



MONTHLY REPORT FROM THE
VRFISH OFFICE
MAY 2006

Welcome to the Monthly Report from the VRFish Office.

This newsletter should be sent on to all clubs and members of associations that you represent. Anyone wishing to receive this newsletter directly can e-mail Alison at alison@vrfish.com.au to be added to the distribution list.

- **VRFish crosses the Tasman** – Chairman, Bob Pearce, recently met with Philip Kirk and Robin Connor from New Zealand Fisheries to discuss aspects of recreational fisher representation, as New Zealand are looking at the possibility of implementing something similar to the Victorian model.
- **Abalone Bag Limit** – Fisheries Victoria are proposing a reduction to the daily bag and possession limit in the west and east of Victoria to a limit of 5 abalone. This action is proposed to reduce abalone crime. VRFish is working with the Scuba Divers Federation to respond to the draft Fisheries Notice by June 30. A copy of the Fisheries Notice can be obtained from the VRFish office.
- **Abalone Fishing in the Central Victorian Waters** - Fisheries Victoria has again proposed 60 open days for central Victorian waters for recreational abalone fishing. This management action is aimed at protecting abalone resources of inshore reefs. VRFish have proposed that the number of days should be increased to 120. VRFish informally monitored the 60 open days prescribed by Fisheries Victoria during the 2005/06 season. Opportunities to recreationally fish for abalone on the nominated days were hampered by bad weather and related circumstances to such a degree that, in practical terms on average, less than 10 of the nominated fishing days were accessible. This has effectively removed or excluded legitimate recreational abalone fishers from the fishery.
- **Quantifying Victorian Recreational Catch** – Sandy Morison and his research team at Primary Industries Research Victoria (PIRVic) are undertaking a 12-month telephone survey to estimate the numbers of snapper and other key species taken by recreational anglers in Victoria's coastal marine waters (including Western Port and Port Phillip Bay). Researchers have created a sampling framework from the state's database of recreational licence-holders, phone interviewers are conducting a specific number of interviews each month, mostly outside office hours. The objectives of this survey are to determine the number of fishers in specific locations, profile their demographic characteristics location by location, and quantify their total catch of key species location by location. For more information please contact Sandy Morison 03 5258 0232.
- **Round 2 Closed for the recreational fishing community grants scheme** - The Australian Government has provided \$15 million over three years to support local initiatives that enhance recreational fishing and tourism experiences, both through on-ground activities and education and awareness raising, as well as protecting near shore coastal environments. Round 1 received 166 applications with 71 successful projects funded - 14 of these were for Victoria. Round 2 is now

closed for results check out <http://www.mffc.gov.au/releases/2006/06058a.htm>. Round 3 has opened - applications closing on 28 July 2006. Activities proposed for funding must be consistent with, support and build on the *National Code of Practice for Recreational and Sport Fishing 2001* and the *Recreational Fishing in Australia – A National Policy 1996*. For further details for grant guidelines check out www.daff.gov.au/recfishinggrants.

- **FRDC releases applications approved for 2006-07** – The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) will invest \$30 million into new fisheries related research and development projects around Australia in 2006-07. Two new projects for recreational fishing are ‘Sustainability of recreational fisheries for murray cod in the murray darling basin’ – PIRVic, Wayne Fulton and ‘Development of a national environmental management and accreditation system for business/public recreational fishing competitions’ – Recfish Australia, Bill Sawynok.
- **Fisheries Co-Management Council, Committee Appointments** – The FCC is now fully functional again after a long break between Fishery Committee appointments. The new appointments term commenced 7 May 2006 and will run until December 2007. VRFish Members, Lawrence Moore (Abalone Fishery Committee), Corrie Banks (Marine and Estuarine Committee) and Rob Loats (Inland Fishery Committee) have been appointed for their recreational expertise. For full details of Fishery Committee appointments, check out www.fcc.vic.gov.au.
- **Fisheries Co-Management Council, Chair** - FCC has also seen a change in leader, Dr David Smith, CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research has replaced Assoc. Prof. John Sherwood, Deakin University. VRFish looks forward to continuing its working relationship with the FCC.
- **It's a Boy!** – Jane Stevanovski, former VRFish Executive Assistant, has given birth to a healthy baby boy – Kasha. VRFish congratulates Jane and Mike on the new addition to their family.
- **Chairman's Activities** – Bob's schedule of meetings with Recreational Fishing Associations is continuing to role on. In recent weeks he has visited Ballarat & District Angling Association; Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club; South Gippsland Angling Clubs Association; and Australian Federation of Coarse Angling Association. He has also met with Yarra Valley Fly Fishers following a Government announcement which took place at Lilydale Lake.

Bob attended Lilydale Lake on 6th June where a quantity of trout were released by the Minister for Agriculture, Minister Bob Cameron who subsequently announced that five bodies of Victorian water had been selected as “Family Fishing Premier Sites” These sites will be especially stocked with fish on a progressive basis and are considered to be highly suited to enable family participation in recreational fishing. Development of the “Premier Sites” comes as part of the Bracks Government's commitment to invest \$3.2 M in recreational fishing, especially in provincial Victoria. The selected waters for “Premier Sites” are Eildon Pondage, Lilydale Lake, Kennington Reservoir, Jubilee Lake and Hyland Lake.

- **Upcoming events-**
 - 14/6 – Club Talk – Game Fishing Association of Victoria
 - 14-15/6 – Rock Lobster & Giant Crab Stock Assessment Workshop – PIRVic, Queenscliff
 - 14-15/6 – Native Fish Strategy Forum – Canberra
 - 18/6 – Club Talk – Victorian Piscatorial Council
 - 20/6 – Club Talk – Geelong & District Angling Clubs Association
 - 24/6 – Club Talk – Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs
 - 27/6 – VRFish North East Meeting
 - 28/6 – Club Talk – Wimmera Anglers Association
 - 30/6 – VRFish Board Meeting
 - 1/7 – VRFish State Council Meeting