**RFLTAC Meeting #56 of 2 September 2024**

**Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee Meeting #56**

**Location: Queenscliff**

**Chairperson's Summary**

This was the 56th meeting of the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee (previously known as the Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group).

Key items discussed included:

* RFL sales, receipts and expenditure trends
* Macquarie Perch/ Native Fish Report Cards
* Recreational Fisheries Monitoring Update
* Education and Enforcement Update
* Carp Management Proposal
* Kingfish Tracking Progress Update
* Small Grants Summary and Conditions and Guidelines

**RFL sales, receipts and expenditure trends**

The committee were provided with a presentation on key RFL sales, receipts and expenditure trends over the last 10 years and since the beginning of RFL sales. This presentation displayed the positive effects of the implementation of 3-year licences and how an increase of RFL fees has contributed to a greater resource of funds. This presentation also highlighted the negative impacts of covid and how RFL sales, receipts and expenditures are now recovering post-covid.

**Macquarie Perch/ Native Fish Report Cards**

The committee were provided with a presentation on the Native Fish Report Cards project which provides a meaningful insight into native fish populations and identifies what native species are most prevalent and where.

The committee also learned of the importance of the Cracking the Code project which aims to play a vital role in the reestablishment of Macquarie perch populations. A production manual was being created from research on breeding Macquarie perch in captivity, and Deakin University was undertaking food trials to establish the correct diet for these fish. There have also been other trials focused on hormones and genetics of Macquarie perch.

**Recreational Fisheries Monitoring Update**

The committee received a presentation stemming from the VFA-led ‘Informing sustainable management of Victoria’s wild catch fisheries’ project, with a focus on snapper in Port Phillip and black bream in Gippsland Lakes. The importance of this research was highlighted, including how the results can be used to make informed decisions regarding fisheries management and ultimately benefit recreational fishing.

**Education and Enforcement Update**

The committee received an update from the Education and Enforcement division, with a focus on the different ways fisheries officers engage with the public and the beneficial impact they have on the community. The presentation included some of the major enforcement cases that fisheries officers have worked on which have resulted in the successful apprehension of those disobeying the law. Data showing that recreational fishing has a high rate of compliance was also provided.

**Carp Management Proposal**

The committee received a presentation on a proposed carp virus release trial to be delivered by the VFA and it was suggested that this is an opportunity for the committee to consider the investment of RFL funds towards the proposed trial. The committee showed unanimous support for the VFA to develop an out-of-session commissioning grant application for their consideration and assessment.

**Kingfish Tracking Progress Update**

The committee were provided with an update on Deakin University’s RFL funded project which is investigating the residency and movement of yellowtail kingfish in Victorian waters using acoustic and satellite tracking. The project has been progressing well and is moving into its third and final year with records displaying some exciting data.

**Small Grants Summary and Conditions and Guidelines**

The committee received a presentation on small grant applications and funding trends for the last 5-10 years. This presentation highlighted the negative impacts of covid and how the rate of approved applications was now recovering post-covid.

**Next meeting:** To be advised

Julia Menzies

Chairperson

Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee