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2008/2009 Native Fish Stocking Plan for Dams and Lakes

There are many impoundments and reservoirs suitable for native fish stocking throughout NSW and over the last two decades a large number of excellent recreational fisheries have been established. To ensure that the best use continues to be made of publicly funded fish stocking programs, the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is seeking input from people who have an interest in the State's stocked native freshwater fisheries. For more information on the proposed list of impoundments to be stocked check out www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries or phone DPI on 02 6763 1441.

Annual trout season in NSW closed at midnight 9 June 2008

The annual trout season in NSW closed on Monday 9 June to allow brown, rainbow and brook trout a chance to breed uninterrupted. Designated trout streams are closed to recreational fishing after the June long weekend and will reopen prior to the October long weekend at midnight on Friday 3 October, enabling trout fishers to fish during both long weekends.

All trout dams remain open to fishing all year, which will allow fishers to continue their sport throughout the year. NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) in conjunction with the acclimatisation societies has been stocking our trout dams and rivers for many years. During the previous 12 months, about two-and-a-half-million trout have been stocked into our waterways.

Seasonal ban on taking Australian bass and estuary perch

There is a zero bag limit for Australian bass and estuary perch in all rivers and estuaries until 31 August to protect female fish stocks. Both Australian bass and estuary perch form schools and migrate to parts of estuaries with the correct salinity to trigger spawning. These great native sports fish can be vulnerable to fishing when they are in large groups. The zero bag limit was introduced from feedback from the community after a review into NSW recreational fishing rules was finalised last year. The zero bag limit does not close any waters to fishing and does not affect anglers fishing for other estuary species such as bream or flathead. However, any Australian bass or estuary perch caught accidentally should be returned to the water as quickly as possible.

All fish in freshwater impoundments, such as Glenbawn Dam and Glennies Creek Dam in the Hunter valley, Brogo Dam near Bega and Clarrie Hall and Toonumbar Dam in the northeast of the state, are stocked fish and anglers may continue to fish under the normal bag limit of two fish per day.

Change to minimum size limit of abalone from 1 July 2008

Effective from 1 July 2008, the minimum legal size limit for abalone has increased from 115mm to 117mm to provide greater protection for abalone stocks. The saltwater bag and size limit brochure and sticky rulers have been updated to reflect the change. To obtain new advisory material, contact DPI on 1300 550 474.

New patrol boat for Mid North Coast waters

The crackdown on illegal fishing activity has stepped up a gear with a new high-speed boat now patrolling the State's Mid North Coast. The six-metre Edencraft vessel is based at the DPI Fisheries office at Tuncurry and is being used for estuarine and offshore patrols. This is essential equipment because DPI fisheries officers conduct patrols in both coastal and inland waterways constantly throughout the year. Officers check that fishers have paid their recreational fishing fees and that commercial and recreational fishers comply with the State's fisheries laws. The vessel patrols waterways from Seal Rocks in the south to Hallidays Point in the north, which includes Smiths Lake, Wallis Lake and the Wallamba River. It also patrols marine protected areas and critical habits for the grey nurse shark, such as The Pinnacle and Big Seal Rocks.

Abalone theft – Bega man sentenced to gaol

A Bega man has been sentenced to two months gaol and a \$500 fine after facing court this week on abalone theft charges. The man was one of three men caught during a targeted patrol operation of driving locations on the Far South Coast in February this year. Two other offenders, will face court in August. This sentence sends a clear message to thieves who threaten the abalone industry – if you flout the law, you will get caught and can end up in gaol.

Key Fisheries bust stats since June last year:

- More than 9,200 illegally harvested abalone have now been seized by fisheries officers
- More than 2,000 penalty infringement notices have been issued, and more than 450 prosecutions launched for offences under Fisheries legislation across the State.
- Illegal fishing activity can be reported to any local DPI office or by calling the Fishers' Watch Hotline on 1800 043 536.

North Coast Fishcare Volunteers Recruitment

Keen fishers located from Tweed heads to Port Macquarie are invited to join the NSW Government's successful Fishcare Volunteer Program. The two-day training session is planned for the weekend of the 26th and 27th of July at the Coffs Harbour campus of TAFE. For more information about Fishcare Volunteer training, contact Dean Hancock on 02 6648 3929 or 0458 274 876. Further details on Fishcare Volunteers can be found at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Reminder to all Agents

To order additional licence material and recreational fishing advisory information, contact DPI recreational licensing team on (02) 9527 5855 or fax your order to (02) 9527 0034.

General information 1300 550 474

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

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/recreational