

Annual Report 2024–25

NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts

November 2025

dpird.nsw.gov.au





Contents

Contents	3		
1 Background	4		
Highlights	5		
1.1 Objectives of the Recreational Fishing Trusts	8		
2 Recreational Fishing Trusts financial summary	10		
2.1 Licenses sold	11		
2.2 Licence sale channels	11		
2.3 Financial accountability	12		
3 Recreational Fishing Trust Programs	14		
3.1 Fisheries Enhancement	15		
3.1.1 Freshwater fish stocking	15		
3.1.2 Marine fish stocking	16		
3.1.3 Fish aggregating devices	17		
3.1.4 Offshore artificial reefs	17		
3.2 Fishing Facilities and Access	18		
3.2.1 Fishing facilities	18		
3.2.2 Enhancing angler access	20		
3.3 Education and Promotion	22		
3.3.1 Come Fish With Us	22		
3.3.2 'Get Hooked... It's Fun to Fish'	23		
3.3.3 Fish For Life, Building a Healthy Fishing Future	25		
3.3.4 Fishcare	25		
3.3.5 Gone Fishing Day	27		
3.4 Research	28		
3.4.1 Game Fish Tagging Program	28		
3.4.2 Research Angler Program	30		
3.4.3 Satellite tracking of big Kingfish	31		
3.4.4 Recreational Fisheries Monitoring Program	32		
3.4.5 Building a Healthy Freshwater Fishery	33		
3.4.6 Effectiveness of marine fish stocking	33		
3.4.7 Making More Maccas	34		
3.5 Aquatic Habitat Rehabilitation	36		
3.5.1 Landcare NSW & OzFish Unlimited community partnership driving fish habitat action	36		
3.5.2 Flagship Fish Habitat Rehabilitation Grants	38		
3.5.3 Rec Fisher Habitat Capacity Building	39		
3.5.4 Habitat Action Grants	40		
3.6 Fisheries Officers	42		
3.7 Trusts Management and Administration	43		
3.7.1 Recreational Fishing Licence Fee — facilitating fishing licenses for fishers	43		
3.7.2 Trusts program delivery	43		
4 Appendices	46		
4.1 Appendix 1: RFNSW and Expenditure Committee membership	46		
4.2 Appendix 2: Recreational Fishing Trusts funds summary by project	48		
4.3 Appendix 3: Summary of projects approved for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts in 2024–25	51		
Platform: Recreational fishing enhancement	51		
Platform: Fishing access and facilities	53		
Platform: Recreational fishing education	55		
Platform: Research on fish and recreational fishing	58		
Platform: Aquatic habitat protection and rehabilitation	59		
Platform: Enforcement of fishing rules	60		
Platform: Licence fee payment system & Trust management	60		

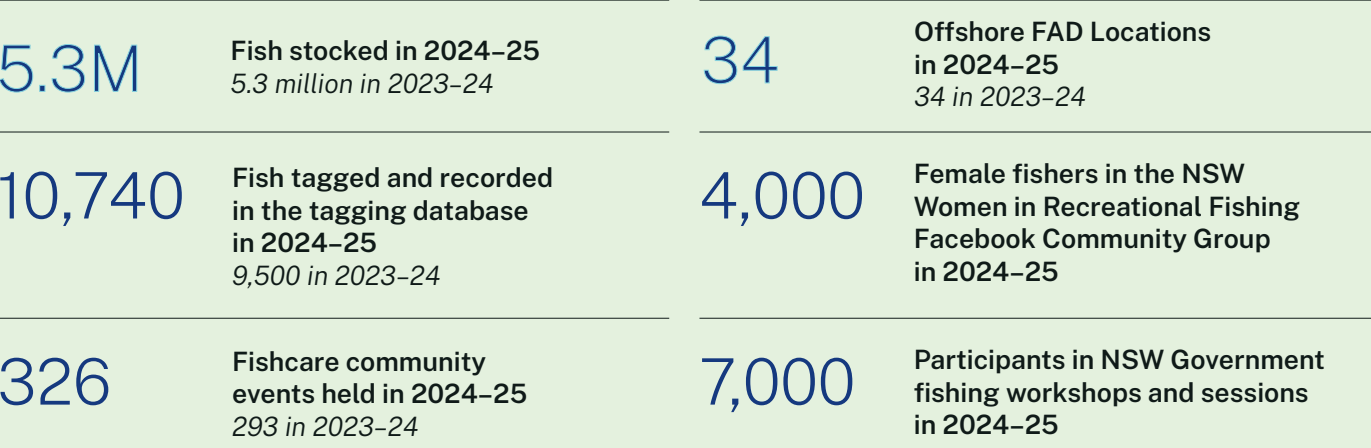
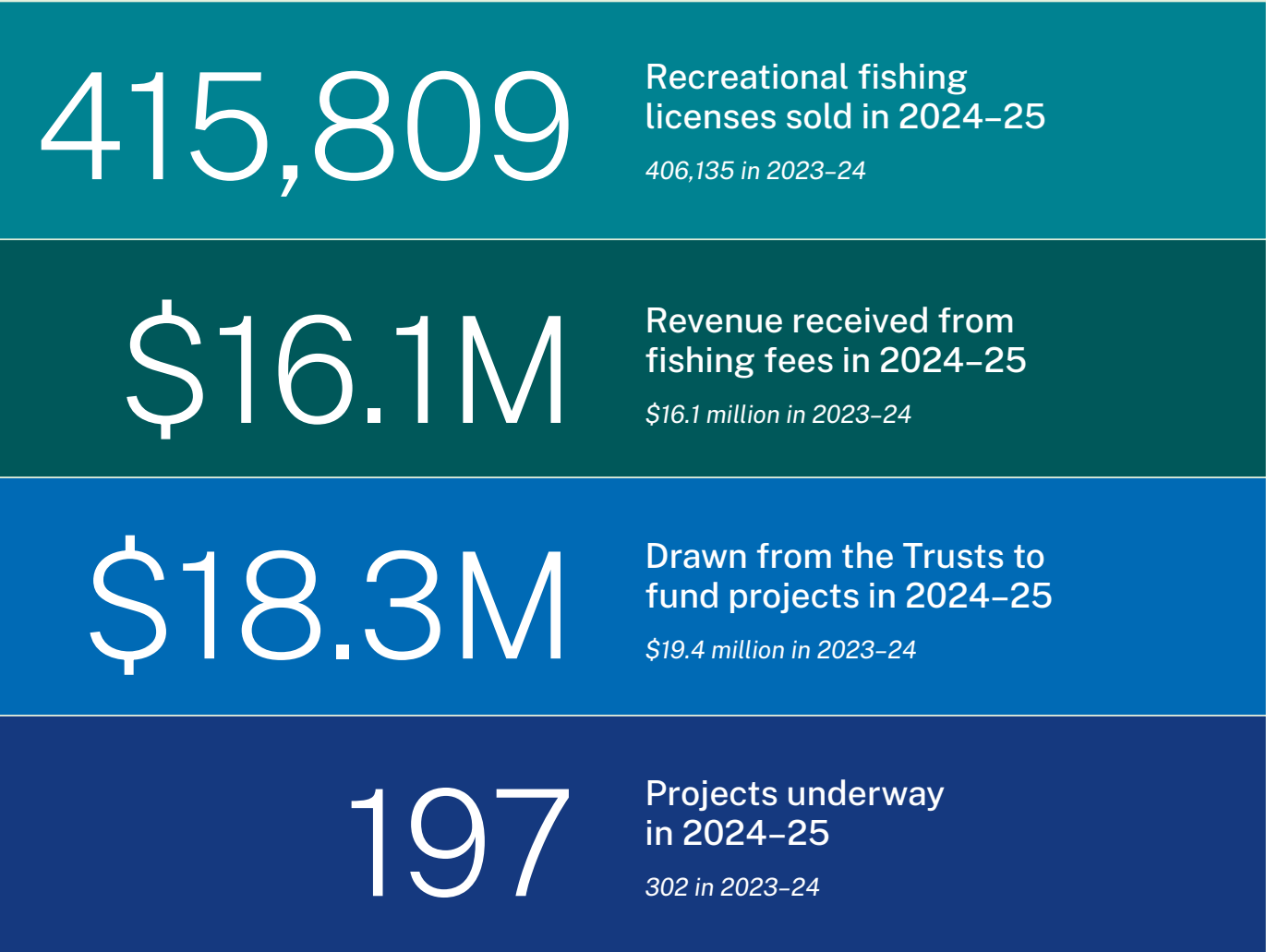
1 Background

All funds raised from the recreational fishing licence fee in NSW are placed in the Recreational Fishing Trusts. A wide range of projects are supported from the Trusts (Saltwater and Freshwater) aimed at boosting recreational fishing opportunities in NSW.

Since the recreational fishing licence fee was introduced statewide in 2001, the Trusts have enabled thousands of projects to be rolled out across the State to improve your fishing experience and make fishing better. This investment has continued in 2024–25 across NSW in projects to improve fishing facilities and your fishing access. Many education projects have created more opportunities for all to enjoy fishing safely and sustainably. Fish stocking activities have also expanded along with ongoing key programs such as fish aggregating devices and artificial reefs. This report celebrates the many achievements of these projects in 2024–25 made possible with Recreational Fishing Trust funding and invites you to head outdoors and enjoy all that fishing in NSW has to offer.



Highlights



A snapshot of Recreational Fishing in NSW

NSW Fisher Snapshot:

1 million

people go fishing
in NSW each year

48%

of all fish caught
were released

Benefits for the wider community:

Economic

\$3.4 billion

(est.) of economic activity annually from
recreational fishing

14,000

full time jobs

Hundreds of local tackle, charter
and tourism related businesses
supported by recreational fishing

Social

- Accessible healthy outdoor activity for everyone
- Provides health benefits from eating fresh fish
- Connection to nature and outdoors
- Promotes opportunity to relax and unwind
- Increases environmental stewardship
- Provides youth engagement opportunities
- Promotes physical activity

Fishing occurs in:

48%

estuaries

25%

oceans

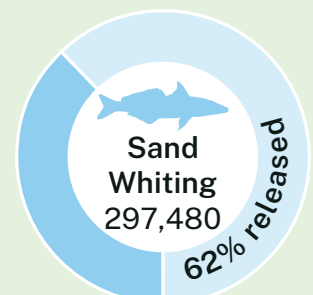
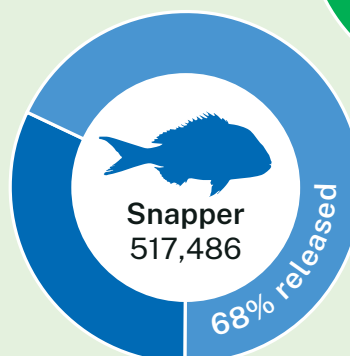
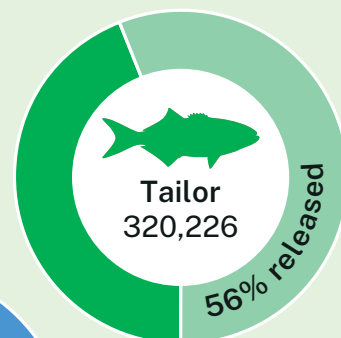
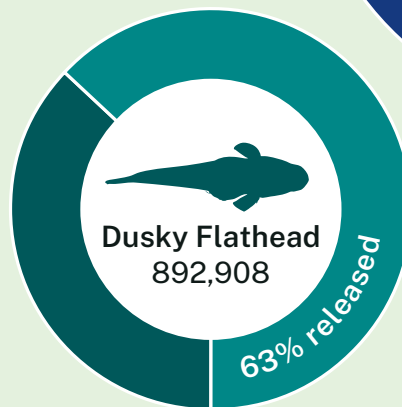
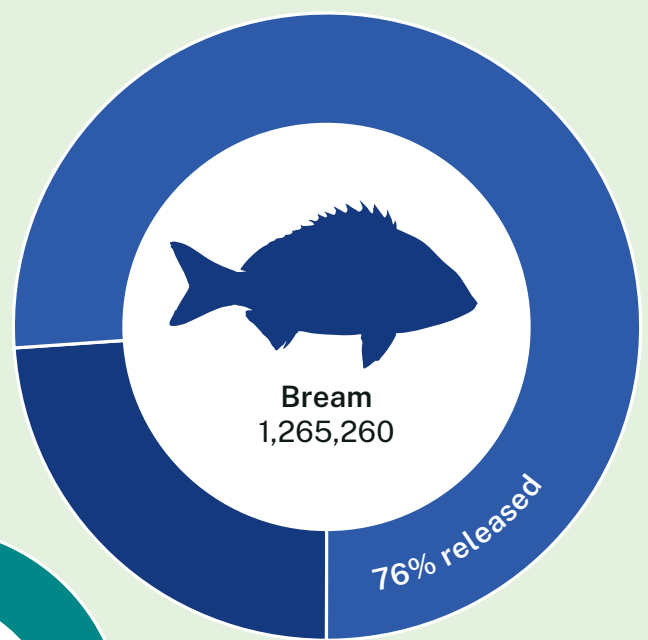
19%

rivers

8%

lakes & dams

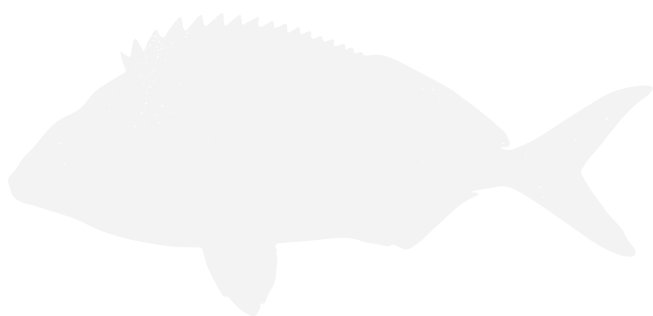
Top Five Saltwater Finfish Species Caught



1.1. Objectives of the Recreational Fishing Trusts

The Trusts were established to deliver a range of programs to improve recreational fishing opportunities in NSW, and aim to:

- Undertake innovative projects that create new recreational fishing opportunities
- promote the growth of recreational fishing in a sustainable manner
- enhance recreational fishing access and accessibility for all abilities, ages and genders
- educate fishers on responsible and safe practices
- promote fishing as a healthy, active outdoors pastime.





2 Recreational Fishing Trusts Financial Summary

Funding of \$18.3 million was drawn from the Trusts in 2024–25 to support a diverse range of initiatives aimed at enhancing community recreational fishing outcomes (compared with \$19.4 million in 2023–24).

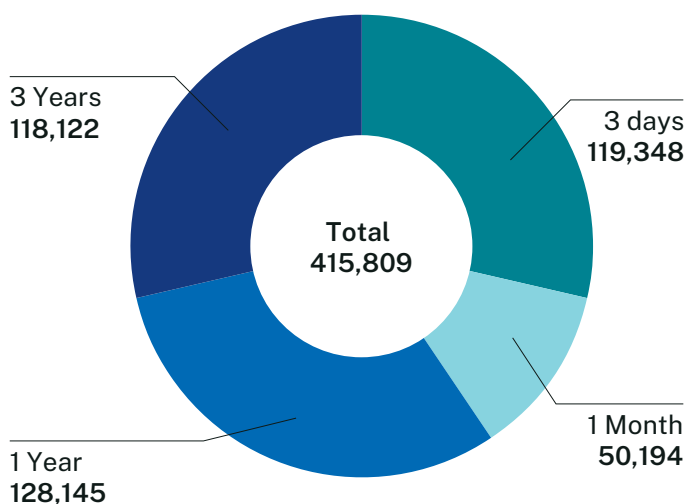
Revenue received in 2024–25 from fishing fees (licences) totalled \$16.1 million (\$16.1 million in 2023–24). The closing balance for the Trusts at 30 June 2025 was \$13.0 million (compared with \$15.8 million at 30 June 2024). Closing balance also includes additional revenue other than licence sales.



2.1 Licenses sold

Recreational fishing licence sales (new applications and renewals) increased to 415,809 overall during 2024–25, compared to 406,135 in 2023–24.

Recreational Fishing Licence Types sold in 2024–25



2.2 Licence sale channels

Recreational fishers made use of a range of channels which are available for the purchase of licenses. These included agent network (paper licenses), integrated voice recognition (IVR) automated phone numbers, online, over the counter (OTC), mail and BPAY. Online sales remain by far the most popular option, accounting for 84% of sales.

Licence sales experience enhanced with key system improvements

Several systems were enhanced to improve the overall customer experience for recreational fishers in 2024–25. This included fisher feedback being incorporated to improve the digital fishing licence and online renewal experience for fishers when using the Service NSW (SNSW) app.

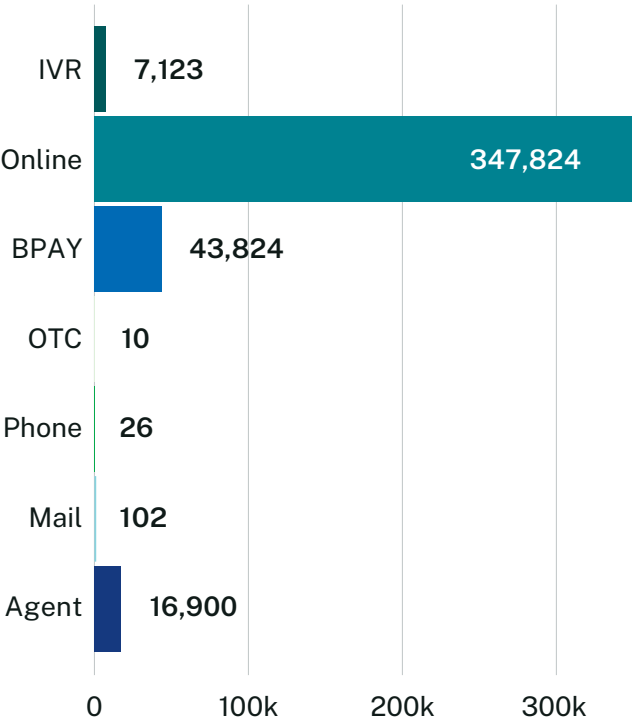
During 2024–2025:

- The digital licence continued to grow in popularity. The DPIRD recreational fisheries customer services team worked closely with Service NSW to assist in improving the digital fishing licence in the Service NSW app for fishers.

Key improvements included:

- Renewal numbers and licence numbers for expiring one-year and three-year fishing licenses are now visible in the SNSW app with a new autofill renewal feature to enhance the online renewal customer experience
- the overall volume of current one-year and three-year licence holders who have linked their licence digitally to the SNSW App is approximately 317,000 and continues to increase.

Recreational fishing licence sales by channel



2.3 Financial accountability

It is an important expectation of recreational fishers that funds managed by the Recreational Fishing Trusts are accounted for and handled with transparency. Financial statements for the Recreational Fishing Trusts are published in the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development annual report. Additionally, the Audit Office of New South Wales prepares a ‘special purpose’ financial report on the Fisheries Trust Funds each year. Periodic audits are also conducted as part of the DPIRD Internal Audit Program to review the management of Recreational Fishing Trusts funds and programs. An independent audit was completed by O’Connor Marsden & Associates in 2024 to review the operating effectiveness of controls and governance processes with management of the Trusts. All recommendations from the audit were accepted by the Government to reinforce the Government’s commitment to the transparent and accountable management of public funds in our Recreational Fishing Trusts.





3 Recreational Fishing Trust Programs

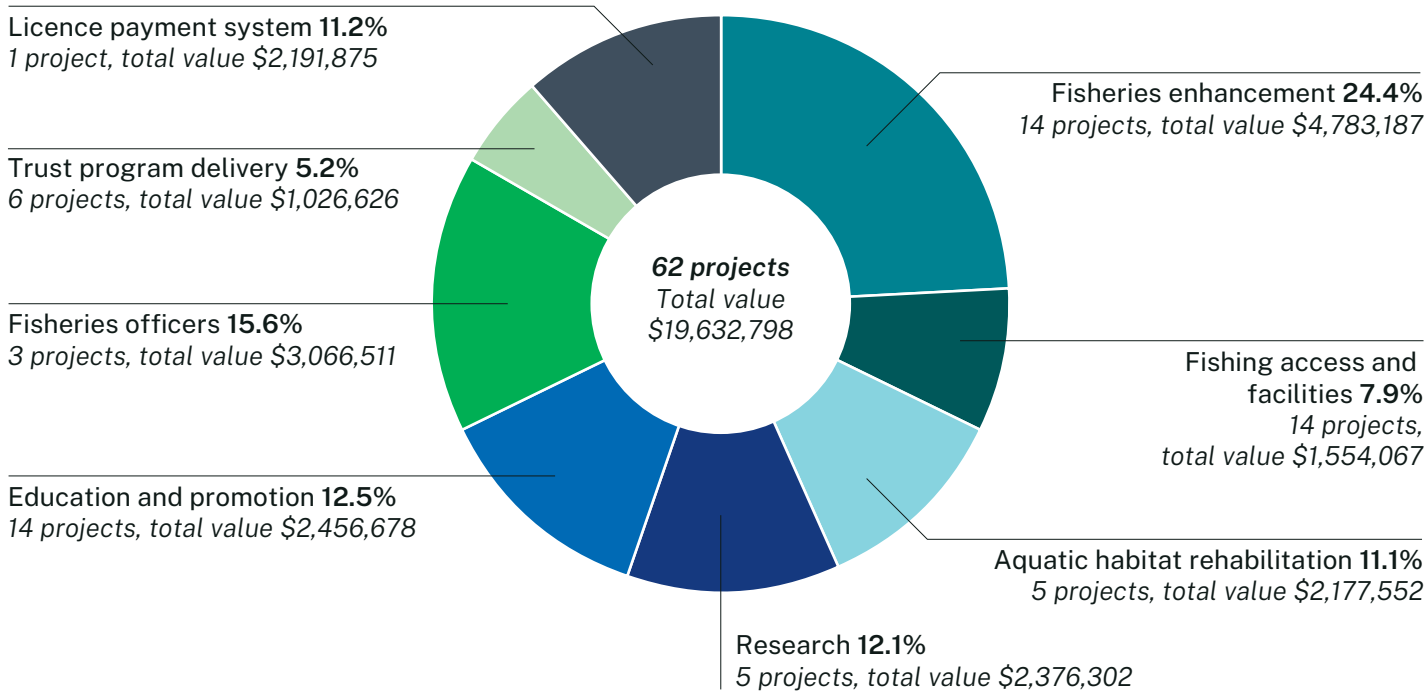
More than 3,600 large and small projects have received funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts since 2001. More than 3,400 projects have been completed and 197 projects are currently underway.

During 2024–25, \$18.3 million was provided to support projects currently underway (including ongoing programs). Priority areas for funding are:

- Fisheries enhancement (e.g. fish aggregating devices (FADs), artificial reefs and fish stocking)
- fishing access and facilities (e.g. fishing platforms, cleaning tables, safety infrastructure and other facilities, and protecting fishing access)
- aquatic habitat restoration (e.g. habitat action grants to improve fish habitat)
- research on recreational fishing (e.g. fishing surveys, stock assessment and angler catch projects)
- education (e.g. fishing workshops, Fishcare volunteers, school education, fishing advice and increasing participation in recreational fishing)
- enforcement of fishing rules (Fisheries officers)
- Trust management and administration, including program delivery and the digital and over the counter licence payment system.



Projects approved for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts



Highlights and achievements delivered under each of these priority areas are outlined on the following pages.

3.1 Fisheries Enhancement

A variety of coastal and inland programs are undertaken each year to boost fish populations and improve recreational fishing opportunities. Stocking activities include native marine and freshwater species as well as salmonids. Artificial reefs and fish aggregating devices (FADs) have also been installed to support fish habitats and provide quality fishing options.



3.1.1 Freshwater fish stocking

Freshwater fish stocking remains a key initiative undertaken to create, enhance and sustain fisheries across NSW. All fish stocking is carefully and responsibly managed under a fishery management strategy to ensure our fisheries perform at optimum levels whilst ensuring the protection of the unique environment across the State.

DPIRD’s fish hatcheries at Narrandera, Ebor, Jindabyne, Port Stephens and Grafton produce millions of high-quality fish for release into freshwater rivers, streams and impoundments each year. In addition to this, the Community Native Fish Stocking program partners with groups such as angling clubs and local councils to undertake further native fish stocking in NSW.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- Almost 5.25 million fish produced at DPIRD and commercial fish hatcheries and stocked across our freshwater fishery
- the release of 1.2 million Murray Cod, over 1.5 million Golden Perch and more than 400,000 Australian Bass
- salmonid stocks boosted with almost 2 million trout and salmon released
- almost 900,000 of those native fish were provided under the Community Native Fish Stocking Program with fish stocked by community groups.

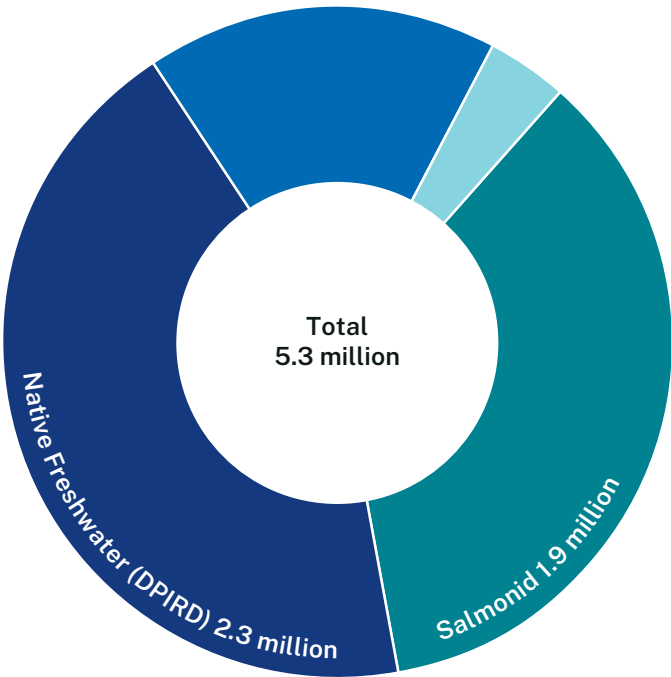
Community Native Fish Stocking

After more than 20 years in operation, the popular long-running Dollar-for-Dollar Native Fish Stocking Program was re-named the CFNS grants program in 2023. The program provides even better value for money for stocking groups with \$2 provided from the Recreational Fishing Trusts for every \$1 raised by the community for the purchase of inland native fish.

This flagship stocking program rolled out another successful season in 2024–25 with 62 groups (nine for Australian Bass and 53 for inland native species) stocking fish. Seven private commercial hatcheries participated in the program by producing and supplying native fish to these groups. The program saw around 880,000 native fish (88,000 Australian Bass, 471,000 Golden Perch and 325,000 Murray Cod) released into rivers, creeks and impoundments across the State. This was the second consecutive year that over 800,000 native fish have been released under the program. This program plays a vital role in boosting local fish stocks in regional and rural communities while also supporting the aquaculture industry.



Number of fish stocked



- Freshwater fish
- Native Freshwater 2.3 million
 - Salmonid 1.9 million
 - Native (CNFS/Community) 0.9 million
- Saltwater fish
- Marine 190,724

3.1.2 Marine fish stocking

The Marine Fish Stocking program continued to evolve and gained momentum with over 190,000 saltwater sportfish released over the course of 2024–25.

This highly popular program utilises the DPIRD Port Stephens Fisheries Institute marine fish hatchery to produce Mulloway, whilst partnering with a commercial hatchery to provide Dusky Flathead.

In 2024–25:

- More than 126,000 Mulloway and almost 65,000 Dusky Flathead were released
- close working relationships with DPIRD scientists saw cutting edge technology used as part of trials to answer questions such as optimum size for release, what habitats are preferred post-release and rates of predation in the days after liberation.

3.1.3 Fish aggregating devices

Fish aggregating devices or FADs are large floating buoys moored to the seabed along the NSW coastline. The FADs are strategically placed to capture the East Australian Current (EAC) throughout the warmer months of each year. They provide reliable fishing for warm water pelagic species, such as Dolphinfish (Mahi Mahi), which arrive with the EAC from spring to the autumn months.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- Fisher reports of the best fishing for Dolphinfish since the NSW FADs program commenced in 2002, with consistent catches of metre plus fish caught along the entire coastline
- FADs deployed and maintained at 34 offshore locations between Tweed Heads and Eden
- fishers were able to view the status of their closest available FAD on the FishSmart app and DPIRD website to help with their trip planning due to DPIRD's satellite tracking of all FADs.



3.1.4 Offshore artificial reefs

The Artificial Reefs Program is transforming the NSW coastline into a series of thriving underwater ecosystems, delivering exciting new opportunities for recreational fishers. Since 2011, eleven large-scale, purpose-built reefs have been deployed from Tweed Heads to Merimbula — boosting fish habitats, supporting local communities and enhancing the marine environment. And the program isn't slowing down — two more reefs are on track for deployment in 2025–26.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- Community and stakeholder consultations were successfully completed for two new reef sites off Ballina and Coffs Harbour
- a major contract was awarded for the design, construction, and installation of engineered marine habitats designed to foster everything from encrusting biofouling organisms to bottom-dwelling invertebrates and pelagic gamefish
- once deployed, they will provide fishers with high-quality, sustainable opportunities for decades to come, while playing a vital role in enhancing local biodiversity and supporting regional tourism
- sea dumping permit applications were finalised and submitted to the Commonwealth Government for assessment and approval.

Ballina and Coffs to rank among NSW's largest artificial reefs

Ballina and Coffs Harbour will soon host some of the largest and most advanced artificial reef structures in NSW. Designed by marine experts and built locally by SMC Marine, each site will include two massive reef modules — 12 metres high, 16 x 16 metres wide and weighing around 50 tonnes. These engineered habitats rival recent installations off the Central Coast and Forster, built to endure major storm events and support rich marine ecosystems. Once in place, the reefs will boost local biodiversity, attract pelagic species and provide decades of high-quality fishing for recreational fishers. Procurement and construction activities are scheduled to kick off in mid to late 2025, paving the way for another boost for coastal fishers.



3.2 Fishing Facilities and Access

Funds from the Trusts are used to protect and improve recreational fishing access and provide new or upgraded facilities including fishing platforms and jetties, fish cleaning facilities and improved safety infrastructure.

3.2.1 Fishing facilities

New or upgraded facilities are installed by local councils, fishing clubs, community groups and others to provide quality public amenities for fishers using funds from the Recreational Fishing Trusts.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- A total of 16 fishing facilities completed using Trust funding, including accessible fishing platforms, fish cleaning facilities and shelters.



New fishing platform at Dumaresq Dam

Armidale Regional Council has played its part in increasing the attractiveness of Dumaresq Dam as an inland fishing destination with the installation of a new accessible fishing platform on the dam's western shoreline. The fishing platform design consists of a 24 metre walkway with a T-section of 10 x 4 metres providing plenty

of space for fishers. The Recreational Fishing Trust component of the upgrade complemented funding from the Bushfire Local Economic Recover Fund for the Dumaresq Dam Reserve Redevelopment Project. The reopening of the dam following completion of the works attracted around 750 people.

📷 Simon Scott Photo

New recreational upgrades for fishers at Ray Pascoe Park, Tweed Heads

Tweed Shire Council completed upgrades for recreational fishers adjacent to the Kennedy Drive boat ramp at Ray Pascoe Park in Tweed Heads. The old and unstable fishing cleaning table and concrete slab was removed and replaced with a new accessible fish cleaning station with shelter. New concrete paths now provide access from the disability car parking space to the jetty which was also upgraded with new fibre reinforced plastic decking, hand rails and kick rails. The addition of lighting has further increased safety to the site. The upgrades provide a great new facility for fishers of all abilities to enjoy.



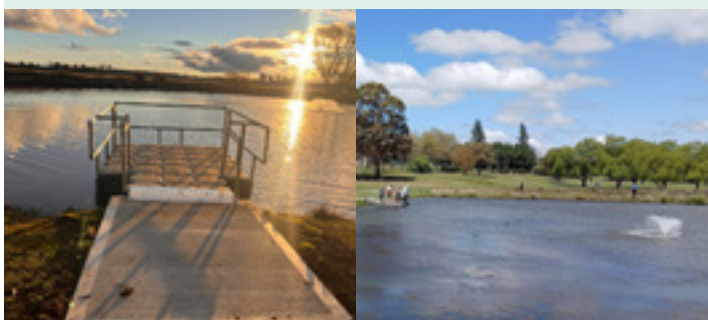
New fish cleaning facility at McInernhey Park, Port Macquarie

A new fish cleaning facility is now available for fishers at the McInernhey Park Reserve in Port Macquarie. The new facility includes an eight person stainless steel cleaning table with faucets connected to potable water supply, a shelter and solar lighting to increase usability outside of daylight hours. This is the latest of several recreational fishing upgrades completed by Port Macquarie-Hastings Council in the region in recent years.



Fishing upgrades at Tenth Dam, Guyra

Tenth Dam at the Guyra Golf Course has been stocked with rainbow trout from DPIRD's Dutton Trout Hatchery and used for fishing workshops in the past. Now there is even more reason for the local community and tourists to visit thanks to the installation of a floating, accessible fishing platform by the Guyra Angler's Club. The club also installed an aerator to maintain the dam's water quality using a Recreational Fishing Trust grant. These works have increased the viability of the dam as a local fishery for years to come.



New fishing platform at Nambucca

The Nambucca Valley Council has incorporated a fishing platform into the popular Marine Rescue boardwalk. The accessible platform provides adequate space for fishers while catering for pedestrians wishing to enjoy the scenic views of the Nambucca River.



3.2.2 Enhancing angler access

The Angler Access Program collaborates with recreational fishers to identify and promote new fishing locations and opportunities across inland and coastal NSW, in addition to ensure existing access is maintained into the future. DPIRD Access Officers also work closely with partner agencies, including the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), Local Land Services, local councils and Crown Lands, along with many other stakeholders. Staff meet regularly with land managers to discuss and plan fishing access, including initiatives to enhance access opportunities.

Achievements in 2024–2025 include:

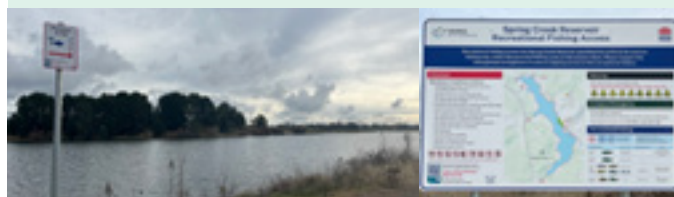
- Continuing to implement the Clean Safe Wharves Program working closely with Transport for NSW, NSW Police and Transdev (Sydney Ferries) to promote responsible fishing access to the vast network of Sydney Harbour and Parramatta River ferry wharves, which are popular fishing locations
- maintaining a co-management approach to recreational fishing at Walsh Bay Piers in close partnership with Precinct managers to ensure ongoing access and facilities are provided for fishers at this iconic land-based fishing location in Sydney Harbour and to promote respectful interactions with other Pier users
- undertaking assessments of proposals and plans involving Crown land, Crown roads, national parks and council managed land adjacent to waterways to help ensure recreational fishing access is maintained and enhanced
- promoting the EcoHut Program in association with NPWS
- production and distribution of the popular Go Fishing handbook series, which currently covers 22 coastal and inland locations, with more editions planned
- promoting the easy-to-use Angler Access website to recreational fishers.

Access win — new reservoir fishery established

DPIRD collaborated with Orange City Council and local fishing clubs to create an artificial fly and lure fishery in a section of Spring Creek Reservoir at Orange in Central Western NSW.

The Department stocked Spring Creek Reservoir with Murray Cod, Golden Perch and ex-broodstock Rainbow Trout in preparation for the opening of the fishery to ensure healthy fish stocks were available for recreational fishers to access when the fishery opened in June 2025.

This exciting new fishery adds an extra dimension to the existing fishing opportunities available in the Orange region including Gosling Creek Reservoir and Lake Canobolas.





3.3 Education and Promotion

The Recreational Fishing Trusts drive positive community change by investing in recreational fishing education and promotion, supporting stewardship programs like Fishcare, Get Hooked, It's Fun to Fish, Come Fish with Us, Gone Fishing Day and many community programs. All of which cultivate a culture of responsible fishing practices and aquatic stewardship, empowering NSW fishing communities to champion the importance of fishing sustainably and the protection of our aquatic environment.

3.3.1 Come Fish With Us

Empowering the next generation of fishing enthusiasts is at the heart of the DPIRD Fisheries' 'Come Fish with Us' program, which inspires a lifelong passion for the sport by teaching essential fishing skills and fostering a sense of community. The program provides free fishing workshops and try fishing sessions across NSW, so people of all ages can experience the thrill of reeling in their first catch and discover the joy of fishing in their local waterways.



Achievements in 2024–2025 include:

- Around 7,000 new fishers participated at 160 'Come fish with us' events held across NSW, assisted by dedicated Fishcare volunteers
- championed Fish for Life, 'Women in fishing initiative, empowering a future team of fishers through a series of 40 workshops across NSW
- championed Fish for Life, 'Take a mate fishing' and people with a disability initiatives, encouraging access to fishing and the outdoors for all community members with 27 workshops held at accessible fishing locations across NSW
- continuing collaboration and partnerships with NDIS and disability support groups such as Interchange Australia (supporting living independently), Camp Breakaway, Men's Shed, Anglicare NSW (helping to alleviate poverty), IRT NSW, Refugees Australia (connecting communities) and FORTEM Group (supporting first responders).

Meet Margaret, NSW's newest fisher at 93!

Holidays are made for fun! So during her sea change break in Coffs Harbour, this Sydney grandma took the initiative to try fishing for the first time at one of DPIRD's women's fishing sessions, at beautiful Boambee Bay Reserve. With the guidance of the Fishcare team, Margaret achieved an impressive milestone, catching her first bream on her debut cast, proving that it's never too late to wet a line and chase new dreams!





Making memories

On a crisp day, a group of dedicated women fishers gathered at DPIRD's Dutton Trout Hatchery, braving the elements to enjoy a day of fishing and learning. Undeterred by the chilly temperatures and misty rain, their spirits soared, fueled by a guided tour, hands-on experience 'stripping' fish and a home-cooked trout that provided a heartwarming and delicious treat. The highlight of the day was newcomer Jenni's truly inspiring catch, reeled in with the help of Fishcare Volunteer Pip and little helper Heidi, demonstrating the profound impact of shared experiences on building confidence, community and unlocking true potential.



3.3.2 'Get Hooked... It's Fun to Fish'

If there's one thing better than talking about fishing, it's teaching kids how to love it too! That's exactly what the DPIRD Get Hooked... It's Fun to Fish Primary Schools Program is all about — gathering students to learn about the thrill of fishing and teaching them how to look after our precious waterways and aquatic life.

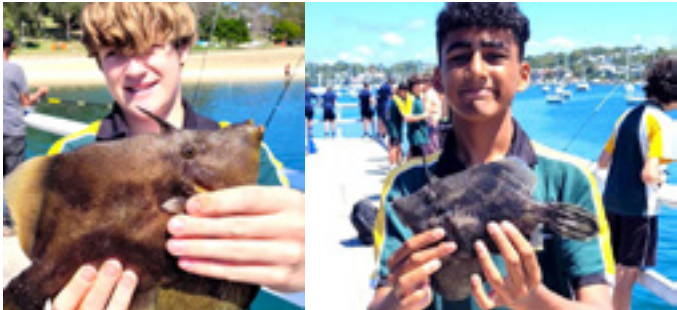
This program has become a must have favourite for schools across NSW, with both in-class sessions and hands-on fishing adventures, all tied into the Australian school curriculum, so students and teachers can be assured the program meets syllabus needs as well as being fun.

Achievements in the 2024 Calendar year, Term 1-4:

- 108 schools signed up across NSW
- over 4,700 students got a taste of fishing fun
- 35 fishing workshops with 934 students fishing
- 13 in-class lessons hooked over 640 students
- Get Hooked Fish for Life High School Program launched in June 2025.

From the classroom to the catch!

DPIRD’s Dutton Trout Hatchery at Ebor was a venue for some “fintastic” adventures with students from Newling Public School. The day kicked off with a behind-the-scenes tour of the hatchery, where students learned about the incredible work the hatchery teams do to keep fish populations thriving. Students rolled up their sleeves to feed the fish and even tried their hand at stripping eggs from rainbow trout — an unforgettable experience! The workshop continued when they hit the stocked dams and tried their luck at catching dinner. While the fish were a little shy, there were still a few gorgeous rainbow trout landed, including one student who proudly caught his very first fish with us! Thanks to the hatchery team and the dedicated Fishcare volunteers for making this day possible.



Fishing for sport — reeling in skills

At Bosco College, students swapped screens for rods and reels, diving into weekly ‘Fishing for Sport’ sessions that quickly became the highlight of their week. The events were run by our Fishcare volunteers, who relished the task of teaching first-time anglers the basics of holding a fishing rod — and feeling the tug of a fish on the line. Anticipation reigned as the still water turned into the thrill of the bite, these sessions weren’t just about learning the basics of casting and reeling — they were about sparking a love for the great outdoors. By the end of the year, the students weren’t just catching fish; they were catching a whole new appreciation for nature, teamwork, and that sense of accomplishment that comes from landing “the big one.”

Organising teacher Ryan Decker was hooked too: “This collaboration has helped students develop a passion for fishing, forge lasting bonds, and gain key skills in fishing safety, handling, and species identification”.

Students get reel about fishing

The Central Region Team brought the magic of fishing to Biriban Public School and Lambton High School with some fantastic incursions — made possible by the incredible Fishcare volunteers (we honestly couldn’t do it without them!).

Students at both schools dived into the world of recreational fishing, learning the ins and outs of fishing rules and regulations. They also got hands-on, tying knots like pros, setting up rigs, and testing their casting skills at some very fishy targets. The smiles and laughter said it all — these kids had a reel good time!



3.3.3 Fish For Life, Building a Healthy Fishing Future

Fish For Life is all about making fishing in NSW better for everyone. From getting more people out on the water to encouraging responsible fishing habits, this DPIRD initiative is helping protect our waterways while growing a stronger, more connected fishing community.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- **39 Free Workshops for Women:** delivered across NSW with Fishcare volunteers and education officers to help women build skills, confidence, and community connections
- **Keep It Clean:** partnered with OzFish for 12 additional clean-ups, bringing the total to 411 fishers getting involved and removing 7.59 tonnes of litter from fishing spots over two years
- **Ambassadors and Awareness:** collaborated with fishing ambassadors to inspire more women to take up fishing and grow the new community group, promoted litter awareness through Keep It Clean (over 1.5 million impressions) and launched a new Fish For Life landing page to showcase key initiatives.

Women in fishing: building a stronger community

In December 2024, DPIRD launched the Women in Recreational Fishing Facebook community, which has already hooked over 4,000 members! The group has been buzzing with 785 posts, 6,065 comments and over 30,000 reactions in the first six months, a clear sign of the strong connection and passion among female fishers across NSW. It's a welcoming community where women swap tips, share their best catches and celebrate their love for fishing, building a friendly, supportive crew that's casting out for new friendships every day.



3.3.4 Fishcare

Empowering the community to become tomorrow's fishing stewards, a dedicated team of volunteers champions responsible fishing practices and a sustainable fishing future. Six education officers are supported by an army of enthusiastic and dedicated Fishcare volunteers, who continue to drive positive change through innovative initiatives like the popular Come Fish with Us and Get Hooked school's programs.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- Fishcare made a splash across NSW engaging with communities running 326 events, with Fishcare volunteers donating some 13,000 hours (approx. 1,800 days) supporting and encouraging stewardship of our aquatic resources within communities
- the team championed the Fish for Life, Sydney Clean Safe Wharf initiative, with 44 days spent mentoring fishers with do the right thing messaging on the wharves
- advisory stands at popular events, including Sydney International Boat Show, Abcare National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, AgQuip, Mudgee Small Farm Field Days, Eden Whale Festival, Canberra Camping and Caravan Expo, Batemans Bay Caravan Camping & Leisure Show, Tamworth Outdoor Living & Caravan Expo, Total Field Days and Gone Fishing Day events throughout the State.

Unlocking endless possibilities

December 3rd marked the International Day for Persons with Disabilities, and included celebrations showcasing the unwavering spirit of fishers from all walks of life! The fishing extravaganza shone brighter than ever across NSW, with beaming smiles and unforgettable moments at Chaffey Dam, Ballina, Gosford, Balmain, Greenwell Point and Forbes. The day's catch was nothing short of impressive, with Murray Cod, Tarwhine and Bream all making an appearance. It's days like this that make us all smile! A heartfelt thank you to all of the incredible partners and Fishcare volunteers for making this day truly unforgettable.



Sydney's teen fishers blaze a trail in responsible fishing

Around Sydney's wharves, a heartening phenomenon has emerged; groups of teenagers enthusiastically casting lines and sharing their catches online. These young anglers are making waves by championing responsible fishing practices and setting a shining example for their community. The Sydney Fishcare team, which undertook 44 wharf advisory days throughout

the year, spent hours talking all things sustainable fishing to the teens and have witnessed firsthand the profound impact these young ambassadors are having, inspiring their peers and the broader community to adopt environmentally responsible fishing practices. These visionary teen fishers are harnessing Sydney's stunning waterfront to pioneer a culture of sustainability, ensuring the long-term health of our waterways and the preservation of iconic fishing spots.

3.3.5 Gone Fishing Day

NSW Gone Fishing Day is a celebration that unlocks the thrill of fishing for everyone, regardless of background or skill level and welcomes all to join in. By providing funding grants and fishing packages to fishing clubs and coordinating statewide events through the DPIRD Fishcare Program, this initiative empowers communities to come together and share in the excitement of fishing at a local waterway.

Anglers reel in some fun and the thrill of a catch for Gone Fishing Day 2024

On 13 October, Gone Fishing Day 2024 brought together budding anglers across NSW, uniting communities in a celebration of fishing and connection. Fishcare held seven free events in Nambucca Heads, Taree, Narrabeen Lakes, Merimbula, Lake Keepit, Wagga Wagga and Jindabyne that offered interactive casting lessons, target practice and the thrill of reeling in a catch, while NSW DPIRD also provided 111 local fishing clubs and organisations with valuable fishing packages and grants to support their community initiatives.



Crowds flock to reel in a smile and a catch at Gaden Hatchery

Visitors flocked to the Jindabyne Gaden Trout Hatchery to join a Gone Fishing Day/Open Day event that inspired a new wave of anglers. DPIRD Fisheries hosted hands on, how-to fish sessions, equipping excited kids and families with the skills and confidence to catch their very first trout! Participants also got a free fishing outfit, paving the way for a whole new generation of passionate anglers. Other informative displays included in-water demos of fish counting technology and Fisheries Compliance, with DPIRD Hunting, Local Land Services, Maritime, Snowy Hydro and local wildlife rescue also in attendance, offering valuable insights and information.



3.4 Research

The Recreational Fishing Trusts help fund important fisheries related research projects. Research projects are often conducted in collaboration with Departmental researchers, external universities, citizen scientists and other organisations. The funded research projects provide essential scientific information to help ensure the sustainable use of our fisheries resources.

3.4.1 Game Fish Tagging Program

The Game Fish Tagging Program is one of the largest citizen science fish tagging programs in the world and now boasts over 50 years of data collection. The program works collaboratively with fishing clubs and anglers to distribute and tag key pelagic, billfish, shark and inshore species in club competitions and through personal fishing. These anglers and game

fishing clubs provide their tag and release information to the program and when tagged fish are recaptured, anglers are provided with movement and growth information. Researchers from Australia and across the globe utilise the data for various studies, which contribute to the sustainable use and management of fisheries both within Australian and international waters.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- Over 10,740 fish tagged in the program, with over 400 recaptures
- 6,455 pelagic, 9,984 billfish, 1,659 shark and 525 Snapper tags were distributed to anglers and clubs across the country
- over 120 new anglers joined the program over the season (not including new club members)
- continued collaboration with external researchers and universities to utilise the data in research projects, for example Project Kingfish.

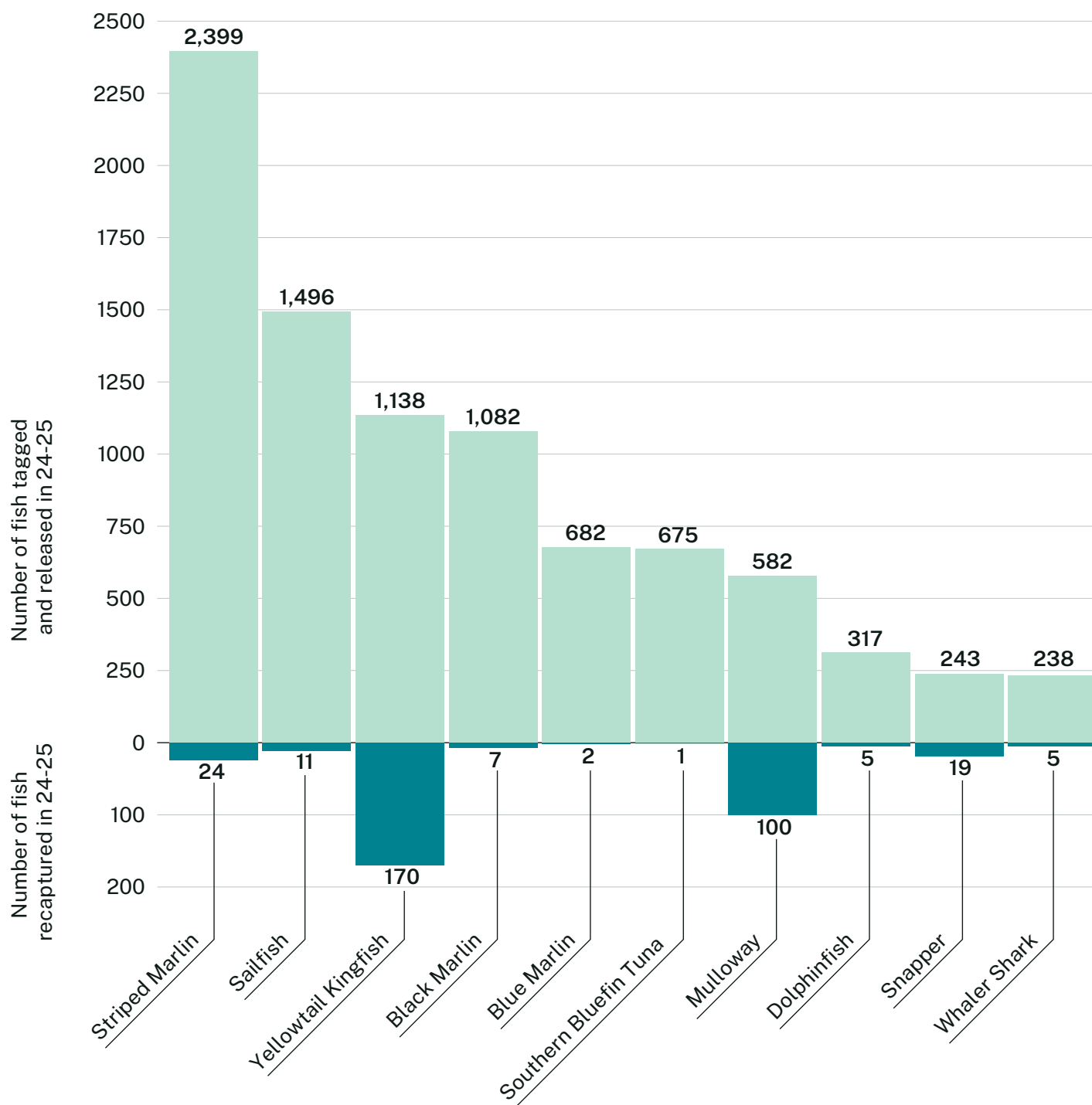


Historic Black Marlin Record

A Black Marlin originally tagged off Moreton Island in January 2023 was recaptured off the coast of Costa Rica in March 2025. The marlin swam an impressive 7,360 nautical miles (~13,600 km) across the Pacific Ocean in a little over two years and gained

over 100 kg in weight. This record narrowly comes in at second place to another Black Marlin also recaptured off Costa Rica back in 2000. This record highlights the connectivity of our East Coast marlin fishery to international fisheries across the globe.

Top 10 tagged fish for 2024–2025

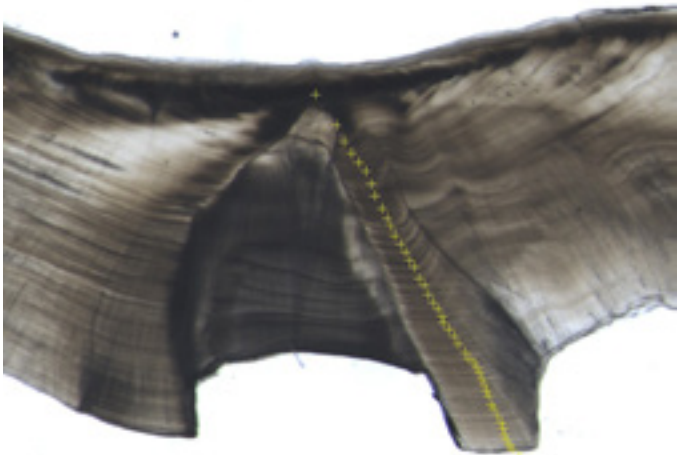


3.4.2 Research Angler Program

DPIRD Research Angler Program (RAP) continued this year with 138 recreational fishers, as citizen scientists, providing their fish frames to DPIRD for processing and extraction of the fish ear bones. These small ear bones (otoliths) are then used to determine the age of the fish and this important age data is then used to build a picture of the age structure of local fish populations. This data is critical for improving the accuracy of stock assessments and helps evaluate the health of our fish stocks. By collecting this data over time, we can also see how the structure of fish populations in NSW may be changing.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

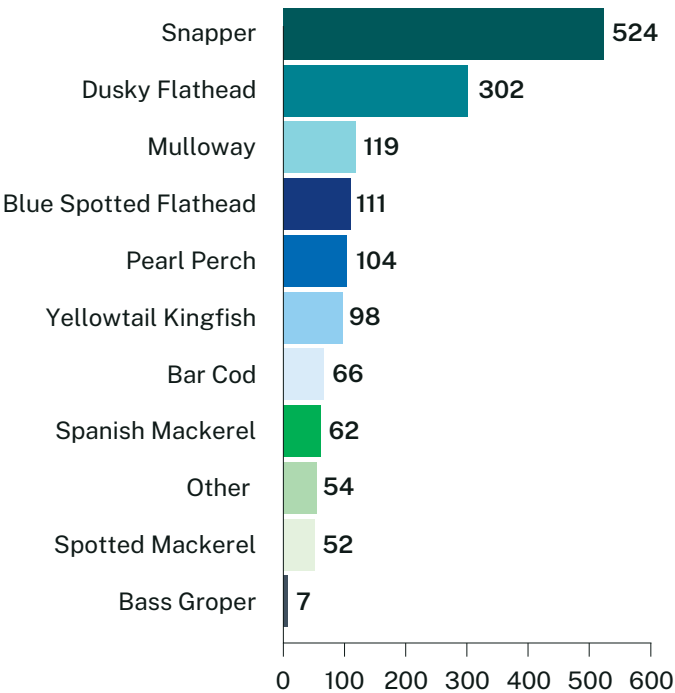
- 1,499 fish frame donations were received from 138 citizen science fishers
- the RAP contributed 73 deepwater species otoliths and tissue samples to the Fisheries Research Development Corporation (FRDC) deepwater species research project
- RAP engaged with the recreational fishing community through research presentations and sample collection at five fishing tournaments across NSW including events at Lake Macquarie, Sussex Inlet and Merimbula, and in Sydney with Sydney Spearfishing and Sutherland Shire Anglers
- RAP contributed Spanish Mackerel tissue samples to the Fisheries Research Development Corporation (FRDC) Spanish Mackerel research project
- in addition to otoliths, the RAP contributed around 80 Snapper stomachs and tissue samples to a university gut contents analysis and isotope research project.



Monster Bass Groper

A 71 kg (154 cm total length) Bass Groper was caught offshore of Crowdy Head in June 2025 and was donated to the RAP. Studies in other jurisdictions have shown that Bass Groper are a very long-lived species. Data in NSW is limited, so each donated frame is important to increasing our understanding of the species. After being aged, it was revealed that the female fish was an incredible 42 years old, which is the 2nd oldest reported Bass Groper for the RAP.

All fish collected by RAP in 2024–25:



3.4.3 Satellite tracking of big Kingfish

Project Kingfish is a collaboration between scientists at the Sydney Institute of Marine Science, Macquarie University and Deakin University, and recreational fishers. Since the project commenced in 2022, Kingfish have been satellite and acoustically tagged to better understand their movements and connectivity around south-eastern Australia.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

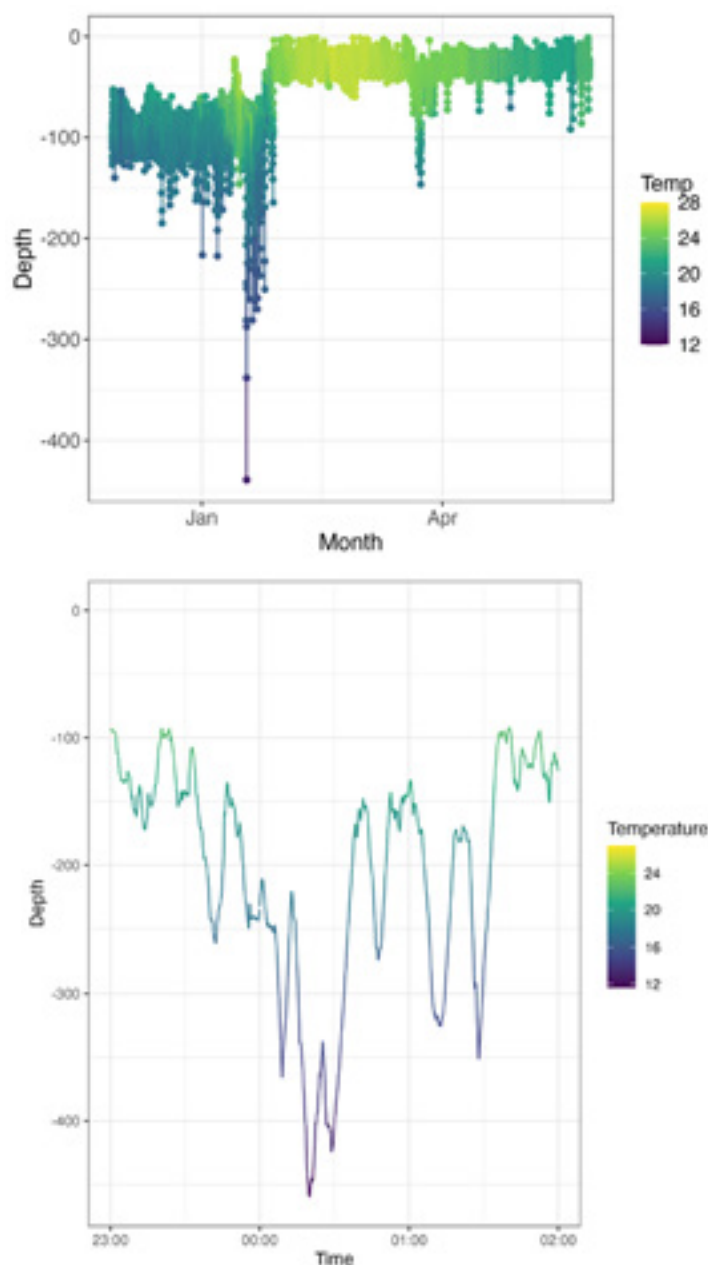
- Successful collaboration with recreational anglers around south-eastern Australia to deploy an additional nine satellite tags and 20 acoustic tags on large Kingfish
- since 2022, a total of 57 Kingfish have been satellite tagged, equating to 3,131 data days (revealing diving behavior and thermal habitats) and a total of 32,542 km travelled
- scientific publication¹ of Kingfish otolith ('ear bones') microchemistry to investigate juvenile kingfish habitat use
- across Project Kingfish social media profiles, the research has reached over 400,000 people, with 6,500 active followers, allowing the public to have access to up-to-date scientific information on the species.



1. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jfb.70110>

Rapid diving behaviour of Kingfish made possible by the swim bladder 'vent'

The satellite tags that are deployed on Kingfish contain pressure probes that allow for insights into the diving behaviour of tagged fish. One individual, satellite tagged at Lord Howe Island, exhibited the species' impressive ability to tolerate the deep, dark waters and dove to an impressive 467 m! Kingfish have a specialised "vent" structure in their swim bladders which allows built up gas to escape, possibly explaining how this dive was possible.



3.4.4 Recreational Fisheries Monitoring Program

Statewide recreational fishing surveys are done every two years using a telephone-diary survey to collect information on recreational fishing across NSW. The most recent surveys were completed in 2023–24, with the 2025–26 survey commencing in November 2025. These surveys provide comparable biennial snapshots of catch, effort and participation of long-term (one and three year) licensed recreational fishers. The RFMP also has an on-site survey which collects biological and fisher information using trained observers on-board charter vessels. For species commonly caught by recreational fishers, this catch information is essential for stock assessments and status determinations and helps ensure sustainable fishing into the future.

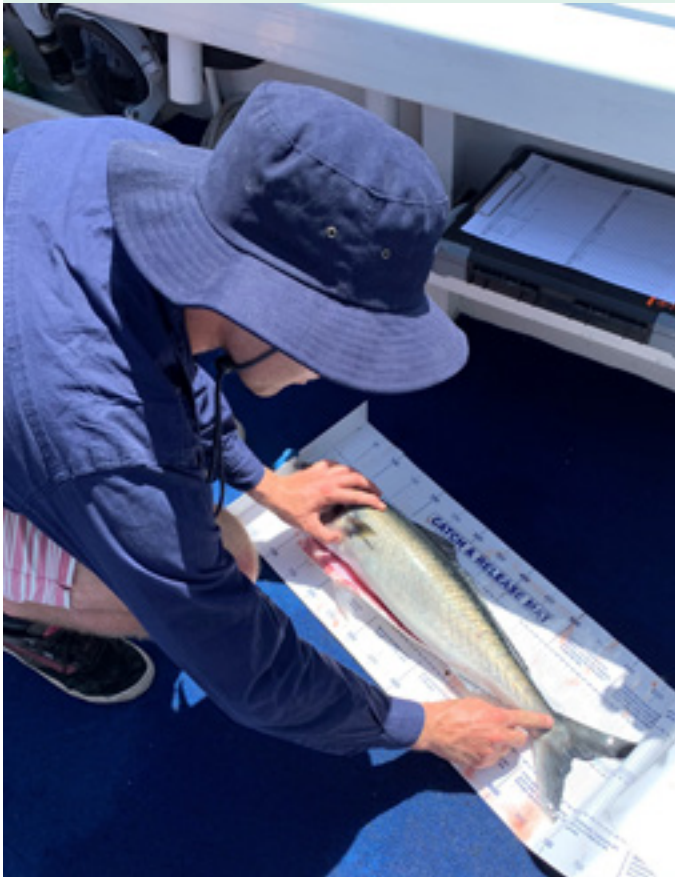
Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- Analysis of the 2023–24 survey was completed with information from 8,300 individual fishing events recorded, indicating that licensed households undertook 2.1 million days of fishing and caught 9.4 million individual organisms across more than 140 species
- the top five saltwater species recorded were Bream, Dusky Flathead, Snapper, Tailor and Sand Whiting
- the top five freshwater species recorded were European Carp, Murray Cod, Trout, Australian Bass and Golden Perch.

On-site surveys

The on-site component of the recreational survey program has focused on the charter boat fishery but is being extended to selected boat ramps across the state using trained interviewers at selected boat ramps across the State to expand the amount of data collected from recreational fishers and make our stock assessments even more accurate. Look out for our interviewers at boat ramps in the near future.

 A trained scientific observer measures catch on board a NSW nearshore charter vessel in NSW



3.4.5 Building a Healthy Freshwater Fishery

This long term freshwater research program provides essential biological and fish sampling data on our key inland fisheries to inform sound decision-making on the management of our key recreational fish species.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- Assessment of a Tiger Trout trial in lakes of the Lithgow region of NSW
- continuation of tagging studies monitoring Murray Cod habitat usage and movements in Copeton Dam
- monitoring of NSW impoundment fisheries for Murray Cod, Golden Perch, Australian Bass and salmonids through age and growth studies (using otoliths), hydroacoustic surveys, and genetic analyses.
- Completion of annual trout fishery monitoring in the Snowy Lakes and streams across NSW.

3.4.6 Effectiveness of marine fish stocking

The marine stocking monitoring program provides scientific evidence to ensure the release of hatchery bred fish is both sustainable and achieves maximum benefits for the NSW recreational fishing community.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- A record number of fin clips collected by recreational anglers targeting both Dusky Flathead and Mulloway have been genetically analysed to determine the contribution of stocked fish. 253 Mulloway and 331 Dusky Flathead clips donated to the scientific program by anglers were sent for DNA analysis, highlighting the strong support by the recreational fishing community.
- releases of larger (400–500 mm) externally tagged Mulloway have continued with recaptures now highlighting the residency of these Mulloway within their stocked estuary
- the longest time at liberty before recapture of larger stocked Mulloway is now 493 days, with this fish caught not far from its release location and growing 18 cm.

Tiger Trout stockings

In a trial across Lake Lyell, Lake Wallace, and Thompson Creek Dam near Lithgow, Tiger Trout stockings were assessed through angler reports, electrofishing surveys, and socio-economic studies. The results revealed strong returns, healthy growth rates, localised movements and economic benefits for the region. This work highlights not only the value these fisheries bring to local communities but also the importance of carefully evaluating any new fish stocking activities to ensure they achieve recreational fishing goals.



Predation rates on stocked juvenile Mulloway investigated

Predation rates on stocked Mulloway were evaluated using transmitters capable of detecting when a fish has been caught and eaten by a predator. Transmitters were surgically implanted into 30 juvenile Mulloway stocked into the Georges River. Fish were tracked over 5 months, with 13 predated upon, with all these events occurring within 22 days. Fish which survived the initial 22 days appeared to thrive and were recorded moving around the estuary for the duration of the study. This reveals expectedly high predation rates upon stocked Mulloway, but that they acclimate quickly and fish surviving the initial release period will adapt well to the wild. Outcomes from this work will help refine Mulloway stocking practices including release size, location and timing, to help reduce the effects of predation.



3.4.7 Making More Maccas

Prior to massive declines, Macquarie Perch (Maccas) were once a highly prized recreational species. This project aims to recover Maccas with the long-term goal of creating a future recreational fishery for the species.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- Continued captive breeding and development of technology at Narrandera Fisheries Centre
- stocking of captive bred Maccas into the Winburndale Catchment
- continued trout relocation from Winburndale to the Mill Pond at Portland
- Macquarie Perch booming in Winburndale Dam, with the species now dominating the fish community and reaching 320 mm in length.



Annual Winburndale Trout Muster

The annual Winburndale Trout Muster, where trout are captured and collected from the Winburndale Dam and rivulet above the dam, continued with strong and increased support from recreational anglers. In 2025, 129 Brown Trout and one Rainbow Trout were transferred from Winburndale to the Mill Pond at Portland. There were over 25 recreational fishers involved in the program which was led by the Central Acclimatisation Society (CAS). This program has seen the transformation of the fish community from one that was dominated by trout to one that is now dominated by native fish and has attracted lots of media attention.

Prior to this program, Maccas had been extinct from the Macquarie River catchment for over 70 years. We have now reestablished a population, have seen the first ever Macca caught by a recreational fisher in the Macquarie for over 70 years and demonstrated a model for recovery of the species.





3.5 Aquatic Habitat Rehabilitation

Aquatic habitat rehabilitation initiatives focus on increasing fish populations naturally by improving environmental conditions. This is achieved through a range of small-and large-scale habitat-centered programs. Some programs repair existing environmental damage; others reinstate snags and riparian vegetation to improving water flow, and fish passage initiatives focus on removing barriers to fish movement and providing fish with longer, more connected waterway access. Taken together, these make a significant difference to the protection of fish habitats.

3.5.1 Landcare NSW & OzFish Unlimited community partnership driving fish habitat action

OzFish Unlimited and Landcare NSW have partnered to deliver 40 more fish habitat restoration projects across NSW, bringing the running total to 100 partnership projects. By combining local Landcare knowledge with the passion of recreational fishers, the partnership has improved fish habitat, enhanced biodiversity, and restored river health throughout the state.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- 20 more fish habitat restoration projects across saltwater and freshwater environments.
- \$1 million in additional funding secured for on-ground waterway restoration.
- 700 volunteers engaged to undertake this important work.
- Planted 10,600 native trees and shrubs
- Installed 48 woody habitat structures for native fish.

Boambee Creek mangrove restoration

When Southern Cross University and the Gumbaynggirr Sea Rangers determined that part of the mangrove population in Boambee Creek had been wiped out by storms and chemical contamination, OzFish and Landcare stepped in to lend a hand in restoring them. A community planting day was held where the restoration team trialed the John Eddy Method for mangrove restoration, utilising locally sourced mangrove seeds from Boambee Creek.

Mangroves provide a crucial link between land and water and provide critical habitat for recreationally targeted species of fish. Once they are re-established in the system, the creek's resilience to future shocks will be significantly enhanced.

📷 Southern Cross University, Gumbaynggirr Rangers, OzFish Unlimited and Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare join forces to restore a mangrove forest in the Boambee Creek estuary.



3.5.2 Flagship Fish Habitat Rehabilitation Grants

The Flagship Fish Habitat Rehabilitation Grants (Flagship) program seeks to benefit recreational fishing opportunities by enhancing coastal habitats that fish need to thrive. Flagship Grants builds on the Habitat Action Grant program by offering up to \$400,000 for larger scale projects.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- Five projects have progressed key fish habitat improvements in popular fishing destinations from the Richmond River in the north to the Crookhaven River in the south
- three of these projects continued efforts to rehabilitate degraded riverbank habitat, while the other two progressed plans to improve estuary shorelines with a combination of vegetation improvements, improved access to fishing and rehabilitated natural reefs
- positive stakeholder engagement by community members, fishers, landholders, local and State government managers, university researchers and industry representatives to contribute to projects that will lead to better habitat and fishing.



Bowraville’s young stewards caring for the river

Nambucca Valley Landcare in consultation and collaboration with OzFish, local council, community members and NSW Government agencies, is addressing some of the issues impacting the water quality and ecosystem of the Nambucca River through the Bowraville Connections project. Activities include 170 metres of bank stabilisation and protection at highly impacted flood sites, improved riverbed erosion controls at five sites and 2 km of fencing to prevent effluent input from cattle. Bank protection methods will include submerged woody snags, which ambush predators love, as well as riparian vegetation improvements that will stabilise the banks, increase shade, improve water temperature control, provide food and improve habitat complexity.

Recently, the project team educated students from Tallowood Steiner School on the importance of fish habitat and the children spent a morning getting their hands dirty by planting 500 tubestock. The effort was supported by ShoreTrack who came along for the afternoon to help finalise putting in stakes and tree guards to protect the tubestock from local wildlife. A great result and way to start the project.

3.5.3 Rec Fisher Habitat Capacity Building

The Rec Fisher Habitat Capacity Project gives NSW rec fishers the chance to step up and be part of leading fish habitat outcomes and waterway health improvements through citizen science programs, leadership opportunities, and shared learning experiences across the state. Through hands-on science and leadership programs, anglers are driving change and shaping the future of their waterways across coastal and inland regions of NSW.

NSW OzFish Young Leaders Program

This program is empowering the next generation of passionate recreational anglers as emerging leaders in fish habitat restoration and waterway health. Young anglers have gained hands-on experience through internships and placements, learning practical skills in ecological monitoring, habitat restoration, stakeholder engagement, science communication and project planning. Whether collecting data in the field or sharing stories with local communities, young anglers are building careers while making a real difference for their waterways. The program ensures they leave not just inspired but equipped to lead future projects that protect and enhance fishing experiences across NSW for years to come.



Anglers are using environmental DNA (eDNA) to help uncover the last remaining, long-forgotten native fish of the Richmond River

Eastern Freshwater Cod once thrived in the Richmond River, however poor land and waterway management has seen them nearly disappear over the years. Now, local rec anglers are teaming up with OzFish, local experts and NSW DPIRD Fisheries to change that by habitat mapping and collecting eDNA from creeks to hunt for any remaining wild populations of cod. If Cod are detected, the sites will guide targeted restoration under OzFish's EFC Recovery Plan. If not, monitoring will expand and habitat work near restocking areas will continue in partnership with NSW DPIRD. Just one water sample could confirm their presence and spark a comeback. It's science, fishing and conservation in action and if successful, an unforgettable win led by local anglers who care.



3.5.4 Habitat Action Grants

The Habitat Action Grants provide funding to a range of stakeholders to undertake on-ground fish habitat rehabilitation initiatives, which in turn support fish populations and improve recreational fishing opportunities across NSW.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- A range of on-ground activities were undertaken, including managing stock access to waterways, revegetation areas with native plants, erosion control, reintroduction of woody habitat into rivers and estuaries, weed control, wetland rehabilitation and the reinstatement of fish passage
- community engagement and participation in on-ground activities continues to be achieved across the State, with school groups, community members and recreational fishers getting their hands dirty to support the recovery of recreational fish populations.

Reconnecting the Capertee

Local community groups, recreational fishers and natural resource agencies have completed a fish habitat rehabilitation project in the Capertee Valley to support the recovery of native fish species, including the endangered Blue Mountains Perch. A barrier to fish passage was removed at this location, reconnecting another 25 km of upstream habitat, enabling fish to migrate, breed and thrive in a healthier river system. Revegetation activities were completed at the site resulting in improved bank stability, increasing available food sources and improving water quality. Ongoing weed control will also ensure ongoing benefits for years to come.



Edward Kolety River vegetation rehabilitation

Deniliquin Landcare led the charge to undertake an important revegetation project along the Edward River with the assistance of keen students and budding fishers. Key to the project was the selection of native plant species endemic to the area, including the establishment of more than 1,000 terrestrial and aquatic plants that will create critical habitat for small bodied native species and increased food sources and breeding sites for some of our iconic species such as the Murray Cod. Seeing young adults excited by their participation in the project is great to see, supporting long term protection and improvement of fish habitat; future custodians in the making.



3.6 Fisheries Officers

Funds from the Recreational Fishing Trusts support nine coastal, three coastal mobile squad and six inland Fisheries officers, which forms a key part of DPIRD’s capacity to enforce fisheries rules and regulations.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- 38,520 recreational compliance checks were undertaken across NSW waterways by Fisheries officers
- 5,210 offences were detected (resulting from recreational compliance checks), which led to 3,418 written warnings, 1,521 penalty notices totalling \$476,675 in value, 20 prosecution actions and 251 other sanction types
- Fisheries officers attended 55 educational events, resulting in 1,879 contacts.



Compliance Statistics	
Total recreational contacts	38,520
Compliance rate for recreational sector	90%
Recreational field hours	37,031
Recreational offences	5,210
Recreational written warnings	3,418
Recreational penalty notices	1,521
Value of recreational penalty notices	\$476,675
Recreational prosecution actions commenced	20
Recreational prosecution fines	55
Value of recreational prosecution fines	\$67,560
Operations conducted (all sectors)	37
Recreational fish and invertebrates seized	28,079
Recreational fishing gear and other items seized	1,157
Vessel patrol hours (all sectors)	4,573
Educational events attended (all sectors)	55 educational events resulting in 1879 contacts

3.7 Trust Management and Administration

The administration of the recreational fishing fee (licenses) and the management of the Trusts, including hundreds of grants each year, is supported by funds from the Trusts. The Trusts are managed to a high standard to ensure transparent and accountable governance.

3.7.1 Recreational Fishing Licence Fee — facilitating fishing licenses for fishers

The Department oversees the safe and secure collection of recreational fishing fees (public money) in partnership with Service NSW and continues to provide a convenient payment network for fishers. All fishing fees are deposited into the Trusts, as required by law.

Achievements in 2024–25 included:

- The digital fishing licence grew in popularity. An additional 58,000 fishers made use of the new online licence receipt preference feature allowing fishers to opt for a digital licence receipt only (instead of a plastic card for one-year and three-year applications).
- development and release of a new payment IVR phone system for recreational fishers to be able to pay for a new application or renewal over the phone at any time with enhanced features such as the ability to SMS receipt numbers to fishers, and migration to a new phone system which has allowed for a better customer service experience when recreational fishers call the DPIRD Recreational Fisheries Customer Services Team for assistance.

3.7.2 Trusts program delivery

Since 2001, over 3,400 projects have been completed using funds from the Trusts, including small and large grants projects, fish stocking and fuel card grants, Gone Fishing Day grants, Habitat Action Grants as well as DPIRD projects. DPIRD has worked to ensure accountability of these projects and has implemented good governance arrangements to promote transparency and good business performance. A further 197 projects are underway with ongoing monitoring to ensure delivery of outcomes and benefits for recreational fishers.







Ensuring NSW has great
fishing opportunities for
generations to come.



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

4 Appendices

4.1 Appendix 1: RFNSW and Expenditure Committee membership

Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council

The Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW) provides advice to the Minister for Agriculture on key recreational fishing issues in NSW, **including expenditure priorities from the Trusts.**

To ensure that the views of regional fishers from across the state are conveyed, RFNSW includes representation from eight regional areas, two members with expertise in spearfishing and charter boat fishing and other representatives that significantly benefit its function. The *Fisheries Management Act 1994* provides that all members of advisory councils are to be appointed by the Minister in accordance with the Fisheries Regulations.

RFNSW members	
Independent Chair	Professor Johann Bell
Region 1 – Mid & Far North Coast	Mr Patrick Linehan
Region 2 – Lower North Coast	Mr Paul Lennon
Region 3 – Sydney & Central Coast	Mr Grahame Williams OAM
Region 3 – Sydney & Central Coast	Prof Anna Clark
Region 4 – Illawarra	Ms Vicki Lear
Region 5 – South Coast	Mr Dean Hamilton
Region 6 – North West Inland (and MFAC representative)	Mr Matt Hansen OAM
Region 7 – South West Inland	Mr Karl Mathers
Region 8 – Central & Southern Tablelands	Mr Ray Tang
Region 8 – Central & Southern Tablelands	Mr Bill Blair
Charter Boat Fishing	Mr Peter Dugan
Spear Fishing	Mr Ian Puckeridge
Social benefits of recreational fishing	Mr Matt Tripet
Nominee of Secretary	Mr Peter Turnell, DPIRD

Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee

Made up of freshwater anglers from eight regions in NSW and a representative from a recreational fishing organisation, the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFFTEC) assists the Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW) in setting the Trust's expenditure priorities, including the assessment of Trust applications. Freshwater regions east of the Great Dividing Range extend to the upper limits of tidal waters, and the western regions are west of the Great Dividing Range. The dividing line between the inner west and the far-west regions is east of the Newell Highway until Dubbo and then west of the Newell Highway from Dubbo south.

The RFFTEC was established in line with DRNSW policy – Fisheries advisory groups: Establishments and Governance (TI-O-146).

Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee members	
Chair	Mr Bruce Schumacher AM
Region 1 – North Coast	Mr Max Graham
Region 2 – Central Coast	Mr Ron Butler
Region 3 – South Coast	Mr Ron Croker
Region 4 – North inner west	Mr Michael Davey
Region 5 – Central inner west	Mr Paul Mullen
Region 6 – South inner west	Ms Debbie Lennon
Region 7 – North west	Mr Jasen Ramien
Region 8 – South west	Mr Troy Bright
NSW recreational fishing organisation representative – Professional Fishing Instructors & Guides Association	Mr Brett Richards
DPIRD Representative – Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Management	Mr Peter Turnell

Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee

Made up of saltwater anglers from eight regions in NSW and representatives from three recreational fishing organisations, the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFSTEC) assists the Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW) in setting the Trust's expenditure priorities, including the assessment of Trust applications. The regions extend from Tweed Heads to the Victorian border.

The RFSTEC was established in line with DRNSW policy – Fisheries advisory groups: Establishments and Governance (TI-O-146).

Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee members	
Chair	Mr Bruce Schumacher AM
Region 1 – Qld to Evans Head	Mr Paul Connellan
Region 2 – Evans Head to Woolgoolga	Mr David Faircloth
Region 3 – Woolgoolga to Port Macquarie	Mr Craig Cameron
Region 4 – Port Macquarie to Seal Rocks	Mr Geoff Shelton
Region 5 – Seal Rocks to The Entrance	Mr Michael Aubrey
Region 6 – The Entrance to Wollongong	Mr Sami Omari
Region 7 – Wollongong to Narooma	Ms Ann Garard
Region 8 – Narooma to Victoria	Mr Micah Adams
NSW recreational fishing organisation representative – NSW Game Fishing Association	Mr Grahame Williams OAM
NSW recreational fishing organisation representative – OzFish Unlimited	Mr Ryan Lungu
NSW recreational fishing organisation representative – Australian Underwater Federation	Mr Adrian Wayne
DPIRD Representative – Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Management	Mr Peter Turnell

4.2 Appendix 2: Recreational Fishing Trusts funds summary by Project

In 2024–25, funds from the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust supported the following projects:

Project	Allocated (\$'000)	Expenses (\$'000)	Carry Forward (\$'000)
Ecohuts for recreational fishers	7	7	0
Expenditure committee meeting expenses	21	21	0
External grants — disbursements made to various organisations for approved projects	1,734	1,734	0
Flagship habitat program	58	58	0
Fish aggregation devices (FADs)	375	375	0
Fisheries officers (9 coastal officers)	1,533	1,533	0
Fisheries officers (mobile squads)	511	511	0
Gamefish tagging program	209	209	0
Great swordfish race	13	10	3
Marine stocking of key recreational fish species in coastal waters	395	395	0
Recreational fisheries enhancement (artificial reefs and FADs coordination)	303	303	0
Recreational fishing access (coastal)	199	199	0
Recreational fisheries monitoring program: statewide fishing and charter surveys	849	849	0
Recreational fishing trust executive officer	275	275	0
Research angler program	209	209	0
Research on estuary cockles	60	60	0
Research on marine fish stocking	319	319	0
Research on Mulloway stock recovery	125	125	0
Sydney Harbour wharves compliance initiative	247	247	0
Trust grants governance enhancement project	152	152	0
Total	7,594	7,591	3

* The Allocated column consists of funds from the Trust fund in 2024–25, amounts carried forward from projects in 2023–24 and any unused project funds from previous years returned to the Trust.

In 2024–25, funds from the Recreational Fishing (Freshwater) Trust supported the following projects:

Project	Allocated (\$'000)	Expenses (\$'000)	Carry Forward (\$'000)
Community native fish stocking program	419	419	0
Eastern freshwater cod production and research	496	496	0
Enhanced fish production at hatcheries for stocking (Port Stephens, Narrandera, Dutton & Grafton)	693	693	0
Expenditure committee meeting expenses	18	18	0
External grants — disbursements made to various organisations for approved projects	548	548	0
Fisheries officers (inland)	1,022	1,022	0
Freshwater recreational management program	210	210	0
Fuel cards for fish stocking	6	6	0
Gaden trout hatchery	859	859	0
Inland stocking management	133	133	0
Macquarie perch research (Making more maccas and Cracking the code)	117	117	0
NSW cold water pollution mitigation strategy	39	39	0
Recreational fishing access (inland)	326	326	0
Regional inland fish habitat protection and management	198	198	0
Research on freshwater recreational fishery in NSW	717	717	0
Stocking of advanced Murray cod to assist with post-flood recovery	32	32	0
Total	5,833	5,833	0

* The Allocated column consists of funds from the Trust fund in 2024–25 and any unused project funds from previous years returned to the Trust.

In 2024–25, funds from the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater and Freshwater) Trusts supported the following projects:

Project	Allocated (\$'000)	Expenses (\$'000)	Carry Forward (\$'000)
Advisory Council meeting expenses	64	64	0
Fish for Life project	188	188	0
Fishcare volunteer program	1,164	1,164	0
Get Hooked... It's Fun to Fish schools program	396	396	0
Habitat action program 2018/19 and beyond	598	598	0
NSW Gone Fishing Day	112	112	0
NSW fishing workshops	37	37	0
Recreational fisheries infrastructure management program	213	213	0
Recreational fishing fee administration project	1,916	1,916	0
Recreational fishing guides	125	125	0
Recreational Fishing Trust annual report	27	27	0
Total	4,840	4,840	0

* The Allocated column consists of funds from the Trust fund in 2024–25 and any unused project funds from previous years returned to the Trusts.

4.3 Appendix 3: Summary of projects approved for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts in 2024–25

Note: SW and FW denote the Saltwater and Freshwater Trusts, respectively. Amounts shown are the approved funds for each project.

Platform: Recreational fishing enhancement

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
\$2 for \$1 native fish stocking program: This highly popular project “doubles down” on volunteer efforts to boost freshwater native fish stocks via an innovative fish stocking program where Trust funding is provided at a rate of \$2 for every \$1 from community groups.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$500,000 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Accelerating eastern freshwater cod production in the hatchery and the wild: This project builds on recent success with nest box experimentation for eastern freshwater cod. The aim is to improve freshwater recreational fisheries in NSW which will result in economic, social and environmental benefits.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$546,352 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Assessing and managing freshwater fish stocking proposals. Boosting recreational fishing opportunities via effective and efficient assessment of freshwater stocking proposals: This project boosts recreational fishing opportunities in inland NSW via the effective and efficient assessment of freshwater fish stocking proposals. This involves the preparation of fish stocking plans, site assessments, analysis of fish stocking data, liaison with fish stocking groups, and issuing fish stocking permits. Regular engagement with stakeholders to discuss options for fish stocking within public waterways and to provide advice on current fish stocking programs is a key aspect of the project.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$161,548 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Boosting freshwater fish stocks in NSW with popular species to enhance recreational fishing opportunities: Further boost and enhance freshwater fishing opportunities for popular native and salmonid species across NSW by enabling the Dutton, Grafton, Port Stephens and Narrandera fish hatcheries to produce and stock more fish.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$713,875 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Boosting our fisheries: stocking NSW estuaries with popular species to enhance recreational fishing opportunities: This marine stocking program involves the breeding and release of key species including Mulloway and Dusky Flathead along the coast of NSW using the world’s best stocking practices to enhance recreational fishing in estuaries. Stockings are guided by a Fisheries Management Strategy to ensure a responsible approach.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$525,204 SW	2024–25 activities completed
Cracking the Code on Captive Breeding of Macquarie perch: This project will ‘crack the code’ on captive breeding of Macquarie perch, allowing for the species to be reliably and consistently bred in captivity using hatchery broodstock, rather than relying on harvest of broodstock from dwindling wild populations. This work will save Macquarie perch from extinction and ultimately re-establish recreational fisheries for Macquarie perch across its former range in NSW, Victoria and ACT.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$75,000 FW	2024–25 activities completed

Platform: Recreational fishing enhancement

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Enhancing coastal fisheries: Making reefs and FADs happen: Artificial reefs and fish aggregating devices (FADs) are two of the most popular programs funded by the Recreational Fishing Trusts providing new high quality, fishing locations for anglers. This project involves a dedicated fisheries manager to manage and coordinate the programs to make them happen. The role facilitates environmental assessments, State and Commonwealth approvals, tenders and monitoring of artificial reefs.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$321,000 SW	2024–25 activities completed
Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) — more places for people to fish: The FADs program provides reliable offshore fishing locations where recreational fishers can target a variety of popular pelagic fish over the spring, summer and autumn months. This project involves a dedicated FADs officer responsible for procurement of hardware, assembly and installation of FADs, replacement and maintenance where required, removal of all FADs at the close of each season and providing fishers with up-to-date FADs information via a range of media avenues including email, social media and smartphone apps.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$378,366 SW	2024–25 activities completed
Fuel cards assistance program: Assisting community groups with transport costs to and from fish stocking events and other recreational fishing enhancement activities via the management and provision of fuel cards.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$15,000 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Funding support to assist with continued operation of the volunteer-run Manilla Native Fish Hatchery: To obtain funding support from the Recreational Fishing Trust to enable this long-running volunteer operated community hatchery to continue operations to produce and stock native fish for the benefit of local and visiting anglers to the Manilla region and surrounds.	Manilla Fishing Club & Hatchery Inc		\$10,000 FW	Completed
Gaden Trout Hatchery - Boosting salmonid fish stocks in southern and central NSW: This project ensures the continued delivery of high-quality fishing via the production and stocking of Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout, Brook Trout, Tiger Trout and Atlantic Salmon in rivers, streams and impoundments across NSW's premier salmonid fisheries including the Snowy Mountains, Southern Highlands and Central Tablelands.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$896,842 FW	2024–25 activities completed
NSW DPIRD Freshwater Fish Tagging: To increase the number of fish tagged and broaden the species included in the current tagging program. This will focus on increasing the number of tagged fish released by NSW DPIRD trout hatcheries and expanding the locations of where these fish are stocked. This would also look at the expansion of the program to include tagging of native species by NSW DPIRD.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$15,000 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Restoring catfish through partnerships — A partnership based traditional approach to restocking and restoring native fish: Catfish have significant cultural and recreational value. Restocking catfish populations at crucial traditional creek and wetland locations, is a vital step toward revitalizing the profound cultural and recreational significance that catfish hold for the local and visiting community.	Edward-Wakool Angling Association (EWAA)		\$25,000 FW	Project underway

Platform: Recreational fishing enhancement

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Upgrading Water Supply and Filtration Infrastructure for Gaden Trout Hatchery: The current \$8.657M upgrade of the Gaden Trout Hatchery is progressing on program and will deliver a new hatchery building and dedicated refurbished tourist facility. However, the project's construction has highlighted the need to upgrade the ageing water supply infrastructure and water filtration system. Much of the hydraulic infrastructure is 50 years old. Many valves are inoperable, pipework is at end of life and the existing bell filter is inoperable, redundant and bypassed. To future-proof the ongoing operation of the station, an upgrade of main supply line/associated components as well as an advanced filtration system is required. This upgrade would also greatly benefit the proposed Snowy 2.0 concept works that are slated to begin in the coming years.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$600,000 FW	Works completed (alternative funding used)

Platform: Fishing access and facilities

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Allworth Fishing Jetty Refurbishment: Major refurbishment of timber jetty including structural components, all past useful life and in urgent need of replacement. These works will complement the scheduled upgrade of the adjoining boat ramp and pontoon (LRCI) funded.	MidCoast Council		\$101,302 SW	Project underway
Berry Jerry Lagoon Track upgrade (Murrumbidgee R): A project to improve a flood damaged track and gate system that leads to a large reserve system at Berry Jerry Lagoon. The improvements will increase access to 2 km of the Murrumbidgee River and provide large boat access to an established earthen boat launch.	Southwest Anglers Association		\$8,350 FW	Withdrawn by applicant
Eight-person Fish Cleaning Table at Apex Park Laurieton: The removal of the old, dilapidated table and replacement with a new eight-person fish cleaning table. Includes faucets connected to potable water supply.	Port Macquarie Hastings Council		\$39,250 SW	Completed
Eight-person Fish Cleaning Table at McInherney Park Port Macquarie: The removal of the old, dilapidated table and replacement with a new eight-person fish cleaning table. Includes faucets connected to potable water supply.	Port Macquarie Hastings Council		\$39,250 SW	Completed
Fishing Upgrade iNfrastructure Across Shoalhaven 2024–26 (FUN-AS 3): Repair, refurbishment and upgrade of FIVE old recreational fishing platforms across the Shoalhaven region for increased resilience to storms and flooding, with significantly improved accessibility for locals and visiting tourists. The project includes five subprojects.	Shoalhaven City Council		\$375,000 SW	Project underway
Harwood Island Fishing Club Shade Shelter: To build a shelter over the existing fish cleaning table that does not have any protection from the sun or inclement weather, and install a stainless steel cover to the existing concrete table top for health reasons.	Harwood Island Fishing Club Inc.		\$7,525 SW	Completed

Platform: Fishing access and facilities

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Keeping Recreational Fishing Access on Sydney Harbour Wharves & Piers: Sydney Harbour's 50 ferry wharves network and Walsh Bay piers are the most valuable access asset to recreational fishers in the Sydney region, providing safe and convenient fishing platforms for everyone. Given their huge popularity, there is unfortunately ongoing anti-social behaviour by some recreational fishers. This project involves facilitating Water Police patrols at night to provide a highly visual deterrent on the wharves and piers and to promote fishers to behave respectfully and to be courteous to ferry commuters and other user groups. The project also involves some cleaning services for the Walsh Bay piers. These funds are disbursed to Transport for NSW which manages the patrols in consultation with Water Police.		DPIRD Fisheries (in partnership with Transport for NSW)	\$250,000 SW	2024–25 activities completed
Lake Lyell Fishing Access Upgrade: A project to enhance and retain foot-based angler access for recreational fishers with limited ability to the Farmers Creek arm of Lake Lyell.	Wallerawang CAS		\$8,500 FW	Project not yet commenced
Maintaining and enhancing angler access in inland NSW: Great fishing depends on accessing great places to fish! In order to ensure NSW's 1 million + recreational fishers enjoy great fishing now and into the future, DPIRD's Angler Access team delivers a range of projects to maintain and enhance access to inland NSW recreational fisheries. Key priorities of our two person team include identifying new access opportunities, maintenance and promotion of the Angler Access website, assessment and input into public road and land closures/acquisitions, actively encouraging responsible fishing and stewardship via the Angler Access Code of Conduct, developing and implementing an Angler Access Action Plan and working with land managers and partner agencies to promote the benefits of well-managed access to provide diverse angling opportunities.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$378,251 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Maintenance of Spencer Park Floating Jetty/Fishing Platform: To assist the management of the new Spencer Park Merimbula Floating Jetty adjacent to the Merimbula Big Game & Lakes Angling Club Inc's Club house at Merimbula. The new jetty is a very popular community facility, now used daily by both local and visiting anglers as a fishing platform.	Merimbula Big Game & Lakes Angling Club Inc.		\$2,890 SW	Completed
Recreational fishing access — maintaining and enhancing land and boat access for fishers along the NSW coast: Great fishing depends on accessing great places to fish! In order to ensure NSW's 1 million + recreational fishers enjoy great fishing now and into the future, DPIRD's Angler Access team delivers a range of projects to maintain and enhance access to NSW recreational fisheries. Key priorities of the Coastal Access Officer include identifying new access opportunities, assessment and input into National Parks plans of management, actively encouraging responsible fishing and stewardship via the Angler Access Code of Conduct, and working with land managers and partner agencies to promote responsible fishing while fishers are interacting with the many other water user groups on our busy coastal waterways.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$208,204 SW	2024–25 activities completed

Platform: Fishing access and facilities

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Replace fishing platform Lintern St Wharf, Davistown. NSW 2251: To replace an aging wooden fishing platform at Davistown with marine/weather durable material including a pedestrian bridge. The project will enable people with disabilities to better access the facility.	Davistown Progress Association Inc.		\$11,035 SW	Completed
Sandy Point - Fisherman's Bend Platform: To reconstruct a failing retaining wall to allow better and safer access to the Fisherman's Bend Platform and the Sandy Point boat ramp.	Hay Shire Council		\$98,300 FW	Project underway
Tumbulgum village fish cleaning facility: To provide the local community & tourists with a quality fish cleaning facility to go alongside the existing boat ramp and jetty with disabled access. This facility will give the village a facility that complies with the DPIRD rules for cleaning fish.	Tumbulgum Fishing Club Inc.		\$26,210 SW	Project underway

Platform: Recreational fishing education

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Broken Bay Game Fishing Club Junior fishing Development program: Introduction to fishing for parents and children of all ages. Rods and fishing tackle to be provided by Broken Bay Game Fishing Club for all participants to take home and use at later date. Lunch and refreshments provided at end of fishing day. Junior development program to run throughout the year, one day per month. Junior development program open to all juniors with parents wanting to learn the basics of safe boating with all aspects of fishing on board and off board our club boats.	Broken Bay Game Fishing Club \ Division of RMYC		\$4,500 SW	Project underway
Casting and Connecting - Mental Fitness, Recreational Fishing Retreats: The 'Casting and Connecting' program will see 36, four-day recreational fishing, mental fitness retreats hosted at both freshwater and coastal fisheries in NSW, supporting 360 NSW community participants over three years.	The Fly Program		\$36,000 SW \$36,000 FW	Project underway
Come Fish With Us — Teaching the fishing custodians of tomorrow, instilling passion & drive that encourages continuation in the sport: This interactive Come Fish with Us program runs around 90 fishing workshops each year for 8000 kids and adults per year how to fish throughout NSW in a responsible and sustainable manner. Creating a fun, enjoyable educational experience, teaching the basics of fishing so they continue in the sport for life. Our mission is to create the fishing steward's and champions of tomorrow. The workshops are inclusive involving people from diverse backgrounds, including people with disabilities, multicultural communities, the elderly etc and promote the positive physical and mental wellbeing benefits of recreational fishing.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$42,000 SW \$28,000 FW	2024–25 activities completed

Platform: Recreational fishing education

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Engaging, educating, and empowering at-risk rock fishing communities to fish safely on our coastlines: Delivering targeted rock fishing safety education through the provision of 1,500 lifejackets into community along with rock fishing safety workshops, classroom-based education, family targeted school programs, advanced practical skill sessions, lifejacket libraries and rock fishing safety resources.	Surf Life Saving NSW		\$298,590 SW	Project underway
Fishcare Grassroots Fishing Education: The dedicated and passionate network of Fishcare Volunteers across NSW provides face to face and hands-on education to recreational fishers on the ground. Targeted messaging is used to promote responsible and sustainable fishing ('Fish for Life'). Fishcare also plays a key role in the running of the Get Hooked...its fun to fish schools' program and the many Come Fish with Us sessions held each year. Our mission is to create a team of fishing stewards that champion, responsible fishing and a sustainable secure fishing future for our fishing community. Fishcare Volunteers are serviced by 6 dedicated Recreational Fishing Education Officers based regionally throughout NSW.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$840,912 SW \$360,391 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Fishing 4 All: Introduce people with disabilities specifically those with Intellectual Impairment to Fishing through education, mentorship and volunteering. The program aims to bring joy and friendship into people's lives through fishing and the outdoors, building networks and support groups for those that can feel isolated and unable to take the first step of wetting a line alone. As an accredited NDIS provider, we will work with local partners to deliver 2x 8 weekly programs with the view that the projects will continue with supported assistance over the next 12 months.	4Titude		\$10,000 SW	Project not yet commenced
Fishing Sydney Harbour With Starlo & Friends: A series of six videos showcasing the diversity of recreational fishing opportunities available in Sydney Harbour, while promoting the five core concepts of sustainability, responsibility, stewardship, education, and safety.	River & Sea Pty Ltd		\$9,660 SW	Withdrawn by applicant
Fly Fishing Day for people who have experienced breast cancer: The exercise of fly fishing is beneficial to all who have experienced breast cancer not only the physical but the mental aspect of joining with people who have much in common. Annual events will be held for people who have experienced breast cancer.	New England Acclimatisation Society		\$2,000 FW	Project underway
Get Hooked It's Fun to Fish! Free schools program: This interactive discovery program introduces around 4000 primary school students to freshwater and marine fishing, the significance of aquatic life, catch and release skills and the importance of sustaining a quality fish habitat, while practising safe and responsible fishing behaviours. The program is open to all schools in NSW, including home schools and delivers targeted messaging through a series of practical in class lessons and practical fishing workshops at a local waterway. While the focus has been on primary schools, the high schools program is being launched in the first half of 2024.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$343,819 SW \$147,351 FW	2024–25 activities completed

Platform: Recreational fishing education

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Gone Fishing Day: The annual Gone Fishing Day is run in October each year to celebrate recreational fishing as a fun, healthy, outdoors activity that everyone can participate in. DPIRD continues to run 6 major events across NSW on the Day to celebrate the day with various community-based activities (try fishing sessions, casting competitions, giveaways etc). Fishing clubs and organisations are also provided the opportunity for funding grants or fishing packages to run their own events on the Day. In 2023, over 100 fishing organisations participated in Gone Fishing Day.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$95,000 SW \$35,000 FW	2024–25 activities completed
NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts Annual Report — Creative design of print and online publications: To create an online and print publication for the Recreational Fishing Trust Annual Report, which promotes the achievements of programs supported by the Recreational Fishing Trust. The publication will be highly graphic (including photographs and infographics) and high profile, available as a printable A4 document.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$28,000 SW \$12,000 FW	2024–25 activities completed
NSW Saltwater and Freshwater Recreational Fishing Guides — One stop shop for all essential fishing information: These guides provide an easy-to-read summary of essential information fishers need before they go fishing. This includes important information like fishing rules, gear descriptions, licenses and Recreational Fishing Trusts information, sustainable fishing practices and much more. It is proposed to produce 200,000 per year. The guides represent a one stop shop for anglers to access their fishing information. It is especially popular with new or beginner fishos, but it is still readily requested by experienced anglers at tackle shops and events.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$87,500 SW \$37,500 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Recreational Fishing for Students with a Disability — Morisset High School: Development of social skills, engagement with leisure activities and awareness of local waterways through recreational fishing for students with disabilities at Morisset HS.	Morisset High School		\$2,515 SW	Project underway
St Peter's Anglican College Marine and Aquaculture Technology: Purchase and organize fishing tackle, books and equipment to deliver an extensive marine and aquaculture program.	St Peter's Anglican College Broulee		\$5,500 SW	Project underway
Winter School Holidays Junior Fishing Competition 2024: Run a Winter School Holidays Junior Fishing Competition over the winter school holidays including education workshops and a presentation afternoon, supporting recreational angling and Merimbula's local businesses.	Merimbula Big Game & Lakes Angling Club		\$4,100 SW	Withdrawn by applicant

Platform: Research on fish and recreational fishing

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Enhancing and monitoring the freshwater recreational fishery in NSW: This project builds on the long-term recreational fishing monitoring and research program undertaken throughout NSW. The aim is to improve freshwater recreational fisheries in NSW which will result in economic, social and environmental benefits.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$757,747 FW	2024–25 activities completed
NSW Game Fish Tagging Program — the largest of its kind in the world: The NSW DPIRD Game Fish Tagging Program is the largest citizen science tagging program of its kind in the world and has been in operation since 1973. It uses anglers to obtain vital information on the biology of billfish, tunas, sharks and sport fish while encouraging fishers to participate in the management of the fishery.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$225,751 SW	2024–25 activities completed
NSW Recreational Fisheries Monitoring Program: The New South Wales Recreational Fisheries Monitoring Program (RFMP) provides regular surveys of recreational fishing activities, which contributes preeminent information to inform evidenced-based decision making and ensure the interests of recreational fishes can be represented in the management of NSW fisheries resources.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$594,146 SW \$254,634 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Research Angler Program — Fish into fillets, frames into facts — A key citizen science initiative: The Research Angler Program is a citizen science initiative that enables fishos to donate their fish frames which are used by scientists to obtain essential biological information for stock assessments such as fish age, reproductive status and other life history information. Fishers are also provided feedback about their catch and enables fishers to be involved in the management of their recreational fishery.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$219,098 SW	2024–25 activities completed
Science-based sustainable and productive fisheries enhancement in NSW: This project builds upon previous work, undertaking the required monitoring of DPIRD marine stocking programs. Recreational anglers are engaged through a citizen science program, thereby directly providing information that supports fish stocking in NSW.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$324,926 SW	2024–25 activities completed

Platform: Aquatic habitat protection and rehabilitation

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Aquatic habitat protection and fish conservation — Greater Murray NSW: Provision of fish conservation management services for the Murray, Lower Darling and Murrumbidgee catchments of NSW, to enhance key fish habitat protection and recreational fisher involvement in fish habitat protection, management and rehabilitation.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$237,204 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Flagship Habitat Action: The Flagship Habitat Action program will continue to engage and facilitate key stakeholders in the development and delivery of large-scale strategic coastal fish habitat rehabilitation activities; restoring highly productive, resilient fisheries.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$447,444 SW	2024–25 activities completed
Habitat Action Program — “Making More Fish Naturally” — 2.0: Saltwater - Habitat Action Grants (Sub Program) - Coordination and management of the devolved grant to enhance fish habitat in coastal NSW and support healthy, resilient recreational fisheries (up to \$50,000 per grant with total funds of \$570,000 annually). Freshwater - Flagship Fish Habitat Rehabilitation Program (Pilot Sub Program) - Strengthen partnerships to achieve significant on-ground actions to support the protection and improvement of fish habitat at priority locations across inland catchments (between \$100,000 - \$400,000 per grant with total funds of \$400,00 annually). ‘Fishers for Fish Habitat’ (Sub Program) - The Habitat & Threatened Species Unit will continue to engage with and support recreational anglers across inland and coastal New South Wales in meaningful activities to enhance fish habitat, fish/habitat research activities/citizen science and threatened fish species awareness and recovery, education and capacity building.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$780,493 SW \$490,211 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Otyhuca Pandyl Project (Fish Salvage Project): Over a 2-year co-funded initiative, Traditional Owners, subject matter experts and volunteers collaborate to rescue and relocate native fish to secure refuge areas during the winter shutdown of Murray Irrigation Limited channels.	Western Murray Land Improvement Group		\$25,000 FW	Project underway
Stage 2 – Rec Fisher Habitat Capacity: Building the fish habitat capacity, knowledgebase, delivery capability and leadership qualities of NSW recreational fishers: Based on the first 12 months successes and feedback from NSW recreational anglers on what they would like to see in a continued program, OzFish has conceptualized additional leadership and development pathways for training (science and practical) that will further equip NSW recreational fishers with the skills and resources needed to advocate and engage with habitat restoration actions, providing better fishing outcomes and experiences in NSW.	OzFish Unlimited		\$118,000 SW \$79,200 FW	Project underway

Platform: Enforcement of fishing rules

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Coastal Fisheries Officers x 9: Funding for 9 coastal fisheries officers maintaining capacity of NSW DPIRD to enforce fisheries rules and regulations including recreational fishing fee requirement across NSW coastal areas.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$1,533,256 SW	2024–25 activities completed
Coastal Rec Mobile Squad Officers x 3: Funding for 3 regional mobile squad officers maintaining capacity of NSW DPIRD to enforce saltwater recreational rules and regulations in particular recreational fishing fee requirements whilst patrolling popular fishing areas including recreational fishing havens.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$511,085 SW	2024–25 activities completed
Inland Fisheries Officers x 6: Funding for 6 inland fisheries officers maintaining capacity of NSW DPIRD to enforce fisheries rules and regulations including recreational fishing fee requirement across NSW inland areas.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$1,022,170 FW	2024–25 activities completed

Platform: Licence fee payment system & Trust management

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
RFSTEC and RFFTEC meeting expenses: The Recreational Fishing Saltwater and Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committees (RFSTEC and RFFTEC) are advisory committees that review applications for funding and make recommendations on priorities for expenditure from the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater and Freshwater) Trusts.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$39,200 SW \$39,200 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Recreational Fishing NSW (RFNSW) Advisory Council consultation and meeting expenses: RFNSW advises the Minister for Primary Industries on recreational fishery policy issues including maintaining and improving the quality of recreational fishing opportunities.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$62,300 SW \$26,700 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Recreational Fishing Licensing Fee and Customer Services — facilitating a convenient system for the sale of fishing licenses and renewal notices for fishers: Provides for the safe and secure collection of recreational fishing licenses fees (public money) which are deposited into the Recreational Fishing Trusts daily. It provides a convenient payment network for fishers using a variety of methods such as a dedicated webpage, sales agents (fishing tackle stores etc) throughout NSW, BPAY, automated telephone, and mail. It caters for all types of fishers. There is 1) an electronic sales platform provided by Department of Customer Service — Licence NSW which DPIRD uses to manage electronic licenses and 2) a manual payment system of agents run by DPIRD. This includes the data entry of 1 year and 3-year paper fishing licenses sold at tackle shops into the Licence NSW database. The project also provides an efficient licence renewal notice system (via external contractor) to provide opportunity for recreational fishers to renew their fee when it expires for all 1 year and 3-year fishing licenses.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$1,534,313 SW \$657,562 FW	2024–25 activities completed

Platform: Licence fee payment system & Trust management

Project	Partner Organisation	Government Agency	2024–25	Project status
Recreational Fishing Trust Executive Officer - ensuring accountability and transparency: The Executive Officer is responsible for the overall coordination and financial management of the Recreational Fishing Trusts to facilitate a transparent and accountable Trust system, on behalf of the recreational fishing community. This includes implementation of good governance processes to, disbursement of funds to Trust projects and ensuring quality delivery of project outcomes to improve recreational fishing.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$284,037 SW	2024–25 activities completed
Recreational Fishing Facilities and Grants Management Project: To target recreational fisher identified gaps in fishing facilities throughout NSW, including fishing platforms, fish cleaning facilities and waterway access infrastructure. To provide support to the Trust Executive Officer for financial and auditing management of Trust programs to ensure timely and quality service delivery. The role provides quality advice to the public on all Trust enquiries and application development.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$170,563 SW \$42,641 FW	2024–25 activities completed
Recreational Fishing Trust grants administration program – supporting the delivery of Trust funded projects: To improve the delivery and performance of Recreational Fishing Trust funded projects by assigning essential resourcing to grants administration and management. The position facilitates funding agreements to applicants, receives milestone reports and final reports, processes project invoices and purchase orders for Trust grants etc. It is an integral position of the Trust management team to facilitate effective governance controls including audits and monitoring to maintain and improve the standard of project delivery and accountability across all Trust funded projects.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$151,812 SW	2024–25 activities completed
Inland fisheries project and policy services and management: This project plays a key role in co-ordinating an array of Trust funded community fishing grants including the two dollars for one-dollar native fish stocking program and the fuel cards assistance program and enables the efficient operation of RFFTEC and its subgroups (fuel card evaluation panel and the Gaden hatchery management advisory committee). Additional behind-the-scenes work involves updating recreational fishing legislation and the development of policies to enhance inland fishing opportunities.		DPIRD Fisheries	\$210,173 FW	2024–25 activities completed



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development



© State of New South Wales through Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development 2025. You may copy, distribute, display, download and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development as the owner. However, you must obtain permission if you wish to charge others for access to the publication (other than at cost); include the publication in advertising or a product for sale; modify the publication; or republish the publication on a website. You may freely link to the publication on a departmental website.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (November 2025) and may not be accurate, current or complete. The State of New South Wales (including Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development), the author and the publisher take no responsibility, and will accept no liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document (including material provided by third parties). Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.