

## Fisheries Victoria and the Australian Trout Foundation Working together to enhance our Trout fishery



Following the drought breaking winter and spring rains, many of the lakes in our Western district are now full again; several for the first time in almost a decade. There has been a big call for stocking of these waters and this underway.

Earlier this year the ATF attended the Vic Fish Stock Meetings, formally CONS. Naturally during the discussions it was hoped that the drought would break and many of our most important lakes would come back on line. As we are all aware this has happened but responsible stocking can only take place on what has happened, not what may happen. So it was a wait and see situation and a number of these lakes were earmarked for re-assessment later in the season. This assessment has been completed and those waters that were dry and now predator free will be stocked with fingerling trout during November this year.

One big problem is food in these once dry waters. As they fill there is plenty of terrestrial matter for those fish to feed on but once that has gone there is very little left until the aquatic life forms come back on line, which can take some months to happen. We can only hope that we receive good rains next year to keep this momentum moving.

The total number of waters to be stock has yet to be confirmed but Fisheries will stock as many as feasibly possible. As you can imagine, the breaking drought has put considerable strain on Fisheries and available stocks to meet this increased and unexpected demand.

During the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires the Buxton Trout Farm was badly damaged and the Australian Trout Foundation and Futurefish lent a helping hand to rebuild this very popular business. Well the Trout Farm is back and running at full pace, in fact Mitch MacRae who owns the Buxton Trout Farm, has had a great year with his fish production side of his business; so much so that he has

offered as a gift to the ATF 20,000 trout fingerlings. So to keep everything legal and on the right line, the ATF in turn has offered these trout to Fisheries to assist in getting those once dry Western district lakes back on line.



*From left Mick Hall ATF , Ewan Mclean Fisheries Victoria and Mitch MacRae of Buxton Trout Farm*  
As you would expect, Fisheries was only too keen to except this gift and allowing the ATF to share in this highlight of the Trout season. These fingerlings are only small but by this time next year they hopefully will be a lot bigger and the year after that, with the aquatic food chain also back on line, we can expect to see some of the best trout fishing this state has seen in many years. All we need to do is just keep on adding water.



*Only small now but they will grow and in a year be very catchable*