



Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee Outcomes, 44th meeting

St George Rowing Club, Sydney

13 June 2014

Attendees

Bruce Schumacher (Chair), Max Graham (Region 1) Ron Butler (Region 2), Ron Croker (Region 3), Ian Ward (Region 4), Tom Williams (Region 5), Debbie Lennon (Region 6), Richard Ping Kee (Region 7), Kevin McKinnon (Region 8), Peter Turnell (NSW DPI).

1. Chairs introduction

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Confirmation of outcomes from previous RFFTEC meeting

The draft outcomes of the 43rd RFFTEC meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting. Moved: Max Graham Seconded: Ron Croker

3. Action items from previous meetings

The progress of action items from the previous meeting was noted.

4. Recreational Fishing Trust Report

The status of the Freshwater Trust was presented. Meeting reports for Trust funded programs were submitted by project managers to enable committee members to review progress of projects prior to the meeting. DPI advised that the number of electronic licence sales continues to increase with a corresponding decrease in manual methods, such as licence agents. The Government Licensing Service has also recently launched a smartphone application for purchasing and renewing a fishing licence, which includes a facility to store your licence on your phone.

DPI also advised that the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) has completed a statewide review titled: Reforming licensing in NSW. The review aims to identify all licence types in NSW and prioritise those where reform would produce the most red tape savings. Recreational fishing licences were included in the review and IPART recommended that: By end of 2014, the Government should review the recreational fishing licence using the Licensing Framework with respect to duration, fee setting and administration. DPI will be undertaking the review as recommended.

Community EOI for Trust programs

A community expression of interest for Trust funded programs was advertised by the Department and widely circulated using a media release, Newscast, mail outs to fishing clubs, councils, the Department's website and other networks. The closing date for submission of new applications was Monday 14 April 2014. Over 50 applications were received by DPI.

Ongoing promotion of recreational fishing trust programs

The Committee was advised that the 2014 saltwater and freshwater recreational fishing guides had been reprinted and distributed through the various networks during the busy Easter fishing period, including licence agents, Fisheries Officers and Fishcare Volunteers. It is proposed that another Trust promotional

video be produced to enhance community awareness of Trust programs and initiatives. The DPI website will also be updated to show a geographical distribution of fishing licence expenditure in NSW. A DPI Fisheries Facebook page is also being used to promote recreational fishing articles, including programs funded by the Recreational Fishing Trusts.

Action item: For DPI to distribute recreational fishing guides to expenditure committee members.

6. Fisheries NSW Strategic research plan

The Fisheries NSW Strategic Research Plan 2014-2018 has been developed and published. The strategic plan provides a framework to guide the development of future research projects across a range of priority programs, which include threats to fishery resources; sustainable fish harvest; ecosystem assessment; aquatic biodiversity; sustainable aquaculture; fishery enhancement and fish habitat improvement.

A table of recreational fisheries research priorities previously developed by ACoRF, as part of the previous research strategy titled: Planning Strategic Research for Wild Fisheries, Aquatic Ecosystems and Aquaculture in NSW (updated in 2011), was provided to members. The 2011 strategy contains a series of priorities previously identified by recreational, commercial, aquaculture, research and conservation consultative committees (note: many of the priorities were jointly identified by various consultative committees).

It was noted that many of the research topics listed in the table had been completed or were underway. The Chair invited committee members to submit specific priorities for the development of a new recreational fishing stakeholder research priority list for 2014 and beyond. A template for listing new research program priorities was distributed to committee members.

Action item: RFFTEC to submit any specific inland stakeholder research priorities by the next RFFTEC meeting.

7. Review of new 2014/15 Trust funding applications

The committee reviewed new Freshwater and joint Freshwater/Saltwater Trust grant applications (large and small grants). Funding recommendations with respect to each project were forwarded to ACoRF for subsequent recommendations to the Minister for consideration. Meeting recommendations as considered by the Minister are provided in Tables 1 and 3. One project was referred to the Habitat Action Program for review in a subsequent round of funding.

8. Murray crayfish research

Standardised crayfish sampling is being undertaken at 54 sites within Murrumbidgee, Murray and Edward/Wakool catchments including Blowering, Burrinjuck and Talbingo Dams. Murray crayfish were found to be locally rare in the Murrumbidgee River below Darlington Point, in the Murray River below Swan Hill and in the Edward/Wakool region. Murray Crayfish tissue samples have been sent to Melbourne University for analysis. Follow up sampling at long-term monitoring sites within the Murray River is planned in future, to track temporal trends in Murray crayfish populations in blackwater affected and unaffected areas. Collaborative funding from Murray Local Land Services has been secured for further investigations into distribution and changes in population structure of Murray Crayfish within the Edward/Wakool and Murray irrigation areas.

9. Get hooked it's fun to fish

A total of 95 schools have registered for the Get Hooked program in 2014 with over 4840 school students participating this year, including a large number of schools in regional inland areas. A new Get Hooked teachers manual was launched in 2014. A Get Hooked Crab Mascot naming and colouring in competition was held for all registered schools to promote interest in the program. The end of year Get Hooked fishing workshops were run over an 8 week period including 3 new fishing locations: Jervis Bay; Ballina and Wee Jasper. The inland fisheries advisory trailer was used at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and over 81,000 contacts were made during the 14 day event.

10. General business

Freshwater catfish research: A habitat mapping report is currently being finalised to provide information on areas suitable for possible future catfish reintroductions. Any future catfish reintroductions would be subject to the completion of a review of environmental factors and an associated threatened species research program.

Tallowa Dam high fishway: A Tallowa Dam fish lift report is being completed. Research shows that the fish lift provides successful upstream fish passage to many fish species when in operation, however the fish lift has been subject to mechanical issues since its commissioning, which has reduced its overall effectiveness. Downstream fish migration over the modified spillway gate has been successful with fish travelling over the spillway continuing to exhibit normal movement and spawning behaviour.

Action item: DPI to distribute the report on the effectiveness of the Tallowa Dam high fishway to expenditure committee members when completed.

Retirement of Director Fisheries Compliance: Mr Glenn Tritton, Director Fisheries Compliance will be retiring from DPI in July 2014. Mr Tritton has worked for the department for more than 35 years and has extensive corporate, legal and executive experience relating to fisheries law enforcement and the management of fisheries resources.

Action item: That the Chair write a letter to Mr Tritton acknowledging the longstanding contribution of Mr Tritton in fisheries compliance and fisheries resources protection.

Snowy lakes trout fishery: A Snowy Lakes Trout Strategy meeting and a community forum were held in May 2014 to discuss the ongoing management of the Snowy lakes fishery. A meeting was also held with fisheries researchers (attended by former fisheries scientist Dr Richard Tilzey, Dr Michel Dedual - a leading scientist from the Department of Conservation in New Zealand and existing DPI hatchery, management and compliance staff) to consider future research options for the Snowy lakes fishery. Two new research priority areas were identified as a result of these meetings: a limnological survey of Lakes Eucumbene and Jindabyne and an angler survey to quantify species composition in the Snowy lakes as well as catch rates and angler satisfaction. Outcomes of the public forum will be communicated through the Department's website.

Committee member expenses: The committee questioned whether committee meeting payments could be reviewed including the sitting fee payment rate, an additional payment for reading / application assessment and other incidental costs related to the meeting.

Action item: DPI will investigate, within the Department of Premier and Cabinet guidelines, any potential scope for additional committee meeting payments.

12. Next meetings

The next meeting is scheduled for 19 September 2014 in Sydney.

13. Meeting closed

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 1.30 pm.

14. Action items

| Action items | Group responsible | Status |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. To distribute recreational fishing guides to expenditure committee members | Recreational Fisheries Management | Completed |
| 2. RFFTEC to submit any specific inland stakeholder research priorities by the next RFFTEC meeting | Expenditure committee members | Completed |
| 3. To distribute the report on the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Tallowa Dam Fishway to committee members when completed | Recreational Fisheries Management / Aquatic Ecosystems Unit | Pending completion of the report |
| 4. Chair to write a letter of acknowledgement to the Director Fisheries Compliance on the Director's impending retirement | Chair / Recreational Fisheries Management | Completed |
| 5. NSW DPI will investigate, within the Department of Premier and Cabinet guidelines, any potential scope for additional committee meeting payments | Recreational Fisheries Management (Geoffrey Barrett) | Completed |
| 6. Refer the Lansdowne River Access funding application to the Habitat Action Program | Recreational Fisheries Management / Conservation Action Unit | Completed |
| 7. Refer the lower Murray River golden perch recreational catch monitoring proposal to the Aquatic Ecosystems Unit for budget revision and future collaboration opportunities between NSW DPI and the Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre / La Trobe University | Recreational Fisheries Management / Aquatic Ecosystems Unit | Completed |

Table 1: New Trust project applications supported by RFFTEC for funding**Platform: Recreational fishing enhancement programs**

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------|
| <p>Revamp the fingerling tanks</p> <p>To install 7 new fish tanks, 7 fish tank stands and 10 heaters at the hatchery and install 1 new air pump for broodstock and fingerling holding ponds.</p> <p>SUPPORTED. Moved Ron Croker Seconded Richard Ping Kee. Will enhance fish breeding capacity of a non-for-profit community run fish hatchery, accredited under the HQAS. Ian Ward declared a potential conflict of interest.</p> | Bingara Anglers Club and Hatchery | \$14,529 |

Platform: Fishing access and facilities

Small Project

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|--|-----------------|---------|
| <p>Black Lake alive</p> <p>Involves installation of a fish cleaning table, information board highlighting pertinent locations/advice/hints and tips, production of tri fold brochure aimed at increasing recreational fishing and skills development sessions.</p> <p>SUPPORTED. Moved Kevin McKinnon Seconded Debbie Lennon. The Committee supported funding for installation of the fish cleaning table component of the project only, to provide a fish cleaning facility for recreational fishers at Black Lake.</p> | Bombala Council | \$2,100 |

Platform: Aquatic habitat protection and rehabilitation

Small Project

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|--|------------------------------|----------|
| <p>Support for the NSW Fish Habitat Partnership, Working together for healthy fish habitat</p> <p>Provision of administration Support for the NSW Fish Habitat Partnership in the form of contributions towards the salary of an Executive Officer (EO), meeting, communication and administrative costs and Chairperson expense allowances.</p> <p>SUPPORTED. Moved Ian Ward. Seconded Ron Butler. The program provides administrative support for a new independent initiative to improve the health of aquatic ecosystems. Funding is supported subject to the contribution of funding from all other funding partners listed in the application.</p> | NSW Fish Habitat Partnership | \$10,000 |

Platform: Research on fish and recreational fishing

Small Project

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|---|---|----------|
| <p>Clarence ‘Fishtrack’</p> <p>The Clarence River Fish Monitoring Program – Fishtrack, commenced in 2006. Over 400 fish have been tagged and tracked from seven species. An acoustic tagging component includes ~80 stations which covers approximately 600 km of river.</p> <p>SUPPORTED. Moved Ron Butler Seconded Max Graham. The project will increase knowledge of freshwater fish passage in the Clarence river catchment. DPI representative Cameron Westaway declared a potential conflict of interest.</p> | NSW DPI | \$10,000 |
| <p>Closing the net on carp in the Upper Murrumbidgee</p> <p>This project will support the UMDR-Scottsdale Carp Research project which will investigate carp movement, biology and control methods to support recovery of native fisheries in the upper Murrumbidgee catchment.</p> <p>SUPPORTED. Moved Max Graham. Seconded Ron Croker. The project will support research into the biology and passage of carp populations and investigate carp removal options such as use of advanced viral control technologies.</p> | Capital Region Fishing Alliance | \$9,500 |
| <p>Interactions between Australian Bass and the invasive Eastern Mosquito Fish: Implications for Stocking Programs</p> <p>This study will assess the effect of the invasive Eastern Mosquito fish, <i>Gambusia holbrooki</i>, on the success of Australian Bass stocking with a combination of manipulative laboratory experiments and field studies.</p> <p>SUPPORTED. Moved Tom Williams. Seconded Ron Butler. The project will support research into interactions of <i>Gambusia holbrooki</i> with juvenile Australian bass populations.</p> | University of Wollongong | \$3,098 |
| <p>Improving our understanding of the values, beliefs, motivations and attitudes of recreational fishers in NSW</p> <p>The study will explore how the values, beliefs and motivations of fishers influence the attitudes and behaviours of different segments of the recreational fishing community.</p> <p>SUPPORTED. Moved Ian Ward. Seconded Ron Butler. The project will provide valuable insights into the social values and benefits of recreational fishing, including a demographic profile of fishers involved in recreational fishing and interaction of the activity with the community.</p> | University of Wollongong, Australian Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS) | \$31,034 |

Table 2: New trust project application deferred by RFFTEC**Platform: Aquatic habitat protection and rehabilitation**

Small Project

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| Lansdowne River Access | Lansdowne Fishing Club | \$2,725 |

This project involves clearing and providing an additional building for boat/canoe access to a freshwater section of Lansdowne river for the instruction of junior fisherman and community access.

DEFERRED. Moved Max Graham. Seconded Ron Croker. The Committee recommended that the Lansdowne River Access proposal be referred on to the Habitat Action Program for consideration.

Table 3: New Trust Project Applications not supported by RFFTEC**Platform: Fishing access and facilities**

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|--|---------------------------|----------|
| Fish Cleaning Table (4 person) at Malpas Dam Provision of a quality fish cleaning table on site at Malpas Dam. NOT SUPPORTED. Moved Kevin McKinnon. Seconded Richard Ping Kee. Whilst a fence style has been erected at the entrance gate on Malpas Dam Road, public access to the Malpas Dam foreshore and proposed fish cleaning table area is limited, would not be utilised by the general public and requires further improvement. The application did not show contributing funds from the Armidale / Dumaresq Council or St Kilda Fishing Club towards the project. Max Graham declared a potential conflict of interest. | St Kilda Fishing Club Inc | \$15,120 |

Platform: Recreational fishing education

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|---|------------------------------|----------|
| Adding Freshwater angling information to the NSW Waterways Guide www.waterwaysguide.org.au Involves modifying the web based NSW Waterways guide to include freshwater fishing regulations, angler access information and information about investment in habitat protection and anglers facilities. NOT SUPPORTED. Moved. Ron Butler Seconded Ian Ward. Freshwater Trusts funds have been previously allocated to develop of an angler access strategy to address access issues on a river reach basis and to provide anglers with information that will assist them in accessing rivers. Web delivery of access locations and site details is planned in the future. | Paddle NSW | \$38,000 |
| Burren Junction Fishing Club Carp Muster 2015 This project will aid reduction of the pest fish (European Carp) by having a community carp muster. NOT SUPPORTED. Moved. Kevin McKinnon Seconded Debbie Lennon. As a matter of policy, Recreational Fishing Trust funds are not normally used to fund recreational fishing competitions, including carp control fishing events. | Burren Junction Fishing Club | \$2,000 |

Platform: Recreational fishing education

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|---|--------------------|---------|
| <p>Fun and Effective ‘Best Practise Sustainable Fishing’ for Inland Native Fish</p> <p>To produce 6 videos to promote fishing tourism within country NSW and to educate anglers on the use of circle hooks for a sustainable future.</p> <p>NOT SUPPORTED. Moved. Max Graham Seconded Ian Ward. As a matter of policy, Recreational Fishing Trust funds are not normally used to fund material developed for a primarily commercial purpose or to provide a marketing advantage to a commercial enterprise. Recreational Fishing Trust funds have been previously allocated towards production of advisory material on effective catch and release methodologies.</p> | Geagle Productions | \$9,750 |

| | | |
|---|-------------|----------|
| <p>Additional community fishing sports shows at clubs and organisations in regional NSW in 2014/15</p> <p>To provide, promote and engage regional communities with an entertaining informative and interactive fishing show/clinic in conjunction with a sporting show, media and sporting personalities, entertainment and coaching.</p> <p>NOT SUPPORTED. Moved. Debbie Lennon Seconded Richard Ping Kee. As a matter of policy, Recreational Fishing Trust funds are not normally used to fund a commercial operation or provide a marketing advantage to a commercial enterprise. Specific contractual and sponsorship obligations also apply to explicitly endorsing a commercial entity or its products. It is noted that the radio program is already hosting fishing talk back shows within regional NSW and is reaching listeners within regional communities.</p> | 2SM Hi-Tide | \$25,000 |
|---|-------------|----------|

Platform: Research on fish and recreational fishing

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
|--|-----------------|----------|----------|
| <p>High Fishways Study</p> <p>To critically analyse the necessity, performance and costs of fishways at dams to improve recreational fisheries resources, enhance fish conservation and facilitate cost-effective design choices for high fishways.</p> <p>NOT SUPPORTED. Moved. Kevin McKinnon Seconded Ron Croker. While fish passage improvements at high level structures are considered valuable, such improvements are not considered a priority for funding at the time. Recreational Fishing Trust funds have been allocated towards remediation of fish passage at low level impediments (e.g. low-level weirs, causeways), due to the improved ecological outcomes that can be achieved through fishway offsets and the substantial cost of high level fishways. Trust funds are also being utilised for assessment of riverine developments to prevent future obstructions to fish passage in aquatic ecosystems.</p> | Harris Research | \$82,600 | \$35,400 |

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|---|---|-----------|
| <p>The recreational fishery in the lower Murray River (Toolybuc-SA): What's the catch?</p> <p>Estimate the total annual recreational catch and effort (all fin-fish species) and compare with previous estimates from 5-years ago for the NSW lower Murray River. Will also compare age-structure of golden perch between recreational catches and populations.</p> <p>NOT SUPPORTED. Moved. Kevin McKinnon Seconded Ron Croker. While the expenditure committee acknowledged the benefits of the project, the proposal was considered similar to another creel survey project currently underway by DPI and may inadvertently overlap or duplicate aspects of that existing research. The budget of the proposal should be reviewed in light of the DPI creel survey, which is being undertaken at a lower cost to the proposal. The committee also recommended that further consultation between DPI and the applicant could be undertaken, with a view to developing a more collaborative/integrated program for future submission. DPI representative Cameron Westaway declared a potential conflict of interest.</p> | The Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre and La Trobe University | \$177,000 |
| <p>Evaluating recreational fishers' knowledge of, and adherence to, sustainable fishing principles</p> <p>Distribution and analysis of a survey assessing knowledge of and adherence to sustainable fishing principles will provide data that could inform decisions regarding effective communication strategies for evidence-based sustainable fishing guidelines</p> <p>NOT SUPPORTED. Moved. Kevin McKinnon Seconded Ron Butler. The application appeared to focus on saltwater recreational fishing activities. Recreational Fishing Trust funds have been used for research into sustainable fishing practices and the production of sustainable fishing publications. DPI is currently implementing codes of practice in NSW which promote safe and responsible recreational fishing activities. DPI representative Bryan van der Walt declared a potential conflict of interest.</p> | National Marine Science Centre (NMSC), Southern Cross University | \$18,034 |
| <p>Identifying the health, well-being benefits and potential to use recreational fishing as a rehabilitative service to the Disabled/Special Needs Community</p> <p>This project aims to investigate the physical, mental health and rehabilitative benefits of recreational angling within the disabled/special needs community by way of provision of regular fishing clinics resulting in data collection and analysis throughout the Western Sydney region.</p> <p>NOT SUPPORTED. Moved. Kevin McKinnon Seconded Ron Croker. The application appeared to focus on saltwater recreational fishing activities. Recreational Fishing Trusts funds have been previously allocated to state wide "Fishcare", "Get Hooked its fun to fish" and "Fishing Workshops" programs, including running clinics for special needs groups and persons with disabilities.</p> | Professional Fishing Instructors & Guides Association (PFIGA) | \$96,000 |

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|---|---|----------|
| <p>Women in Fishing Initiative</p> <p>This project involves a scoping study to identify the current barriers and constraints for women and fishing; identify current drivers and opportunities; and develop an action plan for the future. The study would examine international case studies and draw on the successes in places such as Canada and United States of America. The project would also run a scoping workshop with relevant stakeholders to help develop the action plan.</p> <p>NOT SUPPORTED. Moved. Ron Croker Seconded Richard Ping Kee. While the expenditure committee acknowledged the benefits of increasing participation of women within recreational fishing, the application appeared to focus on Victorian recreational fishing activities, including surveys and interviews of fishers based in Victoria. The committee also noted there may be other methods for promoting an increase in participation of women within recreational fishing.</p> | Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body (VRFish) | \$24,354 |

Platform: Fishing fee coordination and payment network

| Project title and summary | Organisation | 2014/15 |
|---|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <p>Improving the efficiency of the sale of rec fishing licenses</p> <p>To establish a pilot study to assess the efficiency gains from establishing online-in store sales of NSW recreational fishing licenses. The lower the administration cost the more money for recreational fishing projects.</p> <p>NOT SUPPORTED. Moved. Ian Ward Seconded Ron Croker. A review of the recreational fishing licensing system is currently underway in response to the IPART review of licensing in NSW, which has identified licence reform priorities to reduce licensing red tape.</p> | Australian Fishing Tackle Association | \$92,000 |