

Freshwater Fisheries Management Update

Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable

Fish Habitat and Flows Roundtable

12 March 2021

Vic Fish Stock meetings completed - 10 million reasons to smile

- A key Target One Million commitment is to increase fish stocking to 10 million fish this coming stocking season.
- Just a few of the many highlights for the 2021-22 draft stocking include:
 - One million native fish each into Eppalock, Rocklands and Eildon,
 - Pykes Creek Reservoir trout increased from 10,000 to 20,000,
 - Lake Colac to receive 10,000 rainbow trout,
 - Mitchell River bass stocking increased from 60,000 to 100,000,
 - Barwon River estuary perch stocking boosted to 120,000.
- The stocking plan is developed in a close partnership with anglers and VFA. Each year 5 regional meetings are held with VFA staff, VRFish, ATF and NFA and local representative anglers to discuss the stocked fisheries and how the stocking plan is performing. Face to face meetings could not be undertaken due to COVID-19 restrictions so the meetings were held online.
- For the first time VFA also published the draft plan on the web to get an even wider range of views and provide more anglers the chance to have input to the stocking plan.
- The meetings have all be conducted and anglers are generally satisfied with the plan. Next steps are to get the final report drafted and approved through the VFA executive. The final plan is expected to be published by April 2021 for the start of the new stocking season.



Native fish saved from irrigation channels

- The Victorian irrigation channel system, managed by Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW), is vast but has issues with water delivery due to weed growth. As a last resort, GMW use a herbicide treatment to control aquatic weeds.
- Over the past two years, VFA have worked closely with GMW and professional contractors to salvage fish prior to these maintenance works. Over 6 days in April, VFA staff have been coordinating the native fish salvage from irrigation channels in North West Victoria.
- The team, assisted by Boort Angling Club members, saved 40 native fish, including 34 Murray cod to 88cm and 6 golden perch to 66cm. Whilst not huge numbers, the size of the fish was impressive and these mature fish will be highly valuable as breeders and catchable fish in the public waters that they were released into including the Loddon River and Little Lake Boort.
- VFA is developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement with GMW to have a forward plan for future fish salvage works over the next 1-3 years, which will result in more good outcomes for native fish populations and recreational fishing.



Codference planning well underway

- Planning for the upcoming Murray Codference has been progressing well. The Codference is scheduled for the 18th of April at the Riverlinks venue in Shepparton. This year's event is the fifth consecutive Codference to be held in the heart of the Goulburn Valley.
- An impressive line up of speakers have been secured in to provide an interesting and informative range of cod related presentations.
 - Keynote address from Cameron McGregor who will discuss angling tips and techniques
 - Arcadia Native Fish Hatchery update by Anthony Forster
 - Steve Trelfall on new and useful native fish fishing products
 - Yorick Piper and his journey as a cod fisher
 - Katie Doyle on Murray Cod diet
 - Ben Scullin on better access to Murray Cod fisheries
- The Codference will also have a mini lure expo, native on the catering menu and other fishy displays.
- Bookings are essential for the event given the pandemic restrictions and regulations, but there is good interest from the public with nearly 200 registrations already. Capacity is 300 so we are well on the way to a full house event.



Native Fish Hatchery

- The State Governments \$7 million dollar commitment to build a native fish hatchery is taking shape. Due for completion this November, the hatchery the hatchery will produce 1.6 million native fish (Murray cod and golden perch) at full production capacity. This is three times the scale of native fish production at Snobs Creek.
- By growing our own native fish, we are less reliant on private hatcheries in New South Wales so the new hatchery will 'future proof' our stocking program.
- Regular progress on hatchery construction can be followed on the new dedicated hatchery website. [A new native fish hatchery - future-proofing your fishing - VFA](#)



Lake Purrumbete – Victoria’s best temperate freshwater fishery?

- Over the past few weeks, we’ve been receiving sensational reports of fishing from Lake Purrumbete located in south-west Victoria.
- This lake is stocked with brown trout, rainbow trout, Chinook salmon, Tiger trout, Cheetah trout and it supports a healthy redfin population too.
- Check out these recent catches including:
 - 3.0 kg Rainbow trout
 - 3.1kg brown trout
 - 6.5kg Chinook salmon
 - Cricket scores of redfin, and..
 - 2.4kg Tiger trout!
- So is it Victoria’s best temperate freshwater fishery?....





Cracking 2.4kg Tiger trout caught at Lake Purrumbete 21 Feb 2021 (Photos: John Clements)

If you have any questions or comments about these or other projects, feel free to get in contact with the freshwater fisheries management team:

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