**RFLTAC Meeting #54 of 23 October 2023**

**Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee Meeting #54**

**Location: Snobs Creek**

**Chairperson's Summary**

This was the 54th meeting of the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee (previously known as the Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group).

Key items discussed included:

* Snobs Creek Advisory Board Status
* 2023-24 Fish Stocking Targets
* Grant Assessment Pulse Check – Small/Intermediate/Large
* RFL Report to Parliament – 2022-2023
* Snobs Creek/Arcadia Election Commitments (Visitor’s Centre, Conservation Hatchery, Site expansions)
* RFL Communications Plan 2024-25
* RFL funded election commitments (Stronger Fishing Clubs Grant Program, Little Angler Kits)

**Snobs Creek Advisory Board Status**

The committee were advised that the Snobs Creek Advisory Board had been disbanded, with their last meeting on 13 September 2023. The role of the board had previously been to provide oversight of operations at the Snobs Creek hatchery and external accountability, and they were responsible for the development of the Snobs Creek Strategic Plan and Annual Reports.

The disciplines developed by the Advisory Board will be maintained by the VFA via different avenues to ensure that a culture of continuous improvement is maintained at the site.

**2023-24 Fish Stocking Targets**

The committee were advised of strategies that are being implemented to achieve the target of stocking 10 million fish across Victoria in the 2023-24.

**Grant Assessment Pulse Check – Small/Intermediate/Large**

The committee was provided with an opportunity to reflect on the processes that are in place for the assessment of Small, Intermediate, and large grants. One outcome was that the committee agreed that more discussion was required to facilitate the assessment of Intermediate grants, with the possibility of face-to-face discussions on Teams for some applications

**RFL Report to Parliament – 2022-2023**

The group were advised that the 2022-23 RFL Trust Account Report to Parliament had been prepared and that the Victorian Auditor-General’s Office (VAGO) were close to finishing their audit of the report. Once an Audit Opinion is received from the VAGO, the report will be finalised for tabling, which is expected to occur in November.

**Snobs Creek/Arcadia Election Commitments (Visitor’s Centre, Conservation Hatchery, Site expansions)**

The Advisory Committee were provided with a presentation containing information and progress updates on several key election commitments including:

- the $10M expansion of the Arcadia fish hatchery to increase production capacity and reduce reliance on external suppliers.

- the $5 M expansion of the Snobs Creek fish hatchery focussing on the construction of a dedicated captive breeding centre for Macquarie perch and trout cod.

- construction of the Snobs Creek Conservation Hatchery for threatened and endangered species (not necessarily recreational species), which is scheduled for completion in early 2024.

- construction of a Visitors Centre and activity precinct at the Arcadia Native Fish Hatchery, which has received $3M in funding from the Regional Tourism Investment Fund.

**RFL Communications Plan 2024-25**

A presentation was given on outcomes from the implementation of the previously approved RFL Communications Plan over the last two years. The aim of the plan is to communicate messages to recreational fishers on how their licence fees are spent to improve recreational fishing and also promote the various grant programs to prospective applicants. The main tools used are media releases, social media, advertisements in recreational fishing magazines, and to a lesser extent publications and YouTube videos.

**RFL funded election commitments (Stronger Fishing Clubs Grant Program, Little Angler Kits)**

The committee were provided with an update on the delivery of the Stronger Fishing Clubs grant program and advised that Round One was open for applications until 6 December 2023. Subsequent rounds will also be offered, and funding under this program will be available for the next four years.

The committee were also provided with an overview of the Little Angler Kits program which will see 95,000 rod and reel kits delivered to primary school (Year 5) students across Victoria before the end of 2023. The program is being funded with a $1.5M investment from the RFL Trust Account.

**Next meeting:** To be advised

Julia Menzies

Chairperson

Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee