



Thursday 11 September 2014 For immediate release

## 2500 mature trout for Upper Ovens River

Nationals Member for Benalla, Bill Sykes and Member for Murray Valley, Tim McCurdy today welcomed a successful application from the Australian Trout Foundation (ATF) to re-stock trout in the upper Ovens River from Porepunkah to Harrietville with 2500 mature trout.

Dr Sykes said, "This is good news and I am pleased that the number of trout approved for the re-stocking far exceeded the number requested in the application from ATF to Fisheries Victoria. Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) decided to stick with 2500 trout well above the requested number of 1500."

Trout numbers in the Upper Ovens have been adversely impacted by recent natural disasters in north east Victoria, in particular floods and bushfires in 2013.

The Australian Trout Foundation's submission demonstrated that the impact on trout numbers following floods and bushfires in 2013 was significantly higher compared with the Alpine fires of 2003 and 2006 and the 2010 floods.

Mr McCurdy said, "A re-stocking program is important as these rivers are renowned by anglers far and wide for trout fishing and recreational fishing is an important tourism and economic driver in this region."

The one off re-stocking program will assist in the recovery of the trout fishery in the Upper Ovens and works alongside other publicly funded projects currently being undertaken on the Ovens River including a riparian re-vegetation project and an in-stream fish habitat restoration project.

The project will also complement the Alpine Shire's Shared Trail project currently being undertaken as part of the Victorian Coalition Government's bushfire recovery works.

ATF member and Harrietville resident, Brian Eddy said, "Our submission for a one-off bushfire recovery stocking of the Upper Ovens from Porepunkah to Harrietville was approved by Fisheries and we are very hopeful of a release being undertaken in time for the Christmas holidays."

The re-stocking of the river with mature trout will be an interim measure and it is aimed at giving a 'kick start' to the eventual long term natural recovery of the fishery.

The Victorian Coalition Government has also provided \$880,000 for a three-year investigation into declined trout numbers in highland rivers. This represents the most significant investment into riverine trout research in decades.

The project involves acoustically tagging trout in the Delatite River, a three year brown trout stocking trial in the Upper Goulburn and Howqua rivers along with assessments of wild trout populations in 12 important rivers.

Dr Sykes said, "Volunteer anglers from local fishing clubs will assist by recording their trout catch and effort, to help fisheries managers monitor the performance from season to season and in different stretches."

Mr McCurdy said, "The Coalition Government recognises the social and economic benefits of recreational fishing to Victoria and is committed to ensuring our state remains a top fishing destination."

# Media Release

## Bill Sykes MLA

Member for Benalla | Parliamentary Secretary for Primary Industries

**THE NATIONALS**  
*for Regional Victoria*



The \$16 million Recreational Fishing Initiative also provides funding for boating facility upgrades, more fish stockings, fish cleaning tables and increased fisheries education across the state.

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