



## Partnerships, Projects and the Future

Dear Member,

When I was a kid we were told that the oceans were an inexhaustible source of protein and rivers were a take and take more fishery. Billions of people inevitably leave their footprints and exploit our planet with reckless abandon. There had to be consequences and they reared their ugly head: our oceans and rivers were experiencing serious stress.

When I evolved into a serious fisherman I couldn't understand how so many fishing related people and organisations lacked cohesion. A million plus people have the potential to influence policy significantly yet we failed provide a voice and our expertise to the policy makers. We had to act, or we would end up with a fishery that was beyond rescue.

The Australian Trout Foundation is a fast-growing organisation which is involved in the establishment of a sustainable trout fishery and ecology improvement Australia wide. This group of likeminded fishers formulated a three-point strategy:

1. To send a conservation/sustainable fishery message to all interested persons;
2. Be part of the movement to unite like organisations to a fishery rejuvenation;
3. Educate all fishers and the community about best practices.

The great news was; fishing clubs, land care groups, scientists, catchment management authorities, and Fisheries Victoria had the same ideas. All we had to do was come together and evolve into a force which united all groups with the aims of a sustainable fishery and healthy waterways. That is where we all are now: at the growth of partnerships stage where passion and a great work ethic is changing our fisheries and it is an exciting place to be.

### Partnerships

The partners in the many varied areas are the usual suspects such as DELWP, Fisheries Victoria, Native Fish Australia and the ATF because they represent all trout and native fishers state-wide in almost all projects. The scientists from the Arthur Rylah Institute and Melbourne University are involved in most projects which have a demand for evidence based research relevant to projects like threatened species or river ecosystems. When a problem arises in a specific region like South East Victoria and the Hopkins River concerns; VRFish, local fishing clubs, fishers, fishing guides, farmers, CVFF Clubs, conservationists and land care groups join in the project.



## Achievements of Angler Partnerships

Ten projects completed, 120 people involved, 12 angling groups involved, 6 other community groups involved, 1900 indigenous trees planted, 12 hectares of Desert Ash controlled, 1 kilometre of riparian fencing constructed pre planting, 300 logs sited and 60+ boulders sited.

## Projects

Some Specific Projects and the Participants:

- Delatite River - fish restoration – Mansfield and District Fly Fishers, UP2U's [landcare group], Landholders, ATF, Fisheries Victoria;
- Buckland River – ATF, Alpine Fly Fishers and Harrietville Angling Club., Fisheries Victoria, DELWP - Habitat Restoration - Logs and trees sited in the river and stocking;
- Buckland R, Hopkins R, Goulburn R, King R. Traralgon Crk – ATF, Southern Fly Fishers, Fisheries Victoria, VFFA, DELWP, MAD FF's, Alpine Fly Fishers – installation of Jordon Scotty Incubators, where with these devices survival rates on eggs and fry rise from 15 - 20% to about 85 – 95%;
- Statewide - National Fish Habitat Action Plan – DELWP, Fisheries Victoria, ATF, NFA, Many CMA's, VRFish, VRRRA, ARI, Dr Dan Dauwalter - Riparian and in stream habitat projects;
- Statewide – Restoring snags [an 88% increase in trout populations] – See NFHA Plan data.
- King R – Instream habitat restoration – local CMA's, ATF, local clubs, land care groups.

## ATF and the Future

- Rivers with needs – Water temperatures and riparian shading [50% greater survival rates] -Riparian planting – Dr John Morrongiello, ARI, ATF, Fishing clubs, Relevant CMA's, Fisheries Vic, Land care groups;
- ATF - Internal organisation – Enlargement of management teams with change from single managers to sub committees of 3 or 4 persons per team that shares the work load and minimises burnout;
- Networking – All interested organisations who have been working on any projects – Establishing a network where all relevant information / data is disseminated to all groups, where a person could be appointed / hired to network all groups to keep all contacts in the loop;
- Habitat Workshops – All interested organisations, including ATF – Two meetings to discuss planning and policy, and how to effectively spend a \$1 million grant from DELWP;

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- Wellington and Macalister Rivers – Restoration of stream habitat – ATF, VFFA, local fishing clubs [Sale, La Trobe, Bairnsdale, Myrtleford], Southern Fly Fishers, Upper Ovens Landcare Group, ARI;
- Media – Important to all the above-named groups – Using social media and community television to market the messages about water quality, restoration of oceans, bays and feeder streams, riparian and in stream plants and structures and 'Catch and Release'.

## Something to Consider

**All of us have a great opportunity to make a difference. We may not rapidly see a marked difference, but our next generations will when they catch a wild brown trout, Murray cod, King George whiting or blue fin tuna just like their ancestors did.**

Yours Faithfully,

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Field Cod

*..... protecting, building and promoting Australia's trout fishery.*