

Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW) Chair's Summary Meeting 30



The 30th meeting of RFNSW was held online on 20 March 2024. The Council welcomed the Hon. Tara Moriarty, MP, Minister for Agriculture, Regional NSW and Western NSW to the first meeting of the year. The key outcomes from the meeting are summarised below.

Session with Hon. Tara Moriarty, MP, Minister for Agriculture, Regional NSW & Western NSW

Members appreciated the opportunity to discuss several current and emerging recreational fishing priorities with the Minister, including community consultation underway on the longer-term changes to Eastern Blue Groper fishing rules. Members also took the opportunity to update the Minister on the development of the Recreational Fishing Action Plan, including the key goals of the Plan.

Eastern Blue Groper

DPI provided Council with an overview of the recent changes in the management of Blue Groper, including a 12-month trial during which Blue Groper will be a 'no take' species in NSW, which commenced on 1 March 2024. As part of the 12-month trial, DPI is consulting with stakeholders and the broader community. Council was advised that public submissions can be made via a web portal on the DPI website until 30 April. Community drop-in sessions are also being held at various locations. The Council indicated that options for longer-term changes to Blue Groper fishing rules will be considered at the next meeting and advice will be provided to the Minister accordingly.

Recreational Fishing Action Plan

The Council reviewed the latest draft of the Recreational Fishing Action Plan, which has been a key initiative of RFNSW. Members will have the opportunity to provide any final feedback on the current draft before the Action Plan is presented to the Minister for consideration.

Trout stocking site variation in the Monaro region

DPI briefed Council on trout stocking in the Monaro and the endangered species of Roundsnout Galaxias. The recent listing of Roundsnout Galaxias as Endangered under Commonwealth environment legislation required DPI to work with the Monaro Acclimatisation Society (MAS) to amend some stocking sites on Monaro rivers and streams. MAS is responsible for assisting DPI in releasing Trout produced by Government hatcheries. In this instance, DPI is working with MAS to move a small number of stocking sites to alternative areas in the same waterways and/or catchment areas. This action will mitigate potential impacts associated with fish stocking on populations of the endangered Galaxias. No changes to the total number of Trout stocked in these rivers are proposed. Members requested an improved process, involving not only DPI but also relevant Commonwealth agencies involved in declaring endangered species, to provide opportunities for recreational fishers to be more involved in co-management of such species.

Offshore wind farms update

Member Grahame Williams OAM provided an update on wind farm consultation in NSW and advised that the NSW Game Fishing Association (NSWGFA) had been involved in recent discussions with the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) as part of a working group process to consult further on the Illawarra and Hunter proposed areas. Mr Williams noted that a list of recommendations from the NSWGFA had been presented to DCCEEW for consideration in relation to key fishing grounds off the Hunter coastline.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Johann Bell'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Johann Bell (Chair)