



# Aquaculture News

Issue 16 July 2015

## East Coast Low storm assistance

The April storms that hit Port Stephens, Brisbane Water and Georges River growers caused some \$6M worth of damage. Initially low interest loans were made available to the Hunter and Central Coast growers. Then on 15 July, the Premier announced that grants of up to \$15,000 would also be made available to Port Stephens and Brisbane Water oyster businesses to replace broken infrastructure, motors and to buy spat. Applications for the grant can be made through the Rural Assistance Authority. For more information on this grant and other types of assistance and support. See:

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/emergency/flood>.



Premier Mike Baird with oyster growers Mark Salm, Dean and Stephen Cole announcing the grants. Photo from ABC News.

North coast oyster growers impacted by the second East Coast Low are also offered assistance. See:

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/permit-holder-information>

## NSW Oyster Industry Strategic Plan

The NSW Oyster Industry Strategic Plan funded by FRDC is complete and available on the web. The plan was prepared by ACIL Allen consultants and an Oyster Industry Steering Committee. The plan was finalised following discussion at North and South Coast oyster industry field days. The Strategy Steering Committee will now look to establish a joint industry government implementation group (see EOI page 5) to work under the auspices of the NSW Shellfish Committee. Thanks

go to Ian Crisp and Kel Henry Co-chairs and Noel Baggaley, Greg Carton, Richard Hamlyn-Harris, Caroline Henry, Kevin McAsh, Rex Marks, Tony Troup and Steve Verdich. See:

[http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/563004/nsw-oyster-strategy.pdf](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/563004/nsw-oyster-strategy.pdf)

## Jervis Bay leases approved

On the 27 January 2015, the Minister for Primary Industries announced that the Minister for Planning had approved 50 hectares of aquaculture leases in Jervis Bay on the State's South Coast. This followed submission of an EIS, draft Environmental Management Plan, visual amenity study and response to submissions received during exhibition.

Contact: Ian Lyall DPI 4916 3856

## Cage culture of Murray Cod

Griffith pond based Murray Cod producers came together at a NSW DPI workshop on 22 June 2015 to investigate how they could cooperatively develop their industry. The group considered: development approvals and Council interaction; fish husbandry; health management; feed; water quality; and access to markets both in Australia and overseas. Local Councils, NSW DPI marketing staff, Matt McLellan from Narrandera Fisheries Centre, NSW Food Authority, Brett Ingram from Victorian Fisheries and NSW DPI aquaculture and compliance staff contributed to the constructive round table discussions. Pond based Murray Cod producers in the south west of the state are utilising irrigation water through cage based farming in dams. This results in the water being used twice, value adding this precious resource.

Contact: Graeme Bowley DPI 4916 3845

## Oyster industry field days

Two oyster industry field days were held this year. The first was organised by the Hunter Local Land Services (HLLS) and held at Old Bar on 25-26 May. The second was organised by industry and NSW Farmers Association at Pambula on 28-29 May. Both field days were well attended with over 70 participants at Old Bar

and 65 at Pambula. These included growers, staff from all levels of government, industry organisations, research institutions and trade suppliers. Workshops discussing the draft NSW Oyster Industry Strategic Plan were a focus for the field days and other topics such as biosecurity, selective breeding, social licence and marketing were also covered. The field days were a great opportunity for networking. There was recognition by most participants that they needed to work together more cooperatively in future to achieve the shared goal of a viable, profitable and sustainable oyster industry. A highlight at the event dinner was the presentation of an *Outstanding Service Award to the NSW Oyster Industry* given to Tony Troup and Ray Tynan.

**Contact: Brian Hughes HLLS 6551 8994**

### NSW Aquaculture Investment Strategy

NSW DPI has identified the potential economic opportunities afforded by the aquaculture industry and is preparing a NSW Aquaculture Investment Strategy. An initiative of ARAC, the strategy will support the recapitalisation of existing business and attract new national and local investment. A working group of Jess Zealand, Matthew Wassnig, and Milada Safarik will work with NSW DPI and NSW Food Authority staff to develop the Strategy.

**Contact: Ian Lyall DPI 4916 3856**

### Lease Tenure Factsheet

NSW DPI has put together a new factsheet which provides information on lease tenures, lease renewals and lease mortgages. The new flyer can be downloaded from the department's website at

[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/)

**Contact: Raelene Trenaman DPI 4916 3843**

### Select Oyster Company (SOCo)

Spat rebates of up to \$1000 per grower are now available to subsidise the purchase of selected lines of Sydney Rock Oyster spat. SOCo urge you to claim and avoid missing out. At the NSW Oyster Industry Field Days SOCo discussed the breeding program, hatchery production, spat rebates, industry feedback and alternative species. Well done to Directors Tony Troup and Ray Tynan who were awarded for Outstanding Service Awards. Congratulations to winners of The Most Beautiful Unopened Oyster Contests: Todd Graham, Bruce Redmayne, Peter Cole, Angela and Leon Riepsamen who each won a trophy plate and a \$500 spat voucher for the purchase of selected lines of Sydney Rock Oysters. Ray Tynan, one of our longest standing board members has recently retired. Remembered for his integral part to SOCo's development and several research grants, he will be missed. A SOCo Board Member vacancy is now open to interested persons. In June, SOCo addressed the

audience about the merits and future of the breeding program at NSW Farmers Oysters in the House event at Parliament House. This year, over 10 million spat from the selected lines of Sydney Rock Oyster were sold to industry. Now is the time to make orders for 2015-2016 season.

**Contact: Emma Wilkie SOCo 0402 677 534**



Winner of the Most Beautiful Oyster Competition (Sydney Rock Oyster), Macleay River oyster grower Todd Graham, with Emma Wilkie SOCo and Steve McOrrie NSW DPI

### Socio-economic evaluation of coastal aquaculture

This FRDC funded project starts in July with a team of researchers led by Kate Barclay (University of Technology, Sydney) looking to undertake focus group meetings and grower surveys. Coastal land based aquaculture businesses and oyster farmers will be contacted. **Contact: Kate Barclay UTS 9514 1579**

### Hunter LLS Oyster Farm Profile Project

HLLS has been building partnerships with the oyster industry in the Manning, Wallis and Port Stephens estuaries. The main focus has been a pilot project to develop farm profiles. HLLS Estuary and Marine Officer Brian Hughes has been working with consultant Nick Bullock to complete the farm profiles which accurately describe each farmer's operation including production methods, materials used and opportunities for actions to improve sustainability. A map of each farmer's leases is produced and includes the infrastructure layout within each lease. Growers are now using it to plan for changes such as adopting new production methods. HLLS is now in the process of providing financial assistance to the farmers involved in the pilot project to implement "on-ground/in-water" actions to improve sustainability that were identified through the production of the farm profiles. Given the success of the pilot, HLLS is planning the expansion of the farm profile approach to other farmers in the region.

**Contact: Brian Hughes HLLS 6551 8994**

### NSW Farmers' Association

NSW Farmers' was very pleased to support the North and South Coast Oyster Industry Field Days. It was a positive and energising exercise that left no doubt about the opportunities for the industry. In early June NSW Farmers held a highly successful metro members event *Oysters in the House* at NSW Parliament House. The event was hosted by new Minister for Primary Industries, Lands and Water, Niall Blair MLC, in conjunction with oyster farmers who supplied tasty oysters for a full house of 130 guests. In addition to the Minister, Deputy Premier Troy Grant, Opposition Leader Luke Foley and the Opposition Spokesperson for Primary Industries, Lands and Water Mick Veitch attended. The event was an excellent opportunity to discuss policy with politicians and key department staff in a relaxed atmosphere, and the NSW grown oysters were delicious!

Contact: Jaimie Lovell NSW Farmers 9478 1008

### Land based aquaculture workshops

A Yabby and fish farming workshop and field day organised by the NSW Aquaculture Association was held in Griffith on the 13 & 14th March 2015 with 60 people attending the two day event. The workshop showed participants how to apply for permit approval and how to set up and manage an aquaculture business. The field day incorporated visits to local producers (Ian Charles & Mat Ryan) and the NSW DPI Narrandera Fisheries Centre. See: [www.nswaqua.com.au](http://www.nswaqua.com.au).



Cage growing of Murray Cod

A yabby field day is to be held by the NSW Aquaculture Association on the 8th August 2015 at Swan Bay, NSW. For further information see: [www.nswaqua.com.au](http://www.nswaqua.com.au).

### Operation Trident

Fisheries Compliance would like to encourage permit holders to report all incidents of oyster theft regardless of how large or small. Fisheries Officers work closely with NSW Police rural crime investigators to target peak times and locations when oyster theft is occurring. Fisheries Officers need timely and accurate information from permit holders. A new Operation Trident (oyster theft) reporting form has been developed and is available from your local Fisheries Office. This reporting form enables permit holders to notify the joint agency

Operation Trident. Fisheries Officers and NSW Police rural crime investigators are able to provide permit holders with advice on how to reduce the risk of theft from oyster leases.

Contact: Lee Burdett DPI 5524 0604

### HQAS audits

Audits were undertaken of five HQAS accredited hatcheries in southern NSW during March. These hatcheries produce Golden Perch, Murray Cod and Australian Bass for stocking into our rivers under the recreational fish stocking program. The department was pleased to note that all the hatcheries were compliant with the requirements of the HQAS program.

Contact: Graeme Bowley DPI 4916 3845

### Potential funding source for oyster farmers

The Federal Government provides grants to primary producers to encourage new technologies, develop business skills, improve market access, and other initiatives. See:

<http://governmentgrantsaustralia.org/agriculture-grants>

### Chemicals

NSW DPI Fisheries continues to work closely with the Silver Perch Growers Association and NSW Aquaculture Association to secure the access to chemicals. Discussions are ongoing with the Commonwealth and the National Aquaculture Council (NAC).

Contact: Ian Lyall DPI 4916 3856

### ARAC membership

ARAC comprises an independent chair and representatives of the oyster and non-oyster aquaculture industries. The Minister is seeking to appoint interested persons to the committee as membership terms are due to expire (current members can re-nominate). Submit an Expression of Interest by 31 July 2015. See: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/committees/arac>. Contact: Jo Pickles DPI 4916 3901

### Marine finfish research

Yellowtail Kingfish research has been given a boost in a recent funding announcement by Senator Barnaby Joyce. A consortium led by FRDC, including NSW DPI, South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) and Cleans Seas Tuna Ltd, has been successful in securing funds from a \$100 million 'Rural Research and Development for Primary Productivity' program. The project titled 'Growing a profitable, innovative and collaborative Australian Yellowtail Kingfish aquaculture industry: bringing 'white' fish to the market' has a total value of \$4.65 million with \$3 million being provided by the federal Department of Agriculture. The research will in part be carried out on the experimental Marine Aquaculture Research lease



established by NSW DPI to promote marine finfish culture in NSW and the research will focus on diet development and production technology.

Contact: Wayne O'Connor DPI 4916 3906

#### SMS service

NSW DPI continues to use a SMS notification service to provide permit holders with quick, easy access to industry alerts and reminders. Currently, we are reaching 85% of our permit holders through this service. If you have a mobile number and are not receiving these SMS alerts, please advise us.

Contact: Raelene Trenaman DPI 4916 3843

#### OceanWatch

OceanWatch has just commenced a program looking at returning Sydney Rock oyster reefs to Sydney Harbour for ecological benefit. More to follow as the program progresses. Contact: Simon Rowe 9660 2262

#### New format Aquaculture Permits

The simplified Aquaculture Permit and conditions have been issued to permit holders over the last couple of months. It is important to be aware of your responsibilities under your aquaculture permit. To assist you, an information sheet accompanied your newly issued permit documents. If you have not received a copy of your new aquaculture permit please advise us.

Contact: Raelene Trenaman DPI 4916 3843

#### New lease infrastructure

Oyster aquaculture permit holders are reminded of their responsibility to only install infrastructure that meets the best practice guidelines in OISAS – particularly the visual amenity criteria. These guidelines are designed to ensure that the industry has a professional image and can rightly argue that they take their estuarine stewardship responsibilities seriously. As Oceanwatch's Andy Myers argued at the industry field days, public opinion matters because without the support of other waterway users your right to farm may be threatened.

Contact: Steve McOrrie DPI 4916 3921 or your local Fisheries Officer

#### Lease policy for overcatch and 'neat and tidy'

Shellfish Committee has endorsed the preparation of a new NSW DPI policy on overcatch management and neat and tidy provisions. Industry representatives are being sought to work with Compliance and Aquaculture Management Officers to put the policy together. The aim of this work is to provide an agreed and consistent approach to compliance standards for dealing with overcatch and a range of neat and tidy issues. To nominate for the working group please contact Tim Gippel DPI 4916 3823.

#### Crown Land grant for derelict Oyster Lease Clean up

Crown Lands have provided a \$90,000 grant to NSW DPI for the clean-up of derelict oyster leases. Contractors have been cleaning up leases in the Hawkesbury River, Port Stephens and Brisbane Water. The grant will enable the removal of leases that pose a navigational hazard and/or visual amenity issue.

Contact: Katie Sachs DPI 4916 3913

#### Sydney Royal Easter Show

NSW DPI ran an educational stand at the Sydney Royal Easter Show this year and included a mini oyster farm. The stand was situated in the Food Farm pavilion, targeting young people and promoting 'where your food comes from'. More than 850,000 people visited the show so it was a great opportunity to showcase the NSW aquaculture industry.



Dr Geoff Allan Deputy Director General Fisheries with Fiona Simson and Board Members of NSW Farmers Association  
NSW DPI Royal Easter Show exhibit



Jo and Gary Rodely receiving the Fine Food Champion Oyster Award with Polly Bennett (NSWFA)

#### Tilapia detected in NSW

Towards the end of 2014 Aquatic Biosecurity confirmed the presence of the pest fish Tilapia (*Oreochromis mossambicus*) in Bogangar Canal, Cabarita Beach in northern NSW. This is the first known incursion of Tilapia in NSW, however there are known populations in Qld in close proximity to the NSW border. Aquatic Biosecurity is working with Fisheries NSW to determine the extent of the incursion, and encourages anyone that suspects

they have seen a Tilapia outside of the Cabarita Beach area to **contact Aquatic Biosecurity DPI 4982 1232**.



Tilapia (*Oreochromis mossambicus*) caught at Bogangar Canal. Photo NSW DPI

#### Aquaculture Committees meeting summaries:

Ministerial Fisheries Advisory Council

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/consultation>

Shellfish Committee

<http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry/industry-sector-requirements/shellfish/nsw-shellfish-committee>

Aquaculture Research Advisory Committee

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/committees/arac>

Land Based Aquaculture Consultative Group

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/committees/land-based>

#### Bill Talbot retires

After a distinguished career going back to 1981 Bill Talbot, Director Aquaculture and Aquatic Environment, retired 3 July 2015. Bill pioneered marine fish breeding

techniques at PSFI and was a strong advocate for sustainable aquaculture. Congratulations Bill from the all staff at Fisheries and best wishes for the future.

#### Fish diet development

The PSFI Aquaculture Nutrition Research Unit at PSFI recently partnered with Skretting Australia and Pejo Enterprises to conduct research on the use of high energy diets for barramundi. One aim of the research was to determine if increasing the energy content (lipid level) of barramundi feeds could improve growth and FCR while another was to determine how blending different amounts of fish oil, poultry oil and canola oil in feeds affected carcass fillet composition. A summer temperature trial was conducted with larger 0.9kg barramundi in recirculating tanks at NSW DPI's PSFI and a winter temperature trial was conducted in farm ponds at Pejo Enterprises, FNQ. High energy test feeds were compared to a standard commercial barramundi feed over more than 3 months. The research indicated that use of high energy feeds improved growth rate and lowered FCR at both winter and summer temperature profiles. Higher lipid diets resulted in fillets with a higher fat content. Fatty acid analysis revealed that fish fed the high energy diet containing canola oil had significantly lower levels of saturated fatty acids but higher levels of beneficial omega-6 and omega-3's than the other diets. This research was presented at the International Symposium on Fish Nutrition & Feeding (ISFNF) in Cairns in 2014. **Contact: Mark Booth DPI 4916 3816**

Aquaculture News is a newsletter from the team at NSW DPI.

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#### Expressions of Interest sought

Oyster farmers are invited to join an Implementation Group to progress the NSW Oyster Industry Strategy. The Group would comprise five to ten industry members from across the State. Ian Crisp and Kel Henry, co-chairs of the Steering Committee, are nominating to ensure continuity. Agencies or other bodies with relevant expertise would be included as required. It is anticipated that the Group would run for up to two years to ensure the recommendations in the Strategy are addressed. Most business will be conducted by telelink or email.

**Contact: Ian Crisp 0427 394 388 or Kel Henry 0477 054 590 by 15 July**

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