) from the Freshwater Trust (total \$500) and \$4,750 dollars per annum for two years (total \$9,500) from the Saltwater Trust, to upgrade the existing site to make it more accessible to the general public. The proponent has advised that Telstra has recently provided a broadband Internet service to the Coffs Harbour telephone exchange, which will allow the website to be easily accessed and delivered at a minimal cost.