



**Recreational
Fishing Trusts**

***Recreational Fishing Freshwater
Trust Expenditure Committee***

MINUTES

**15TH RFFTEC MEETING
6 February, 2003**

**Meeting Room, Narrandera Fisheries Centre
Buckingbong Road, Narrandera**

**Fifteenth Meeting of the NSW
Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure
Committee
MINUTES**

6.2.03, 10:30am to 3.30pm
Meeting Room, Narrandera Fisheries Centre
Buckingbong Road, Narrandera

Attendance

Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee Members

Bruce Schumacher	Chair
Doug Joyner	Region 2
Steve Tooley	Region 3
Elizabeth Brodbeck	Region 4
Debbie Lennon	Region 6
Richard Ping Kee	Region 7
Kevin McKinnon	Region 8
Steve Rudder (representing Janine Rudder)	Region 1

NSW Fisheries (observers)

Mr Cameron Westaway, Senior Fisheries Manager (Inland)
Ms Dee McElligott, State Co-ordinator, Fishcare Volunteer Program
Mr Peter Cummings, Education Officer
Mr Gary Henry, Project Manager, National Angling Survey
Mr Bob Faragher, Scientific Officer, Recreational Freshwater
Mr Steven Thurston Hatchery Manager
Mr Peter Angel District Fisheries Officer

Business

Chair's introduction
Chair's welcome to members
Confirmation of minutes from previous meeting
Business arising (action items from last meeting)

Agenda items

1. Weir review program and innovative fishways program (Cameron Lay)
2. L.P. Dutton Hatchery water temperature review report by Professor Losordo (Cameron Westaway)
3. Carp Assessment and Reduction Program (CARP) update
4. Progress of the recreational fish stocking fishery management strategy and associated environmental assessments (Cameron Westaway)
5. Update on community education programs and quotations for the purchase of inland advisory trailers (Dee McElligott / Peter Cummings)
6. Outcomes of the National Recreational Fishing Survey (Gary Henry)
7. Expression of interest to submit proposals funded from recreational fishing trusts (Cameron Westaway)
8. Progress on aspects of the assessment of stocking program and anglers' catch research program (Bob Faragher)
9. Freshwater trust project account reports (Cameron Westaway)
10. Modifications to yabby traps (Cameron Westaway)
11. Update on the progress of the Dollar-for-Dollar Native Fish Stocking Program (Cameron Westaway)
12. Enhanced fish production program update (Cameron Westaway)
13. Native fish breeding program, Narrandera Fisheries Centre (Stephen Thurstan)
14. Freshwater Trust project pro-forma summary reports (Cameron Westaway)

Apologies

Mrs Janine Rudder (Region 1) Steve Rudder attended the meeting in place of Mrs Rudder
Mr Keith Woolbank (Region 5)

Chair's welcome

The Chair welcomed members to the 15th meeting of the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFFTEC) and noted a full agenda for the meeting. The Chair noted there was an opportunity to inspect the Narrandera Fisheries Centre.

Minutes from previous meeting

Recommendation

Amendments to the draft minutes of the previous RFFTEC meeting (held 26 September 2002) were tabled. The draft minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Agenda Item 1

Cameron Lay

Information

Weir review program and innovative fishways program

Background

Weir Review Program

In an effort to increase native fish stocks throughout inland waters of NSW, the Weir Review Program aims to increase the available habitat for native fish. Improved fish passage means increased migration, spawning and shelter, through the removal of fish barriers including weirs and road crossings and the installation of fishways. Detailed investigations will be undertaken on those weirs recommended for decommissioning and fishway construction. The detailed investigation involves consultation with landholders, private companies, community groups including fishing clubs, local councils, and governments departments including the Department of Land and Water Conservation and National Parks and Wildlife. Site inspections are being carried out to confirm details obtained from the initial assessment and to liaise with weir owners onsite. The detailed review is looking at the advantages and disadvantages of removal, taking into account the ecological, hydrological and social aspects of the weir.

Innovative fishways program, Euston weir

This study will provide information on the response of individual fish to the fishway that can be applied to entire migrating fish populations. This will allow NSW Fisheries to conclude how the fishery will respond once the fishway is operational. If the fishway has proved successful, options for other weirs can be included in management strategies to improve fish stocks throughout the Murrumbidgee (and other streams). It will also contribute to the rehabilitation of the fish community upstream of Euston within the Murray River and its tributaries. If this study shows that Denil inserts are successful it will lead to widespread 'on ground works' to implement these inserts at numerous sites in NSW, thus enhancing recreational fisheries statewide.

Outcomes

The Committee discussed the weir review program and the innovative fishways program, noting that NSW Fisheries had successfully secured funding of \$75,000 from the Environmental Trust for weir removal. The Committee also noted a recent Land & Environment Court ruling where the penalty imposed included weir removal instead of fines. The Committee discussed the Murray Darling Basin Commission's proposal for up to \$120 million to be spent by the Commonwealth on the *Hume to the Sea* program. The Committee noted electronic tagging technology was being shared with Victoria, to develop a comprehensive fish passage movement database. Contracts have been let for fishways on locks 7 & 8 and design tenders put out for contract for locks 9 & 10. NSW Fisheries confirmed they were involved in approval process for Nymbodia Weir and gave an update on funding for Tallowa Dam fishway.

Recommendation

Information noted.

Agenda Item 2**Cameron Westaway****Information**

L.P. Dutton Hatchery water temperature review report by Professor Losordo

Background

The Committee has previously considered a proposal by Mr Carl Young, Seafood Farming Services, for the introduction of a small-scale recirculation system at Dutton hatchery, as well as a number of management options raised by Dr Stuart Rowland, Grafton Research Centre, to overcome broodstock mortality concerns. RFFTEC previously supported the initial trialling of these management measures in preference to the re-circulation system option. These have included improvement to the aeration of broodstock holding ponds, re-configuration of the larger broodstock pond into two smaller ponds, introduction of new genetic material from Gaden or Tasmania when egg shortages are experienced, continuation with selection of late spawners, removal of older fish kept on site (4 years old and over), a decrease in the broodstock pond stocking density of adult fish and an increase in the stocking density of 2 and 3 year old fish.

The matter of re-circulation was referred to Professor Tom Losordo, an international expert in re-circulation technology. Mr Losordo examined the hatchery site in September and has prepared a report which recommends the construction of a controlled environmental tank system and a 5 tonne heat pump water chilling system within the existing old hatchery building, to address long-term temperature and water quality problems at Dutton hatchery. The report costs this system at around \$100,000 excluding the additional costs of installation and refurbishment of the old building site. As per the request of the Committee at the 11th RFFTEC meeting, the Losordo report has been forwarded to NETAS and has also been circulated to members out of session, for consideration prior to this meeting.

Broodstock management strategies proposed by Dr Rowland which have been implemented have resulted in improved fertility rates, with the hatchery able to continue to meet production targets for the ongoing trout stocking program. Broodstock mortality rates have declined significantly, particularly during the summer months. However the current drought conditions are causing problems with low water levels and high temperatures. This year's 0+ fingerlings have been lost and broodstock are showing signs of stress.

NSW Fisheries believes that Tom Losordo has produced a quality report however recognises the need to consider the capital and operating expense of establishing a recirculating system at the Dutton Hatchery against other priorities for expenditure.

Points for discussion include:

- The system described in the report will not meet all production requirements and the existing facility will still need to be maintained and operated.
- Recirculating systems carry their own inherent risks with no guarantee of success..
- NSW Fisheries considers the improvements already made to the existing facility will allow Dutton hatchery to operate with all but the most extreme conditions, such as those we are currently experiencing.
- Further improvements are possible using parts of the technology outlined in the Losordo report (ie a header tank with oxygenator) without going to a full recirculating system.
- NSW Fisheries is developing a disaster recovery plan for Dutton that would enable broodstock to be replaced even if all fish were to die as a result of extreme conditions. It would involve some recapture of local stock from impoundments to preserve the local gene pool.
- The priority for this type of expenditure compared with the potential benefits of other projects for recreational angling on a regional or statewide basis.

Outcomes

Members considered the problem with Dutton hatchery had been going on for many years and required a complete solution. Funds were being sought from NSW Fisheries capital program with possibly some seed funding from the trust fund. Some members questioned the priority of capital expenditure for Dutton hatchery. NSW Fisheries stated that significant improvements had been made over recent years and that broodstock had survived this year's severe drought. NSW Fisheries believes the cause of the fingerling losses had been identified and could be rectified without resorting to installation of a recirculating system – they also point out that recirculation systems are prone to major operating problems and would result in a new suite of challenges that did not necessarily resolve the problem. NSW Fisheries noted that capital expenditure priorities were competitive both within Fisheries and across Government.

Recommendation

Chair to write to the Minister seeking advice on potential for capital expenditure of up to \$200,000 to address broodstock loss issue at Dutton Hatchery.

Agenda Item 3**Cameron Westaway****Information**

Carp Control Program update

Background

There is widespread public concern that high levels of carp infestation in rivers and wetlands pose a major threat to these aquatic ecosystems. To address this issue, a Carp Control Program is investigating ways of managing the impact of carp on the State's inland waterways consistent with a national approach. The NSW Fisheries program is mapping the current distribution of carp, and investigating effective means of harvesting carp.

Mapping the current range of carp is a means of identifying environmentally valuable or high risk areas most likely to respond to any implementation of carp control strategies. This project seeks to collate existing information and utilise the local knowledge of Fisheries Officers, community volunteers, recreational fishers and the general public to compile an up to date picture of the distribution of carp throughout the State.

Commercial fishing has been encouraged as a control measure, however there are potentially significant bycatch issues with conventional methods such as mesh netting, drum nets and static traps. It is recognised that new or alternative methods that effectively catch carp while minimising the impact on non-target native finfish and air-breathing animals are required.

Mapping

Mapping of the presence or absence of carp in the State's waterways is underway. This program has compiled all existing data, including recreational and commercial catch data, information collected as part of the rivers survey, and the local knowledge of Fisheries Officers to provide the most comprehensive picture of the distribution of carp to date.

Gear Trials

The success of a range of commercial gear types in catching commercial quantities of carp while minimising impact on bycatch has been assessed.

Development of "Envirotrap"

An "Envirotrap" incorporating a bycatch reduction panel has been developed. Field trials of the bycatch reduction panel have demonstrated its effectiveness in retaining carp while releasing non-target air breathing species.

Outcomes

Cameron Westaway advised that Ken Graham would give a full presentation at next RFFTEC meeting. The committee noted the upcoming CSIRO carp conference in Canberra. Members discussed possible reasons for an apparent recent decline in carp numbers.

Recommendation

Information noted.

Agenda Item 4**Cameron Westaway****Issue**

Progress of the fish stocking fishery management strategy and associated environmental assessment.

Background

Community information nights were held at Grafton, Tamworth, Bathurst, Narrandera, Cooma and Port Stephens during September 2002 to discuss the fishery management strategy (FMS) and environmental impact assessment process. Valuable comments were received from the public at these meetings. Following these forums and consultation with the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Management Planning Committee (RFFMPC) and advisory councils, the draft FMS has now been referred to scientific and economic experts to prepare the relevant sections of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Dominion Consulting has been commissioned to undertake the economic assessment component of the environmental impact statement. After peer review comments are incorporated into the draft EIS prior to distribution to the Fisheries Resource Conservation and Assessment Council (FRCAC), RFFMPC and the advisory councils for further comment. Preparation of the draft EIS will consider any further comments from these groups, with the document to be distributed to the public and go on public exhibition in mid 2003.

Public submissions on the draft EIS will be considered in finalising the document prior to being presented to the Government for determination.

Outcomes

The committee discussed progress to date.

Recommendation

Information noted.

Information

Community education programs update and quotations for the purchase of inland advisory trailers

Background

Appointment of two Fisheries Education Officers in Tamworth and Albury has seen the expansion of education programs in inland NSW. Since July 2002 Fishcare training weekends have been held in Orange, Tamworth, Scone, Wagga Wagga, Braidwood, Cowra and Jindabyne.

The volunteers and Education Officers are involved in a range of activities including the hatchery fishing clinic program, which expanded to the Narrandera Fisheries Centre in 2002 with great success and is now set to also incorporate the Grafton Research Station. A school curriculum program "Get Hooked – it's fun to fish" is being trialed at a number of schools. Fishcare volunteers are also participating in club meeting nights and local market/field days in key areas across the State.

At the previous meeting, the Committee discussed the possibility of acquiring additional advisory trailers for use at open days and field events in western areas. NSW Fisheries will provide costings / designs for these trailers for the consideration of members at the meeting, given current levels of funding within the freshwater trust.

Outcomes

NSW Fisheries provided information on progress with various community education programs, including the recent mail out, the new kids page, the "Fun to Fish" program, and quotes on advisory trailers. Activities of the volunteer program were discussed, including clinics, fish care and survey assistance at major fishing events. The Committee discussed the live fish trailer, which is based at the Narrandera Fisheries Centre, and the possibility of providing a trailer to the Moree area under the small grants program. It was suggested this could be discussed at the budget meeting. Some members expressed concern regarding a lack of information flow on from events, however there was excellent feed back on volunteers' participation at major events.

Recommendation

Information noted

Information

Outcomes of the National Recreational Fishing Survey

Background

A national recreational fishing survey was conducted in Australia in 2000-01. The goal of the survey was to obtain fisheries statistics on non-commercial components of Australian fisheries. The survey obtained estimates of the level of participation, fishing effort and catch by recreational fishers. The survey also sought information on the economic activity associated with fishing and the attitude of recreational fishers to prominent fisheries issues. The results of the NSW component of the national survey will be presented to the meeting with a particular emphasis on freshwater fishing.

A significant proportion of the NSW population was polled (9,100 households) and a large number of recreational fishers identified (3,700 fishers). A high proportion of these fishers (90 per cent) accepted a diary and participated in the survey for its duration. The resulting recreational fishing database is one of the most comprehensive sets of statistics to be collected on the NSW recreational fishing sector, recording 16,100 fishing trips. These data will be used to support and guide the management of recreational fishing in NSW.

In line with expectations, the NSW recreational fishery involved a large number of people (1 million fishers), using a diverse range of fishing methods to harvest finfish, crustaceans and molluscs from all of the State's regional areas and water body types. Recreational fishers harvested a substantial number of fish (approximately 13 million) of more than 200 different species, with the top 30 species constituting the bulk of the catch. Fishing in freshwater accounted for 24 per cent of the State effort.

A copy of the National Survey Report is attached for members information.

Outcomes

Mr Henry highlighted key aspects of the survey including the percentage of freshwater vs saltwater effort (24% to 76%), the high proportion of fishing effort by a small percentage of total anglers, the interstate contribution to fishing effort with NSW being a net importer of effort especially from Victoria, and the regional economic implications of fishing. The committee noted the excellent response to the survey, and discussed possible variability, eg the survey indicated that there were more angling visits to Wyangla Dam than Lake Eucumbene however anecdotal observations suggest the reverse is more accurate.

Recommendation

Information noted.

Agenda Item 7

Cameron Westaway

Issue

Invitation to the community to submit proposals for funding by the Recreational Fishing Trusts through the small grants program

Background

An invitation to the community to submit proposals for projects to be funded from the Recreational Fishing Trusts has been issued via an Expression of Interest process. Proposals must enhance recreational fishing. Projects to receive priority will be those where the benefits to geographic areas or numbers of anglers are maximised, where there is matching funding from other sources and where they address a major research, compliance or management need in relation to recreational fisheries.

In terms of the freshwater trust, the community have been invited to submit proposals for freshwater projects via the small grants program only. It was not considered appropriate to invite submissions for more general projects given that the carry-over of existing programs from previous years will mean that the 2003/04 budget for the freshwater trust is likely to be fully expended. Proposals for saltwater projects can however be submitted either under the small grants program or as a more general project. Applications will be reviewed by the Committee at a future meeting. Successful applicants will be required to report to the expenditure committees on a regular basis.

For the committee's information, an expression of interest has been published (week beginning 27 January) for the freshwater fish habitats grants program.

Outcomes

Clarification was provided that the fish habitat grants were for \$300,000 over three years, with a maximum of \$10,000 per grant.

Recommendation

Information noted.

Agenda Item 8

Bob Faragher

Issue

Progress on aspects of the assessment of stocking program and anglers' catch research program.

Background

The assessment of stocking program aims to determine the contribution of stocked fish to various fisheries. A marking procedure to identify stocked fish has been developed and marked fish have been released into various waterways across NSW.

The Anglers' Catch Research Program collects data from fishing competitions to monitor numerous river and impoundment fisheries. The program is continuing to expand, with sixty-one fishing events monitored in 2002 and angling data collected in the far western region in the Darling system. NSW Fisheries is also working in conjunction with a researcher from the University of Canberra to undertake a study into the effects of the stocking of trout on populations of the Booroolong frog.

Outcomes

The committee discussed various marking techniques, with Alizarin complex considered the most efficient. It was recognised that this technique was expensive and required correct procedure to avoid mortalities. Alizarin marking is not yet generally available in private hatcheries. Examples were given of electro fishing surveys showing returns of stocked fish and therefore demonstration of the success of stocking in various impoundments, eg it was recognised there was limited return from Mannus Lake with very large numbers of redfin and only one cod caught despite stocking of trout and natives, compared with good returns of cod from Lake Albert.

Information was provided on the methodology and preliminary results from research undertaken in conjunction with Dr Dave Hunter of the University of Canberra into the effects of the stocking of trout on the endangered Booroolong frog.

Recommendation

Information noted

Agenda Item 9**Cameron Westaway****Information**

Freshwater trust project account reports

Background

Quarterly project reports outlining expenditure for freshwater trust funded programs will be presented for information. The project statements will outline project costs attributed to capital works, operating expenses, salaries and overheads.

Outcomes

Copies of the freshwater trust quarterly project account reports were distributed. Members were advised to contact NSW Fisheries out of session with any queries on the account reports.

Recommendation

Noted

Agenda Item 10**Cameron Westaway****Information**

Modifications to yabby traps

Background

Recreational fishers are being encouraged to modify their yabby traps to minimise bycatch of non-target species such as turtles and platypus. Tackle outlets, wholesalers, retailers and manufacturers are being advised of the recommended modifications to yabby traps. This will provide manufacturers with time to adjust and enable them to have future stock modified before distribution.

Outcomes

There was general discussion on the need to notify tackle suppliers of the required modifications to yabby traps. NSW Fisheries advised that a thorough communications plan was being implemented to inform anglers, retailers and wholesalers of the modifications.

Recommendation

Information noted

Agenda Item 11**Cameron Westaway****Information**

Update on the progress of the Dollar-for-Dollar Native Fish Stocking Program

Background

The Dollar-for-Dollar Native Fish Stocking Program matches funds raised by the community to release native fish sourced from industry into public waters. Matching funding has been set aside for the stocking of Australian bass, Murray cod and golden perch. For the 02/03 season, a total of 157,000 Australian bass were stocked into dams, rivers and streams in the north, central and southern parts of the State. Major releases included the Wyong River, Wilson River, Glennies Creek Dam and Danjerra dam. There was an increase in the number of releases around the Sydney Metropolitan area this year. Stockings occurred near Penrith, Hornsby, Cambridge Park and Glenmore Park (refer to table below). Fourteen organisations were involved in the dollar-for-dollar stocking program east of the divide.

Western drainage stockings for the 02/03 season are now underway. To date, a total of 30,000 Murray cod fry have been released into the Murray River near Dareton, Corowa, Howlong, Albury and Tocumwal and in the Murrumbidgee River near Whitton. Golden perch stockings are expected to start in February, at which time central western and north western native fish releases will also commence (both Murray cod and golden perch). Sixty three organisations are involved in the dollar-for-dollar stocking program west of the divide this year.

Dam	Location	Number stocked
WELBY DAMS (1 & 2)	MITTAGONG	4,523
MYALL RIVER	BULAHDELAH	8,000
HASTINGS RIVER	BEECHWOOD	27,000
PENRITH LAKES ROWING REGATTA CENTRE	PENRITH	12,000
BEROWRA CREEK, GALSTON GORGE	HORNSBY	2,000
LAKELANDS ESTATE	WARNER'S BAY	2,000
NORTH CREEK ABOVE THE WEIR	WARNER'S BAY	1,625
SOUTH CREEK ABOVE THE WEIR	WARNER'S BAY	1,375
HASTINGS RIVER	ELLENBOROUGH	9,000
GRAHAMSTOWN RESERVOIR	RAYMOND TERRACE	5,500
WERRINGTON LAKE	PENRITH	3,063
GLENMORE PARK LOCH	GLENMORE PARK	1,800
CLARENCE RIVER (LILYDALE BRIDGE)	COPMANHURST	7,300
WILSON RIVER	TELEGRAPH POINT	15,036
DJANDERRA CREEK DAM	NOWRA	10,500
FLAT ROCK DAM	NOWRA	5,250
GLENNIES CREEK DAM (LAKE ST CLAIR)	SINGLETON	12,000
WYONG RIVER	WYONG	29,260

Outcomes

The committee noted that application forms for the Dollar for Dollar Native Fish Stocking Program were likely to be simplified as an outcome of the FMS/EIS process.

Recommendation

Information noted

Agenda Item 12

Cameron Westaway

Issue

Enhanced fish production program update

Background

Since implementation of the enhanced fish production program, the production of fish from departmental hatcheries has increased substantially to the current output of approximately 6.8 million fish per annum. This total is comprised typically of around 4 million trout and 2.8 million native fish. The program incorporates fish produced at departmental facilities - Port Stephens (Australian bass), Narrandera (Murray cod, golden perch, trout cod and silver perch [some silver perch stock are made available by the Grafton Research Station for stockings in north-western impoundments]), Jindabyne (brown trout, rainbow trout, Atlantic salmon, brook trout) and Ebor (rainbow trout and brown trout).

This year's stocking program is well underway. Golden perch releases have commenced and silver perch stockings are expected to begin in February. Trout cod, Murray cod and Australian bass releases for this season have been completed. A record number of Murray cod have been released this year. A total of 24 impoundments were stocked with Australian bass this year, which is the greatest number of sites stocked with bass in one year. Salmonid fry releases from the Dutton and Gaden trout hatcheries have been completed. Releases of salmonid fingerlings from the Gaden hatchery are ongoing and are expected to be completed in April. Release details (*as at 21 Jan 03*) for the 02/03 season are listed below:

Draft stocking report (numbers provisional)

Species	Number stocked	Hatchery
Rainbow trout, Brown trout	3,448,975	Dutton
Rainbow trout, Brown trout	699,100	Gaden
Brook trout	25,000	Gaden
Atlantic salmon	400,000	Gaden
Australian bass	234,917	Port Stephens
Murray cod	426,000	Narrandera
Golden perch	541,000	Narrandera
Trout cod	47,000	Narrandera
Silver perch	0	Narrandera
Total	5,821,992	

Outcomes

There was general discussion on the effects of the drought on stocking. It was noted that stocking numbers would be retained unless there were serious water quality issues.

Recommendation

Information noted

Agenda Item 13**Stephen Thurstan****Issue**

Native fish breeding program, Narrandera Fisheries Centre.

Background

Since the early 1970s NSW Fisheries has been breeding various native inland fish species at Narrandera Fisheries Centre. Since that time, the centre has developed techniques for the extensive and intensive breeding of major recreational species such as Murray cod, golden perch and silver perch, as well as trout cod which are produced as part of the trout cod recovery program.

Funds from the recreational fishing fee have been made available to enhance long-term breeding outcomes. This has included a major upgrading project in the last 12 months with the construction of a new broodstock holding facility at the Centre. This new facility has increased the capacity for holding broodstock, enabling staff to lengthen the fish breeding season, and has made additional pond space available to allow for better production of species such as Murray cod and trout cod. A fisheries technician has been employed to assist in disease testing and to help in the monitoring of water quality.

Outcomes

Stephen Thurstan conducted a tour of the facility including the hatchery, broodstock and fry ponds, and the John Lake Visitors Centre. Mr Thurstan highlighted the production technique improvements made in recent years, and discussed the positive impact of the trust funded hatchery technician position.

Recommendation

Information noted

Issue

Trust fund program summary reports.

Background

A standard pro-forma has been developed for project managers to use for project reporting. Annual reports for each of the freshwater trust funded programs will be provided to RFFTEC for consideration at the meeting. Freshwater trust funded programs are:

- enhanced NSW Fisheries fish production;
- purchase of fish from private hatcheries;
- freshwater recreational management;
- effectiveness of stocking research;
- angler catch monitoring;
- recreational fishing expenditure survey;
- restoration of aquatic habitats;
- small grants program;
- inland field operations;
- impoundment access;
- regional fish habitat;
- fish passage;
- bass habitat mapping;
- fish stocking FMS/EIS
- recreational fishing FMS/EIS
- Fishcare volunteers and
- fishing fee administration.

Outcomes

Members are to raise any detailed questions with NSW Fisheries out of session. The committee discussed the Eastern cod breeding program which has not drawn funds due to the loss of fish at the private hatchery supplier. The committee also discussed the direction of the economic survey project given the angling survey results. These issues will be discussed at the next RFFTEC budget meeting.

Recommendation

Information noted.

Other business

Issue

Stocking of Tallowa dam with bass

Discussion

Steve Tolley raised the issue of the stocking of Australian Bass in Tallowa Dam on the Shoalhaven River. Stocking of this impoundment has been put on hold as it is intended to construct a fish passage on the Dam and it was considered that stocking of fish in the dam would complicate research into the effectiveness of the fish passage.

Steve Tolley stated that Tallowa was an important recreational fishery in the area which relied on stocking. He stated that regular illegal stocking appeared to be taking place which would interfere with any research. Subsequent to the report by Bob Faragher on methods for marking stocked fish, Steve asked whether these methods could be used to recommence stocking without compromising any future research into the effectiveness of the planned fishway.

Recommendation

NSW Fisheries to consider methods for recommencing stocking in Tallowa Dam which would not interfere with future research into the effectiveness of the planned fishway.

Issue

Better signage for the Narrandera Fisheries Centre

Discussion

Kevin McKinnon raised the issue of better signage for the Narrandera Fisheries Centre, especially within Narrandera township and at the Sturt Highway turn off. NSW Fisheries stated the communication branch had visited the Centre and was preparing proposals for refurbishment of signage.

Issue

Funding for lighting of boat ramps

Discussion

Debbie Lennon raised the issue of possible small grant funding for the provision of lighting at a particular boat ramp which was often used by anglers after dark and had a dangerous approach. There were mixed views as to whether the small grants program should cover this activity or whether this was the responsibility of the Waterways Authority. NSW Fisheries informed the Committee that a draft small grants application for lighting at a similarly dangerous boat ramp had been received and would probably be submitted for consideration at the next RFFTEC meeting. Members agreed to determine the appropriateness of grants for this activity when assessing the application.

Issue

Travel costs for RFFTEC meetings outside Sydney

Discussion

Elizabeth Brodbeck raised concern regarding the use of licence fees for the relatively high travel costs involved in holding this RFFTEC meeting. . There was general consensus that the Committee had an obligation to be informed about inland freshwater fishing issues and that occasional meetings in inland regional areas were justified.

The next RFFTEC meeting is scheduled for Thursday 26th of May 2003 at the Cronulla Fisheries Centre.

Meeting concluded at 2.30pm.

15th RFFTEC Meeting – 6 February 2003

Action item	Agenda item	Action	Status / Comments	Team responsible
1	2. LP Dutton Hatchery Water Temperature review	Chair to write to Minister seeking advice on potential for capital for improvements for Dutton Hatchery	Pending	Chair/Recreational Management
2	Other Business (stocking of Tallowa Dam with Bass))	NSW Fisheries to consider whether stocking of bass in Tallowa Dam can resume without compromising research into effectiveness of future fish way.	Completed	Rec Management / Conservation Branch