

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP
Minister for Environment
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Outdoor Recreation



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BUILDING BETTER FISH HABITATS ACROSS VICTORIA'S WATERWAYS

More fishing organisations across Victoria can now ensure fish habitats in their local area are healthier and more sustainable for generations to come, thanks to support from the Labor Government.

Minister for Outdoor Recreation Steve Dimopoulos today announced the first projects to boost habitat for a range of fish species in Victoria's waterways, made possible by the Labor Government's \$2.5 million Fish Habitat Improvement Fund.

The grants provided up to \$50,000 for recreational fishing groups and up to \$200,000 for large-scale projects to support our state's marine and estuarine environments and help fish shelter, feed and breed in freshwater.

East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (EGCMA) received an investment of \$200,000 to increase woody habitat for black bream, estuary perch and other native fish in the estuaries of the Mitchell, Nicholson and Tambo rivers.

These estuarine reaches of the rivers provide critical spawning habitat for the Gippsland Lakes' iconic black bream population. The project is in partnership with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation as well as the Nicholson, Wy Yung and Bairnsdale RSL angling clubs.

In the state's north-east, the waters of the Mullinmur Billabong at Wangaratta will provide more homes for native fish with Wangaratta Landcare and Sustainability receiving a \$50,000 grant to build new fish shelters – while cultural burning and weed management will also be done in partnership with the Bangerang Traditional Owners.

The Australian Trout Foundation (ATF) in partnership with the Alpine Fly Fishers have also received investment to improve habitat at Mayfly Rise on the upper Ovens River, with a grant of \$46,000 helping ATF stabilise the riverbed, deepen the river channel and prevent erosion while removing pest plant species from the area.

Recreational fishing groups can still apply for grants of up to \$50,000. To learn more visit vfa.vic.gov.au/fishhabitatfund.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Outdoor Recreation Steve Dimopoulos

"All these projects will make a real difference and provide better fishing and healthier aquatic ecosystems for many years to come."

"We encourage recreational fishing organisations to apply for a grant and improve fish habitats in their local community."