

Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing
Outcomes - Meeting 40, 14 December 2006

Apologies

John Dunphy and Jim Harnwell.

The Chair welcomed new/reappointed members and Ms Renata Brooks, Deputy Director-General, Agriculture, Fisheries and Regional Relations, to the meeting.

Confirmation of minutes from previous ACoRF meeting

The Council accepted the outcomes as a true and accurate record of discussions from the 39th ACoRF meeting, held 28 September 2006. **Moved:** Neil Ryan. **Seconded:** Ann Garard. **Carried**

Business arising from the minutes

Nil.

1. a) Grey Nurse Shark presentation

Dr Nick Otway, Senior Research Scientist, advised the Council on several matters relating to Grey Nurse Shark protection, including an overview of the scientific evidence that has been used to make decisions to date. Examples of recreational and commercial hooks removed from tagged/autopsied sharks were provided.

Information noted. No recommendations.

Action Item

That a copy of the Grey Nurse Shark report be distributed to Council members for information.

Completed.

1. b) Discussion of Grey Nurse issues

The Council discussed revoking Bass Point as a Grey Nurse Shark Critical Habitat site in light of the findings of the "Scientific Summary and Options for the Protection of Grey Nurse Sharks in Critical Habitat Sites in NSW Waters". This report recommends that Bass Point be deleted from the list of critical habitat sites for Grey Nurse Sharks.

Motion:

The Council recommends that Bass Point be de-listed as a Grey Nurse Shark Critical Habitat area.

Moved: Mel Brown. **Seconded:** Ann Lee. **Carried.** (Megan Kessler and Otto Volz against motion)

2. Aquatic Ecosystems research activities (Dr Bob Creese)

Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

3. Recreational Fishing Trust expenditure

ACoRF considered expenditure recommendations arising from the Recreational Fishing Freshwater and Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFFTEC and RFSTEC) meetings held on 28 November and 7 December 2006, respectively.

Motions:

ACoRF recommends that the Recreational Fishing Trusts allocations outlined in Tables 1 and 2 (attached), as supported by the Expenditure Committees, be approved. **Moved:** Steve Scott. **Seconded:** Kevin McKinnon. **Carried.**

The Council supports funding for the Round 2 Statewide Saltwater Habitat Restoration Projects, as outlined in Table 3. **Moved:** Kevin McKinnon. **Seconded:** Ann Lee. **Carried.**

The Council supports funding for the Round 2 Statewide Freshwater Habitat Restoration Projects, as outlined in Table 4. **Moved:** Megan Kessler. **Seconded:** Ann Garard. **Carried.**

The Council endorses new Saltwater Trust priorities, for consideration at the April 2007 budget meetings. **Moved:** Neil Ryan. **Seconded:** Otto Volz. **Carried.**

Table 1: Applications recommended for funding from the Freshwater Trust

Large Grants	Applicant	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Fisheries Management Officer (Inland) – to provide additional management services for freshwater recreational fishers	NSW DPI	\$28,535	\$93,538	\$96,171
Improved access to land for recreational fishing – to provide long term management of access ways to inland streams for recreational fishers	NSW DPI	\$41,650	\$127,954	\$127,954
Optimised stocking of Australian bass, by testing modeled estimates of predator impact – to develop a predatory impact model to optimise stocking rates of Australian bass in freshwater impoundments	University of New South Wales	\$50,095	\$50,427	\$52,251
Small grants (for information only)				
Establishing sites for study of trout impacts on frog population demographics - ongoing monitoring of threatened frog populations in the Styx River catchment, near sites where trout releases occur	University of Newcastle	\$9,513		
Assessing the population status of Booroolong Frog in areas where trout are stocked - comparing the relative abundance of Booroolong frog in areas where fish stocking occurs against non-stocked waters and the presence or absence of Chytrid Fungus at stocked sites	Department of Environment & Conservation	\$8,400		

Table 2: Applications recommended for funding from the Saltwater Trust

Program details	Applicant	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Shoalhaven Fishing Platform - Scenic Drive, Nowra	Shoalhaven City Council	\$25,000		
Shoalhaven Fishing Platform - Greenwell Point	Shoalhaven City Council	\$25,000		
Shoalhaven Fishing Platform - Terrara Levee	Shoalhaven City Council	\$30,000		
Shoalhaven Fishing Platform - Lake Conjola boat ramp reserve	Shoalhaven City Council	\$25,000		
Shoalhaven Fishing Platform - Tabourie Lake	Shoalhaven City Council	\$25,000		
Enhancing recreational fisheries through the responsible and optimal stocking of mulloway into estuaries – additional funding for purchase of mulloway fingerlings and acoustic tagging of stocked mulloway to determine habitat preferences	University of NSW	\$129,750		
Pilot offshore artificial reefs – Stage 1: Site investigation, development of methodologies and Environmental Impact Statement	DPI	\$275,000	\$119,000	\$122,000
Perpetual access for NSW recreational anglers - to provide long term management of coastal access for recreational fishers	DPI	\$60,750	\$118,000	\$125,400
ACoRF meeting expenses - additional funding	DPI/RFSTEC	\$12,000		
Recreational Fishing Trust DVD - additional funding for replication	DPI	\$30,000		
Small grants (for information only)				
Fish cleaning tables for Lake Cathie – construction of 2 cleaning tables	Lake Cathie LANDCARE Group	\$1,350		
Mallabula Fishing Jetty Restoration Project - Port Stephens	Mallabula Jetty Committee	\$10,000		
Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW - Rockfishing Safety DVD replication	Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW	\$8,000		
Movements and behaviours of tiger sharks off NSW as determined by popup satellite tags – Dr Kim Holland expert advisory trip	Pepperell Research and Consulting	\$5,000		

Table 3: Successful Round 2 Statewide Habitat Restoration Projects, as supported by the Saltwater Trust.

Project number	Applicant	Title	Location	Proposal Summary	Funds Sought (\$)	Applicant Contribution (\$ + in-kind)
1	Nambucca Council	Restoration of tidal flow and fish passage Stuart Island Causeway	Northern branch of Nambucca River, causeway to Stuart Island, Nambucca Heads	Improve fish passage at the causeway, which is restricting tidal flows, causing stagnant backwater, restricting fish passage (1 km), causing sedimentation and also impacting upon the local aboriginal community's ancestral connection to the area as a sacred site.	\$25,650	\$45,310
5	Lloyd Gill (Private landholder)	River bank fencing Lansdowner River	Southern river bank of the Lansdowne River, Manning River Catchment	Restrict cattle access to the river bank frontage of whole property (2 km), undertake native riparian tree planting (2 km), mangrove protection and rehabilitation, erosion protection works (500 m).	\$900	\$900
7	Great Lakes Council	Natural Wetland Restoration Darawakh Creek/ Frogalla Swamp Wetland	Darawakh Creek/ Frogalla Swamp Wetland located behind Nine Mile Beach, 6 km north of Forster/Tuncurry	Decommission and infill 3 constructed drains (2.5 km) in a high risk acid sulfate soil coastal wetland area. Rehabilitation of 248 ha wetlands.	\$29,443	\$442,425
8	Gosford City Council	Patonga Creek rehabilitation project	Patonga Creek, Hawkesbury River Catchment, Patonga	Regeneration of 15 ha of saltmarsh damaged by trail bikes. Fencing, revegetation, weed management, foreshore remediation and bank stabilisation.	\$29,995	\$86,100
9	Dalas and Elaine Polson (Private landholders)	Midgy Gharret Island restoration project	Midgy Gharret Island in the Manning River delta, lower north coast region of Hunter Central Rivers CMA	Increase mangrove habitat around island 1.5 km and riparian vegetatin through construction of rock fillets to stabilise banks and protect mangrove seedlings. Fencing to restrict cattle access, planting 3000 native trees.	\$20,285	\$70,355
10	Byron Shire Council	Valances Road Project (Stage 2)	Valances Road, 2 kms NE Mullumbimby, Brunswick River Catchment	Stage 2 of project (Stage 1 funded by RFSTEC) extend riparian fencing area 1.8 km (10 ha area), riparian revegetation and weed management (15 ha)	\$22,000	\$30,000
16	Commercial Fishermen Hexham Swamp Rehabilitation Committee	Smiths Creek Restoration of Tidal flows	Maitland Road, Hexham, Hunter Estuary	Remove a fish passage and tidal flow barrier in Smiths Creek. Replace crossing with box culverts. Provide o.k. fish passage, rehabilitate 235 ha of former estuarine wetland. Improve fish stocks and recruitment to the river	\$8,522	\$10,564

19	Eurobodalla Shire Council	Nelligen Creek, River Road Fish Passage	Nelligen Creek, Clyde River Catchment, 2 km north of Nelligen township	Remove pipe culvert crossing high flow velocity barrier to fish passage, replace with a large box culvert crossing. Seal approach roads to reduce sedimentation	\$30,000	\$30,800
Total					\$166,795	\$716,454

Table 4: Successful Round 2 Statewide Habitat Restoration Projects, as supported by the Freshwater Trust.

Project number	Applicant	Title	Location	Proposal Summary	Funds Sought (\$)	Applicant Contribution (\$ + in-kind)
1	Gloucester Shire Council	Gloucester River Fish Passage Project	Gloucester River, Gloucester (Hunter CMA).	To construct a partial width rock ramp fishway parallel to an existing concrete causeway on the Gloucester River, to open up in excess of 20km of fish passage	\$9,000	\$9,000
2	Nari Nari Tribal Council	Toogimbie Indigenous Protected Area Riverbank Rehabilitation	Murrumbidgee River, Hay NSW (Murrumbidgee CMA).	Revegetation approx. 1km and erosion protection works using instream snag placement.	\$6,775	\$9,075
5	Yetman Fishing Club	Macintyre River Revegetation	Macintyre River, Bruxner Highway Yetman (Border Rivers Gwydir CMA).	Revegetation (2km), weed management (2km), Erosion protection (200m). Various recreational fishing infrastructure, signage, carp buster and boat ramp were also proposed as part of this application. Applicant has been advised that only the fish habitat rehabilitation components could be considered under this funding.	\$1,195	\$5,500
8	Tweed Shire Council	Rehabilitation of Lower Oxley River	Lower Oxley River, Murwillumbah (Northern Rivers CMA).	Fish passage rehabilitation through remediation of a road crossing (50km fish passage opened up).	\$30,000	\$96,535
9	Barbara Mathie	Fish Passage Rehabilitation	Broughton Creek, Gerringong (southern Rivers CMA).	Riparian fencing (100m), revegetation (300m ²), weed management (.4ha), erosion protection works (100m), resnagging (2 snags + rock infrastructure), + fish passage works.	\$9,000	\$25,300
11	Snowy River Interstate Landcare Committee	Little Plains River Riparian Rehabilitation.	Little Plains River Riparian Rehabilitation.	Riparian fencing (0.6km), revegetation (0.6km), weed management (1.5km). wetland rehabilitation (2.5ha).	\$15,420	\$46,350

12	Greening Australia	South Creek Rehabilitation	South Creek, St Mary's (Central CMA).	Revegetation (1ha), weed management (500m), wetland rehabilitation (1ha), fish passage (4km), erosion protection works (500m), resnagging (10+ snags), educational material (2 signs).	\$29,950	\$224,075
14	Wollongong City Council	Mullet Creek riparian rehabilitation	Mullet Creek, Wollongong (Southern Rivers CMA).	Riparian fencing (400m), revegetation (200m), weed management (200m), erosion protection works (400m).	\$9,910	\$43,000
15	Richmond Valley Council	Jabour Weir Fishway	Richmond River, Casino (Northern Rivers CMA).	Fish passage rehabilitation (100km of fish habitat opened up). Refurbish existing fishway to operate more effectively.	\$12,500	\$12,500
16	Nemingha Tavern Fishing Club	Riparian Revegetation Program	Namoi Catchment, Chaffey and Split Rock dams.	Revegetation of approximately 2km along foreshore of Chaffy and Split Rock dams or other public reserves along the Namoi/Peel Rivers.	\$2,000	\$3,350
Total					\$125,750	\$474,685

4. NSW actions in response to Commonwealth Government buyouts

The Council was advised that NSW has been endeavouring to negotiate a suitable agreement with the Commonwealth to prevent an adverse displacement of fishing effort into NSW fisheries as a result of the Commonwealth's buyout. At this stage, NSW had bought out some NSW businesses and introduced regulatory provisions to uphold the National Licence Splitting Policy. *Information noted. No recommendations or action items.*

5. Marine Parks update

The Council was advised that the Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park will be implemented in March 2007 and the Batemans Marine Park in June 2007.
Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

6. Redfin update

Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

7. Port Stephens Research Centre site visit (Dr Geoff Allan/Dr Bob Creese)

Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

8. Fishing closures and related issues

- *Hand hauled prawn nets in Marine Park Habitat Protection Zones*

Motion:

The Council supports the Department's position to continue to allow hand held prawn nets in Marine Park habitat protection zones. **Moved:** Kevin McKinnon. **Seconded** Mel Brown. **Carried.**

- *Tuross Lake and Tomago River*

The Council was informed that the Marine Park Authority has been advised that it is appropriate to exclude these closures from the Marine Park Regulation, but still highlight the need for recreational fishers to check any current closures in the Marine Park.

- *Narrawallee Creek Closure*

The Council was advised of the Department's investigation of the ongoing need for this closure. There are potential *Caulerpa taxifolia* and navigational related concerns that may require the closure to continue in its present form.

Motion:

The Council recommends that recreational prawning activities be allowed in Tuross Lake, Tomago River and Narrawallee Creek. **Moved:** Kevin McKinnon. **Seconded** John Clarke. **Carried.**

Action Item

NSW DPI to consult with the NSW Maritime Authority regarding navigation issues in Tuross Lake, Tomago River and Narrawallee Creek.

- *Upper Lane Cove River (Lane Cove National Park) – catch and release.*

At present, all fishing methods are prohibited with the exception of two rods or lines with a fly or lure attached from unpowered vessels only. Fishing from the river bank is prohibited. All fish caught must be released alive.

Action Item

The Department to negotiate with the Department of Environment and Conservation to permit fishing from the river bank.

- *Worms and nippers – Harrington Lagoon/Back Water closure*

Motion:

The Council supports the revocation of the Harrington Back Water worm and nipper closure. **Moved:** Neil Ryan. **Seconded:** Ann Garard. **Carried.**

- *Intertidal harvesting activities north of Iluka*

The Council was informed of large numbers of tourists coming from Queensland to Iluka and surrounding areas to collect large numbers of invertebrates. There are concerns that headlands

may be “stripped bare” quite rapidly by large groups. Peter Cooley advised the Council that intertidal invertebrate collection is vital for indigenous people’s diet.

Motion:

The Council recommends the introduction of a statewide no take closure for invertebrates (i.e. cannot be taken more than 50m from the place of collection) with exemption for indigenous people.

Moved: Peter Cooley. **Seconded:** Kevin McKinnon. **Carried.**

- *Consideration of a recreational bag limit for eels in freshwater*

There is no bag limit for freshwater eels at present. DPI compliance has expressed concern that fishers may take unlimited numbers of eels, under the auspices of recreational fishing activities, for potential commercial sale.

Motion:

The council recommends a bag limit of 20 be introduced for freshwater eels. **Moved:** Neil Ryan. **Seconded:** Kevin McKinnon. **Carried.**

Out of session items

Nil.

Other Business

- *Concerns over Murray Crayfish – for consideration*

The Council was provided with information from DPI Compliance and advised that the Department is undertaking research on the Murray Crayfish this year.

Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

- *Concern WWII chemical dump off NSW coast is deteriorating – for information*

The Council was advised it is known exactly what has been dumped and that there is no concern to the marine environment. Comprehensive information is available at the following website:

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/pollution/dumping/history/index.html>

Information noted. No recommendations.

- *Report on RecFish conference – for information*

The Council was provided with an overview of the issues discussed at the conference.

Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

- *World Fishing Games/recognition of fishing as a sport*

The Council was given a presentation on the World Fishing Games and continued to discuss ideas relating to the potential recognition of fishing as a sport in NSW/Australia.

Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

Correspondence received

- Letter from Jim Harnwell regarding Nature Conservation Council representation on ACoRF.

Ms Cate Faehrmann, Director, NCC, has nominated a representative to represent the NCC on the Council.

Information noted. No recommendations.

- Letter from the Sydney South Amateur Fishing Association Inc (SSAFA) to recreational fishers titled “Sydney Ports begins carving up Botany Bay recreational fishing haven”.

The Council supports the SSAFA’s position regarding compensation for the loss of approximately 50ha of the Botany Bay recreational fishing haven.

Action item

The Chair write to the Minister supporting the SSAFA requests for compensation as outlined in the SSAFA’s letter.

- Correspondence from Mel Brown regarding abalone and lobster bag limits.

Information noted.

Motion:

The Council supports an increase in the bag limits for abalone and lobster from two to five.

Moved: Ann Garard. **Seconded:** Mel Brown. **Carried.**

Action item

The Chair write to the Minister requesting that the bag limits for abalone and lobster be increased from two to five.

- Peter Cooley advised that he will consider ways to improve consultation between the Department and Aboriginal communities. To be discussed at the next meeting.
- Request for Matt Taylor (UNSW) to report on the Mulloway project at the next meeting.
- Request for the status of the recreational fishing environmental assessment and fishing competitions Code of Conduct to be presented at the next meeting.
- The Department was requested to prepare a brief discussion paper regarding the role of the Council and for members to submit ideas of how the Council could improve its profile in NSW.
- The Council was advised that the 15-point safety plan was accepted by NSW Maritime Authority, which ensures a more viable NSW charter fishing industry than if alternate proposals had been introduced.
- Request that Council member cards be distributed to new/reappointed members.

Completed.

- Mel Brown advised of his retirement from the Council after 15 years of service. The Council and Department thanked Mr Brown for his contributions during this time.

Next meeting

ACoRF meeting 41 (01/2007) is scheduled for Thursday 26 April 2007.