

Your fishing licence fees put to good use

- For the first time in several years Pejar Dam situated half way between Goulburn and Crookwell, has been stocked with thousands of trout fingerlings. The dam has not been stocked in recent years because of the drought but with the water levels now at more than 40 per cent DPI has stocked the dam with 10,000 rainbow trout fingerlings and 5000 brown trout fingerlings which should provide good sport for fishers within two years. This particular stocking is part of the Department of Primary Industries' larger two million trout stocking program in conjunction with Trout Acclimatisation Societies. The fingerlings are all produced at DPI's Gaden Hatchery on the Thredbo River at Jindabyne.
- Botany Bay is set to receive two new fish cleaning tables. The two facilities are being built in very popular fishing spots. One of the tables will be located at the San Souci Pontoon, near the Captain Cook Bridge and the second table will be constructed at Tom Uglys Point. The tables will provide a clean and convenient facility for local anglers and recreational boaters to use. The Recreational Fishing Trust will provide Kogarah Council with \$4,950 for the construction of the tables.
- A fish cleaning table and shelter has been built near the popular boat ramp at Sepoy Knob in Copeton Waters State Park to provide improved facilities for individual anglers and fishing clubs. The table and shelter provides a clean, convenient and efficient facility for anglers throughout the year as well as the many who attend the annual competition run by the Great Inland Fishing Festival Committee.
- A fish cleaning table will be built at Biriban Reserve Coal Point. The fish cleaning table will be a welcome addition to the reserve, which is a very heavy traffic area for anglers entering or exiting the lake. The Coal Point Progress Association, Neighbourhood Watch and Landcare Committee wrote to Lake Macquarie Council requesting that they submit a funding proposal to the Recreational Fishing Trust. The Trust approved a grant of \$7,500 and Council will contribute matching funds.
- The Lake Illawarra Police Community Youth Club received a \$5,000 grant to encourage young people to fish. The grant helped young people in the Illawarra learn about recreational fishing, respecting the environment and enjoyed the sport as a safe and fun experience. Local schools utilised the opportunity and referred youth participants to the program, as well as local police within the Illawarra command.
- A comprehensive new survey gauging the socio-economic importance of recreational and charter boat fishing to the NSW economy will commence in 2008. The results of the survey will provide the basis for new fishing-focused economic activity across regional and coastal NSW. The data will allow the NSW Government, the recreational fishing industry, local councils and associated businesses to better respond to the needs of recreational fishers when making planning decisions for the future. The Recreational Fishing Trust is providing \$150,000 towards the study.

For more information on the many programs funded by the fishing licence fee check out the NSW DPI website: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/recreational

Catch and Release Research Booklet

A new booklet is available that contains a summary of recent press articles on catch and release research carried out by NSW DPI. The articles are well presented and give the positive results of trials carried on bream, flathead, mulloway, silver trevally and bass. They also provide a summary of catch and release tips. To get your free copy please phone 1300 550 474.

Recovery package for Richmond River

The recent flood in the Richmond River resulted in a large fish kill, which has adversely affected local recreational and commercial fishers and related businesses. NSW DPI introduced an emergency fishing closure on January 18. The priority now is to monitor the river and return it to fishing as soon as fish populations improve. The State Government has come to the aid of Richmond River fishers, with a recovery package to help the local industry manage the effects of recent floods. The fishing recovery package would help fund the monitoring program being developed to assess the recovery of fish stocks in the Richmond River. Local fishers will conduct this program in collaboration with Department of Primary Industries (DPI) scientists to capitalise on the combination of scientific expertise and local knowledge of fish behaviour. The monitoring program will begin on 18 February.

In addition, the State Government is helping to fund through the recreational fishing trust a new project worth \$30,000 for flood remediation works on the Richmond River. This project seeks to ensure maximum benefit for fish and fishers by identifying existing floodgates in need of remediation and replacing them with tidal drum gates which help to facilitate fish passage and flush waters behind the flood gate, reducing the build up of 'black water'. A Fish Kill Reference Group has been established involving local commercial and recreational fishers and NSW DPI staff to oversee the monitoring program, the recovery of fish stocks, and access arrangements through the re-opening of the river.

New Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme introduced by NSW DPI

During 2002/2004, NSW DPI prepared an Environmental Impact Statement and a Fishery Management Strategy for freshwater fish stocking in NSW. To protect native fish species and populations, the documents highlighted the need for a hatchery accreditation scheme for fish produced for stocking into waterways. NSW DPI has commenced accrediting hatcheries in NSW under a Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme (HQAS) for Murray cod, golden perch, Australian bass and silver perch.

The HQAS sets best practices for hatcheries to ensure that genetics and fish health are appropriate for stocking. Accreditation is also being offered to hatcheries wanting to show that they can supply high quality fish to aquaculture operations. Hatcheries wishing to supply fish to stocking programs (eg. the Dollar for Dollar Native Fish Stocking program), will require accreditation based on compliance with the standards described in the HQAS, including design and operation of facilities and the management of broodstock, fish health, fish quality and water quality. Only fish produced from accredited hatcheries can be stocked into NSW waters. For further details please contact Aquaculture Management on (02) 4916 3919.

Abalone thieves take notice, if you break the law, you will get caught and suffer the consequences

- In one of NSW's largest abalone busts, the owner of an Ashfield grocery store has been caught by DPI Fisheries officers with an alleged illegal haul of 2,437 black-lip abalone, worth more than \$26,000 stored in chest freezers.
- A man is expected to face court after allegedly being caught with more than 50 times the legal bag limit of abalone in Ben Boyd National Park, north of Eden - with nearly all of them undersized. The legal size for abalone in NSW is 11.5cm and the possession limit is 2 per person in areas open to the taking of abalone.
- Two men allegedly apprehended by fisheries officers with 308 blacklip abalone are to appear in Court, facing penalties of up to three months imprisonment and \$11,000 fines. Of the abalone allegedly seized, 290 were prohibited size ranging from 7.5 centimetres to 11.3 cm. The men were caught following a joint surveillance operation conducted with Water Police in the Terrace Beach area, north of Eden. Fisheries officers returned the live abalone to the sea.

Reminder to all Agents

To order additional receipt payment material and recreational fishing advisory information, contact DPI recreational licensing team on (02) 9527 8589 or fax your order to (02) 9527 0034.

To be added to the **Newscast** electronic mailing list, please send your email address to fisheries.newscast@dpi.nsw.gov.au.