

Freshwater Fisheries Management Update

Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable

Fish Habitat and Flows Roundtable

10 September 2021

Macquarie Perch funding grant success!

- Great news for Macquarie perch - we've been successful in securing a major funding grant to help recover the species in bushfire affected areas of North East Victoria.
- The grant is for a Landcare Led Bushfire Recovery Project worth \$181,523, supported by the Australian Government's Bushfire Recovery Program for Wildlife and their Habitat.
- The funding grant will improve the breeding of Macquarie perch and stocking of fingerlings in the Buffalo River, King River and Cudgewa Creek.
- The funding will also be used to restore habitat and engage the community through:
 - Restoring instream fish habitat at two sites, including boulder seeding and hardwood timber structure installation, fencing and revegetation,
 - Holding two community riparian habitat planting weekends with recreational fishers, local Landcare groups, Traditional Owners and general public,
 - Producing a high-quality video of the Macquarie perch recovery story.
- Thanks to our fantastic partners including the Women in Recreational Fishing (WIRF) Network, Corryong Angling Club, Ovens Landcare Network, Upper Murray Landcare Network, North East Catchment Management Authority and the DELWP for working with us on this wonderful project.
- To follow our exciting journey to bring maccas back, please visit our [Macquarie perch website](#) and join our 'Mates of Maccas' Facebook group!



Australian Trout Foundation fry stocking trial continues

- 150,000 brown trout fry are set to be released next week continuing the fry stocking trial initiated the Australian Trout Foundation.
- The trial aims to understand whether stocking brown trout fry can help accelerate the recovery of high-country brown trout populations following environmental events such as bushfires and floods.
- This year's fry will be released into the Jamieson River, Macalister River and West King River.
- The success of fry stocking trials is being evaluated by fisheries scientists using follow up electrofishing surveys and genetic identification analysis.
- Results of the fry stocking trials will be shared at the Talk Wild Trout Conferences.
- Fry stocking trial is just one of many initiatives the Australian Trout Foundation are progressing under the [Victorian Wild Trout Strategy](#) to support a healthy sustainable wild trout fishery for all Victorians.



The winner is Melbourne! - World Recreational Fishing Conference in Melbourne 2024

- In July 2021, Melbourne was announced as the host of the next World Recreational Fishing Conference (WRFC) in 2024!
- The WRFC is the world's most prominent gathering of the recreational fishing community held every three years for researchers, recreational fishers, angling organisations, government worldwide to meet and exchange knowledge on hot topics in recreational fishing.
- Past WRFC's have been held in Canada, Brazil, Germany, USA, Norway and Ireland.
- The Victorian bid was prepared over the last 18 months in partnership with recreational fishing organisations including VRFish and FutureFish Foundation, Women in Recreational Fishing Network and Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation.
- Our winning bid highlighted the diverse range of fishing experiences on offer here in Victoria ranging from iconic Murray cod fishing in our northern rivers and lakes, to trout in the high country, snapper, whiting and calamari in Port Phillip and Western Port and southern bluefin tuna and kingfish off the coast!
- Bringing the world's best fisheries experts to Melbourne to showcase our recreational fishing is going to be massive!



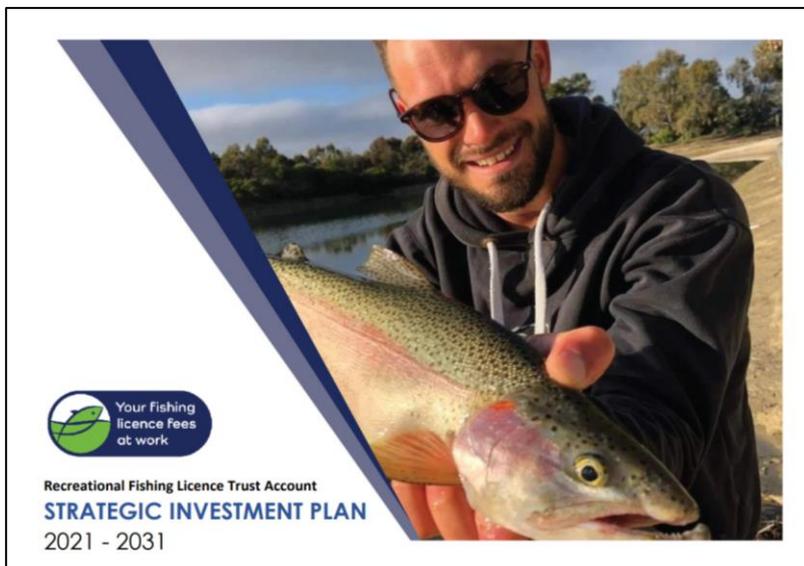
More native fish saved from irrigation channels

- Over the past few months, VFA have continued to work closely with Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) and recreational fishers to save native fish from irrigation channels including 142 Murray cod (up to 80cm) and 6 golden perch.
- The fish were released into the Goulburn River at Shepparton and Yambuna, the Broken Creek upstream of Numurkah and at Katamatite, and into the Serpentine Creek.
- In addition, 55 blackfish were saved from irrigation channels and relocated into two locations on the Campapse River, where the species has previously been locally extinct!
- These channel salvages occur as part of the routine channel maintenance carried out by GMW and provide an opportunity to relocate these fish to boost fish populations in public waterways. Whilst the numbers of fish saved are not enormous, the fish are often large/mature fish, which will contribute to breeding populations.
- The VFA is currently finalising 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.



RFL Strategic Plan developed to support great recreational fishing for the next 10 years

- Each year the Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) Trust Account collects \$8-9 million in revenue from the sale of RFL's, which is reinvested back into improving recreational fishing outcomes through fish stocking, education and enforcement, habitat restoration, improved access etc.
- To support the best use of recreational fishing licence (RFL) fee funds, the VFA and key recreational fishing organisation representatives have developed a new 10-year strategic plan.
- The plan establishes a vision for the RFL investment: 'To invest in improving recreational fishing opportunities for all Victorians', includes 12 priority investment areas and objectives, and 24 strategies to achieve those objectives.
- To read more about the plan, please visit:
<https://vfa.vic.gov.au/recreational-fishing/fishing-licence/recreational-fishing-licence-strategic-plan>



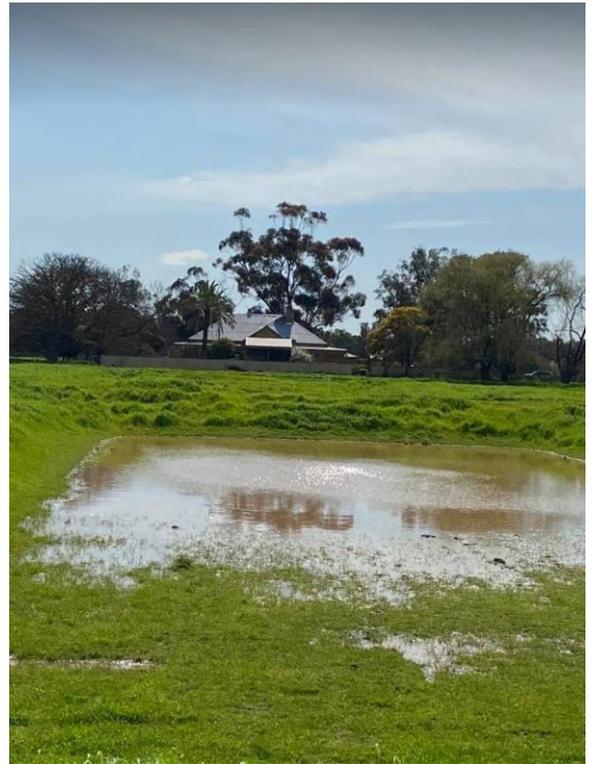
OzFish Unlimited lead Catfish rescue near Mildura

- In August 2021, OzFish Sunraysia contacted the VFA with news of stranded catfish in some dewatered irrigation channels in the Mildura area.
- VFA facilitated permits and translocation authority at short notice and OzFish volunteers were mobilised to save and transport the fish to their new homes!
- A total of 55 catfish, 5 golden perch, 4 silver perch and 4 Murray cod were translocated into nearby Kings Billabong.
- Well done to OzFish! This is another great example of how working together in partnerships can result in huge wins for native fish populations and recreational fishing!



Arcadia Native Fish Hatchery

- Our new native fish farm at Arcadia is progressing well on a number of fronts. Earthworks are almost finalised with the last of the concrete sump mats to be installed once the rain stops. The rain has also bought a spring flourish of grass across the ponds that has stabilised the soil and conditioned the ponds.
- In other news, the power and bore pump have been installed and gravel tracks around the ponds will be installed shortly to provide safe all-weather vehicle access.
- We're working on plans to repurpose an old dairy building as a quarantine and fingerling intake facility and we're in the process of converting the old main residence to an office facility.
- We've selected a contractor to build a hatchery shed and concrete slab and we will be pulling electrical cable through underground conduits so we can power paddlewheel aerators over the next few weeks for the growout of Murray cod larvae.
- The recruitment process for hatchery staff has also been kicked off.
- Beyond the hatchery build, but on the same property, we've appointed a principal contractor to prepare detailed plans for the construction of a Visitors Centre.
- We are soon to establish a community reference group that will help shape the final design.
- The Visitors Centre will engage and educate the community about the amazing social, cultural and economic contribution that native fish have made and continue to make.



Threatened Species Bake Off!

- Check out the impressive Macquarie perch cakes baked for the [National Threatened Species Bake off](#) by Shea Bloom (WIRF), Cara Cummings (WIRF), Renae Ayres (DELWP), Amanda Keilar (WIRF), Julie Morgan (VFA) and the Freshwater Fisheries Management Team.
- Fantastic work to jump onboard this strategic opportunity to raise awareness and support for Macquarie perch recovery!



If you have any questions or comments about these or other projects, feel free to get in contact with the Freshwater Fisheries Management Team:

Taylor Hunt – 0418 478 028 John Douglas – 0447 545 139 Hui King Ho – 0407 987 003

Anthony Forster – 0419 871 096 Michelle Wenner – 0497 999 744

