

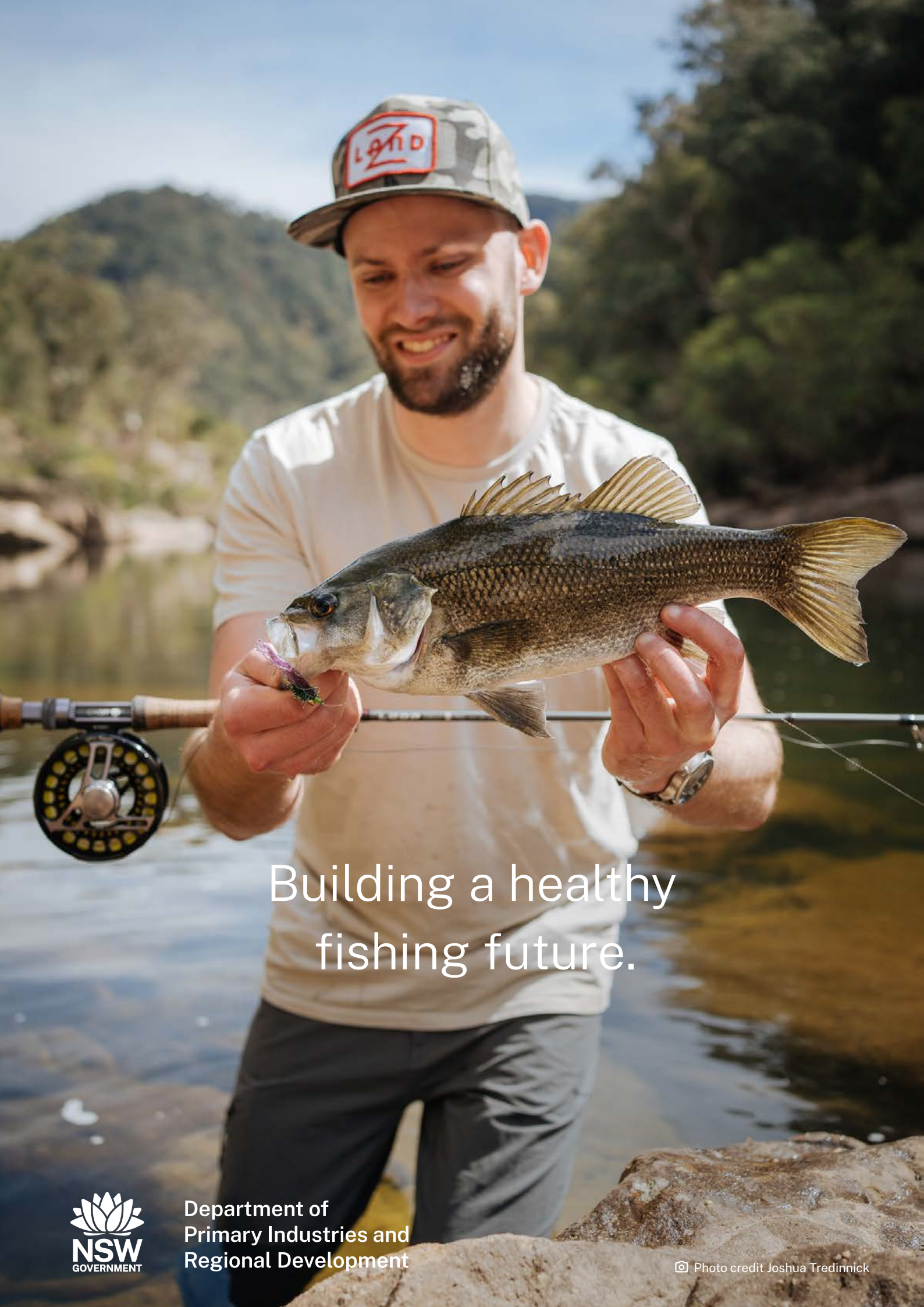
Annual Report 2023/24

NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts

November 2024

dpird.nsw.gov.au





Building a healthy
fishing future.



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Photo credit Joshua Tredinnick

Foreword



Sean Sloan

Deputy Secretary Fisheries and Forestry | NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

November 2024

Recreational fishing is a hugely popular pastime and way of life for many Australians.

Every year, about 12 per cent of NSW residents go fishing. To put this in perspective, this represents the third highest annual participation rate of all outdoors recreational activities.

Participation in the activity comes with many benefits that any recreational fisher will speak about with passion. At the top of the list for many of us is getting out into the great outdoors, with time spent in nature now well-recognised for mental health benefits enabling us to 'switch off' from technology.

The experience of fishing extends past the mateship of blokes getting out in a tinny – recreational fishing is becoming increasingly popular with women. Female participation in fishing in NSW, using available data, is currently estimated at 15 per cent and we are working hard to increase that, including through many of the projects receiving funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts.

Many women and girls are drawn to fishing as an adventurous way to spend time with friends and family outdoors. Heading to a local spot to cast a line provides a great way to relax and get a break away from work and home life. Women are successfully competing in fishing tournaments and finding a sense of community in both competitive and social female-led fishing groups and clubs. Some of these successful 'women in fishing' initiatives have been funded by the Recreational Fishing Trusts, and I'm pleased to see them highlighted in this year's annual report.

To many of us, across all genders and generations, recreational fishing represents precious bonding time. Fishing keeps us active and connected with nature and each other -and allows children to explore and learn new skills about environmental stewardship. As well as helping keep people active, fishers enjoy the health benefits –not to mention the personal satisfaction and culinary delight -of sharing a home-cooked meal of fresh and sustainably caught seafood.

At its best, our passion for fishing unites us, and cuts across age, gender and social divides. It builds family bonds and connects community to their local fishing spots –this sense of place imbues the next generation of recreational fishers with stewardship for countless rivers, creeks, dams, estuaries, wetlands, jetties and beaches across NSW. Many of the projects highlighted in this report are a testament to the commitment of fishers to 'give back more than they take.'

This sense of belonging is just another reason why it is so important that fishing continues to be accessible for everyone. Recreational fishing is good for the environment, good for people and good for communities.

Many charitable and other organised initiatives recognise the unique combination of nature and social cohesion that fishing can provide, from women heading out together to learn to fly fish as part of a breast-cancer recovery programs, to men sharing stories of resilience and growth as part of veteran and first-responder fishing-based mental health programs.

However, benefiting from the therapeutic value of fishing doesn't require participation in a structured program –the majority of fishers head out independently to cast a line.

Thanks to the Recreational Fishing Trusts, we've forged strong partnerships that are making a real difference to enable fishers of all generations to keep enjoying this unique pastime, as well as looking after the natural environment and the waterways which recreational fishers care passionately about.

I'd like to thank the fishing clubs, community groups, the tackle industry, the Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council, the NSW Recreational Fishing Trust Expenditure Committees, and all our project partners across NSW for their hard work.

I hope this report inspires you to plan your next fishing adventure.



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Introduction

A range of important and innovative projects have once again been delivered using funds from the Recreational Fishing Trusts in 2023-24. Recreational fishing fee funds are continually reinvested in projects to improve your recreational fishing opportunity.

Many different projects have been delivered across NSW to benefits all fishing interests. A quick snapshot reveals great work being done across the fishing spectrum, including the offshore canyons and sea mounts where experienced game fishers chase marlin and tuna and help scientists learn more about fish movements and populations, to the calm, sheltered coastal estuaries, home to many favourite recreational fishing species and top spots for families to gather and pass on skills, through to the cool, clear waters of our alpine lakes and streams that offer remote escapes and the technical challenge sought by fly fishers.

We have continued our partnerships with fishing clubs, community groups, universities, local councils and many other groups. Funding support has been provided to veterans and first responders improving their mental health and to cancer survivors recovering their physical health. We have worked with landholders to upgrade access opportunities for recreational fishing across the State, and with diverse communities to improve fishing safety. Fish science continued to be explored in depth, with more learnt about the habits of a range of freshwater and marine species. And, perhaps most importantly, a love of fish, fishing and the natural environment has been instilled in a new generation of fishers as they take up the challenge to care for and be stewards of the ecosystems we all value.

Your fishing fees are vital in supporting the delivery of this diverse range of projects. In 2023-24, more than \$19.4 million was provided to support projects that improve fishing experiences, opportunities and habitats with 302 projects currently underway. More than 406,000 recreational fishing licenses (fishing fees) were sold.

Recreational fishing is unique in the opportunities it provides to people of all levels of skill and ability – from beginners who have never held a rod, to experienced game fishers and adventurers seeking their next big challenge, fishing can be enjoyed from childhood through your entire life. It provides opportunities for family time, social engagement and peer support, intergenerational interaction and sharing of knowledge.

With all the different ways that recreational fishing allows people to come together, it is no wonder that recognised benefits include improvements in physical and mental health. The interaction with the natural environment also encourages fishers to take up the responsibility for environmental stewardship, which helps ensure the ongoing protection of NSW's natural assets.

Your licence fees continue to work hard for you, and we would love for you to Come Fish With Us and help Build a Better Fishing Future.





Quality recreational fishing
for everyone, forever.



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Highlights

406,135

Recreational fishing
licenses sold in 2023-24

390,146 in 2022-23

\$16.1M

Revenue received from
fishing fees in 2023-24

\$14.7 million in 2022-23

\$19.4M

Drawn from the Trusts to
fund projects in 2023-24

\$18.4 million in 2022-23

302

Projects underway
in 2023-24

351 in 2022-23

5.3M

Fish stocked in 2023-24
6 million in 2022-23

\$850K

Made available for on-ground
rehabilitation activities to
improve fish habitat in 2023-24
\$850,000 in 2022-23

34

Offshore FAD Locations
in 2023-24
34 in 2022-23

9,500

Fish tagged and recorded
in the tagging database
in 2023-24
10,860 in 2022-23

Forster and Central Coast

Offshore artificial reefs deployed in 2023-24
Planning completed for construction of offshore
artificial reefs in 2022-23

293

Fishcare community
events held in 2023-24
370 in 2022-23



A wide range of projects are supported with funds from the Recreational Fishing Trusts (Saltwater and Freshwater) aimed at enhancing, maintaining, and protecting recreational fishing in NSW. The Trust funds also enable important research to be undertaken into fish, aquatic ecosystems and fishing activities as well as supporting fisheries compliance work.

Since being established in 2001 under the Fisheries Management Act 1994, the Trusts have supported thousands of projects across the State. Recreational fishers, unless exempt, are required to pay the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee (fishing licence fee) when fishing in NSW waters, with all money from these fees placed into the Trusts.

By law, all funds collected from these fees must be spent on improving recreational fishing in NSW. The Trusts are legally regulated and overseen by two expenditure committees of recreational fishers, with separate committees for saltwater and freshwater projects.

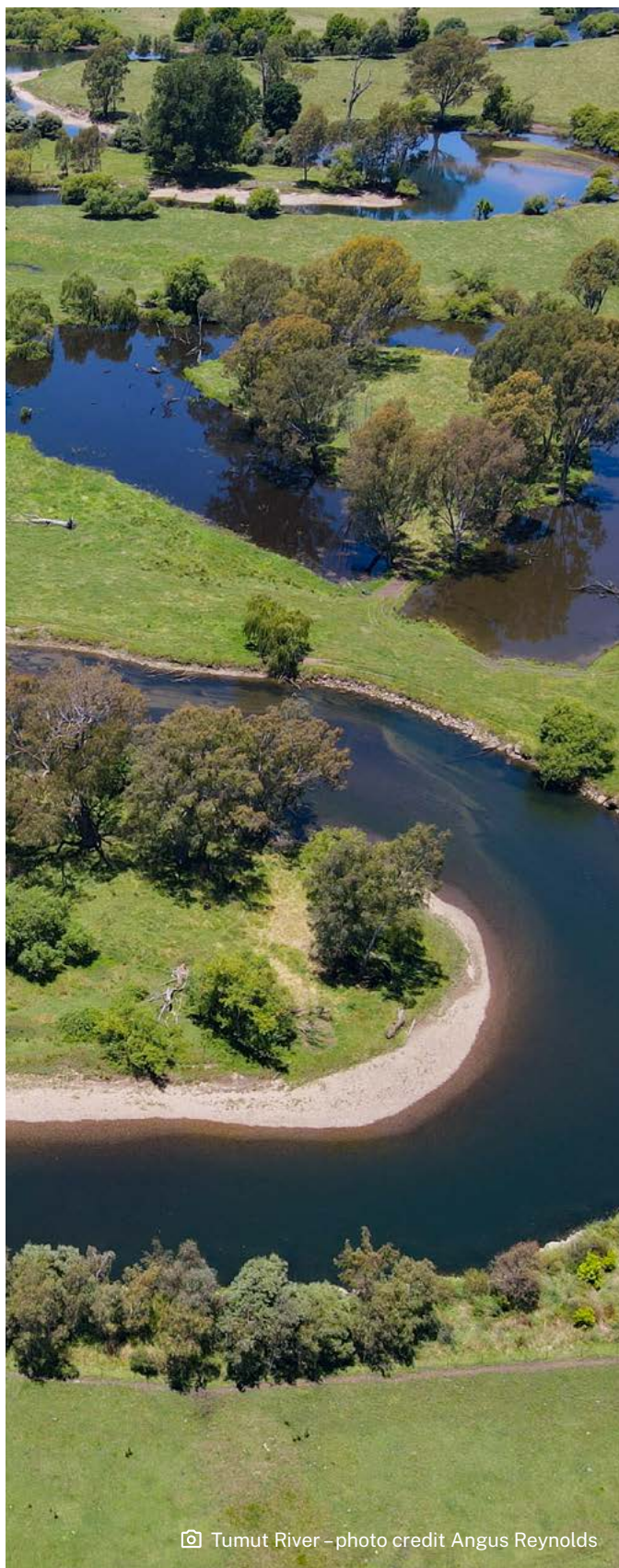


1.1 The recreational fishing sector in NSW

NSW recreational fishers continue to contribute to the 2023-24 statewide survey of recreational fishing, which is currently underway. This is the fifth round of the survey, which has been held bi-annually and provides an ongoing time-series of data on who went fishing, how much fishing was done, where fishing occurred and what was caught. The results of this survey will be released in 2025 and will build on the knowledge gained from previous surveys.

The outcomes of the 2021–22 survey were reported in late 2023¹ and estimated that recreational fishing licence holder households fished for 1.7 million days, which was similar to the total effort estimated for 2019–20. While the majority of fishers were NSW residents, fishers also travelled from ACT, Queensland and Victoria. Saltwater fishing remained the most popular activity, accounting for 70% of all effort, with estuary fishing dominating. Freshwater fishing accounted for the remaining effort, with most fishing occurring in riverine systems.

1. https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1550631/NSW-Recreational-Fisheries-Monitoring-Program-Survey-of-recreational-fishing-in-NSW-202122.pdf



📷 Tumut River – photo credit Angus Reynolds



1.2 Objectives of the Recreational Fishing Trusts

The Trusts were created to deliver a variety of programs that enhance recreational fishing opportunities across NSW. Their goals include:

- Promoting fishing as a healthy, active outdoors pastime
- Enhancing recreational fishing access and ensuring accessibility for all abilities, ages and genders
- Educating fishers on responsible and safe practices
- Undertaking innovative projects that create new recreational fishing opportunities
- Ensuring the growth of recreational fishing occurs in a sustainable manner.

These projects were made possible through partnerships with the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), other government agencies, fishing clubs, community groups, and universities. Additionally, the NSW Government continues to provide annual funding from general State revenue to help manage and improve recreational fishing in the State.

To make sure that Trust project activities are achieving their objectives, periodic surveys are undertaken of recreational fishing licence holders to seek their views on how licence fees are spent. A survey completed during 2022–23 found that licence holders reported high satisfaction rates overall towards the activities and projects funded from the Recreational Fishing Trusts.

Recreational Fishing Trusts financial summary

Funding of \$19.4 million was drawn from the Trusts in 2023-24 to support a wide range of projects that improve recreational fishing (compared with \$18.4 million in 2022-23).

Revenue received in 2023-24 from fishing fees (licenses) totalled \$16.1 million (compared with \$14.7 million in 2022-23). The closing balance for the Trusts at 30 June 2024 was \$15.8 million (compared with \$18.5 million at 30 June 2023). Closing balance also includes additional revenue other than licence sales (such as interest).



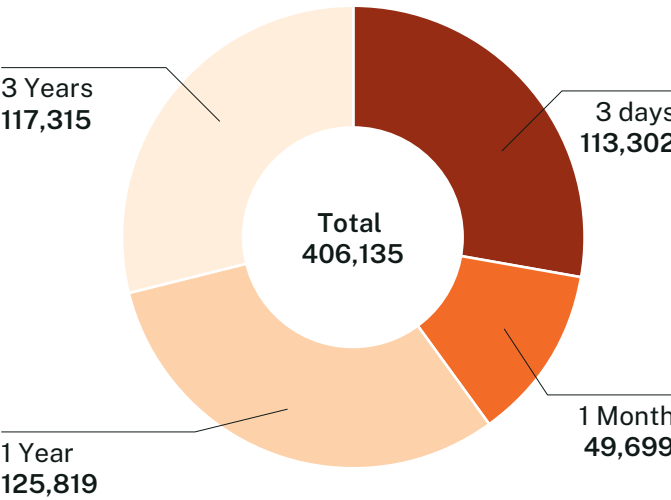
📷 Tumut River – photo credit Angus Reynolds



2.1 Licenses sold

Sales of recreational fishing licenses (including both new and renewals) increased to 406,135 sales overall during 2023-2024, compared to 390,146 sales in 2022-23.

Recreational Fishing Licence Types sold in 2023 -24



2.2 Licence sale channels

Recreational fishers made use of a range of channels which are available for the purchase of licenses. These included agent network (paper licenses), integrated voice recognition automated phone numbers, online, over the counter, physical mail and BPAY. Online sales remain by far the most popular option, accounting for 83% of sales.

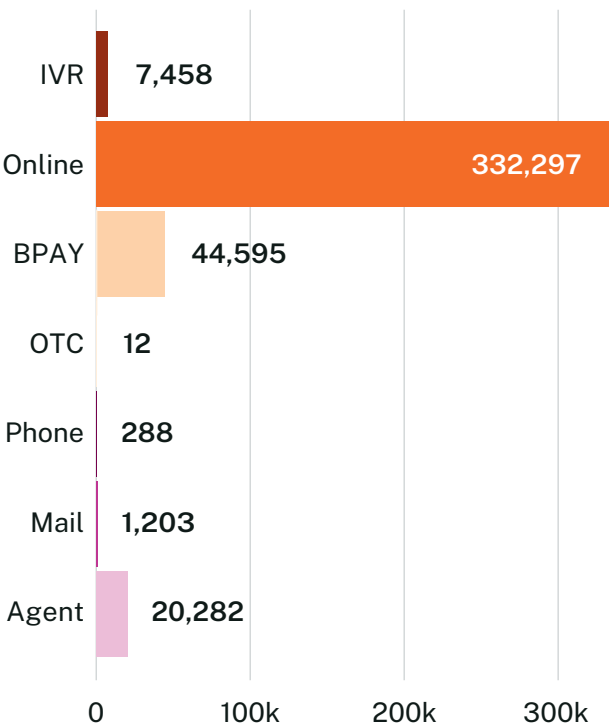
Improved Licence NSW webpage for licence purchase and renewals

The new Licence NSW system included improved upgrades to the online webpage for purchasing new licenses and renewing. The new and improved webpage designs incorporated feedback from recreational fishers.

During 2023-2024 there was also an increase in the uptake of longer duration fishing licenses compared to 2022-23:

- 117,315 three-year fishing licenses were purchased compared to 108,670 three-year licenses in 2022-23
- 125,819 one-year fishing licenses were purchased compared to 115,157 in 2022-23.

Recreational fishing licence sales by channel



2.3 Financial accountability

It is an important expectation of recreational fishers that funds managed by the Recreational Fishing Trusts are accounted for and handled with transparency. Financial statements for the Recreational Fishing Trusts are published in the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development annual report (previously the Department of Regional NSW). Additionally, the Audit Office of New South Wales prepares a 'special purpose' financial report on the Fisheries Trust Funds each year. Periodic audits are also conducted as part of the DPIRD Internal Audit Program to review the management of Recreational Fishing Trusts funds and programs.

In 2023-24, the NSW Government engaged an independent firm to complete a comprehensive standalone audit of the NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts, which fulfilled an election commitment to review the management of the Trusts. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 and was completed in March 2024. The audit made 26 recommendations, all of which have been accepted by the Government, which will increase transparency and accountability of Trust processes even further. This reinforces the Government's commitment to the transparent and accountable management of public funds in our Recreational Fishing Trusts. The outcome of the independent audit and the Department's response have been published and can be viewed in full on the Department's website².

2. https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1570725/Independent-Audit-of-the-Recreation-Fishing-Trusts-2023-2024.pdf





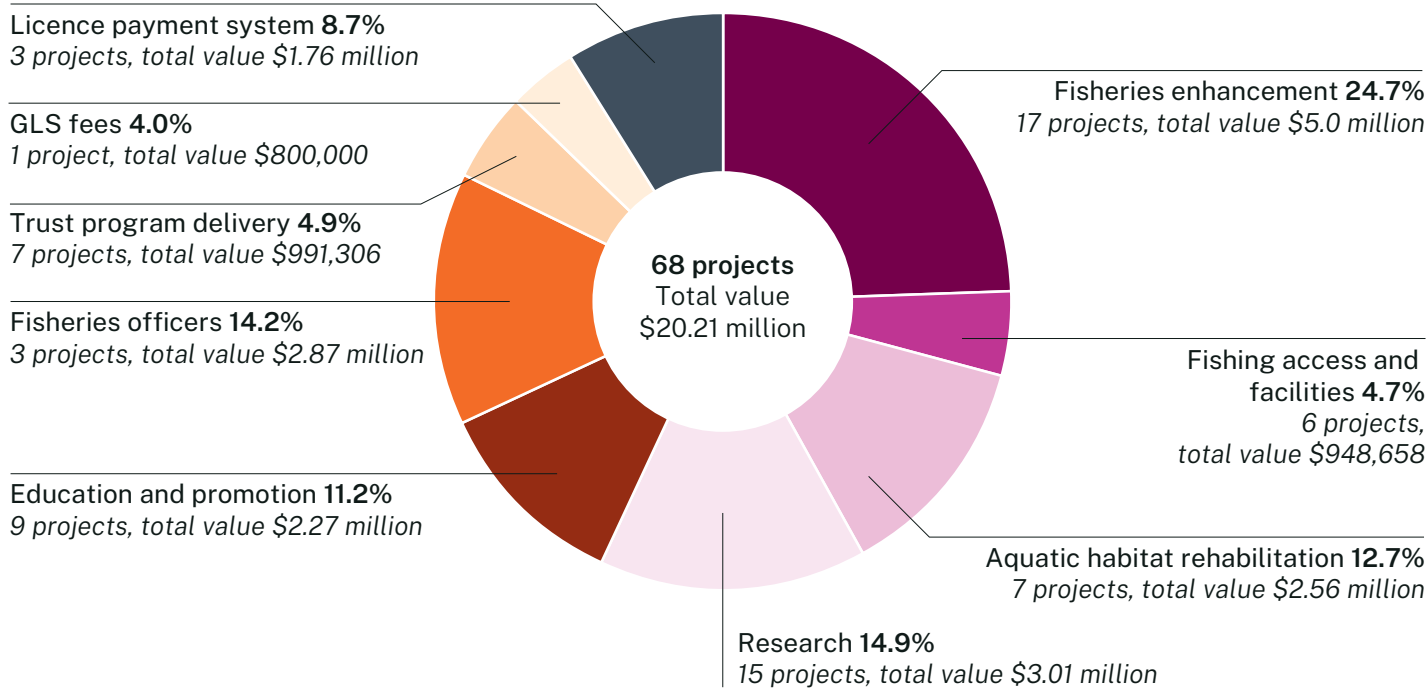
Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Recreational Fishing Trust programs

More than 3,400 large and small projects have received funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts since 2001. More than 3,100 projects have been completed and 302 projects are currently underway.

- During 2023–24, more than \$19.4 million was provided to support projects currently underway (including ongoing programs). Priority areas for funding are:
- Fisheries enhancement (e.g. fish aggregating devices (FADs), artificial reefs and fish stocking)
 - fishing access and facilities (e.g. fishing platforms, cleaning tables, safety infrastructure and other facilities, and protecting fishing access)
 - aquatic habitat rehabilitation (e.g. habitat action grants to improve fish habitat)
 - research on recreational fishing (e.g. fishing surveys, stock assessment, and angler catch projects)
 - education (e.g. fishing workshops, Fishcare volunteers, school education, fishing advice, and increasing participation in recreational fishing)
 - enforcement of fishing rules (Fisheries officers)
 - Trust management and administration, including program delivery and the digital and over the counter licence payment system.

Projects approved for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts



Highlights and achievements delivered under each of these priority areas are outlined on the following pages.

3.1 Fisheries enhancement

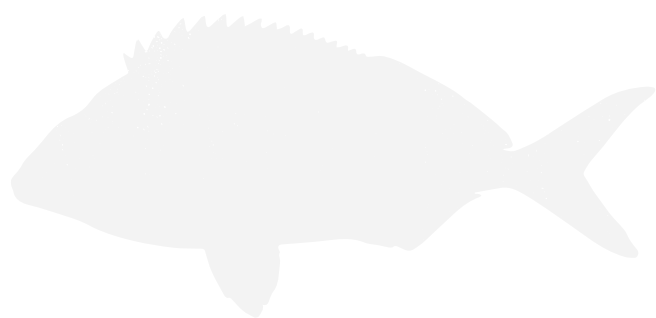
A variety of programs undertaken each year in both coastal and inland regions seek to boost fish populations and improve recreational fishing opportunities. Stocking activities include native marine and freshwater species as well as salmonids. Fish aggregating devices (FADs) and artificial reefs have also been installed to support fish habitats.

3.1.1 Fish aggregating devices

Fish aggregating devices or FADs are large buoys moored to the seabed at strategic locations along the NSW coastline. The FADs are made available to recreational fishers throughout the warmer months of the year and provide reliable fishing for warm water pelagic species, such as Dolphinfish (Mahi Mahi), which arrive when the East Australian Current strengthens from spring through to the autumn months.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- FADs deployed and maintained at 34 offshore locations between Tweed Heads and Eden
- modifications to design led to minimal adrift FADs throughout fishing season
- real time satellite tracking of all FADs ensured fishers could jump online to remain up-to-date with the status of their closest FAD on the FishSmart app and DPIRD website before a day on the water.

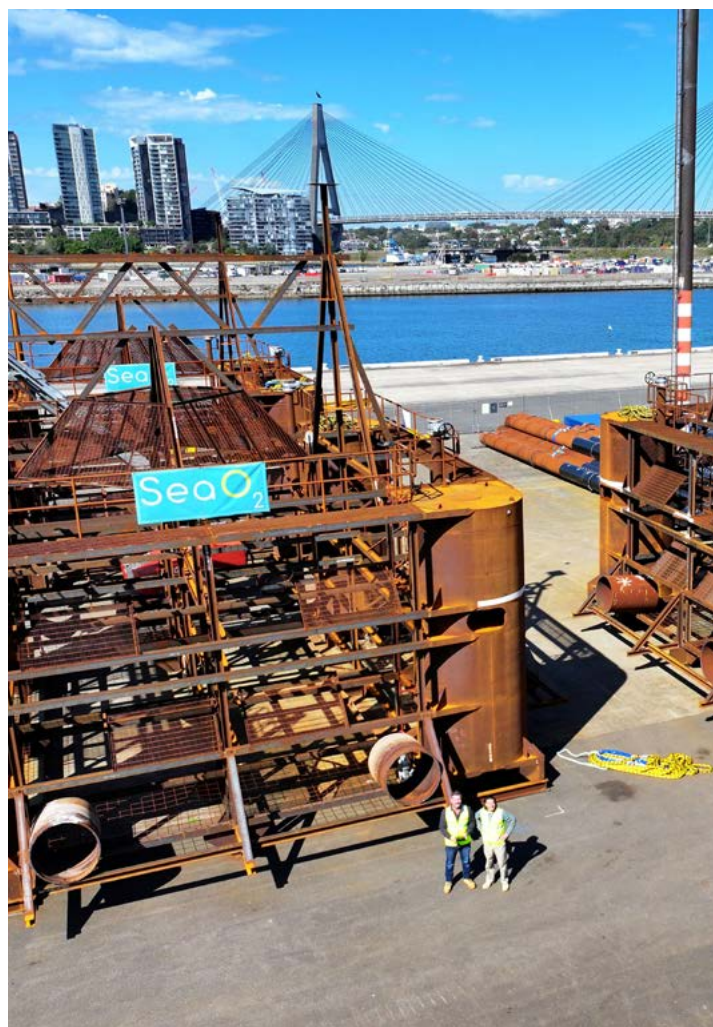


3.1.2 Offshore artificial reefs

The artificial reefs program provides new, quality recreational fishing opportunities through the installation of complex, designed reef modules in carefully selected coastal locations. Eleven large-scale artificial reefs have now been deployed between Tweed Heads and Merimbula since 2011 with more to come in 2025.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- Deployment of the four largest artificial reef structures in the reef program's history off the Central Coast and Forster in September/October 2023
- planning underway for the deployment of artificial reefs off the Ballina and Coffs coasts with deployment scheduled for mid 2025.



Largest NSW artificial reef structures deployed for fishers off the Central Coast and Forster

The Central Coast and Forster artificial reefs were completed by Sydney-based company SeaO2 in September and October 2024. Leading scientists provided input into the design to ensure the reefs will provide high quality marine habitat while input from a specialised team of engineers and naval architects will ensure the structures will remain stable and able to withstand 1-in-100 year storm event conditions.

Each location now has two structures, each weighing approximately 50 tonnes with footprints of 16 x 16 metres and standing 12 metres high. The reef structures will maximise biological outcomes and support an entire ecosystem; from biofouling to benthic community to pelagic species. Importantly, they will provide decades of quality fishing opportunities for recreational fishers to enjoy.



3.1.3 Fish stocking

Fish stocking involves producing fish fry or fingerlings and releasing them into NSW waters at approved sites to create new fisheries or augment existing ones. Fish stocking is carried out under permits that ensure appropriate environmental controls and protection of our unique biodiversity.

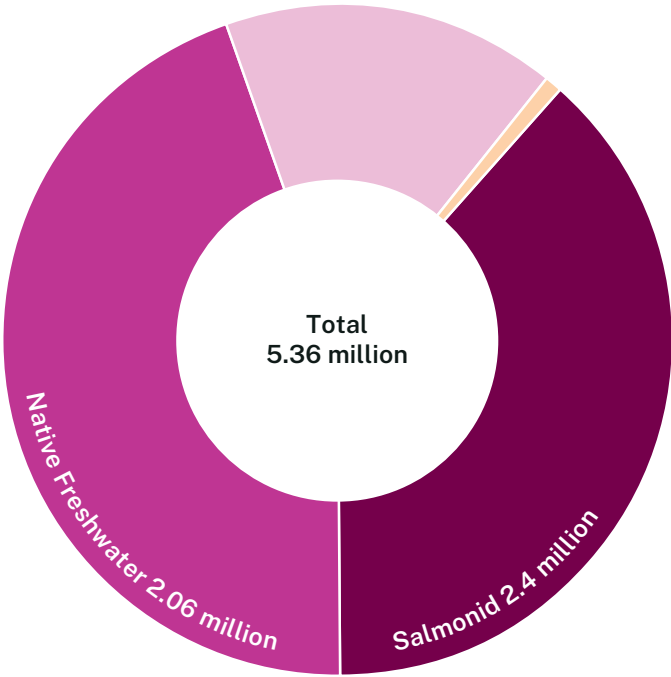
The NSW Government has DPIRD fish hatcheries at Narrandera, Ebor, Jindabyne and Port Stephens. Each year these produce millions of fish that are stocked across the State for the benefit of the recreational fishing community. Stocking events are also carried out by angling clubs and community groups under the popular *\$2 for \$1 Native Fish Stocking Program*.

A Marine Stocking Program also focuses on releasing fish into Recreational Fishing Havens along the NSW coast.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- More than 5.3 million fish produced and stocked across all programs
- over 800,000 Australian Bass, 1.4 million Golden Perch and 2.5 million salmonids produced and stocked
- the successful release of 21,400 juvenile Dusky Flathead into two key Recreational Fishing Havens on the NSW South Coast for the fourth year running
- DPIRD’s Port Stephens Fisheries Institute produced Mulloway fingerlings that were released in Recreational Fishing Havens along the coast with 7,000 released into Lake Macquarie, 2,000 into the Georges River and over 450 advanced sized tagged Mulloway into the Hastings River.

Number of Fish Stocked



Freshwater fish 5.3 million

- Native Freshwater 2.06 million
- Salmonid 2.4 million
- Native (\$2 for \$1/Community) 868,385

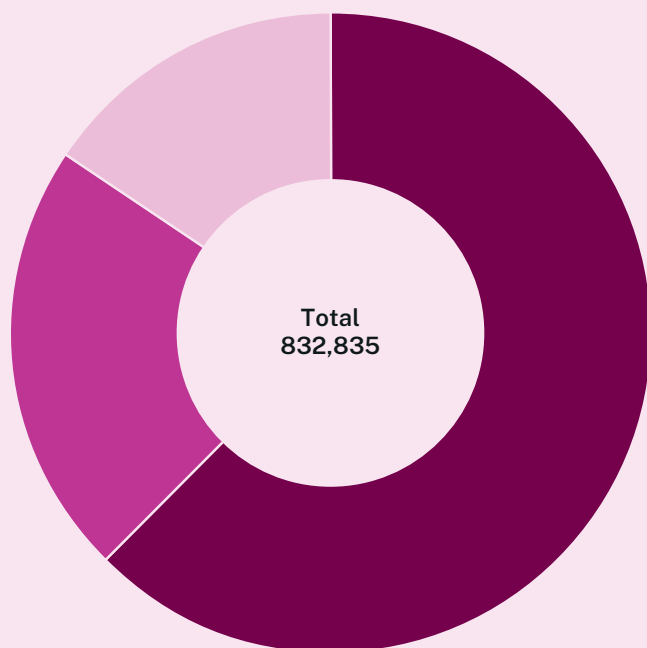
Marine fish 31,694

- Marine 31,694

\$2 for \$1 Native Fish Stocking

This long-term Trust project continued in its 25th year. In 2023-24, angling clubs and community organisations partnered with commercial hatcheries to stock over 830,000 native fish across NSW - the highest number of fish stocked by this program in seven years.

- a highlight was 520,000 Golden Perch stocked in 2023-24, almost three times what was achieved in the previous period
- since inception this program has stocked over 11 million Golden Perch, almost 5 million Murray Cod and 2.6 million Australian Bass across the State.



Total fish 832,835

- Golden Perch 521,821
- Murray Cod 183,767
- Australian Bass 127,247



3.1.4 Upgrades to Narrandera Native Fish and Gaden Trout Hatcheries completed

Significant upgrades to hatchery production facilities at DPIRD's Narrandera Native Fish Hatchery and the Gaden Trout Hatchery have been completed. These upgrades were funded by the NSW Government with funding support from the Recreational Fishing Trust.

The new hatchery facilities will help future proof the NSW Government's fish production and stocking work.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- New native fish hatchery at the Narrandera Fisheries Centre completed and operational
- upgraded hatchery and tourist centre facilities at the Gaden Trout Hatchery completed and operational.



New Narrandera Native Fish Hatchery facilities future-proofs NSW fish stocking work

The native fish hatchery at Narrandera will enable our skilled and dedicated hatchery staff to more effectively breed and stock key native sportfish including Murray Cod and Golden Perch as well as produce threatened species including Trout Cod for conservation stocking.

📷 Tourists enjoying the new Narrandera Hatchery

📷 Tanks inside the new Narrandera Hatchery



State of the art recirculating aquaculture systems at expanded Gaden Trout Hatchery

The new and expanded hatchery at Gaden features state-of-the-art recirculating aquaculture systems to enable salmonids (Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Brook Trout, Tiger Trout and Atlantic Salmon) to be produced and stocked more efficiently via temperature control technology. The new hatchery will allow hatchery staff to hold broodstock during hot, dry conditions so that fisheries can be recovered more quickly.

The new hatchery at Gaden also features dedicated facilities to breed small bodied native fish, including threatened species, if and as required. Major upgrades to the tourist facilities at the site will maximise opportunities for visitors to learn about trout production and the important role the fishery plays in the Snowy Monaro region.

The Recreational Fishing Trust has also supported installation of a recirculating aquaculture system at the Dutton Trout Hatchery near Ebor as well as specialist fish transport tankers for both the Dutton and Gaden hatcheries.

This work is ongoing and is expected to be completed over the coming year.

📍 Entrance to the refurbished visitor centre at Gaden Trout Hatchery



3.1.5 Restoring Catfish – A partnership-based traditional approach to restocking and restoring native fish

This project aimed to bring local communities together to work with agencies to bring back Eel-tailed Catfish to the Edward River and broader local Deniliquin region. Catfish have now been stocked into the Edward River and adjoining creeks for the past two years as part of a local 10-year plan for species recovery.

Team effort to restock Edward River with prized Catfish

In 2023-24 the project stocked Catfish into the Edward River and other smaller creeks for the second year running with support from the Recreational Fishing Trust and funds raised through the Edward Kolety Fishing Challenge.

This involved bringing together local community groups including fishers, environmentalists, school children and traditional owners. Over 100 participants helped with the stocking, releasing fish whilst learning about the local rivers, and the fish species that call them home, as well as the importance of restoring once prized recreational species such as Catfish.

📍 Catfish Release Deniliquin April 2024



3.2 Fishing facilities and access

Funds from the Trust are used to protect and improve recreational fishing access by upgrading or building new facilities for anglers including fish cleaning stations or improved safety infrastructure, and access points such as fishing platforms and jetties.

3.2.1 Fishing facilities

New or upgraded fishing facilities are installed by local councils, fishing clubs, community groups and others to provide quality public amenities using funds from the Recreational Fishing Trust.

Achievements in 2023–24 included:

- A total of 25 fishing facilities completed using Trust funding, including accessible fishing platforms, fish cleaning facilities and a kayak launching facility.



All-abilities fishing platform at Lake Macquarie

Lake Macquarie City Council completed works on the Bolton Point fishing platform on the north-western shoreline of Lake Macquarie.

The platform has been specifically designed with all fishers in mind so that people of all mobilities can safely access and enjoy the quality fishing on offer at this stunning location.

Lake Macquarie is a well-located fishing destination and Recreational Fishing Haven, less than a two hour drive north of Sydney and a short drive south of Newcastle.

As part of these upgrades, Lake Macquarie City Council has also provided supporting infrastructure, with dedicated accessible parking, a formed connecting footpath and seating.

Improved fish cleaning facilities for the Bega Valley

The Far South Coast is renowned as a recreational fishing hot spot with a range of estuarine, beach, rock and offshore options on offer for recreational fishers.

Bega Valley Shire Council recognises the importance of fishing to the region and upgraded fish cleaning tables at regularly used locations at Bermagui Harbour, Bermagui River, Pambula River and Quarantine Bay.

The upgrades at all four locations complement recent major boating infrastructure upgrades delivered by Council through the NSW Government Boating Now Program.

📷 Quarantine Bay Cleaning Table



New fish cleaning facilities across Lake Conjola

Fishers visiting the popular Recreational Fishing Haven of Lake Conjola now have new fish cleaning facilities to clean their catch.

Shoalhaven City Council installed a spread of new facilities across the lake in the towns of Lake Conjola, Conjola Park and Fishermans Paradise in 2023-24.

📷 Fishermans Paradise Cleaning Table.



New fishing platforms for Shoalhaven fishers

In 2023-24, Shoalhaven City Council completed fisher friendly accessible platforms at Greenwell Point, Terara and Nowra.

📷 Terara Fishing platform





3.2.2 Keeping trout anglers on the right track

The Monaro Acclimatisation Society (MAS) worked closely with Snowy Hydro Ltd to identify various high-usage tracks in need of repair that lead to key fishing locations in the Snowy Mountains. Several key access tracks to popular fishing locations at Lake Eucumbene and the Thredbo River had deteriorated and become impassable due to recent years of high rainfall and high visitation rates. The tracks have now been repaired benefitting the thousands of fishers who visit the Snowy Mountains region each year.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- Snowy Hydro Ltd provided matching funding to the MAS Trust grant to increase the number of access track upgrades
- deteriorated sections of tracks were excavated, laid with geotextile fabric, topped with various size rock and compacted ensuring safe access for fishers
- access tracks to Lake Eucumbene at Frying Pan, Rushy Bay, Middlingbank, Wianui, Braemar Bay and Seven Gates and the Thredbo River at Paddys Corner have been rehabilitated to allow fishers to travel safely without damaging their vehicles or becoming bogged
- the completed works have reduced environmental impact from fishers trying to create new tracks while ensuring access continues to these famous trout fisheries.

Access win at two inland reserves

The Angler Access Program collaborated with two inland councils to assist in reinstating riverine access to separate reserves on the Tumut and Lachlan rivers.

This has seen recreational fishers enjoy additional access for shore-based fishing on the Tumut River and opportunities to launch small passive watercraft such as kayaks and rafts.

Meanwhile, fishers in Forbes can now use a much-needed boat launch location close to town on the Lachlan River.

📍 Tumut River, GoCup Reserve

📍 Lachlan River, Forbes Reserve



3.2.3 Enhancing angler access

The Angler Access Program works for fishers to identify and promote new recreational fishing locations and opportunities across inland and coastal NSW and ensure existing access is maintained into the future. DPIRD Access Officers work closely with partner agencies and stakeholders.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- Undertaking assessments of proposals and plans involving Crown land, Crown roads, National Parks and council managed estate adjacent to waterways to help ensure recreational fishing access is enhanced
- managing the Eco Hut Program in association with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. 2023 was the second largest booking since the program started in 2017
- production and distribution of the popular Go Fishing Guide handbook series, which currently covers 21 coastal and inland locations, with more editions planned
- facilitating collaborative access agreements at key fishing locations with agencies and stakeholders to enhance fishing access
- promoting the easy-to-use Angler Access website to recreational fishers. The site provides information on thousands of fishing locations across NSW where rivers, streams and lakes can be accessed for fishing
- promoting responsible spearfishing practices in popular, multi-use coastal waterways
- working with partner agencies and stakeholders to promote responsible access to shared urban facilities such as Sydney Harbour's ferry wharves and the Walsh Bay piers.



Promoting responsible fishing on Sydney Harbour's ferry wharves

Sydney Harbour's network of ferry wharves, together with the historic piers at Walsh Bay, are highly popular and productive land-based fishing locations which have been enjoyed by generations of keen fishers.

DPIRD Fisheries works with partner agencies such as Transport for NSW, local Precinct Managers, NSW Police, Transdev and other stakeholders to manage responsible usage of these shared public facilities to ensure access is maintained into the future.

The multi-agency Clean, Safe Wharves Initiative continued in 2023-24 and focuses specifically on the vast network of ferry wharves. These wharves primarily provide for safe commuter access to ferries, but fishers also enjoy being able to fish from these wharves. The initiative includes on-water patrols of ferry wharves by NSW Police Force Marine Area Command to help ensure responsible fishing practices on these busy wharves.

Regular cleaning services and a semi-permanent portable toilet at Walsh Bay's popular Pier 2/3 have also provided necessary amenities for fishers. The Fishcare team was also out and about on the wharves, regularly encouraging fishers to "do the right thing".

3.3 Aquatic habitat rehabilitation

Aquatic habitat rehabilitation initiatives focus on increasing fish populations naturally by improving environmental conditions. This is achieved through a range of small-and large-scale habitat-centered programs. Some programs repair existing environmental damage; others reinstate snags and riparian vegetation to improving water flow, and fish passage initiatives focus on removing barriers to fish movement and providing fish with longer, more connected waterway access. Taken together, these make a significant difference to the protection of fish habitats.

3.3.1 Habitat Action Grants

The Habitat Action Grants program provides funding to a range of stakeholders to undertake on-ground fish habitat rehabilitation initiatives that, in turn, support fish populations and improve recreational fishing opportunities across NSW.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- \$850,000 made available to fishing clubs, community groups, individuals, local councils and natural resource management groups in freshwater and saltwater environments to conduct practical on-ground rehabilitation activities to improve fish habitat
- a range of on-ground activities were undertaken including managing stock access to waterways, revegetating areas with native plants, erosion control, reintroduction of woody habitat into rivers and estuaries, weed control, wetland rehabilitation and the reinstatement of fish passage.

Orara Valley Rivercare Groups repairing erosion on the Upper Orara River

The Orara Valley Rivercare Groups Management Committee (ORGMC) has installed in-stream erosion control structures to repair damage and support habitat for Australian Bass and Eastern Freshwater Cod.

Fallen trees were realigned and secured with hardwood pins. Additionally, the construction of log jams created in-stream habitat and will protect the bank from the impact of future high flow events.

Over 400 native plants including Lomandra and rainforest species of local provenance were also planted at this site with a view towards protecting the longer-term future of the valley. Improved native vegetation creates shading and leads to more food sources for fish species.

The ORGMC has committed to ongoing monitoring and maintenance of this site for an additional three years.

📷 Pin driving



Walaaybaa Rangers and Tamworth School Groups support riparian rehabilitation along the Peel River at 'Trewlawney'

The Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council (TLALC) has continued its commitment to rehabilitate the Peel River at 'Trewlawney'.

The initial on-ground activities were supported by the 'Walaaybaa Rangers', community volunteers and school groups from the Tamworth area.

The Peel River is home to the iconic Murray Cod which is among numerous local species set to benefit from this project.

Riparian rehabilitation activities included weed control and riparian revegetation along the Peel River near Somerton, to increase biodiversity and protect and enhance valuable fish habitat.

More than a thousand trees and grass species were planted, in addition to one thousand handcrafted clay seed balls that were cast across the site and will continue to germinate over time.

Long-term monitoring and maintenance of this project will ensure improved recreational fishing in the local area, with the Somerton Fishing Club being strong supporters of the efforts being undertaken.



3.3.2 Fish salvage in Murray irrigation channels during winter shutdown

The Edward-Wakool Angling Association teamed up with the Western Murray Land Improvement Group, Traditional Owners, subject matter experts, volunteers and DPIRD to rescue and relocate stranded native fish from irrigation channels during annual winter maintenance works to suitable refuge areas. The project aimed to promote animal welfare, translocate fish to local waterways that enhance recreational fishing and reduce public distress caused by fish dying in the drained pools.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- A planning team consisting of a range of key stakeholders was developed and selected sites were chosen for fish salvage efforts in the western area of Murray Irrigation Limited's irrigational channels where 16 sites were pumped out during their winter maintenance works program
- a team consisting of six Traditional Owners captured 134 stranded native fish with landing nets consisting of 79 Murray Cod, eight Golden Perch, four Silver Perch, two Trout Cod and 39 River Blackfish and transferred them to a transportation tank for relocation to the Wakool River at two locations
- the project fostered new relationships, networks and trust building between different stakeholders including recreational fishers, community groups, Traditional Owners, government agencies and the irrigation industry and developed solutions for future fish salvage operations.





3.3.4 Flagship Fish Habitat Rehabilitation Grants

The Flagship Fish Habitat Rehabilitation Grant program began in 2017 and builds on the success of the Habitat Action Grant program to address habitat-related issues. The Flagship Rehabilitation Grants seek to tackle much larger scale coastal projects that require more funding assistance.

3.3.3 Tuckean Swamp rehabilitation

The Tuckean Swamp is one of the most complex coastal wetlands and drainage systems in NSW and potentially the most productive coastal wetland on the Richmond River. This makes it critically important to local fish stocks in the estuary, nearshore reefs and ocean.

In 2022, major flooding saw another documented fish kill event recorded in the Richmond River with the Tuckean Swamp the key driver of poor water quality. OzFish Unlimited has been working to develop ways forward to improve the water quality and natural values of the Tuckean Nature Reserve with funding support from the Recreational Fishing Trust.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- A values study identified the option to hinge open the Bagotville Barrage and install structures upstream of the Tuckean Nature Reserve on all major drains as the most cost-effective solution to bring the greatest positive change for water quality and environmental values while limiting impact to surrounding land values
- a report detailing the design and costing of the preferred option including safety and operational changes to the Bagotville Barrage, extending and improving the Stibbards Creek Levee to protect adjacent agricultural land use and new floodgates in multiple locations was completed.



Clybucca Freshwater Wetland Remediation

The Clybucca Freshwater Wetland project is a long-term project undertaking to return the wetland to a more natural (wet) state, something like it may have been before the 1970s drainage works.

North Coast Local Land Services worked with numerous State Government agencies to implement onground works, informed by 2.5 years of water-quality monitoring, hydrological modelling, and community consultation. Last year, the wetland was reconnected to catchment in-flows from the Seven Oakes drain, and structures were installed to keep the wetland wetter for longer.

Large-scale remediation works focused on 18 ha of the 70 ha coastal wetland that were severely impacted by acid scald. A healthier, 'wetter' wetland has improved natural filtering functions, thereby reducing acid sulphate and blackwater generation and export into the Macleay River estuary.

Water entering the floodplain from the upstream catchment is now harvested by water control structures, modified existing levees and drains. This re-creates a natural cycle of wetting and drying by increasing the extent and time that water is kept in the wetland.

The works are being monitored using hydrological and biological indicators including a community-led bird monitoring program.

In collaboration with the Marine Estate Management Strategy Water Quality initiative and UNSW Water Research Lab, the LLS project team are closely monitoring the outcomes of their work including a water quality monitoring program that is supplemented by two live stream cameras along the lower Macleay River. This helps to monitor land management, record flood events, observe wildlife (including feral animals and unauthorised grazing), and track vegetation changes over time.



📷 Newly installed weir in Clybucca across the East Drain



📷 Weir being installed in Clybucca at the Southern Scald

3.3.5 Landcare NSW & OzFish community partnership drives fish habitat restoration

OzFish has successfully delivered 20 fish habitat restoration projects across inland and coastal regions of NSW in 2023-24 in partnership with Landcare NSW and Landcare groups across the State. The health and resilience of wetlands, mangroves, saltmarshes, seagrasses, and refugial waterholes have been improved through recreational fisher and Traditional Owner led monitoring, protection, and restoration. By removing pest species, rehabilitating riparian zones and providing additional instream habitat, these projects have fostered community involvement in fish habitat restoration and improved recreational fishing across NSW.

Collaboration has been the key to the success of these projects. OzFish has brought together recreational fishers with landcarers, government organisations, Traditional Owners and the wider community to support important recreationally targeted species of fish and assist fish populations that are declining due to poor water quality and degraded ecosystems.



Fish hotels in Moree become canvas for Dreamtime stories

OzFish, in partnership with Landcare NSW and Miyay Birray Youth Group, led educational sessions for young Indigenous students focusing on the significance of waterway restoration and how installing fish hotels creates vital intricate habitats for fish and macroinvertebrates.

Indigenous youth had an opportunity to share their cultural traditions by illustrating Dreamtime stories on logs that will soon be transformed into fish hotels. They used a range of techniques, including burning and engraving, to draw abstract patterns onto the logs. These designs are symbolic, often representing elements of the natural world, intertwined with spiritual concepts and cultural knowledge.

OzFish believes that this is a wonderful technique of merging art and cultural traditions with habitat restoration. It allows the community to be engaged with and educated about habitat restoration, while providing opportunities for Indigenous youth to express their stories on the fish hotels, which will provide additional in stream habitat for native fish.

📷 Photo credit Amber L Hall





3.4 Education and promotion

Funding is provided from the Trusts for recreational fishing education, supporting a range of programs that promote recreational fishing as an active, healthy pastime. Education also fosters best-practice responsible fishing and encourages recreational fishers to be proactive caring stewards of aquatic resources.

Education programs engage the next generation of recreational fishers via school based programs, as well as introducing new entrants to recreational fishing via engaging hands-on programs. Fishing skills are taught alongside sustainable and responsible fishing practices, thereby increasing voluntary compliance associated with NSW fisheries rules and regulations.

Education programs funded by the Trusts include Fishcare, Get Hooked... It's Fun to Fish, Fishing Workshops and Gone Fishing NSW Day, among others.

3.4.1 'Come Fish With Us'

The aim of the DPIRD Fisheries Come Fish With Us program is to mentor fishing custodians of tomorrow, and instil new recreational fishers with passion and drive, to encourage continued participation in the sport.

Juniors and adults throughout NSW join the workshops and are introduced to fishing in a responsible and sustainable manner. All events are free to participants and include activities such as fishing workshops, try fishing sessions, ladies fishing days and dedicated community fishing for partner groups.

The program provides fun, enjoyable educational experiences that aim to teach skills to continue in the sport for life.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- 140 'Come fish with us' events assisted by Fishcare volunteers
- 11,200 participants cast a line with DPIRD Fisheries
- 10 Women fishing events run across NSW in the autumn 2023-24
- 'Ladies Fishing Fridays' on the Coffs Coast for a keen group which was formed from the women's fishing events run on the North Coast
- collaboration and partnerships with NDIS and disability support groups such as Interchange Australia (supporting living independently), Anglicare NSW (helping to alleviate poverty), IRT NSW (previously Illawarra Retirement Trust is now a statewide aged care group), Refugees Australia (connecting communities) and FORTEM Group (supporting first responders)
- Try Fishing Sessions held at large events such as Tocal, Mudgee Small Farm Field Days and the Harvest Festival saw around 800 participants wet a line over six days
- 'Fishing Fun & Worming day' held for local anglers seeking to learn advanced skills.



Women catch some fun

On International Women's Day Friday 8 March, DPIRD Fisheries launched a series of FREE fishing sessions, to celebrate the day and encourage increased participation among female fishers in NSW.

A series of 10 workshops were hosted by the DPIRD Fishcare team and supported by dedicated Fishcare volunteers. Ladies came together to learn and meet other like-minded people, make new friends and have fun. Women were encouraged to bring children along, and the successful workshops attracted many family groups of mums with daughters and sons, with one workshop even having ladies from three generations of one family join! On the north coast a Ladies Fishing Friday session was formed, following the success of the introductory workshops.

'Try Fishing' session at Mudgee Small Farm Field Days

The fish were biting, and the fun was infectious at the Fishcare Try Fishing Sessions held at Mudgee Small Farm Field Days.

Fish stocked by the DPIRD Fisheries hatchery team were on the bite over the two days and made for some fantastic fishing for many new and some experienced anglers.

There were also plenty of smiles for the large Rainbow Trout caught and released on the day with the assistance from staff and our dedicated Fishcare volunteers.



3.4.2 Fishcare

The Fishcare mantra is to encourage the community to become the fishing stewards of tomorrow. Dedicated volunteers are located across NSW and champion this responsible fishing message and are ambassadors for a sustainable secure fishing future. Six Education Officers are supported by 126 dedicated, motivated and passionate Fishcare volunteers. Fishcare also plays a key role in running the popular *Come Fish with Us* and *Get Hooked... it's fun to fish* programs.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- ran 293 events across NSW
- volunteers dedicated 11,000 hours (1,500 days) to Fishcare
- 500+ old-style witches' hat nets were collected and exchanged as part of the responsible crab trap swap program
- 26 days spent undertaking face to face education on Sydney Harbour ferry wharves
- spotlight events included AgQuip, Mudgee Small Farm Field Days, Tocal Field Days, Harvest Festival, Sydney International Boat show, Narrabri Carp Muster, Central West Camping Show, Gone Fishing Day and International Women's Day



Shelving the need for frozen bait

A Fishcare Worming Workshop held on the Central Coast aimed to teach the art of bait collection, whilst having some fun. The workshop was targeted to anglers seeking to advance their fishing skills and knowledge.

Participants learned to interpret beach conditions, identify worms and master the art of catching them. In no time, and with just a little coaching, they became adept at the technique -gaining an invaluable lifelong bait collection fishing skill.

No need for frozen bait when you can catch yourself some worms -along with some new like-minded friends!



Crab gear exchange days gain support

The Fishcare pop-up exchange program exchanged approximately 500 crab nets and traps along the NSW coastline, from Nowra in the south to Ballina in the north.

The program, which was well-received, aims to encourage local fishers to move away from traditional witches' hat nets, which can have negative impacts on non-target species including turtles, by providing more environmentally friendly crab fishing alternatives –lift nets and round crab traps.

3.4.3 Gone Fishing Day

NSW Gone Fishing Day is an all-encompassing celebration of fishing. The annual occasion encourages universal participation and welcomes individuals of all backgrounds and skill levels. Everyone is invited regardless of fishing experience—from seasoned ‘old hands’ to those picking up a rod for the very first time.

To support this Gone Fishing Day on 8 October 2023, funding grants and fishing packages were offered to fishing clubs for event organisation. The DPIRD Fishcare Program also coordinated a series of NSW-wide events.



Anglers out and about for Gone Fishing Day

NSW DPIRD's Gone Fishing Day events brought people together in a celebration of fishing and community, with six free events held across the state, including at Cowra, Narrabri, and Port Macquarie. Participants were offered casting lessons/practice, and a chance to wet a line.

The program also supported 74 local fishing clubs and organisations with fishing packages, as well as 27 grants to support their events on the day.



3.4.4 ‘Get Hooked... It’s Fun to Fish’

The Get Hooked... It’s Fun to Fish Schools program is committed to educating students about the recreational benefits of fishing while emphasising the significance of maintaining aquatic ecosystems through responsible and safe practices.

The initiative is popular with schools and provides comprehensive in-class instruction and practical outdoor fishing workshops, carefully designed to align with the Australian Curriculum and achieve educational objectives across all key learning areas.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- 100 schools registered across NSW
- Over 1,700 students participated in fishing workshops and class lessons
- 34 fishing workshops (939 students)
- 27 in-class lessons (over 800 students)

Fish diversity makes lessons fun

In the Far North Coast of the State, outdoor fishing lessons for Repton and Crossmaglen Public School involved 70 students in a day of learning through fishing adventures.

A vast array of fish were caught and released on the day -with the help of staff and teachers. Children successfully managed to land Bream, Tarwhine, Flathead, Flounder, Trevally, Moses Perch, and even a much talked about Catfish, which most students hadn’t seen before.



Reeling in some creativity

At St. Edward's College, students mixed art and industrial technologies to hand craft their very own fishing rods. In an era where screens often steal the spotlight, these marine biology enthusiasts decided to dive into the world of DIY.

The challenge was two-fold: first to build their rods, and then, to score full marks, to successfully catch and reel in a fish. Students were keen to hit the water and cast their lines, and saw some impressive catches like Bream, Flathead, Tailor, and Long Tom on the day.





Expect the unexpected with every catch

Ettalong Public School students experienced an unforgettable day of discovery and learned that a day of fishing can hold unexpected surprises. Alongside common shoreline species like Tarwhine, Whiting, Snapper and Bream, students also landed some remarkable finds—including an Octopus, Blue Swimmer Crab and a Long Tom, all of which were safely released. Teachers also got hooked, providing feedback which demonstrated a warm appreciation of the program for their classes:

‘What a fantastic day to spend with the students!’

‘Such a well-run program that encourages students to get outside and learn about their local marine environment’

‘Very informative, well structured lessons that encourage a hands-on attitude’

3.4.5 Fish For Life, Building a Healthy Fishing Future

Fish For Life—Building a Healthy Fishing Future is a recreational fishing brand that aims to increase participation in recreational fishing, enhance social licence, and promote greater stewardship and responsibility among fishers.

Through partnerships with stakeholders and grassroots fishers, DPIRD is rolling out both on-ground and online initiatives that actively engage and benefit the recreational fishing community.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- successful social media campaign raising awareness of the impacts of fishing litter, resulting in 2.7 million impressions and a reach of 1.4 million on DPIRD channels
- conducted 10 free fishing workshops for women, with over 170 participants across various locations in NSW, aimed at encouraging and supporting female fishers through skill-building opportunities
- developed a strategy and range of high-quality creative materials to educate and welcome women into fishing, while encouraging participation of existing female grassroots fishers



Keep your fishing spot clean – in partnership with OzFish

In partnership with OzFish, Keep It Clean (an initiative under Fish for Life) involved the promotion and delivery of 18 litter clean-up events along the NSW coast over 12 months. Using OzFish and Fishcare volunteers, these events focused on popular fishing locations and involved the local recreational fishing community. With over 200 participants, these clean up events resulted in the collection and recording of 8.72 tonnes of litter.

3.5 Research

Funding is provided from the Trusts for fish and recreational fishing research projects. Citizen scientists are engaged in many of these projects and provide valuable observations and data collection. These research projects provide crucial scientific information to understand current fish stocks and help ensure the sustainable use of our fisheries resources.

3.5.1 Research Angler Program

The Research Angler Program (RAP) enables anglers, as citizen scientists, to contribute to the scientific knowledge and stock assessment of key recreational species in NSW by donating fish frames. The frames are then processed, and the ear bones are removed.

The ear bones (otoliths) are used to determine the age of the fish. Age data is used to build a picture of the age structure of the species population. This combined data details how many fish there are of each age in the stock, which helps evaluate the health of the species. By collecting this data over time, we can also see how the structure of fish populations in NSW may be changing.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- 1,458 fish frame donations were received from 95 anglers
- 284 Mulloway frames collected which was a significant increase from 172 Mulloway frames in 2022-23. The RAP Mulloway data contributed to the DPIRD Resource Assessment and Monitoring Research team's 2023-24 Mulloway stock assessment
- contributed 29 deepwater species frames to the Fisheries Research Development Corporation (FRDC) deepwater species research project - making 76 altogether from the RAP (majority of samples collected from NSW)

Giant Spanish Mackerel

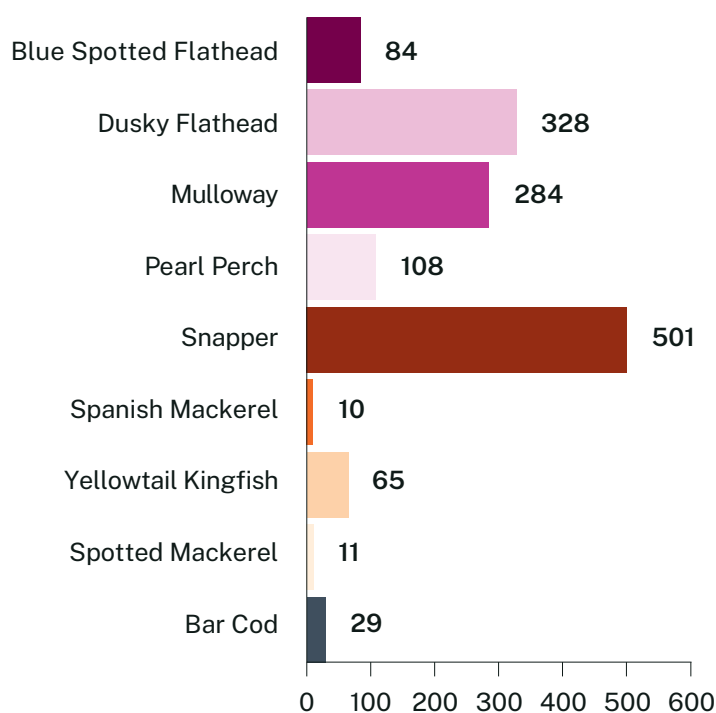
A 51.88 kg (195 cm total length) Spanish Mackerel was caught on the Tweed Coast in April 2024 and was donated to the RAP. Besides a 54 kg Spanish caught at Fraser Island, it is one of the largest caught in the world for the species. The otoliths were removed and the fish was aged at 11 years. The oldest on the books for the RAP is 13 years old while they are estimated to live to 26 years.

From the age data received in 2023-24, the RAP now has two of its oldest Pearl Perch at 10 years old. They are estimated to live to 30 years but it is rare to find any 10 years or older.

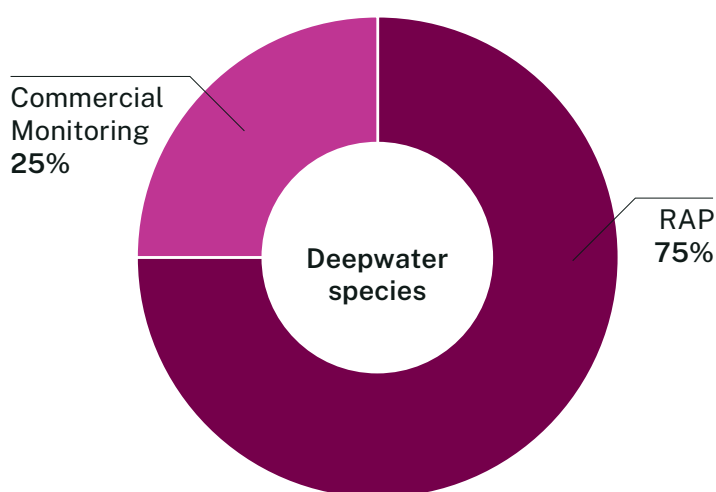
In 2023-24, the RAP received its largest pearl perch at 68.2 cm. The fish was subsequently aged at 9 years of age.



The individual numbers of fish frames for each of the target species in 2023-24 were:



Since the beginning of the FRDC funded deepwater species research project, 75% of the samples from NSW have been collected by RAP.



3.5.2 Managing the Black Bream fishery in southern NSW - understanding genetic spatial distribution

The project focuses on managing the Black Bream fishery in southern NSW by studying the genetic spatial distribution and hybridisation with Yellowfin Bream. Previous research identified significant hybridisation in the region, leading to concerns about the presence of pure Black Bream. This study aims to clarify the distribution of pure and hybrid populations through genetic analysis, which will inform better management strategies and address the decline in Black Bream populations, benefiting the recreational fishing community.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- the study has now collected and analysed over 300 bream samples from eight different estuaries. This included samples collected via angling and using a new coastal survey tool, an estuarine electrofishing boat
- genetic analysis of these samples revealed that while Black Bream and Yellowfin Bream frequently hybridise in southern NSW, pure Black Bream still exist in most areas
- the project highlighted the difficulty in distinguishing Yellowfin and Black Bream through visual observation alone. To address this, a range of educational resources will be produced to raise awareness and improve identification as part of the project

Exciting new tool for estuarine research

The newly acquired DPIRD estuarine electrofishing boat has provided a much-needed sampling tool for coastal monitoring and research. First used in this NSW project on Black Bream genetics, it complements angler-supplied catches by collecting genetic material from fish inhabiting a range of complex habitats, from the upper reaches of estuaries to ocean entrances.

The electrofishing boat also improves sampling efficiency, allowing for precise targeting of specific species and sizes, making it ideal for recreational fishing research.

Integrating it with angler-collected data offers a comprehensive approach to studying genetic diversity and hybridisation in species like bream, with broader applications in recreational fisheries research and management.

📷 A citizen scientist preparing to take a Black Bream DNA sample in Lake Coila, NSW

📷 The new estuarine electrofishing boat on the Clyde River, NSW.



3.5.3 Game Fish Tagging Program

The Game Fish Tagging Program (GFT) began in 1973 and involves citizen science anglers that help to collect information that leads to a better understanding of the biology and behaviour of important sports fish such as billfish, tuna and sharks. The program encourages responsible fishing practices and encourages anglers to participate in the sustainable management of the fishery. Anglers tag fish and return their completed tag cards to DPIRD. When the tagged fish is reported as recaptured, both release and recapture anglers receive fish movement and growth information. Tagging data is used by scientists in Australia and globally to study and improve our knowledge on the lives and habits of these exciting migratory fish species.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- data from over 9,500 fish tagged in 23-24 have been recorded with over 475 fish recaptures reported to date
- 11,200 billfish, 9,150 general pelagic, 2,395 shark, 250 flathead and 885 Snapper tags distributed to game fishing clubs and individual anglers
- creation of a new publicly available Game Fish Tagging dataset which includes tagged fish location heat maps, recapture maps and downloadable data. The maps are available on the DPIRD website³.

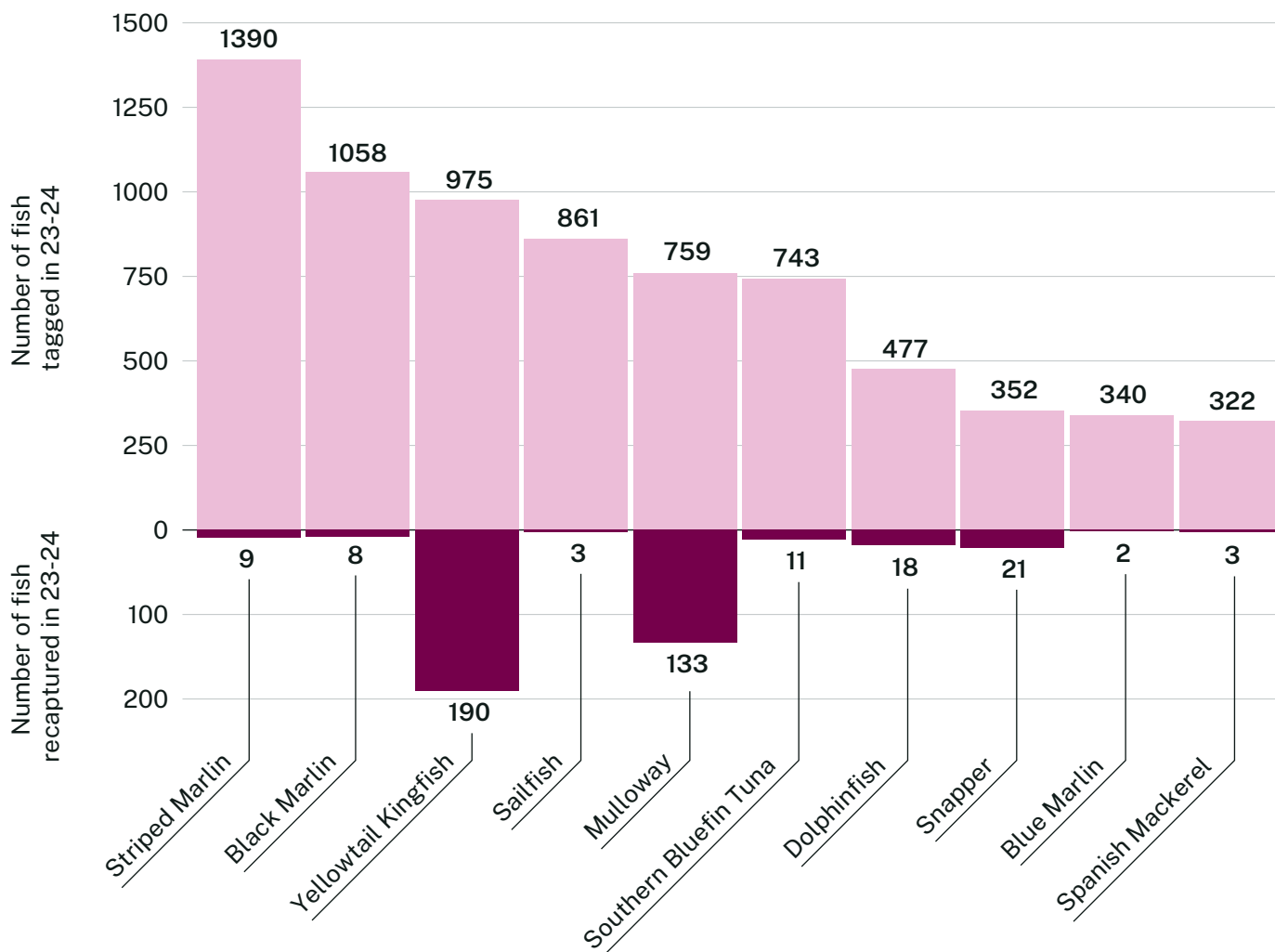
3. <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/recreational/resources/fish-tagging/game-fish-tagging/interactive-game-fish-tagging-maps>

Black Marlin in top 3 distance record

In late December 2023, a tagged Black Marlin was reported as recaptured by a Japanese longline vessel fishing in the Central South Pacific Ocean, 970 nautical miles West of Marquesas Islands. The marlin was originally tagged off Broken Bay, Sydney, NSW by program participant Peter MacDougall along with well-known skipper Scott Thorrington, fishing aboard Freedom (Haven Sport Fishing Charters). This female Black Marlin measuring in at 190 cm had travelled 4,800 nautical miles (~8,890 km) in 329 days, making this the third longest distance travelled by a Black Marlin since the program's inception in 1973.



Top 10 tagged fish



3.5.4 Project Kingfish - satellite tracking Kingfish

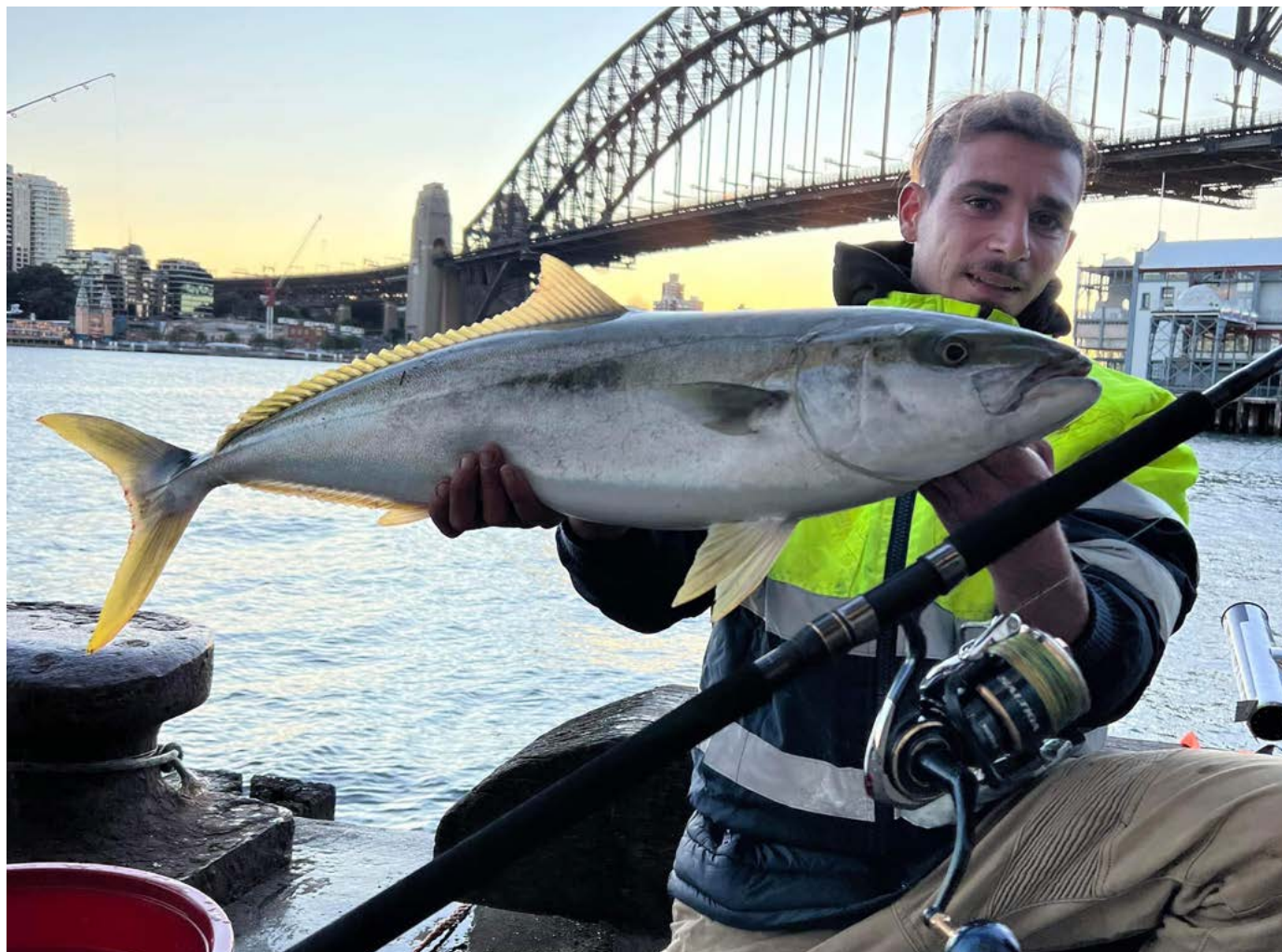
The Sydney Institute of Marine Science in collaboration with Macquarie University, the University of NSW, Deakin University and NSW DPIRD have run a project since 2022 in partnership with specialist recreational fisheries to catch and satellite tag mature Kingfish across NSW and south-eastern Australia.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- Scientific publication⁴ of 50 years of Kingfish tag-recapture data from the NSW DPIRD and NZ Gamefish Tagging Programs, encompassing over 63,000 Kingfish releases and 4,600 Kingfish recaptures demonstrating strong cross-jurisdictional connectivity

- successful collaboration with 14 recreational anglers to deploy an additional 25 satellite tags on Kingfish totaling 48 deployments, and 42 tags have already transmitted their data. The tracks from the transmitted, tagged fish have covered 29,488 km around south-eastern Australia, offshore seamounts (Lord Howe Island) and New Zealand
- over 150,000 accounts reached with Project Kingfish social media, and 11,000 people engaged with the shared content and science communication.

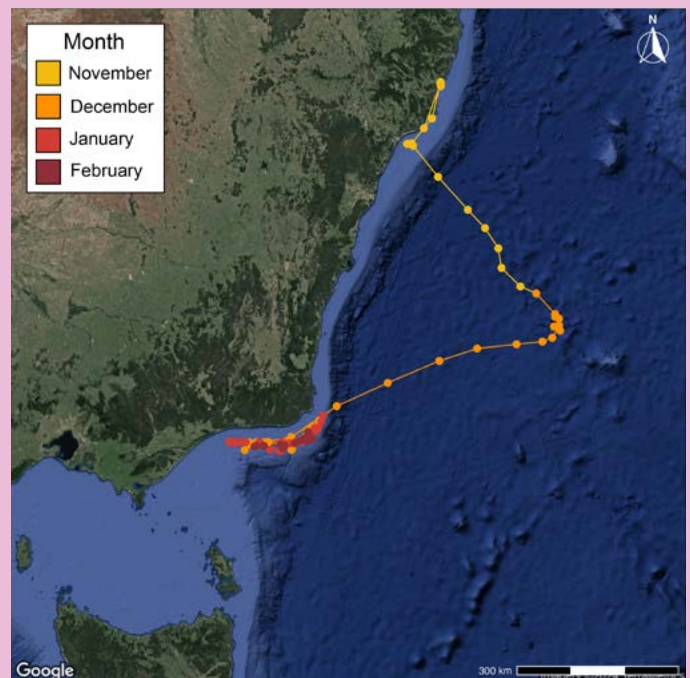
4. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11160-024-09880-0>



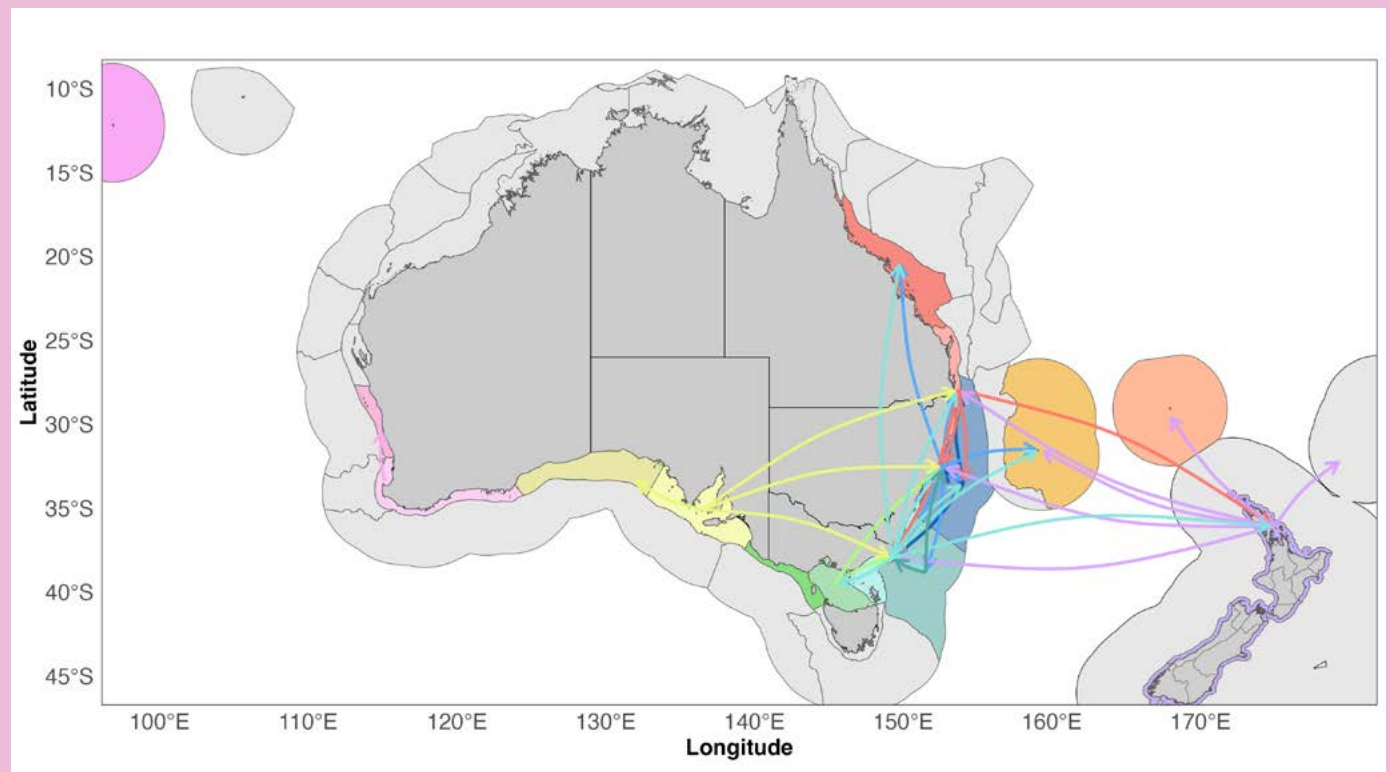
Purposeful movements to offshore seamounts by mature-sized Kingfish

A large mature Kingfish tagged at Port Stephens, measuring 127 cm, was tracked for 99 days, until the tag eventually detached in southern NSW near Eden. After spending the first couple of weeks post-tagging in the coastal, shallow waters around Port Stephens, this Kingfish displayed purposeful movements to seamounts located offshore from southern NSW. This fish then moved to coastal eastern Victoria, aligning with when large schools of Kingfish were being reported and captured in this region throughout the warm summer months.

📍 99-day movement of a 127 cm satellite tagged Kingfish, originally released at Port Stephens in November 2023. Each dot represents the daily “most-likely” geolocation of the fish. The colour of the dots and line indicate the month that each daily location corresponds to.



📍 Overall broad-scale movements and connectivity of Kingfish recorded through the NSW DPIRD and NZ Game Fish Tagging Programs from 1974-2022. Releases and recaptures are allocated to bioregions to summarise the scale of connectivity observed around south-eastern Australia and New Zealand.



3.5.5 Recreational Fisheries Monitoring Program

The Recreational Fisheries Monitoring Program (RFMP) uses a telephone-diary survey to collect information on recreational catch, effort and participation across NSW. These surveys provide biennial snapshots of these data for long-term (one and three year) licensed recreational fishers within NSW. The RFMP also includes an on-board observer and logbook program to collect similar information for the recreational 'for hire' charter fishery. Information from the RFMP is used in resource assessments, status determinations, quota setting, investigation of the impacts of management changes, and helps ensure sustainable fishing into the future.

The RFMP has completed surveys in 2013-14, 2017-18, 2019-20 and 2021-22, with the 2023-24 survey currently underway.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

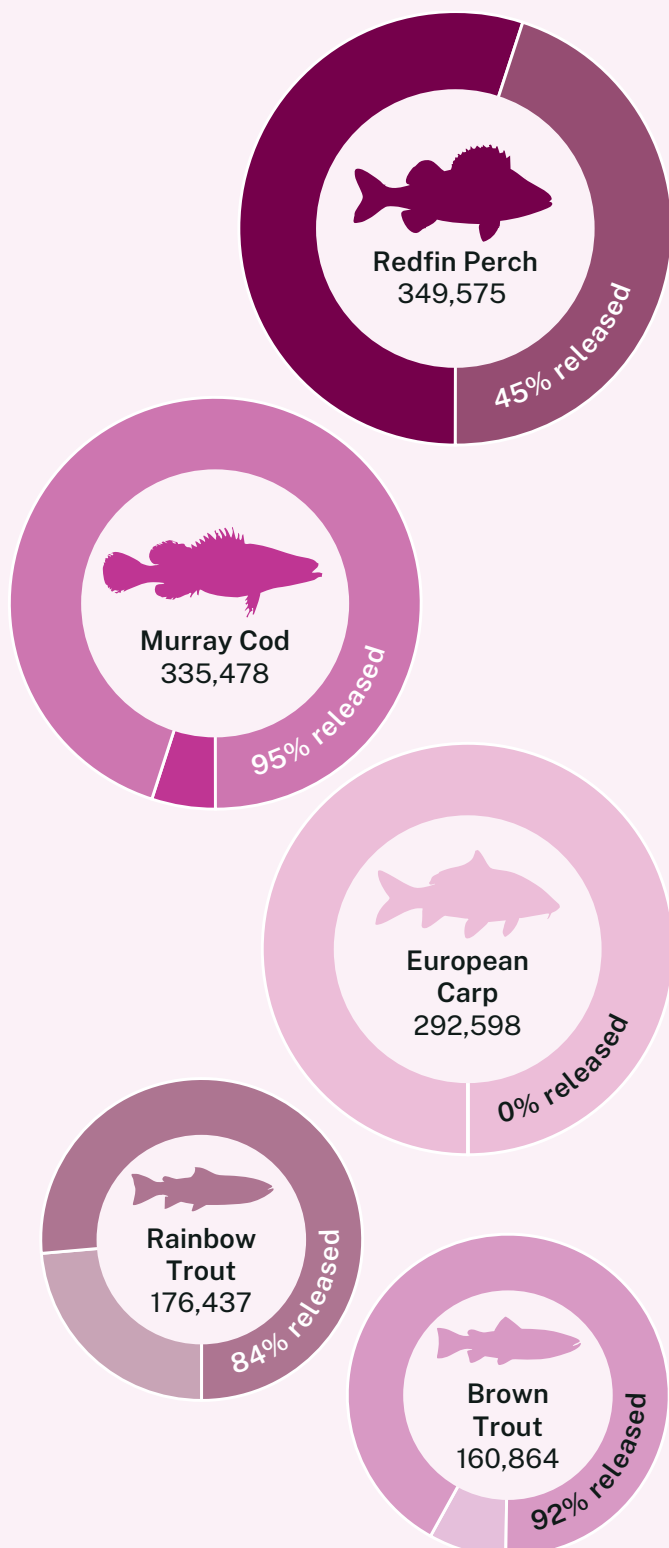
- Analysis of the 2021-22 survey was finalised, with information from 6,400 individual fishing events recorded, indicating that licensed households undertook 1.7 million days of fishing and caught 7.7 million individual organisms across 123 species
- the top five species recorded in the 2021-22 surveys were Bream, Dusky Flathead, Redfin Perch, Murray Cod and Snapper
- patterns in the data revealed that catches of many key saltwater species were similar between the 2019-20 and 2021-22 surveys, but many key freshwater species showed increased catch in 2021-22 following good rainfall
- commencement of the 2023-24 survey, with almost 1,100 households currently engaged in the 12-month diary program
- the RFMP has celebrated its 10-year anniversary of monitoring recreational fishing in NSW.

Charter fishery observer monitoring

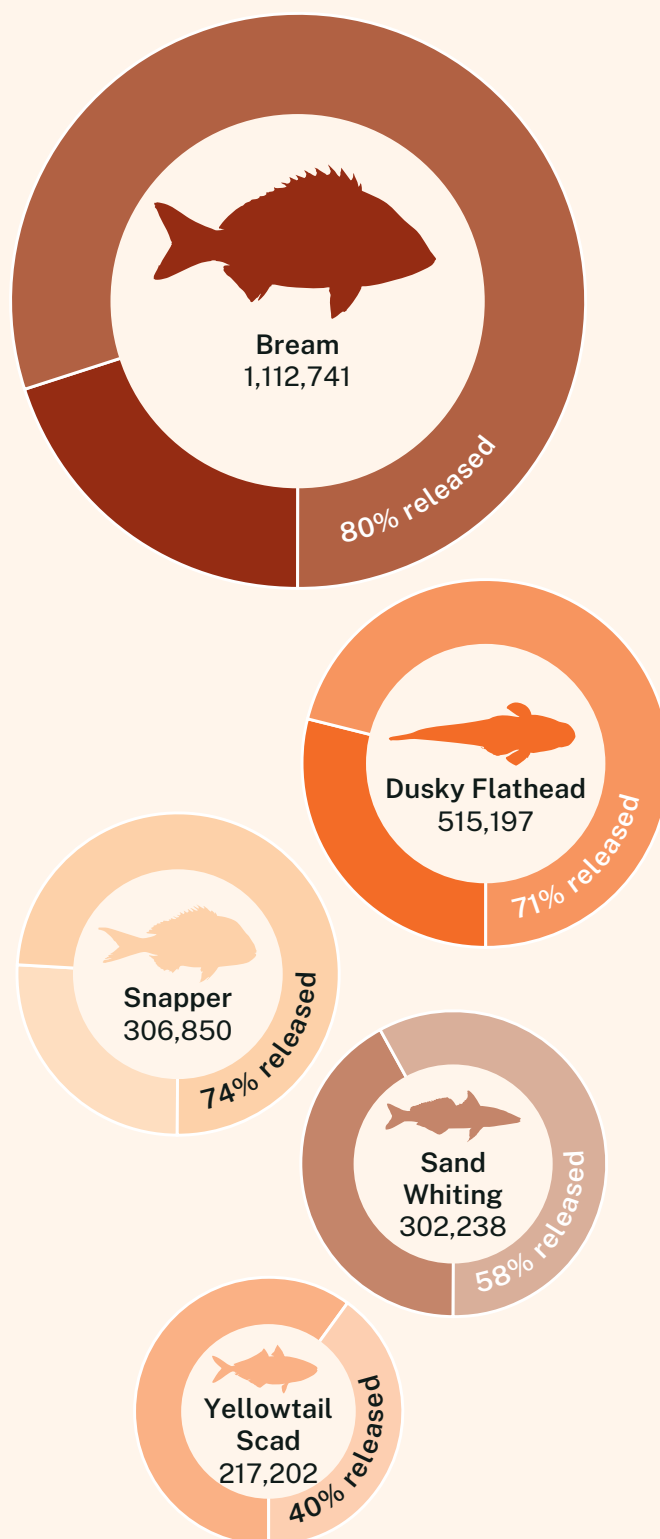
Monitoring of the NSW Charter Fishery during 2021-22 involved trained fishery observers being voluntarily hosted by more than 30 operators on almost 200 nearshore marine charter trips state-wide. More than 14,000 individual organisms across more than 120 species were captured during observed trips, with more than forty per cent released. As well as recording data on fishing catch and effort, observers also collected information on wildlife observations, with more than 4,400 seabirds and marine mammals observed in the vicinity of charter vessels in 2021-22, but very few interactions with the fishery were recorded.



Top 5 Freshwater finfish species



Top 5 Saltwater finfish species



3.5.6 Informing sustainable multi-sector harvest of NSW Estuary Cockles

The Estuary Cockle (recently renamed as the Sydney Cockle) is found throughout the entire NSW coast. The species supports important commercial, recreational and Aboriginal fisheries, but anecdotal reports indicate a substantial increase in harvest of cockles by recreational fishers in several estuaries over the past decade. In partnership with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, research on the fisheries ecology of the species is providing new knowledge to underpin both stock assessment and future management of the species.

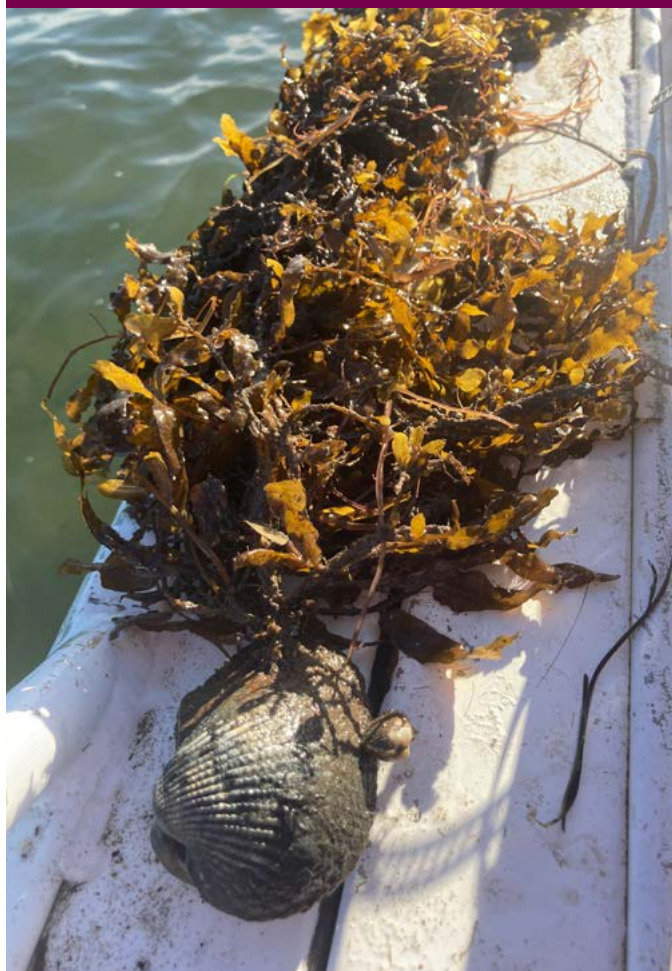
Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- Preliminary aging work on the species, which showed that animals grow rapidly to a harvestable size, but may live as long as 16 years or more
- the first targeted creel survey for Estuary Cockle in NSW, which is providing baseline estimates of cockle harvest across two key estuaries
- commencement of a long-term independent survey for the Estuary Cockle, which will track abundance through time and show how populations respond to fishing pressure and environmental variability.

Migrating Cockles

Field-based research on Estuary Cockles is giving new insight in the ecology and behavior of the species, and observations during field work have shown that the species can be remarkably mobile. A proportion of cockles have algae that settles and grows on the shell of the animal, sometimes referred to as 'cockle weed'. Many different species of algae grow on cockles, and when the thallus grows long enough the cockles can dislodge themselves from the sediment and get dragged around to new locations in the estuary in currents and waves. Some of these species of attached algae are very buoyant, and when the cockle dislodges it actually floats around in the water column, essentially giving rise to the 'swimming cockle'.

📷 Estuary Cockle with algae and young cockle recruit attached



3.5.7 Building a healthy freshwater fishery

Building a Healthy Freshwater Fishery is a long-term program incorporating monitoring and research of freshwater recreational fisheries throughout the state. In particular, the program provides regular data on fishery status, assessment of management interventions and undertakes targeted research that will benefit recreational fishers by providing fishery managers with relevant and up-to-date information.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- Completion of annual trout fishery monitoring in the Snowy Lakes and streams across NSW
- development and continuation of tagging studies monitoring Murray Cod habitat usage and movements in Copeton Dam
- development of a Bass fishery monitoring program in NSW rivers which incorporates automated fish counters, genetic ageing and field surveys
- monitoring of NSW impoundment fisheries for Murray Cod, Golden Perch, Australian Bass and salmonids through age and growth studies (using otoliths), hydroacoustic surveys, and genetic analyses.

Novel use of automated fish counters

Two new Vaki Riverwatcher automated fish counters are enhancing recreational fisheries monitoring for Australian Bass in NSW rivers. Traditionally used for salmonids, this marks the first use of fish counter technology for native species in NSW's coastal catchments. These devices, previously used in fixed locations, are now mobile (solar-powered) and provide accurate data on fish size, numbers, and movements. The new flexibility in deploying these systems allows fish counters to operate continuously in remote areas and various river conditions, capturing detailed data on daily and seasonal fish movement patterns. The novel use of automated fish counters plays a crucial role in fisheries management by providing precise data for population assessments allowing for adaptive management that benefits both fishers and fish populations.

📷 Temporary solar powered set up of the Vaki fishcounter on the Deua River, NSW

📷 Australian bass moving through the device in May 2024



3.5.8 Making more Maccas

Macquarie Perch, or Maccas as they are known, were once a common and highly-prized recreational fishing species. Habitat loss, barriers to movement, altered flow patterns, competition from introduced species and the effects of disease means they are no longer found in most of their former native range in South Eastern Australia, and are listed as an endangered species. This project aimed to support key recovery actions to help rebuild Macquarie Perch populations.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- Ongoing trout relocations from the Winburndale system
- continued development of captive breeding techniques
- confirmation of continued presence and reproduction of Maccas in the Retreat River, 14 years after initial stockings occurred.

Win-win at Winburndale!

The ongoing trout relocations from the Winburndale Dam and Rivulet are showing excellent results. This relocation program is a win-win, with recreational fishers of the Central West gaining more trout to target, while the Maccas have less competition. This year the program consisted of more than a month spent intensely targeting trout in the system, which yielded 60 fish compared with 1,081 captured for the same level of effort in 2023. This continues to set the system up for the newly introduced Macca population to thrive. The captured trout are taken to the popular Millpond fishery at The Foundations in nearby Portland, where they are available for anglers of all ages to enjoy catching. A win-win for all concerned!



3.5.9 Effectiveness of marine and freshwater fish stocking

Marine and freshwater stocking programs release many species of native fish and salmonids into rivers, inland lakes and estuaries, to increase recreational fishing opportunities for NSW anglers. These activities are supported by internationally renowned long-term monitoring and research programs, which evaluate the impacts of stocking initiatives and provide scientific evidence to ensure the release of fish is sustainable, benefits the NSW recreational fishing community, and supports adaptive management of the fisheries (e.g. when and where stocking is required).

Achievements in 2023-24 for the marine stocking program included:

- The first pilot release of Yellowfin Bream under the program occurred in the Bellinger/Kalang Recreational Fishing Haven. Movements of fish were monitored following release, and stocked fish showed high residency on the estuarine artificial reefs in this system. This work will pave the way for future stocking programs for a variety of finfish species by integrating artificial reefs and fish releases
- releases of advanced Mulloway (50 cm in size) have expanded to also include the Hastings River, with all fish being externally tagged, allowing researchers to track their growth and movements through citizen scientist anglers
- data collected from the program has allowed fisheries managers to improve release strategies for species released in this on-going stocking program.

Achievements in 2023-24 for the freshwater stocking program included:

- Monitoring and early analysis of the effectiveness of stocking sub-adult Murray Cod (e.g. fish above 30cm) in the Edward Wakool and Darling (Baka) Rivers
- evaluating the success of Brook Trout, Tiger Trout and Atlantic Salmon stocking to create boutique and unique fishing opportunities in NSW. This included a comprehensive study on the success of Tiger Trout stocking in NSW, covering socio-economic impacts, angler catch and effort, and biological surveys
- continued monitoring of the stocking effectiveness of warm water Rainbow Trout in the Snowy Lakes.



Recreational anglers help monitor Dusky Flathead and Mulloway releases

DPIRD scientists have teamed up with recreational anglers to monitor releases of both Dusky Flathead and Mulloway in NSW estuaries. Anglers are provided with kits allowing them to collect DNA samples (fin clips) which are returned to the scientific staff who then use genetics to determine if fish anglers are catching belong to stocked cohorts. So far anglers have provided 1,191 DNA samples spanning 5 estuaries. The partnership between the anglers and scientists is providing a far better overview of the effectiveness of the fish releases, not only due to the large number of samples collected, but because the target of the stocking program – recreational anglers – are directly providing the data.

Baaka River and Edward-Wakool system stocked with advanced tagged Cod for native fish recovery

Advanced-size Murray Cod, around 30 cm, have been stocked in the Darling (Baaka) River and the Edward-Wakool system in NSW to enhance native fish recovery. All fish were externally tagged, with 500 released in each system, and 50 in the Darling River were additionally fitted with acoustic transmitters for precise tracking. Preliminary data shows that 39 of 50 tagged fish were detected in the first 3 months, and 9 of these at a receiver 20 km upstream of the release point, indicating high survival and dispersal. Further data from ongoing monitoring and tag returns will refine stocking practices and boost recreational fishing opportunities.



3.6 Fisheries officers

Funds from the Recreational Fishing Trusts support nine coastal, three coastal mobile squad and six inland Fisheries officers, which forms a key part of DPIRD’s capacity to enforce fisheries rules and regulations.

Achievements in 2023-24 included:

- 46,280 compliance checks were undertaken across NSW waterways by Fisheries officers
- 5,682 offences were detected (resulting from recreational compliance checks), which led to 3,422 written warnings, 1,877 penalty notices totaling \$606,150 in value, 81 prosecution actions and 302 other sanction types
- fisheries officers attended multiple educational events resulting in 636 contacts.



Compliance Statistics

Total recreational contacts	46,280
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Compliance rate for recreational sector	90%
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Recreational field hours	45,445
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Recreational offences	5,682
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Recreational written warnings	3,422
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Recreational penalty notices	1,877
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Value of recreational penalty notices	\$606,150
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Recreational prosecution actions commenced	81
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Recreational prosecution fines	16
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Value of recreational prosecution fines	\$10,385
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Operations conducted (all sectors)	22
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Recreational fish and invertebrates seized	47,141
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Recreational fishing gear and other items seized	1,438
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Vessel patrol hours (all sectors)	5,978
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Educational events attended (all sectors)	12 events leading to 636 contacts
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FRANCE

24387

FISHERIES PATROL
FPV Pittwater
Port Jackson



3.7 Trust management and administration

The administration of the recreational fishing fee (licenses) and the management of the Trusts, including hundreds of grants each year, is supported by funds from the Trusts. The Trusts are managed to a high standard to ensure transparent and accountable governance.



3.7.1 Recreational fishing licence fee – facilitating fishing licenses for fishers

The Department facilitates the safe and secure collection of recreational fishing fees (public money) in partnership with Service NSW and continues to provide a convenient payment network for fishers. All fishing fees are deposited into the Trusts, as required by law.

Achievements in 2023–24 included:

- Staff from the DPIRD Recreational Fisheries Customer Services team worked with the Department of Customer services (DCS) to assist with launching a new licensing data management system called Licence NSW. The new system included several system improvements for fishers. Some of these improvements include:
 - the option to receive a renewal reminder via SMS or email
 - online self-service option to purchase a replacement licence card
 - an updated secure online option for fishers to update their own contact details
- along with migration to the new system, a new model of charging agencies for use of the Licence NSW system resulted in the overall licence administration costs for DPIRD Fisheries reduce to less than 10% of revenue during 2023-24.


3.7.2 Trusts program delivery

Since 2001 over 3,100 projects have been completed using funds from the Trusts, including small and large grants projects, fish stocking and fuel card grants, Gone Fishing Day grants, Habitat Action Grants as well as DPIRD projects. DPIRD has worked to ensure accountability of these projects and has implemented good governance arrangements to promote transparency and good business performance.

Achievements in 2023–24 included:

- Facilitating completion of a comprehensive audit of the NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts by independent firm O'Connor Marsden and Associates, which fulfilled an election commitment to review the management of the Trusts. The audit made 26 recommendations all of which have been accepted by the Government, which will increase transparency and accountability of Trust processes even further
- monitoring hundreds of the Trusts' projects to facilitate the delivery of outcomes and benefits for recreational fishers.





Quality recreational fishing
for everyone, forever.



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development



4.1 Appendix 1: RFNSW and Expenditure Committee membership



Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council

The Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW) provides advice to the Minister for Agriculture on key recreational fishing issues in NSW, **including expenditure priorities from the Trusts.**

To ensure that the views of regional fishers from across the state are conveyed, RFNSW includes representation from eight regional areas, two members with expertise in spearfishing and charter boat fishing and other representatives that significantly benefit its function. *The Fisheries Management Act 1994* provides that all members of advisory councils are to be appointed by the Minister in accordance with the Fisheries Regulations.

RFNSW members

Independent Chair	Professor Johann Bell
Region 1 – Mid & Far North Coast	Mr Patrick Linehan
Region 2 – Lower North Coast	Mr Paul Lennon
Region 3 – Sydney & Central Coast	Mr Grahame Williams OAM
Region 3 – Sydney & Central Coast	Prof Anna Clark
Region 4 – Illawarra	Ms Vicki Lear
Region 5 – South Coast	Mr Dean Hamilton
Region 6 – North West Inland (and MFAC representative)	Mr Matt Hansen OAM
Region 7 – South West Inland	Mr Karl Mathers
Region 8 – Central & Southern Tablelands	Mr Ray Tang
Region 8 – Central & Southern Tablelands	Mr Bill Blair
Charter Boat Fishing	Mr Peter Dugan
Spear Fishing	Mr Ian Puckeridge
Social benefits of recreational fishing	Mr Matt Tripet
Nominee of Secretary	Mr Peter Turnell, DPIRD

Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee

Made up of freshwater anglers from eight regions in NSW and a representative from a recreational fishing organisation, the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFFTEC) assists the Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW) in setting the Trust's expenditure priorities, including the assessment of Trust applications. Freshwater regions east of the Great Dividing Range extend to the upper limits of tidal waters, and the western regions are west of the Great Dividing Range. The dividing line between the inner west and the far-west regions is east of the Newell Highway until Dubbo and then west of the Newell Highway from Dubbo south. The RFFTEC was established in line with DRNSW policy – Fisheries advisory groups: Establishments and Governance (TI-O-146).

Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee members

Chair	Mr Bruce Schumacher AM
Region 1 – North Coast	Mr Max Graham
Region 2 – Central Coast	Mr Ron Butler
Region 3 – South Coast	Mr Ron Croker
Region 4 – North inner west	Mr Michael Davey
Region 5 – Central inner west	Mr Paul Mullen
Region 6 – South inner west	Ms Debbie Lennon
Region 7 – North west	Mr Jasen Ramien
Region 8 – South west	Mr Troy Bright
NSW recreational fishing organisation representative – Professional Fishing Instructors & Guides Association	Mr Brett Richards
DPIRD Representative – Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Management	Mr Peter Turnell

Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee

Made up of saltwater anglers from eight regions in NSW and representatives from three recreational fishing organisations, the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFSTEC) assists the Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW) in setting the Trust's expenditure priorities, including the assessment of Trust applications. The regions extend from Tweed Heads to the Victorian border.

The RFSTEC was established in line with DRNSW policy – Fisheries advisory groups: Establishments and Governance (TI-O-146).

Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee members

Chair	Mr Bruce Schumacher AM
Region 1 – Qld to Evans Head	Mr Paul Connellan
Region 2 – Evans Head to Woolgoolga	Mr David Faircloth
Region 3 – Woolgoolga to Port Macquarie	Mr Craig Cameron
Region 4 – Port Macquarie to Seal Rocks	Mr Geoff Shelton
Region 5 – Seal Rocks to The Entrance	Mr Michael Aubrey
Region 6 – The Entrance to Wollongong	Mr Sami Omari
Region 7 – Wollongong to Narooma	Ms Ann Garard
Region 8 – Narooma to Victoria	Mr Micah Adams
NSW recreational fishing organisation representative – NSW Game Fishing Association	Mr Grahame Williams OAM
NSW recreational fishing organisation representative – OzFish Unlimited	Mr Ryan Lungu
NSW recreational fishing organisation representative – Australian Underwater Federation	Mr Adrian Wayne
DPIRD Representative – Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Management	Mr Peter Turnell



4.2 Appendix 2: Recreational Fishing Trusts funds summary by Project

In 2023-24, funds from the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust supported following projects:

Project	Available (\$'000)	Expenses (\$'000)	Carry Forward (\$'000)
Coastal fish habitat protection and management	194	194	0
Ecohuts for recreational fishers	17	17	0
Expenditure committee meeting expenses	22	22	0
External large grants –disbursements made to various organisations for approved projects	1,423	1,423	0
Flagship habitat program	158	158	0
Fish aggregation devices (FADs)	308	308	0
Fishcare volunteer program	595	595	0
Fisheries officers (9 coastal officers)	1,432	1,432	0
Fisheries officers (mobile squads)	482	482	0
Gamefish tagging program	215	215	0
Great swordfish race	15	2	13
Marine stocking of key recreational fish species in coastal waters	401	401	0
Offshore artificial reefs	1,940	1,940	0
Recreational fisheries enhancement (artificial reefs and FADs coordination)	285	285	0
Recreational fishing access (coastal)	202	202	0
Recreational fisheries monitoring program: statewide fishing and charter surveys	654	654	0
Recreational Fishing Trust executive officer	227	227	0
Research angler program	204	204	0
Research on Black Bream fishery	73	73	0
Research on Blue Swimmer Crabs in Lake Macquarie	9	9	0
Research on Estuary Cockles	60	60	0
Research on marine fish stocking	277	277	0
Research on fish usage of oyster reefs	11	11	0

In 2023-24, funds from the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust supported following projects:

Project	Available (\$'000)	Expenses (\$'000)	Carry Forward (\$'000)
Small grants – disbursements made to various organisations for approved projects	42	42	0
Sydney Harbour wharves compliance initiative	230	230	0
Trust grants governance enhancement project	149	149	0
Total	9,625	9,612	13

* The Allocated column consists of funds from the Trust fund in 2023-24, amounts carried forward from projects in 2022-23 and any unused project funds from previous years returned to the Trust.

In 2023-24, funds from the Recreational Fishing (Freshwater) Trust supported the following projects:

Project	Available (\$'000)	Expenses (\$'000)	Carry Forward (\$'000)
Dollar-for-dollar native fish stocking program	430	430	0
Enhanced fish production at hatcheries for stocking (Port Stephens, Narrandera, Dutton and Grafton)	452	452	0
Expansion of Narrandera Fisheries Centre Hatchery	200	200	0
Expenditure committee meeting expenses	26	26	0
External large grants – disbursements made to various organisations for approved projects	507	507	0
Fence stiles for facilitating angler access	14	14	0
Fish transport tanks for stocking activities from Gaden and Dutton trout hatcheries	136	136	0
Fishcare volunteer program	307	307	0
Fisheries officers (inland)	955	955	0
Freshwater recreational management program	205	205	0
Fuel cards for fish stocking	6	6	0
Gaden trout hatchery	644	644	0
Hatchery technician at Narrandera Fisheries Centre	160	160	0
Inland stocking management	148	148	0
Making more maccas (Macquarie perch research)	148	148	0
NSW cold water pollution mitigation strategy	112	112	0

In 2023-24, funds from the Recreational Fishing (Freshwater) Trust supported the following projects:

Project	Available (\$'000)	Expenses (\$'000)	Carry Forward (\$'000)
Production of estuary perch for stocking in NSW impoundments	30	30	0
Production of NSW trout and cod strategies	79	79	0
Recirculating aquaculture system to increase trout production at Gaden Trout Hatchery	614	614	0
Recreational fishing access (inland)	318	318	0
Regional inland fish habitat protection and management	213	213	0
Research on freshwater recreational fishery in NSW	694	694	0
Small grants –disbursements made to various organisations for approved projects	34	34	0
Stocking of advanced Murray Cod to assist with post-flood recovery	56	56	0
Total	6,488	6,488	0

* The Allocated column consists of funds from the Trust fund in 2023-24, amounts carried forward from projects in 2022-23 and any unused project funds from previous years returned to the Trust.



In 2023-24, funds from the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater and Freshwater) Trusts were used for the following projects:

Project	Available (\$'000)	Expenses (\$'000)	Carry Forward (\$'000)
Advisory Council meeting expenses	57	57	0
Fish for Life project	135	135	0
Get Hooked... It's Fun to Fish schools program	422	422	0
Habitat action program 2018/19 and beyond	661	661	0
NSW Gone Fishing Day	83	83	0
NSW fishing workshops	70	70	0
NSW fishway strategy for fish passage remediation	27	27	0
NSW recreational fishing environmental assessment	38	38	0
Recreational fisher research database	7	7	0
Recreational fisheries infrastructure management program	198	198	0
Recreational fishing fee administration project	1,511	1,511	0
Recreational fishing fee renewal notice system	107	107	0
Recreational fishing guides	116	116	0
Recreational Fishing Trusts annual report	38	38	0
Total	3,470	3,470	0

* The Allocated column consists of funds from the Trust fund in 2023-24, amounts carried forward from projects in 2022-23 and any unused project funds from previous years returned to the Trusts.

4.3 Appendix 3: Summary of projects approved for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts in 2023-2024

Note: SW and FW denote the Saltwater and Freshwater Trusts, respectively. Amounts shown are the approved funds for each project. All projects listed below that are valued at \$10,000 or less receive funding through the Small Grants Program.

Platform: Fisheries enhancement

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Enhancing coastal fisheries: Making Reefs and FADs happen: Artificial reefs and fish aggregating devices (FADs) are two of the most popular programs funded by the Recreational Fishing Trusts providing new high quality, fishing locations for anglers. This project involves a dedicated fisheries enhancement officer to project manage and coordinate the programs to make them happen. The role facilitates environmental assessments, Commonwealth approvals, tenders and monitoring of the reefs. Both programs continue to deliver with proposed expansion of the FADs program and recent deployment of the Tweed Artificial Reef.		DPIRD	SW \$284,826	2023-24 activities completed
Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) – more places for people to fish: The FADs program provides reliable offshore fishing locations where recreational fishers can target a variety of popular pelagic fish over spring, summer and autumn. This project involves a dedicated FADs officer responsible for procurement of hardware, assembly and installation of FADs, replacement and maintenance where required, removal of all FADs at the close of each season and providing fishers with up-to-date FADs information via a range of media avenues including email, social media and smartphone Apps.		DPIRD	SW \$308,054	2023-24 activities completed
Boosting our fisheries: stocking NSW estuaries with popular species to enhance recreational fishing opportunities: This marine stocking program involves the breeding and release of species such as Mulloway, Dusky Flathead and Kingfish along the coast of NSW using the world's best stocking practices to enhance recreational fishing in estuaries. Stockings are guided by a Fisheries Management Strategy to ensure a responsible approach.		DPIRD	SW \$417,842	2023-24 activities completed
Assessing freshwater fish stocking proposals in NSW to boost our recreational fisheries: Preparation of fish stocking plans, conducting site assessments, analysing fish stocking data, liaising with fish stocking groups, and issuing fish stocking permits to enhance recreational fish stocks.		DPIRD	FW \$153,290	2023-24 activities completed
Boosting freshwater fish stocks in NSW with popular species to enhance recreational fishing opportunities: Provide additional operational funds for the Dutton, Grafton, Port Stephens and Narrandera fish hatcheries to stock highly valued native and salmonid species, to enhance freshwater fishing opportunities across NSW.		DPIRD	FW \$494,943	2023-24 activities completed

Platform: Fisheries enhancement

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Community \$4\$ native fish stocking grants to boost local fisheries: Matching funds provided from the Recreational Fishing Trust to community groups to purchase native fish to stock local waterways for the benefit of anglers.		Community grants – administered by DPIRD	FW \$250,000	2023-24 activities completed
Fuel cards for community fish stocking, fish rescue and fish habitat work: To issue fuel cards to community groups to assist with transport costs to / from fish stocking, fish rescue and fish habitat.		Community grants – administered by DPIRD	FW \$15,000	2023-24 activities completed
Future Fish Stocking Stewardship Fund – Government fish hatcheries: Assists with travel and accommodation expenses for university students learning fish hatchery techniques at Government hatcheries to develop future leaders in fish production and aquaculture.		Student funding – administered by DPIRD	FW \$5,000	Project completed
Gaden Trout Hatchery - Boosting salmonid fish stocks in southern and central NSW: Provides operational funds for the Gaden trout hatchery for the stocking of highly valued salmonid species, to enhance recreational fishing opportunities in the snowy mountains, southern highlands and central tablelands.		DPIRD	FW \$770,735	2023-24 activities completed
Investigations of nodavirus infection in aquaculture reared euryhaline fish produced for stocking and in wild freshwater fish populations in NSW coastal catchments: This project will provide a continuation of screening of euryhaline fish produced in commercial hatcheries (including under the dollar-for-dollar program) for stocking into freshwater impoundments in NSW for nodavirus. This testing program will ensure only nodavirus free fish are stocked into freshwater NSW impoundments. Any remaining funds will be used to test wild fish collected in freshwater reaches of coastal catchments in NSW for nodavirus. The data collected will be used to determine if nodavirus is present or absent in wild fish and will inform future nodavirus screening requirements of fish produced for stocking.		DPIRD	FW \$20,000	Project completed
Stocking of Estuary Perch within Brogo Dam and to investigate stocking Estuary Perch within Danjera Dam, Glennies Creek and Lake Toolooma: The aim of this project is to continue to stock up to 20,000 Estuary Perch fingerlings within Brogo Dam and to investigate the potential release of a further 20,000 Estuary Perch into Danjera Dam (Nowra), Glennies Creek Dam (Singleton) and Lake Toolooma (Waterfall), to provide anglers with exciting new high quality recreational fishing opportunities.		DPIRD	FW \$50,000	2023-24 activities completed
Review and update the NSW trout strategy and design a framework for the development of management strategies for other key NSW freshwater sportfish: This project will review the structure, content and progress of the existing NSW trout strategy framework and develop a new five-year trout strategy including recommendations relating to research, stocking strategies, management action, enhancement and promotional opportunities for the NSW recreational trout fishery. The review and development of the trout strategy will be used as a framework to develop a Murray cod species management strategy. The Murray cod and trout strategies will inform the future development of similar management initiatives for other key species including golden perch and Australian bass.		DPIRD	FW \$67,000	Project underway

Platform: Fisheries enhancement

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Enhancing coastal recreational fishing opportunities by installing a new offshore artificial reef: A recent Ministerial expression of interest survey has highlighted the need for more artificial reefs as a high priority among recreational fishers. Stakeholder expectations of this program continue to remain high as artificial reefs are well accepted as an excellent way to maximise recreational fishing opportunities while providing high quality, cost effective fish habitat along the NSW coast.		DPIRD	SW \$1,500,000	Project underway
Trial \$2 for \$1 native fish stocking scheme – doubling down on community fish stockings to boost freshwater native fish stocks: To trial the doubling of the matching amount of funds provided from the Recreational Fishing Trust to community stocking groups to purchase fish to boost freshwater native fish stocks, following drought, fish kills, floods and Covid restrictions.		DPIRD	FW \$250,000	2023-24 activities completed
Hatchery Technician at Narrandera Fisheries Centre: This project involves continuing the role of the additional hatchery technician at the Narrandera Fisheries Centre to enhance fish stocking production at the hatchery. The additional role commenced in 2021 and is essential given the expanded hatchery capacity, which will greatly increase production of fish for stocking throughout NSW to improve recreational fishing even further.		DPIRD	FW \$168,146	2023-24 activities completed
Recirculating Aquaculture System for Dutton Trout Hatchery: Involves acquisition and installation of a Recirculating Aquaculture System at Dutton Trout Hatchery. This will enable holding and production of larger fish which have been identified as a priority for successful trout stocking in redfin affected waters. Also provides protection from summer temperature spikes and low flow conditions.		DPIRD	FW \$245,000	Project underway

Platform: Fishing access and facilities

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Recreational fishing access (coastal) – maintaining and enhancing land and boat access for fishers along the NSW coast: This project involves a dedicated access officer managing saltwater fishing access which is under threat or at risk of being compromised. A key aspect of this role involves highlighting the socio-economic importance of recreational fishing to land managers and other relevant entities to ensure access is retained and where possible enhanced. This involves negotiation with stakeholders to identify access solutions to achieve the best possible outcomes for recreational fishers. Put simply, more access means more fishing opportunities!		DPIRD	SW \$200,684	2023-24 activities completed
Small Grants Program: Provides funding towards the development of on-ground recreational fishing facilities and other small, local or regional research, education or enhancement projects to deliver recreational fishing benefits.		Community grant funds administered by DPIRD	SW \$100,000 FW \$60,000	2023-24 activities completed
Recreational fishing access (inland) -Publication of angler access locations and developing new angler access opportunities in NSW: The project prepares agreements with landholders to secure angler access to fishable waters, develops a comprehensive webpage so that anglers are aware of their rights and access opportunities and oversees the concurrence role for land disposal, to secure future angler access across the state.		DPIRD	FW \$204,684	2023-24 activities completed
Securing angler access for the future: The project reviews the high volume of Crown Lands road closures, Aboriginal Land Claims and other public land disposals to secure angler access for the future. The project will also assist in the inspection of angler access sites and maintenance of an angler access website due to be launched soon.		DPIRD	FW \$153,290	2023-24 activities completed
Police on ferry patrols and Police boats to help keep Sydney Harbour ferry wharves open to fishing by promoting responsible fishing– a key initiative of the Clean, Safe Wharves program: A trial of having covert Police onboard ferries to patrol recreational fishing on wharves last summer was successful in further promoting responsible fishing and deterring irresponsible, anti-social behaviour at the 50 commuter wharves. It is proposed to continue the covert ferry vessel patrols over the next 2 summers. An extension of the overt Police boat and land based patrols to June 2024 is also proposed.		DPIRD / Transport for NSW	SW \$230,000	2023-24 activities completed

Platform: Recreational fishing education

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Fishcare - Proactively undertaking face to face education of anglers across NSW: The NSW Fishcare Volunteer program uses a network of six dedicated Education Officers and 230 motivated Fishcare volunteers across NSW to provide face to face and hands-on education to anglers on the ground. Education Officers and volunteers use targeted messaging to promote responsible and sustainable fishing ('Fish for Life'). Fishcare also plays a key role in the running of the Get Hooked...its fun to fish schools program and the many fishing workshops involving thousands of kids and community members held each year. Our mission is to create a team of fishing stewards that champion, responsible fishing and a sustainable secure fishing future. Fishcare is one of the flagship programs of the Recreational Fishing Trusts.		DPIRD	SW \$640,000 FW \$410,000	2023-24 activities completed
Get Hooked...it's fun to fish. A fun, interactive recreational fishing program for junior and senior school students to learn about sustainable fishing: Get Hooked is a proactive student recreational fishing program aligned to the NSW Curriculum. Our aim is to teach sustainable fishing skills for life, how to maximise catch and release, and how to fish safely and responsibly. Passionate dedicated Fishcare Volunteers, Fishcare Education Officers and teachers run Get hooked class lessons with interactive fishing resource kits provided to schools. Once class lessons are completed, Education officers and Fishcare Volunteers run practical fishing workshops for thousands of school students each year, allowing them to put new skills into practice at a local waterway. The program has now been extended to senior schools and plays a part in career development for students.		DPIRD	SW \$327,600 FW \$140,400	2023-24 activities completed
NSW Fishing Workshops - Fostering new and existing fishers to be the guardians of tomorrow: Fishing workshops teach adults and children how to fish throughout NSW in a responsible and sustainable manner. The program provides a fun, enjoyable educational experience that aims to teach the basics of fishing to new entrants giving them the skills to continue in the sport for life. Our mission is to create the fishing stewards and champions of tomorrow. Each year, an average of 8,000 new entrants are introduced to fishing under the program.		DPIRD	SW \$42,000 FW \$28,000	2023-24 activities completed
NSW Saltwater and Freshwater Recreational Fishing Guides - One stop shop for essential fishing info: These guides provide an easy-to-read summary of essential information fishers need before they go fishing. This includes fishing rules, gear descriptions, licenses and Recreational Fishing Trusts information, sustainable fishing practices and much more. It is proposed to decrease production of the guide by one third to 200,000 per year noting the increasing use of electronic media. Nevertheless, the guides still represent a one stop shop for anglers to access their fishing information. It is especially popular with new or beginner fishos.		DPIRD	SW \$84,000 FW \$36,000	2023-24 activities completed

Platform: Recreational fishing education

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
NSW Recreational Fishing Trust Annual Report 2021 and beyond – creative design of print and online publications: To create online and print publications for the <i>Recreational Fishing Trust Annual Report</i> , which promotes the achievements of programs supported by the Recreational Fishing Trust. The publication will be highly graphic (including photographs and infographics) and high profile, available as both a website and printable A4 document.		DPIRD	SW \$50,000 FW \$20,000	2023-24 activities completed
Fish For Life (FFL) Stage 2 – strengthening recreational fishing through sector growth, more diversity, enhanced fisheries sustainability, improved social licence and stewardship: Following the launch of the FFL (Stage 1) brand in 2021, DPIRD plans to team up with external partners to deliver a range of new on ground and online initiatives under the FFL banner as part of Stage 2 campaign. Five subprograms will align with the core values of the FFL brand – sector growth, diversity, sustainability, social licence and stewardship – and will be delivered in close partnership with the recreational fishing industry and community (through government tender processes). This approach and next stage is a recommendation from RFNSW following review of Stage 1 FFL outcomes.		DPIRD	SW \$261,175 FW \$87,058	Project underway
FishSmarter, tag smarter – Bringing 50 years of the NSW Game Fish Tagging Program into the digital world: To celebrate 50 years of the NSW Game Fish Tagging Program, it is time to take Australia's first citizen science program into the digital world and straight into angler's hands using the established FishSmart app. It is proposed to develop a quick and slick electronic function for anglers to not only provide the ability for them to directly enter their tag information, but also provide access to their own history of tagged and recaptured fish on their fisher profile. This will not only provide a great new age service to fishers and organisations, but will streamline the manual entry process and store data in a secure and modernised way.		DPIRD	SW \$10,000	Project yet to commence
Casting for Recovery - A weekend Fly Fishing Retreat for Women with Breast Cancer. An ACT regional project with vision of it becoming an Australian National Project with regional sub branches: ACT Fly Fishers provide a free retreat which includes fly fishing tuition on a one to one basis, weekend accommodation and care, for up to 12 women who have had breast cancer.	ACT Fly Fishers Inc.		FW \$7,674	Project completed
NSW Gone Fishing Day – promoting participation and celebrating the benefits of recreational fishing, while supporting local organisations and industries in NSW: In collaboration with the annual national Gone Fishing, DPIRD has been running promotional activities and events in NSW since 2015 with funding support from the Trusts. The day is all about promoting fishing as a fun, healthy, outdoors fishing activity for the whole family. Each year funding grants or fishing packages are made available to fishing clubs and organisations to host local events, while the DPIRD Fishcare Program hosts up to six major community events across NSW.		DPIRD	SW \$95,000 FW \$35,000	2023-24 activities completed

Platform: Recreational fishing education

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Laying the foundation for Mulloway stock recovery through filling critical knowledge gaps and modelling: This project will inform rebuilding efforts and future management to recover the NSW Mulloway stock within the species' harvest strategy by filling critical research knowledge gaps and population modelling.		DPIRD	SW \$125,000	Project yet to commence
Oyster reef restoration boosts recreationally important fish: NSW DPIRD is restoring historically lost oyster reefs throughout NSW. In doing so, oyster reef restoration will provide habitat for more fish and improve waterway health. While oyster reef restoration is generally well received and expanding in NSW, a better understanding is needed of how recreationally important species use these reefs and the specific benefits they provide. This will be done by acoustically tracking juvenile and adult Bream and Dusky Flathead around restored oyster reef habitat in Port Stephens.		DPIRD	SW \$4,480	Completed

Platform: Aquatic habitat protection and rehabilitation

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Aquatic habitat protection and fish conservation – South Coast and Greater Murray: Provision of fish habitat protection and enhancement in Murray, Lower Darling and Murrumbidgee catchments and South East NSW using two dedicated fisheries conservation managers. Increases awareness of fish habitat amongst all stakeholders and land use managers, to ensure management outcomes that improve fish habitat and promote fisher and community engagement in fish habitat management, protection and rehabilitation.		DPIRD	SW \$215,684 FW \$226,684	2023-24 activities completed
Flagship Habitat Action: The Flagship Habitat Action program will continue to engage and facilitate key stakeholders in the development and delivery of large-scale strategic coastal fish habitat rehabilitation activities; restoring highly productive, resilient fisheries.		Community flagship grants administered by DPIRD	SW \$450,653	2023-24 activities completed
Habitat Action Program – “Making more Fish Naturally”: Engagement and support of recreational anglers in fish habitat actions and provision of devolved Habitat Action Grants to enhance fish habitat in NSW and support healthy, resilient recreational fisheries.		Community flagship grants administered by DPIRD	SW \$758,312 FW \$364,372	2023-24 activities completed
Fishers for Fish Habitat 2: This project will continue and enhance the current Fishers for Fish Habitat program providing information on fish and fish habitat to NSW recreational fishers and the broader community through a yearly Fishers for Fish Habitat forum, 4 issues of Newstreams per annum and the maintenance of the Fish Habitat Network website.	OzFish Unlimited		SW \$12,950 FW \$5,550	Project underway

Platform: Aquatic habitat protection and rehabilitation

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
NSW Cold Water Pollution Mitigation Strategy – Phase 1 Development: Finalisation of Phase 1 of the NSW Cold Water Pollution Mitigation Strategy will deliver a coordinated plan to proactively improve water quality and temperatures at high priority dams across NSW to benefit native fish. Will also involve development of a demonstration Cold Water Pollution case study at a suitable dam site.		DPIRD	FW \$242,615	Project underway
Driving Fish Habitat Action-a Landcare NSW/OzFish community partnership: Forty new waterways will have their local community taking action to improve their health, with fish habitat restoration sites established by OzFish and Landcare combining resources across NSW, building a network of skilled volunteers to continue the work well into the future.	OzFish Unlimited		SW \$169,200 FW \$112,800	Project underway

Platform: Research on fish and recreational fishing

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Screens for Streams: Boosting native fish stocks through improved water extraction practices: Will showcase effectiveness of innovative fish screens on irrigation pumps at selected sites across NSW and will facilitate broad-scale uptake of fish screening technologies on irrigation infrastructure across the MDB, to prevent large scale fish losses from water extraction practices.	Charles Sturt University	DPIRD	FW \$100,000	Completed
Marine stocking - Science-based sustainable and productive fisheries enhancement in NSW: The marine stocking program relies upon scientific evidence to underpin its success and sustainable growth into the future. This project outlines the ongoing research required as large-scale stocking of new species is commenced.		DPIRD	SW \$294,496	2023-24 activities completed
NSW Game Fish Tagging Program – the largest of its kind in the world: The NSW DPIRD Game Fish Tagging Program is the largest citizen science tagging program of its kind in the world and has been in operation since 1973. It uses anglers to obtain vital information on the biology of billfish, tunas, sharks and sport fish while encouraging fishers to participate in the management of the fishery.		DPIRD	SW \$215,292	2023-24 activities completed
Research Angler Program – Fish into fillets, frames into facts: The Research Angler Program is a citizen science initiative that aims to provide fishos with interesting and useful information relating to their catch while contributing valuable biological information to stock assessments and the management of key recreational fish species.		DPIRD	SW \$203,800	2023-24 activities completed
Building a stronger more sustainable freshwater recreational fishery in NSW- Phase 2: This project builds on the long-term recreational fishing monitoring and research program undertaken throughout NSW. The aim is to improve freshwater recreational fisheries in NSW which will result in economic, social and environmental benefits.		DPIRD	FW \$754,520	2023-24 activities completed

Platform: Research on fish and recreational fishing

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022–23	Project status
Developing genetic tools to improve management of captive Mulloway broodfish for stock enhancement: This research will develop hatchery and molecular techniques to select genetically diverse hatchery-reared Mulloway fingerlings (F1) of known sex and to on grow them to maturity in tanks. A breeding plan will be developed that will ensure fingerlings produced from the first generation broodfish will satisfy the essential genetic diversity criteria required for ongoing stocking into estuaries to boost recreational fishing. Mulloway remains a high priority for stocking in NSW.	University of the Sunshine Coast		SW \$93,486	Project underway
Informing sustainable multi-sector harvest of NSW Estuary Cockles: Informing the sustainable management of NSW Estuary Cockle, including the burgeoning recreational harvest, filling critical knowledge gaps in their reproductive biology and ecology and in understanding resource use among sectors.		DPIRD	SW \$60,000	Project underway
State-wide recreational fishing survey and charter boat monitoring: The project seeks continuation of funding for the state-wide recreational fishing survey program, which includes 1) an ongoing time series of state-wide recreational fisheries catch, effort, and socioeconomic data, and 2) ongoing monitoring of the Charter Boat Fishery. The information collected is essential for monitoring, assessment and management of recreational fisheries, and broader fisheries resources within NSW.		DPIRD	SW \$862,663 FW \$95,851	2023-24 activities completed
Monitoring of changes in Lake Macquarie Blue Swimmer Crab populations following the recent regulation change: The project will monitor for potential changes in the Blue Swimmer Crab population following the removal of the crab traps closure in Lake Macquarie, comparing data collected following the regulation change with independent surveys from 2018-2021 and a reference estuary monitored over the same time frame.		DPIRD	SW \$10,835	
Making More Maccas: This project will augment the current Macquarie perch recovery actions by providing support for genetic enhancement, population monitoring, relocation of introduced species, eDNA surveys and captive breeding efforts.		DPIRD	FW \$132,761	2023-24 activities completed
NSW DPIRD Freshwater Fish Tagging: This project will increase the number of fish tagged and broaden the species included in the current tagging program. This will focus on increasing the number of tagged fish released by NSW DPIRD trout hatcheries and expanding the locations of where these fish are stocked. Tagging of native species is also proposed.		DPIRD	FW \$10,000	2023-24 activities completed
Provision of Annual Report for the Gamefish Tagging Program for 2022/2023: Provision of an informative, attractive and readily accessible report on the Gamefish Tagging Program for the year 2022/2023.	Pepperell Research & Consulting Pty Ltd		SW \$7,000	Project underway

Platform: Research on fish and recreational fishing

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Monitoring and Research on Landed Fish at Game Fishing Tournaments in NSW: 2023/24: The project organises, facilitates and conducts monitoring, sampling and biological research on billfish, tuna, sharks and other gamefish captured and weighed at the major game fishing tournaments in NSW.	Pepperell Research & Consulting Pty Ltd		SW \$34,200	Project underway
Utilisation of modified habitats, rehabilitated sites and conservation areas by fishes in Kamay (Botany Bay): This project seeks to provide a quantitative understanding of the movement patterns and habitat usage of recreationally and commercially important fish species within Kamay (Botany Bay).	University of Sydney		SW \$89,077 SW \$68,853 (2024/25)	Project yet to commence
NSW Game Fish Tournament Monitoring: Collate data to support fisheries research and management of game fish species and to strengthen negotiations between recreational fishers, Government and other interested organisations regarding fishery access and resource sustainability.	Ghosn Consulting Services		SW \$87,000	Project underway

Platform: Enforcement of fishing rules

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Coastal Fisheries Officers x 9: Funding for 9 coastal fisheries officers maintaining capacity of NSW DPIRD to enforce fisheries rules and regulations including recreational fishing fee requirement across NSW coastal areas.		DPIRD	SW \$1,432,482	2023-24 activities completed
Coastal Recreational Mobile Squad Officers x 3: Funding for 3 regional mobile squad officers maintaining capacity of NSW DPIRD to enforce saltwater recreational rules and regulations in particular recreational fishing fee requirements whilst patrolling popular fishing areas including recreational fishing havens.		DPIRD	SW \$482,389	2023-24 activities completed
Inland Fisheries Officers x 6: Funding for 6 inland fisheries officers maintaining capacity of NSW DPIRD to enforce fisheries rules and regulations including recreational fishing fee requirement across NSW inland areas.		DPIRD	FW \$954,988	2023-24 activities completed

Platform: Licence fee payment system & Trust management

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
RFFTEC/RFSTEC meeting expenses: The Recreational Fishing Saltwater and Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committees (RFSTEC and RFFTEC) are advisory sub-committees of the Ministerial Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW) that review applications for funding and make recommendations on priorities for expenditure from the Recreational Fishing Trusts.		DPIRD (on behalf of RFFTEC & RFSTEC)	SW \$38,200 FW \$38,200	2023-24 activities completed
Recreational Fishing Trust Executive Officer: The officer is responsible for the overall coordination and financial management of the Recreational Fishing Trusts to facilitate a transparent and accountable Trust system, on behalf of the recreational fishing community. This includes implementation of good governance processes to ensure collection and transfer of licence revenue to the Trusts, disbursement of funds to Trust projects and ensuring quality delivery of project outcomes to improve recreational fishing.		DPIRD	SW \$269,548	2023-24 activities completed
Recreational Fishing NSW (RFNSW) consultation and meeting expenses: RFNSW advises the Minister for Primary Industries on recreational fishery policy issues including maintaining and improving the quality of recreational fishing opportunities.		DPIRD (on behalf of RFNSW)	SW \$65,590 FW \$28,110	2023-24 activities completed
Recreational Fishing Facilities and Grants Management: To target angler identified gaps in fishing facilities throughout NSW, including fishing platforms, fish cleaning facilities and waterway access infrastructure. To provide support to the Trust Executive Officer for financial and auditing management of Trust programs to ensure timely and quality service delivery. The role provides quality advice to the public on all Trust enquiries and application development.		DPIRD	SW \$177,916 FW \$19,768	2023-24 activities completed
Recreational Fishing Trust grants administration program – supporting the delivery of Trust funded projects: To improve the delivery and performance of Recreational Fishing Trust funded projects by assigning essential resourcing to grants administration and management. The position facilitates funding agreements to applicants, receives milestone reports and final reports, processes project invoices and purchase orders for Trust grants etc. It is an integral position of the Trust management team to facilitate effective governance controls including audits and monitoring to maintain and improve the standard of project delivery and accountability across all Trust funded projects.		DPIRD	SW \$149,290	2023-24 activities completed

Platform: Licence fee payment system & Trust management

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2022-23	Project status
Recreational Fisher Licence Research Database (tender administered by NSW DPIRD): This project involves data entry of fishers' details from 1 and 3-year paper fishing licenses by an external consultant onto the Recreational Angling database for research and management purposes. Angler details on paper licenses sold at fishing tackle stores are required to be data entered which enables electronic transfer of this data to the main database of licence holders. The data is used to send out licence renewal notices but is also in angler research surveys. This data entry project includes data validation and duplication checks of the paper licence information.		DPIRD (external contractor with tender administered by NSW DPIRD)	SW \$31,500 FW \$13,500	2023-24 activities completed
Recreational Fishing Fee Renewal Notice System: Involves an efficient licence renewal notice system (via external contractor) to provide opportunity for recreational fishers to renew their fee when it expires. The notice gets sent out to around 250,000 licence holders per year and has a range of licence payment options to make it convenient for fishers to renew their licence.		DPIRD (external contractor with tender administered by NSW DPIRD)	SW \$86,000 FW \$36,850	2023-24 activities completed
Recreational Fishing Licensing (Fee) project – facilitating fishing licenses for fishers: Provides for the safe and secure collection of recreational fishing licenses fees (public money) which are deposited into the Recreational Fishing Trusts on a daily basis. It provides a convenient payment network for anglers using a variety of methods such as a dedicated webpage, sales agents (fishing tackle stores etc) throughout NSW, BPAY, automated telephone, and even mail. It caters for all types of anglers. There is 1) an electronic sales platform provided by Service NSW - Government Licensing Service (GLS) which DPIRD uses to manage electronic licenses and 2) a manual payment system of agents run exclusively by DPIRD.		DPIRD	SW \$1,113,531 FW \$476,000	2023-24 activities completed
Recreational Fishing Licensing – Government Licensing Service (GLS) fees: This project provides for payment of licence transaction fees to Service NSW for recreational fishing licenses processed through the Government Licensing Service database platform. The GLS platform is utilised by DPIRD and other government agencies to provide a convenient payment network for the recreational fishing licence and transfer of revenue into the Recreational Fishing Trusts. This application covers transaction fees payable to GLS on a quarterly basis.		DPIRD (transaction fees payable to Service NSW)	SW \$560,000 FW \$240,000	Project completed
Inland fishing services for anglers - co-ordinates grants for Dollar-for-Dollar stocking and Fuel Cards, RFFTEC and associated sub groups and develops fishing policies and regulations, to enhance fishing opportunities: This project co-ordinates Trust funded fishing grants for community fuel cards and the Dollar-for-Dollar native fish stocking program. It also coordinates the running of RFFTEC and its various subgroups such as the Fuel Card Evaluation Panel, Gaden Hatchery Management Advisory Committee, as well as the Snow Lakes Working Group and Trout Allocation Committee. The program also plays a key role in developing fishing strategies and plans to enhance fishing access and amenity.		DPIRD	FW \$204,684	2023-24 activities completed

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