**RFGWG Meeting #44 of 9 September 2020**

**Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group Meeting #44**

**Location: ZOOM Meeting**

**Chairperson's Summary**

This was the 44th meeting of the Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group.

Key items discussed included:

* RFL Intermediate Grants Program
* RFL Marketing & Communications Update
* RFL Logo redesign
* Promotion of RFL Investment and role of RFGWG
* Gippsland Lakes Netting buyout and Gippsland Lakes Recovery Plan
* 2019-20 RFL investment in Fish Stocking – Outcomes
* 2019-20 RFL investment in Target One Million – Outcomes
* Boosting Recreational Fishing Licence Sales

**RFL Intermediate Grants Program**

A draft set of conditions and guidelines as well as a Standard Operating Procedure had been provided to the Working Group, for their information. The next step would be to determine how the Working Group would assess applications received under the proposed program, with a view to launching the program later in the year.

**RFL Marketing & Communications Update**

The Working Group were provided with a presentation which captured the degree to which RFL related stories had featured in the VFA’s social media posts over recent months, as well as updates that had been made to the RFL website to report on completed RFL funded large grant projects, and forthcoming plans for RFL related full page advertisements in recreational fishing magazines.

**RFL Logo redesign**

A discussion was held on the draft RFL logos that had been designed earlier on in the year, and one logo was determined to be the preferred choice. The VFA Executive had also previously viewed the draft logos and indicated the same preference.

**Promotion of RFL Investment and role of RFGWG**

The Working Group were advised that the VFA is looking to lift their public profile and provide recreational fishers with a better understanding of their role in advising the Minister of Fishing and Boating on how funds from the RFL Trust Account should be invested to improve recreational fishing. This included changing the name of the group so that it reflects the role of the group more accurately and is more meaningful to recreational fishers.

**Gippsland Lakes Netting buyout and Gippsland Lakes Recovery Plan**

The Working Group were provided with a presentation on the Gippsland Lakes Recreational Fishery Plan and advised that the plan has now been signed off by the Minister for Fishing and Boating and advised that the phasing out of commercial fishing in the Gippsland Lakes had been completed. The Plan will guide the rebuilding of the recreational fishery into the future, as well as proposing new catch and size limits for black bream, undertaking fish stocking, improving fish habitat and waterway health and monitoring the success of all of these actions. The Plan will soon be released for 6 weeks for public comment and consultation.

**2019-20 RFL investment in Fish Stocking - Outcomes**

The Working Group were provided with an account of how RFL funds had been invested in fish stocking during the last financial year and had resulted in increased stocking of salmonids including brown trout production from Snobs Creek hatchery. The total investment towards this component was just under $900,000 for the year. A more detailed breakdown of funding will be provided as part of the Snobs Creek annual report which will be available in November.

**2019-20 RFL investment in Target One Million – Outcomes**

The Working Group were provided with an account of how $2.2 million of RFL funds had been invested in the delivery of programs under the Target One Million Phase 2 Plan during the last financial year including additional funds provided for fish stocking, access and infrastructure projects, monitoring projects (Go Fishing Vic and Lobster tagging) and the staging of numerous festivals and events.

**Boosting Recreational Fishing Licence Sales**

A discussion was held on ways in which the VFA could look at implementing strategies to increase the sale of recreational fishing licences. Some of the strategies discussed included having promotions centred around Father’s Day and Christmas and promoting the ‘Buy A Licence’ message more strongly to the recreational fishing community and wider public.

**Next meeting:** Wednesday 25 November 2020

David Grisold

Chairperson

Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group