



Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account 2022-23

A report to each House of Parliament on the disbursement
of Recreational Fishing Licence Revenue



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Cover image: A new all-abilities jetty which was installed by the Gannawarra Shire Council at Kangaroo Lake. The jetty provides fishing opportunities for land-based fishers with features such as seating and rod holders, as well as fenders and cleats to assist boat-based fishers.

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Foreword

A report to each House of Parliament on the disbursement of Recreational Fishing Licence Revenue from the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account, 2022-23

Every year the Victorian Government provides revenue from the sale of recreational fishing licences to a range of programs and projects that make substantial improvements to recreational fishing in Victoria.

As the Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Fisheries Authority, I recognise the significant contribution that recreational fishing makes to the State's economy and the social wellbeing it brings to all those who participate in this popular activity.

I would like to thank the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee, who have continued to provide valuable and timely advice on how RFL funds should be disbursed through the Recreational Fishing Grants Program.

The 2022-23 round of the Large Grants Program will see over \$1,233,563 allocated to 10 new projects. These projects include a major upgrade of the Gunbower Weir fishway, research and development into the captive breeding of Macquarie perch, replenishment of the recreational fishing reefs around Port Phillip Bay, increased habitat and access at Kennington Reservoir, an upgrade of the bore pump at Lake Karkarook which maintains water levels, a multilingual fishing information campaign on radio across Melbourne, and further habitat restoration in the Gippsland Lakes.

A further \$403,692 was allocated via the Commissioning Grants Program; \$276,512 to produce a range of popular education and communication products that assist recreational anglers to understand and comply with fishing regulations, and \$127,180 for the monitoring of recreational fisheries at key locations in Port Phillip Bay, Western Port, the Gippsland Lakes, Corner Inlet, and the coastal Lakes Entrance fishery.

In addition, five Intermediate Grant applications were also approved. This included a grant of \$50,000 to the Lake Purrumbete Angling Club to improve access at Lake Purrumbete, and a grant of \$50,000 to Ouyen Inc. to complete the floating walkway which now spans Ouyen Lake and provides land-based fishers with access to deeper and more productive water.

The Small Grants Program saw over \$32,987 provided to angling clubs to run events and activities. This program has funded over 420 projects worth more than \$1 million since its inception in 2010.

During 2022-23, Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account funds were also committed or disbursed to fund:

- increased fish stocking into hundreds of lakes and rivers, including iconic native species such as Murray cod, golden perch and Australian bass, and the highly sought brown trout, rainbow trout and chinook salmon.
- the deployment of Fisheries Officers to boost enforcement and education and protect our valuable fisheries.
- programs and projects to get more Victorians fishing, which has included even more fish stocking as well as the staging of the Hooked on Festivals at Portland, Portarlington and Lakes Entrance and the Vic Fish Kids events at various locations.
- VRFish, to provide advice to the Victorian Government about the broad range of recreational fishers' views on the management of the State's fisheries resources.
- the Victorian Fishcare program, which delivers responsible fishing education and events to the community.
- projects approved through previous rounds of the Recreational Fishing Grants Program; and
- the costs incurred in the administration of the Recreational Fishing Licence and Grants Program.

I'm sure that all recreational fishers would be very happy to know that their licence fees go towards increased fish stocking, better facilities, improved habitat, fisheries research, and more enforcement and education. It goes a long way towards keeping recreational fishing in Victoria in great shape and preserving it for future generations to enjoy.

I have pleasure in providing to each House of Parliament this report on the receipts and disbursements from the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account for 2022-23.



Travis Dowling
Chief Executive Officer
Victorian Fisheries Authority
24 November 2023

Fisheries Act 1995

Pursuant to Section 151B(4) of the *Fisheries Act 1995*, the responsible Minister must cause a report on how amounts paid into the Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) Trust Account were disbursed:

- (a) to be prepared by 1 October each year; and
- (b) to be laid before each House of Parliament on or before the seventh sitting day of that House after the report has been prepared.

For the information of Honourable Members, the RFL Trust Account came into effect on 1 April 2001.

The role of the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) is to administer the Recreational Fishing Licence Program and manage the amounts determined by the Minister for Outdoor Recreation for the purpose of improving recreational fishing.

The VFA also administers the Recreational Fishing Grants Program and provides support to the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee which provides advice to the Minister for Outdoor Recreation on how funds from the sale of licences should be spent to improve recreational fishing in Victoria.

The 2022-23 financial year is the twenty second full year of the RFL Trust Account's operation.

The Victorian Auditor-General's Office has audited the receipts received, and disbursements made from the RFL Trust Account in 2022-23.

Enforcement & Education

In 2022-23, RFL Trust Account receipts contributed \$2,024,916 to the VFA's compliance budget.

RFL Trust Account receipts, when added to ongoing recurrent funding of fisheries compliance (education and enforcement) activities, contributes substantially to the delivery of recreational fisheries compliance services in Victorian coastal and inland locations.

Fisheries Officers have continued to have good contact with recreational fishers in the field during the last year. Table 1 summarises yearly totals for contacts in the recreational fishing sector. The work is divided into categories based on species, locations, or other activities. Over 47,232 total contacts were made with recreational fishers (including Marine Safety) by Fisheries Officers during the reporting period. Compliance contacts (not including Marine Safety) with Fisheries Officers totalled over 40,921 with Table 1 showing the number of offenders, verbal warnings, official warnings, infringement notices, and briefs of evidence for the year.

In addition, Fisheries officers conducted 6,310 Transport Safety Victoria inspections resulting in 1,266 offenders, 568 verbal warnings, 728 official warnings, 442 Infringement Notices and 0 briefs of evidence.

Fisheries Officers also attended 73 recreational fishing related shows, forums, clinics, and events (including angling club meetings) for over 6165 contacts.

All Fisheries Officers provide services to the recreational fishing sector and interact with recreational fishers through:

- contact with recreational fishers in the field.
- attending angling club meetings.
- attending recreational fishing-related shows, family fishing events, forums, and clinics.
- attending fish stocking events.
- liaising with grant recipients regarding the successful completion of infrastructure projects under the annual Recreational Fishing Grants Program (Large Grants).
- advising fisheries management on issues relating to recreational fishing.
- assisting Fisheries Management, Policy, Science and Licencing Branch on matters relating to recreational fishing.
- responding to recreational fishing issues raised from the 13FISH Offence Reporting Line.
- producing recreational fishing-related media releases/distributing booklets and pamphlets.
- investigating recreational fishing-related offences and prosecuting where necessary.
- collecting intelligence related to recreational fishing offences.
- participating in recreational fishing-related educational activities with school groups and the broader recreational fishing community; and
- engaging with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

The VFA in conjunction with the recreational fishing community strives to achieve high levels of voluntary compliance amongst recreational fishers. By working collaboratively and by continuing to promote responsible and ethical fishing, we are better positioned to ensure both fish for now and fish for the future.

Table 1.

Recreational	Contacts with recreational fishers	Number of offenders	Verbal warnings issued	Official warnings issued	Infringement notices issued	Briefs of evidence compiled
Abalone Central Waters	1,445	243	20	141	207	9
Abalone (intertidal zone)	280	161	52	119	155	6
Abalone (other waters)	358	39	2	21	31	1
Bass yabbies	42	2	0	1	1	0
Bay & Inlet - other	2,551	152	18	54	54	1
Bay & Inlet - Gippsland Lakes	1,429	53	13	8	35	0
Bay & Inlet - Lakes Tyers	334	16	3	3	10	0
Bay & Inlet - Snowy River	184	7	2	2	3	0
Bay & Inlet - Port Phillip	14,505	916	210	381	342	3
Bay & Inlet - Western Port	3,166	160	34	78	47	0
Corner Inlet	766	53	18	20	15	0
Estuary	2,315	171	48	81	43	0
Freshwater	6,305	347	110	125	87	0
Golden perch	2,281	79	22	28	27	0
Intertidal - other	171	66	8	43	33	0
Intertidal - pipis	1,297	64	22	35	18	0
Intertidal - Port Phillip	314	149	68	93	56	0
Intertidal - red shore crab	221	21	4	8	12	0
Marine Parks	250	106	17	29	39	3
Murray cod	1,143	77	19	28	25	0
Ocean	5,310	406	77	163	176	0
Rock lobster	268	17	3	8	17	0
Salmonids	2,769	233	48	89	96	0
Sand crabs	572	19	2	4	14	0
Scallops	23	1	0	0	2	0
Spearfishing	531	41	7	26	8	0
Spider crab	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spiny Cray	500	57	33	25	9	0
Squid - cephalopods	678	8	1	2	6	0
Tourism Operators	46	0	0	0	0	0
Trout cod	3	0	0	0	0	0
Tuna	678	17	2	4	12	0
Yabbies - freshwater	253	31	7	15	6	0
Totals	N.A.	3,712	870	1,634	1,586	23

Fish Production and Stocking

In 2022-23, RFL Trust Account receipts contributed \$1,036,672 to the VFA's fish production and stocking budget. This includes \$1,001,672 of the base amount (approved by the Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group in May 2012, ongoing) to support fish production and stocking from Snobs Creek and Arcadia, and \$35,000 from the RFL component of the Go Fishing Victoria initiative. These funds along with state government funds enabled the VFA to stock over 8 million fish in 2022-23, This was short of our 10 million target due to low availability of fish during the 2022-23 production season. The VFA is on track to stock 10 million fish over the 2023-24 year.

RFL Trust Account receipts, when added to state government funding of fish stocking and production activities, contributes significantly to the delivery of recreational fisheries state-wide stocking program.

The combined funds are used to operate the fish hatchery at Snobs Creek, meet costs associated with the delivery of fish across the state and for the purchase of additional fish.

In 2022-23 the VFA (Snobs Creek and Arcadia) grew 1,200,400 native fish and 1,311,874 salmonid fish that were stocked into public waters. In addition to these fish the VFA purchased 5,503,573 mixed species of fish that were picked up and delivered to various locations across the state.

During 2022-23 VFA staff associated with the production and delivery of fish carried out activities such as:

- management of broodstock across all species.
- harvesting of eggs from all species.
- feeding fish of all ages.
- careful movement of fish as they develop.
- animal health monitoring and management; and
- our stocking vehicles travelled 218,180 km's which took 568 person days to undertake.

The VFA works closely with anglers and other key stakeholders to coordinate the successful breeding and delivery of fish across the state.

A list of all waters stocked can be found at <https://vfa.vic.gov.au/stockingdatabase>

Species	Barwon South West	Gippsland	Grampians	Hume	Loddon Mallee	Port Phillip	Grand Total
Australian Bass	15,000	304,000	-	-	-	-	319,000
Dusky Flathead	-	76,100	-	-	-	-	76,100
Estuary Perch	81,000	118,000	-	-	-	45,000	244,000
Golden Perch	49,000	-	169,000	1,099,700	642,200	12,600	1,972,500
Macquarie Perch	-	-	-	40,900	-	-	40,900
Murray Cod	608,000	-	119,000	1,027,100	1,413,000	19,000	3,186,100
Silver Perch	-	-	216,000	109,600	311,600	185,600	822,800
Trout Cod	-	-	-	8,800	-	-	8,800
Natives Total	753,000	498,100	504,000	2,286,100	2,366,800	262,200	6,670,200
Brown Trout	143,500	19,500	60,720	289,971	259,100	10,550	783,341
Chinook Salmon	90,000	-	-	-	-	-	90,000
Rainbow Trout	130,164	67,600	78,677	82,581	46,308	62,351	467,681
Tiger Trout	4,625	-	-	-	-	-	4,625
Salmonids Total	368,289	87,100	139,397	372,552	305,408	72,901	1,345,647
Total	1,121,289	585,200	643,397	2,658,602	2,672,208	335,101	8,015,847

Go Fishing Victoria

In 2022-23, RFL Trust Account receipts contributed \$836,677 towards the VFA's implementation of the Go Fishing Victoria initiative to grow participation and provide more fishing opportunities.

RFL Trust Account receipts, when added to state government funding, contribute significantly to the delivery of the Go Fishing Victoria initiative. The State Government has extended its commitment with Phase 3 of the Go Fishing Victoria initiative, which will see a further \$96 million invested to grow participation and fishing opportunities around the state.

The RFL investment has contributed significantly to several aspects of the plan including improved access, fish stocking, events and engagement, the Go Fish Vic app, and the rock lobster tagging program. A summary of achievements in each of those areas is presented below.

Improved Access for Anglers

A total of \$134,766 has been spent on improving infrastructure and access in 2022-23. Projects which received funding included: installation and maintenance of fish aggregating devices offshore from Torquay, restoration of riverside tracks on the Loddon River by Loddon Plains Landcare Network to allow public access to fishing sites around the Serpentine Weir area, maintenance of the Lake Banimboola fishing area by the Dartmouth Progress Association, works undertaken by GWM Water to provide a reliable water supply to Nhill Lake to create a new recreational fishing lake, and a survey of the site for a future shellfish reef restoration project by Albert Park Yacht & Angling Club.

Fish Stocking

The 2022-23 season has been a very challenging period for the VFA's native fish stocking program. The unseasonal cold weather in November/December 2022 resulted in a reduced supply of Murray cod eggs and larvae at the Snobs Creek hatchery.

This unusual cold weather, including snow in the late spring, also adversely affected the breeding and production of fish across all farms involved in meeting the VFA's supply and stocking targets, particularly with golden perch. As a result, the VFA was only able to stock just over 8 million fish, which was well below the target of 10 million fish. The VFA is now on target to reach the 10 million stocking target in 2023-24.



Events and Engagement

The 2022-23 period saw the return of a packed event calendar, with a Go Fishing Victoria RFL investment of \$393,398. There were many highlights including:

- **Ultimate Fishing Expo** – 7,800 people attended this free public event at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre, showcasing stalls and presentations from fishing experts such as Robson Green and Patrick Dangerfield.
- **World Recreational Fishing Conference** - The world's largest fishing conference was hosted by the VFA. The 380 delegates that attended were treated to presentations from experts across Australia and overseas.
- **Hooked on events** – Events were held in Portland, Portarlington and Lakes Entrance to showcase celebrations of seafood in key tourism destinations, attracting between 2,000 and 5,000 people at each event.
- **Trout Season Opening** events – The Ballarat and Goulburn Fishing Festivals were staged on the same day to celebrate the trout season opening and attracted 2,000 and 900 people respectively.
- **Vic Fish Kids** clinics were held at Lilydale Lake, Seymour, Casey Fields, Lake Fyans and Churchill, in partnership with local communities, VFA Ambassadors and Fishcare volunteers.
- **Local forums** - a series of community networking events were presented by the VFA at Torquay, Wodonga, Portland, Epping, Mitcham, and Port Albert.
- **AccessAbility Lilydale** was delivered as in conjunction with Fishcare and BBV, to provide a bespoke experience for 40 disabled fishers.
- **Snobs Creek Open Day** – attracted 700 people with guided tours and a focus on the soon to be built Conservation Hatchery, in conjunction with the Arthur Rylah Institute.

Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating (WIRFAB) Network

The Women in Recreational Fishing (WIRF) network expanded in 2023 to include boating and create a more inclusive and empowering environment for women, embrace new challenges and celebrate the passion for fishing and boating.

A new strategy has been developed to guide the network through to 2026, with objectives focusing on increasing participation and education, and community building and advocacy for female anglers and boaters. The WIRFAB website was launched and continues to build a collection of valuable materials to enhance fishing and boating experiences.

The online community now has over 4,500 members, with over 300 women involved in the WIRFAB Locals community program. Over 30 women have participated in the WIRFAB Leadership Program, with five new leaders joining in 2023. WIRFAB leaders represented the VFA at the Ultimate Fishing Expo and International Women's Day saw 'learn to fish' clinics run at three different locations. Multiple community events were also run through the WIRFAB Locals program, including women's tackle nights, casting clinics and skills-based fishing sessions.

GoFishVic App

The GoFishVic app provides a novel way of empowering our valuable stakeholders in contributing to the overall management of our recreational fish stocks. The App harnesses the power of the citizen science concept to record recreational fishing (catch) data which in turn allows fisheries managers to make informed management decisions.

In 2023, the App underwent a significant operational restructure, with the appointment of a new and experienced App developer to help update and refine the Apps' functionality and useability. A working group has been established to help canvass ongoing stakeholder feedback on the App, as well as test new (appropriate) functionality prior to future release.

Rock Lobster Tagging Program

Following a successful three-year trial, rock lobster tagging was established as an ongoing program in 2020 and recognised its contribution to improving the accuracy of annual stock assessments and building the VFA's capacity to make management decisions to maintain a healthy and sustainable fishery into the future.

Following the initial tagging phase, the VFA streamlined the process for catch reporting by way of digital tags which removed the requirement for fishers to order, possess and affix plastic tags to their rock lobster catch.

The new reporting program has been embedded into the GoFishVic App and was expanded to include the ability to view weather reports, add photos, create groups, share catch details via social media, and view personal catch statistics.

The VFA is now working closely with the recreational fishing community to further improve the functionality of the app platform and simplifying the reporting process associated with the digital tagging program. This will ensure the long-term viability of the tagging program and enhance its role in the management of the Victorian Rock Lobster Fishery.

Financial Report

Report concerning how amounts paid into the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account were disbursed in 2022-23 financial year

Receipts 2022-23		\$
Total receipts from Recreational Fishing Licence sales		8,131,624
232,055 RFL's sold including: 35,199 three-year licences, 99,094 one-year licences, 8,191 28-day licences, and 89,571 three-day licences.		
Interest – investments	79,495	<i>Fisheries Act 1995, S. 151B(5) enables money standing to the credit of the Account to be invested in any manner in which funds may be invested under the <i>Trustee Act 1958</i>.</i>
Total receipts for the year	8,211,119	

Disbursements 2022-23		\$
Recreational Fishing Grants Program and other projects	1,271,045	Payments to 44 projects - see Note 2.
Go Fishing Victoria Implementation	836,677	Note: A further \$1.2 million was not spent due to the unavailability of fish to purchase.
Fisheries Enforcement & Education Branch	2,024,916	
Fish Stocking	1,001,672	
The purchase and stocking of native and salmonid fish.		
VRFish	502,155	
Fishcare Victoria Inc.	306,809	
Community Information	35,313	
Recreational Fishing Grants Program/Recreational Fishing Licence disbursement reporting related advertising & publicity.		
Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) 6% sales commissions	6,457	
Applicable to sales commissions incurred during 2020-21, paid in 2021-22 financial year.		
Costs and expenses incurred in the administration of RFLs		
Salaries and business, corporate & other levies.	566,455	
Professional and contract services (includes printing and distribution of plastic licences, storage of communication products).	168,530	
Postal expenses, parking, vehicle hire, accommodation, printing, stationery, telephones, banking charges, office equipment, external learning and IT assistance.	28,380	
Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee	13,870	
Sitting fees, sustenance, accommodation, vehicle hire, and venue hire.		
Snobs Creek Advisory Board	1,090	
Sitting fees, sustenance, accommodation, vehicle hire and venue hire.		
Adjustments/Recoupment	(104,005)	
Total RFL expenses for 2022-23	6,659,364	
Timing impacts of differences between expenses and the drawdown of payments from the RFL Trust Account	(482,171)	See Note 5
Net cash inflow/(outflow)	1,551,755	Note: \$1.2 million was not spent due to the unavailability of fish to purchase.
Cash as at 1 July 2022	8,564,810	
Cash as at 30 June 2023	9,634,394	Provision to fund previously approved Recreational Fishing Grants Program projects extending into 2023-24 and beyond as applicable and other items totalling \$2,132,553 - see Note 3. Cash balance includes \$2,633,017 which has been invested – see Note 4.

Amounts are net of applicable GST

Notes to the Financial Report

These notes form part of and should be read in conjunction with the financial report of the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account.

Note 1 - Statement of Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

This special purpose financial report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Fisheries Act 1995*.

The Recreational Fishing Licence Trust operates under section 151B of the *Fisheries Act 1995* to distribute revenue derived from the sale of Recreational Fishing Licences to projects that will further improve recreational fishing opportunities in Victoria, and to fund costs incurred in the administration of recreational fishing licences.

Funds received by the Trust include:

- all levies and fees in respect of recreational fishing licences.
- all income from the investment of funds within the Trust; and
- any other money authorised to be paid to the Trust by the Minister.

These are reported as receipts in the Financial Report.

Disbursements from the Trust include improvements to recreational fishing as determined and the costs incurred to administer the recreational fishing licences.

The report has been prepared on a cash basis to report on how levies and application fees received in respect of recreational fishing licences have been disbursed from the Trust Account.

Note 2 - Payments to Recreational Fishing Grants Program and other projects during 2022-23

Projects initially announced in 2016-17		
Large Grants Program		
Assessing post-release survival of Swordfish from recreational fishing. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$80,549.	\$8,055	IMAS - University of Tasmania
Sub-Total	\$8,055	
Projects initially announced in 2017-18		
Large Grants Program		
Stair Access to Corinella Foreshore. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$64,909.09.	\$6,491	Corinella Foreshore Reserve Committee of Management
Victorian Game Fishing: knowledge, movement, and best practice for catching and releasing shortfin mako sharks. Balance of funding. Total project funding of \$165,000.	\$7,188	Victorian Fisheries Authority
Sub-Total	\$13,679	
Projects initially announced in 2018-19		
Large Grants Program		
Creating two new recreational fishing lakes at Rainbow and Yaapeet. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$100,000.00.	\$10,000	GWM Water
Sub-Total	\$10,000	
Projects initially announced in 2019-20		
Commissioning Grants Program		
Informing sustainable management of Victoria's wild catch fisheries. Partial Year One funding. Total project funding of \$163,000.	\$15,065	Victorian Fisheries Authority
Sub-Total	\$15,065	
Large Grants Program		
Fish Castles in the King. Gippsland Lakes. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$20,909.	\$2,091	OzFish Unlimited
Victorian Wild Trout Fisheries Management Program and the Victorian Wild Trout Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025. Balance of funding. Total project funding of \$100,000.00	\$5,550	Australian Trout Foundation
Gippsland Lakes Habitat Restoration project. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$100,000.	\$10,000	East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority
Sub-Total	\$17,641	
Projects initially announced in 2020-21		
Commissioning Grants Program		
2021-22 Communication and Compliance Products. Partial Year One funding. Total project funding of \$259,750	\$164,600	Victorian Fisheries Authority
Informing sustainable management of Victoria's wild catch fisheries. Partial Year One funding. Total project funding of \$138,000.	\$36,526	Victorian Fisheries Authority
Sub-Total	\$201,126	
Large Grants Program		
Goulburn River Habitat Enhancement - Trawool. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$15,570.	\$1,557	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority
Pritchards Landing Jetty Replacement, Glenelg River. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$77,118.	\$7,712	Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority
Gippsland Lakes Habitat Restoration project. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$100,000.	\$10,000	East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority
Sub-Total	\$19,269	
Projects initially announced in 2021-22		
Commissioning Grants Program		
Informing sustainable management of Victoria's wild catch fisheries. Partial Year One funding. Total project funding of \$139,000.	\$137,954	Victorian Fisheries Authority
Sub-Total	\$137,954	

Large Grants Program		
Ouyen Lake Floating Fishing Pontoon and Walkway Project. 90% instalment of year one funding. Total project funding of \$100,000.	\$90,000	Ouyen Inc.
Gippsland Lakes Habitat Restoration – River Mouths and Bays. 90% instalment of year one funding. Total project funding of \$100,000.	\$90,000	East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority
Understanding residency and movement of Yellowtail Kingfish (<i>Seriola lalandi</i>) in Victorian waters using acoustic and satellite tracking. 90% instalment of year one funding. Total project funding of \$196,572.	\$87,924	Deakin University
Victorian Wild Trout Fisheries Management Program and The Victorian Wild Trout Strategy 2022 - 2023. 90% instalment of year one funding. Total project funding of \$73,762.73	\$66,386	Australian Trout Foundation
Increasing fish habitat in Lake Eppalock. 90% instalment of year one funding. Total project funding of \$72,727.	\$65,455	Ozfish Unlimited
Improve the Kalimna Jetty at Metung. 90% instalment of year one funding. Total project funding of \$72,273.	\$65,045	Gippsland Ports Committee of Management
Upgrade of the boat ramp and jetty at Kangaroo Lake. 90% instalment of year one funding. Total project funding of \$63,636.	\$57,273	Gannawarra Shire Council
Fish stock assessments in key waterways. 90% instalment of year one funding. Total project funding of \$53,614.	\$48,252	University of Melbourne
Report cards for key native recreational fisheries. Year One of funding. Total project funding of \$85,000.	\$38,636	Victorian Fisheries Authority
Increasing fish habitat for river blackfish in the Tullaroop Catchment. 90% instalment of year one funding. Total project funding of \$23,673.	\$21,305	North Central Catchment Management Authority
Sub-Total	\$630,276	
Intermediate Grants Program		
Ouyen Lake Floating Fishing Pontoon and Walkway Project (Stage Two). 90% instalment of funding. Total project funding of \$50,000.	\$45,000	Ouyen Inc.
Lake Purrumbete Access Improvements. 90% instalment of funding. Total project funding of \$50,000.	\$45,000	Lake Purrumbete Angling Club
Painkalac Creek Fishing Platform. 90% instalment of funding. Total project funding of \$47,150.	\$42,435	Association of Geelong & District Angling Clubs
Ovens River Habitat Improvements. 90% instalment of funding. Total project funding of \$38,402.	\$34,562	Alpine Fly Fishers Inc.
Settlement Point Access Stairs. Total project funding of \$17,996.	\$17,996	Corinella Foreshore Reserve Committee of Management
Sub-Total	\$184,993	
Small Grants Program		
Fly Fishing Expo 2022	\$4,065	Calder Fly Fishing Association
Promoting Benefits of Recreational Fishing	\$3,465	Rhyll Phillip Island Angling Club
Ovens River Challenge	\$2,850	Native Fish Australia
Kids Come N Try Day	\$2,700	Northern Suburbs Fly Fishing Club
2023 Ballarat Retreat	\$2,500	Mending Casts
Get Hooked... It's Fun to Fish	\$2,490	Fishcare Central Highlands
Family Fishing & Fun Day	\$2,407	Churchill & District Lions Club
Fish Fun Day	\$2,300	Black Dog Creek Fishing Club
Coliban Classic	\$2,000	Kyneton Angling Club
Fish Cleaning Table Cutting Boards	\$1,911	Westernport Angling Club
Gone Fishing Day	\$1,775	Horsham Angling Club
Fishing Fun Day 2023	\$1,545	Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation
Education Night	\$1,220	Warragul & District Angling Club
Introduction to Fishing	\$1,209	Oxley Primary School
Snapper Competition leaflets	\$550	Leopold Aquatic & Angling Club
Sub-Total	\$32,987	
Disbursements net of GST	\$1,271,045	

Note 3 - Proposal to fund 2022-23's approved Recreational Fishing Grant Program projects, and other items in 2023-24 and beyond as applicable

Proposal to fund previously approved Recreational Fishing Grants Program projects extending into 2023-24 financial year and beyond as applicable, and other items

Project No.	Region	Project category	Proponent	Project site	Type of waters	Project duration	Proposal	Funding (Exclusive GST)	Other contributions/comments
LG2314	Port Phillip & Western Port	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	OzFish Unlimited	Port Phillip Bay	Marine	3yrs	Rejuvenating Port Phillip's reef ball infrastructure. Total project funding of \$288,650.	\$288,650	\$99,415 in-kind.
CG22232	State-wide	Commissioning Grant	Victorian Fisheries Authority	State-wide	State-wide	1yr	2023-24 Communication and Compliance Products. Total project funding of \$276,512.	\$276,512	VFA in-kind project management.
LG2306	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	North Central Catchment Management Authority	Gunbower	Inland	3yrs	Gunbower Weir Fishway Upgrade. Total project funding of \$267,045.	\$267,045	\$124,773 Concept design, detailed design and construction documentation. \$4,000 in-kind.
CG21221	State-wide	Commissioning Grant	Victorian Fisheries Authority	State-wide	State-wide		2022-23 Communication and Compliance Products. Total project funding of \$257,450.	\$257,450	VFA in-kind project management.
LG2315	State-wide	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	Victorian Fisheries Authority	State-wide	State-wide	3yrs	Cracking the Code on Captive Breeding of Macquarie perch. Total project funding of \$150,000.	\$150,000	Financial: \$1,154,000 In-kind: \$2,417,277
CG22231	State-wide	Commissioning Grant	Victorian Fisheries Authority	State-wide	State-wide	1yr	Informing sustainable management of Victoria's wild catch fisheries. Total project funding of \$127,180.	\$127,180	VFA in-kind project management.
LG212211	State-wide	Research	Deakin University	State-wide	State-wide	3yr	Understanding residency and movement of Yellowtail Kingfish (<i>Seriola lalandi</i>) in Victorian waters using acoustic and satellite tracking. Balance of Year 2 and 3 funding. Total project funding of \$196,572.	\$108,648	Total in-kind = \$729,886
LG2309	Gippsland	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority	Gippsland Lakes	Estuarine	1yr	Gippsland Lakes Habitat Restoration (Jones Bay and Nicholson River). Total project funding of \$100,000.	\$100,000	Annual works to improve waterway health (\$5M/year).
LG2308	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	City of Greater Bendigo	Kennington Reservoir	Inland	1yr	Increasing fish habitat and access at Kennington Reservoir Total project funding of \$99,999.	\$99,999	\$90,000 in-kind.
LG2311	Northern	Education, Information and Training	OzFish Unlimited	Swan Hill, Echuca, Bendigo.	Inland	2yrs	OzFish Unlimited native fish roadshow: Raising the profile of fish habitat in Northern Victoria. Total project funding of \$60,909.	\$60,909	\$80,250 in-kind.

Project No.	Region	Project category	Proponent	Project site	Type of waters	Project duration	Proposal	Funding (Exclusive GST)	Other contributions/comments
IG35	Northern	Intermediate Grant	Nhill Lake Committee of Management	Nhill Lake	Inland	1yr	Nhill Lake Water Supply. Total project funding of \$50,000.	\$50,000	
LG2305	Northern	Access & Facilities	Goulburn-Murray Rural Water Corporation	Cairn Curran Reservoir	Inland	1yr	Cairn Curran - Picnic Point - All abilities amenity block. Total project funding of \$45,455.	\$45,455	\$20,510 plus in-kind project management.
LG230	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	Arthur Rylah Institute	Northern	Inland	1yr	Assessing the status of Murray crayfish populations across north-eastern Victoria. Total project funding of \$45,000.	\$45,000	
LG2303	Port Phillip & Western Port	Access & Facilities	Parks Victoria	Karkarook Lake	Inland	1yr	Karkarook Lake submersible bore pump. Total project funding of \$43,091.	\$43,091	In-kind project management.
LG21222	State-wide	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	Victorian Fisheries Authority	State-wide	Inland	2yr	Report cards for key native recreational fisheries. Balance of Year Two funding. Total project funding of \$85,000.	\$42,500	VFA in-kind \$80,000 DELWP in-kind \$80,000
LG2304	Port Phillip & Western Port	Education, Information and Training	3ZZZ	Port Phillip & Western Port	State-wide	1yr	Multilingual recreational fishing campaigns in Melbourne. Total project funding of \$34,909.	\$34,909	\$20,000 financial, \$10,000 in-kind.
LG212222	Northern	Access & Facilities	Ouyen Inc	Northern	Inland	1yr	Ouyen Lake Floating Fishing Pontoon and Walkway Project. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$100,000.	\$10,000	Ouyen Lake Committee - \$25,000 in-kind
LG212218	Gippsland	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority	Gippsland Lakes	Estuarine	1yr	Gippsland Lakes Habitat Restoration – River Mouths and Bays. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$100,000.	\$10,000	Annual works to improve waterway health (\$5M/year).
2021LG22	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	Goulburn Valley Association of Angling Clubs Inc.	Northern	Inland	1yr	Waranga Basin Fish Habitat Installation Project. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$100,000.	\$10,000	VFA fish stocking commitment - \$262,500. GVAAC in-kind \$27,500.
2021LG11	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	Australian Trout Foundation	Northern	Inland	1yr	Victorian Wild Trout Fisheries Management Program/Strategic Plan 2020-2025. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$73,850.	\$7,385	VFA in-kind contribution: \$85,000. ATF in-kind: \$85,000.

Project No.	Region	Project category	Proponent	Project site	Type of waters	Project duration	Proposal	Funding (Exclusive GST)	Other contributions/comments
LG212223	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	Australian Trout Foundation	Northern	Inland	1yr	Victorian Wild Trout Fisheries Management Program and The Victorian Wild Trout Strategy 2022 - 2023. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$73,763.	\$7,376	ATF: 4,300 in-kind hours @ \$25 per hour = \$107,500
LG212225	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	Ozfish unlimited	Northern	Inland	1yr	Increasing fish habitat in Lake Eppalock. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$72,727.	\$7,273	Total in-kind (Ozfish, NCCMA, Goulburn Murray Water = \$73,464.40
LG21224	Gippsland	Access & Facilities	Gippsland Ports Committee of Management	Gippsland	Estuarine	1yr	Improve the Kalimna Jetty at Metung. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$72,273.	\$7,227	\$19,500 in associated works and \$8,000 in project management.
LG21225	Northern	Access & Facilities	Gannawarra Shire Council	Northern	Inland	1yr	Upgrade of the boat ramp and jetty at Kangaroo Lake. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$63,636.	\$6,364	Gannawarra Shire Council - \$20,000
LG212215	State-wide	Research	University of Melbourne	State-wide	Inland	1yr	Fish stock assessments in key waterways. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$53,614.	\$5,361	Total in-kind contribution of \$438.7K.
IG27	Southwest	Intermediate Grant	Lake Purrumbete Angling Club	Southwest	Inland	1yr	Lake Purrumbete Access Improvements. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$50,000.	\$5,000	
IG34	Northern	Intermediate Grant	Ouyen Inc.	Ouyen	Inland	1yr	Ouyen Lake Floating Fishing Pontoon and Walkway Project (Stage Two). Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$50,000.	\$5,000	
IG24	Southwest	Intermediate Grant	Association of Geelong and District Angling Clubs	Aireys Inlet	Estuarine	1yr	Painkalac Creek Fishing Platform. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$47,150	\$4,715	
IG23	Northern	Intermediate Grant	Alpine Fly Fishers Inc.	Bright	Inland	1yr	Ovens River Habitat Improvements. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$38,402.	\$3,840	
2021LG33	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	North Central Catchment Management Authority	Northern	Inland	1yr	Increasing fish habitat in the Little Murray River - Phase Three. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$37,265.	\$3,727	North Central Catchment Management Authority project management costs in-kind: \$5,600.
2021LG31	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	North Central Catchment Management Authority	Northern	Inland	1yr	Increasing fish habitat in Pyramid Creek near Hird and Johnson Swamp. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$31,385.	\$3,139	

Project No.	Region	Project category	Proponent	Project site	Type of waters	Project duration	Proposal	Funding (Exclusive GST)	Other contributions/comments
2021LG18	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority	Northern	Inland	1yr	Eildon Waters Habitat Enhancement. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$28,365.	\$2,837	
2021LG28	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority	Northern	Inland	1yr	Lower Goulburn River Habitat Enhancement - Wyuna. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$25,249.	\$2,525	
LG21227	Northern	Sustainability & Habitat Improvement	North Central Catchment Management Authority	Northern	Inland	1yr	Increasing fish habitat for river blackfish in the Tullaroop Catchment. Balance of 10% funding. Total project funding of \$23,673.	\$2,367	Tullaroop Catchment Restoration Project - 3-year state funded project (\$918,000)
							Sub-total	\$2,101,484	

Other items

Project No.	Region	Project category	Proponent	Project site	Type of waters	Project duration	Proposal	Funding (Exclusive GST)	Other contributions/comments
Not applicable	State-wide	Not applicable	Fishcare Victoria Inc.	State-wide	State-wide	1yr	2022-23 Base funding. Total project funding of \$307,559. Balance of 10% funding.	\$30,756	Nil financial contributions.
							Sub-total	\$30,756	
							Sub-total	2,132,240	

Proposal to fund RFL sales commission not claimed

Proposal	Funding (Exclusive GST)	
	\$313	Excludes RFL sales commission receipts not submitted by licence sellers.
Sub-total	\$313	
Sub-total	\$2,132,553	

Note 4 - Cash assets

Cash as at 30 June 2023 of \$9,634,394 shown in the financial statement includes \$2,633,017 which has been invested pursuant to Section 151B(5) *Fisheries Act 1995*.

Note 5 – Payable to Victorian Fisheries Authority

Timing impacts relate to the difference between the incurred Recreational Fishing Licence Program expenses and the reimbursement of these expenses through the monthly draw down from the Trust.

Statutory Certification

I certify the attached Financial Report for the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account has been prepared in accordance with the *Fisheries Act 1995*.

I further state that, in my opinion, the information set out in the Receipts and Disbursements Report and notes to the financial report, presents fairly the financial transactions during the year ended 30 June 2023.

At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstance which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.



Travis Dowling
Chief Executive Officer
Victorian Fisheries Authority
24/11/2023



Tim Ada
Secretary
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
24/11/2023

Independent Audit Report from Auditor-General



Victorian Auditor-General's Office

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Secretary of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions

Opinion	<p>I have audited the special purpose financial report of the Recreational Fishing License Trust Account (the trust) which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• financial report as at 30 June 2023• notes to the financial report for the year then ended• statutory certification. <p>In my opinion the special purpose financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the receipts and disbursements from the Recreational Fishing License Trust account for the year ended 30 June 2023 in accordance with the <i>Fisheries Act 1995</i>.</p>
Basis for Opinion	<p>I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report</i> section of my report.</p> <p>My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the trust in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.</p>
Emphasis of Matter - Basis of accounting for financial report	<p>Without modifying my opinion, I draw attention to Note 1 - Statement of Accounting Policies, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the financial reporting obligations under the <i>Fisheries Act 1995</i>. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.</p>
Other information	<p>The Secretary of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions is responsible for the Other information, which comprises the information in the trust's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2023 but does not include the financial report and my auditor's report thereon.</p> <p>My opinion on the financial report does not cover the Other information and accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the Other information. However, in connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the Other information and in doing so, consider whether it is materially inconsistent with the financial report or the knowledge I obtained during the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the Other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.</p>

The Secretary's responsibilities for the financial report	<p>The Secretary of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i>, and for such internal control as the Secretary determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.</p>
	<p>The Secretary of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions has determined that the financial report is appropriate to the needs of the Minister for Outdoor Recreation.</p>
Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report	<p>As required by the <i>Audit Act 1994</i>, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.</p>
	<p>As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. • obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the trust's internal control • evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Secretary • evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
	<p>I communicate with the Secretary regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.</p>

MELBOURNE
28 November 2023



Simone Bohan
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

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