

Inland Fisheries Service Report - Anglers Alliance Meeting – February 2014

Hot Topics

Lake Leake Trolling using Petrol Motors

There has been feedback from anglers suggesting that the regulation change at Lake Leake permitting trolling should be rescinded. The original proposal for change came through Anglers Alliance and was supported by IFS given it improved access to the fishery and that petrol motors were already in use on the lake and could only be regulated for fishing. It is the view of Inland Fisheries that the regulation change has been well received by many anglers and should not be rescinded unless there is a compelling environmental reason or AAT changes its position.

Expansion and Review of the Tasmanian World Heritage Area – Access Western shore Lake King William

In response to representations from anglers concerning the actions of PWS staff at Lake King William, IFS contacted Nic Deka, Parks and Reserve manager Cradle Mountain and Lake St Clair, who has advised that there are currently no changes to current use of additional reserve areas including Lake King William.

PWS will undertake an assessment and public consultation process before any new public use or access arrangements are introduced.

The IFS is making a submission to the TWWHA plan review outlining a suggested management regime for new reserve areas that were previously managed by Hydro Tasmania or Forestry Tasmania and have traditionally been used by anglers including Lake King William, Clarence Lagoon, Laughing Jack Lagoon, Sandbanks Creek (Great Lake) and the area accessed via Gunns Marsh Road including Arthurs Lake, Little Lake and Gunns Lake. This regime mirrors the Multiple Use Management guidelines established by Forestry Tasmania and would not require a change in angling regulations.

Poor Performance of River Fisheries

A report on the state wide river electrofishing survey that was conducted in late February 2013 was published on the IFS website in August 2013. The report concluded that the cause of the downturn on the performance of river fisheries across the state was due to the high abundance of cormorants from 2011 through to 2013.

Anecdotal reports from anglers suggest that the situation has improved in terms of the level of cormorant predation occurring during the 2013/2014 season. Anglers are catching fish in the rivers with some improvement in catch rate evident with far fewer cormorants sighted on the rivers in general.

Some rivers have been stocked to aid recovery with a focus on fisheries that have been degraded over a longer period. The Rubicon and Break O'Day rivers are two examples where stocking with brown trout fry in 2013 has been used to aid recovery. Supplementary stocking has also been conducted for other systems including the Clyde, Nile, Vale, Don, Forth Falls, Penguin, Lobster, Dale, Gawler, Coal and Western Creek.

A repeat of the 2013 electrofishing survey will occur late February and early March 2014 to continue the monitoring of the condition of the state's river fisheries.

Poor Performance of the Arthurs Lake Fishery

Arthurs Lake has long been a staple fishery for Tasmanian anglers and as such its' performance is extremely important to the Inland Fisheries Service (IFS). In recent years the fishery has declined in some parameters of performance, particularly the average size of the fish caught there.

Long term monitoring (since 1977) of the spawning run at Hydro Creek has shown a great fluctuation in average weight of fish measured there. As recent as 2006 the fish averaged one kilogram. The fish weighed and measured from the spawning run in 2013 were the smallest yet recorded at just less than 400 grams. This drop in average size is most likely driven by good recruitment to the fishery over the last five years of good rainfall and sustained flows in the spawning streams.

Other aspects of the fishery are also under performing with total harvest and total number of anglers fishing also down.

A survey conducted by the IFS during late September 2013 mirrored the average size of fish from the 2013 spawning run. Additionally the average condition of fish overall was shown to be poor. Recent anecdotal reports from anglers and competition results suggest that the overall condition of fish has improved.

The IFS will commence a project in February 2014 to control recruitment at Arthurs Lake through the construction of spawning barriers and traps to manage overpopulation in the fishery

A report on the September 2013 Arthurs Lake baseline survey was published on the IFS website late December 2013. The link is below .

<http://www.ifs.tas.gov.au/publications/arthurs-lake-baseline-survey-2013>

Craigbourne Dam Closure due to Algal Bloom

Tasmanian Irrigation (TI) has undertaken testing of their storages for algae levels routinely as part of their water quality assessments. In late November 2013 testing indicated high cell counts of cyanobacteria (blue-green algae). Levels of >100,000 cells per ml trigger a high alert as they are enough to cause serious acute poisoning to people with water contact. Craigbourne Dam registered 2.4 million cells per ml during late November 2013 and advice from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to TI was that the public should avoid all contact with the water in the dam and the lake was duly closed.

Inland Fisheries Service (IFS) has sought regular updates from TI in order to open the dam back to anglers at the earliest available opportunity, mindful of TI's safety concerns. During the first week of February 2014 TI advised that cell counts of blue-green algae at the dam had fallen to below harmful levels. At the time of writing the IFS was waiting to hear back from TI regarding a second round of testing to confirm the dam was safe to open again to recreational use.

Four Springs Disabled Angler Access

Due to the unresolved sale of the Gunns Estate the disabled angler facilities at Four Springs remain closed. IFS is considering whether a new, public, disabled facility should be established on the existing State Forest on the Eastern shore of the Lake to mitigate against any future land tenure issues.

Salmon Stocking South vs North and Northwest

Atlantic salmon and rainbow trout surplus brood stock are transferred to various waters on an opportunistic basis as they become available from commercial hatcheries. Travel time is a direct transport cost and manpower issue for IFS, typically the closest hatchery in a region is used to stock one of the key waters in each region to reduce costs and stress on the fish the presence or absence of pest species in the farms is also a factor. The main hatcheries involved are one at Wayatinah, 2 on the Tyenna and one each at Cressy and Springfield. There is no corresponding hatchery in the NW so this region is the most difficult to service and we have gone to some effort to provide opportunities at Lake Kara and Lake Rosebery in addition to the more established Lake Barrington fishery. The farms have different size and numbers of fish available depending on their operation this impacts on the total numbers stocked. With the number and size of the hatcheries in the south there is typically a more regular stocking regime into Craigbourne and Meadowbank.

In response to concerns to anglers IFS is in the process of installing new screens on the spillway at Lake Kara and will seek to change the bag limit and the size limit in line with other family fisheries.

Anglers Access – Neil Morrow

River Access

Work is progressing on River Derwent Anglers Access project. Access arrangements and permission from Glenorchy, Clarence, Derwent Valley and Brighton Councils for access across Crown and Council reserves have been completed.

IFS and AAT have completed an application for the February round of Tasmanian Community Fund for a South Esk River Anglers Access project for 2014/15.

IFS has negotiated increased access upstream from Woolmers Bridge on the Macquarie River and at Westwood Bridge on the Meander River. An additional 4km of river will have signs and stiles installed in coming months. New brochure versions will also be available.

Recreational Boating fund and associated projects

MAST has advertised a tender for a dual lane ramp and pontoon at Bradys Lake (Whitewater). It is anticipated that construction will take place in March 2014 dependant on lake levels. This facility will be similar to the Bronte Lagoon ramp.

In a project jointly funded by MAST and Hydro Tasmania and project managed by IFS a contract for the installation of 31 navigation lights at popular boat ramps throughout the state has been let. Installations have been completed at 18 locations and the balance will be completed by the end of March 2014. Installations completed: Cramps Bay (Great Lake), Dee Lagoon, Four Springs, Jonah Bay (Arthurs Lake), Weekes Reach, Wilmot, Kentish Park (Lake Barrington), Lake Binney, Large Bay, Middle Echo, Dam Wall (Lake Echo), Butlers Gorge (Lake King William), Lake Leake, Tooms Lake, Edgar Dam, Scotts Peak (Lake Pedder), Tungatinah Lagoon and Woods Lake.

IFS has completed an upgrade of the turning and parking area at Bradys Lake Canal Bay boat ramp and project managed an upgrade (Funded by MAST) of the access, parking and turning area at Spillway Bay Dee Lagoon boat ramp. Several large submerged logs have been removed from the toe of the ramp.

Lamberts Dam

A new footbridge will be installed over the spillway at Lamberts Dam to provide foot access to the dam wall.

Licensing and Administration – Tony Wright

2014-2015 Season

Planning has commenced for the coming season. The IFS will have a commemorative medal struck to celebrate the 150 year anniversary and a badge will also be released. It is proposed that the badge will be issued without cost to 5 season licence holders in recognition of their commitment. Planning has also commenced on a promotion for next season that will lift the profile of the States recreational freshwater fishery significantly. Announcements will be made in the coming months.

Boat Promotion

The boat promotion for the current season was drawn on the 23 December 2013 with local Spreyton resident Gregory Morrison winning the prize that was presented to him by the Minister for Primary Industries and Water the Hon Bryan Green.

Licence Sales

A total of 23,502 licences have been issued year to date to the 7 February 2014, of these 1,184 were 5 season licences, 19,101 full season licences and 3,217 short term licences. The majority of short season licences were 48 hour and totalled 1,339 in number.

Carp – Chris Wisniewski

As the air and water temperatures have started rise during late December and January the number of carp captured has increased. A small proportion of male carp from the cohort of 2009 have shown signs of maturity but generally this cohort is lagging in the rate that it is maturing. This provides an opportunity to further reduce the population before the females are ready but makes it more difficult to target fish as they are spread across the lake and have no interest in aggregating.

The additional funding from Caring for Our Country has enabled the employment of two technical officers for the next two years along with a number of casual staff for summer work. As the immature carp are not pushing into the shallows regularly the team has turned to intensive gillnetting across the lake to increase removal rates. <http://www.ifs.tas.gov.au/publications/carp-management-update-oct-december-2013>. A total of 287 carp were removed in December and 893 in January. Total for the financial year of 1449.

No spawning has been detected so far this year but recruitment surveys planned for March will confirm this. No adult females have been captured for over two years.

The Sterile Carp Project that is funded by FRDC is showing promise with the sterilised males that have been released into the lake with transmitters showing similar habits to the rest of their cohort so far. This will unfold further and will be particularly interesting next spring as other fish mature and a clear comparison can be made.

Both lakes Crescent (140mm below full supply level) and Sorell (300mm below FSL) are at relatively high water levels given the time of year. With the extended wet spring there has not been an extensive release of water for downstream use. Water quality readings in both lakes are the best they have been for over 10 years.

Shannon Lagoon update – Chris Wisniewski

The turbidity logger has been in place for nearly since mid October so data should become available post summer. A fish habitat survey has been recently undertaken by Hydro and the macrophyte survey will be undertaken in coming weeks. IFS will be undertaking trout and galaxiid surveys in March. Reports on all of this should be available in April.

Arthurs Lake Trout recruitment control infrastructure – Chris Wisniewski

A report has been completed on the Arthurs Lake Trout population <http://www.ifs.tas.gov.au/publications/arthurs-lake-baseline-survey-2013>.

This gives an understanding of the condition of the brown trout in the lake at the time of the survey. All indications are from angler reports, since the survey was undertaken in September, the condition of fish has improved rapidly.

All approvals have been achieved to commence work on the Scotch Bobs Creek fish trap. This is planned to begin on mid February. The Tumbledown Creek trap has received approval from DPIPW water branch but is subject to permit approval from the Aboriginal Heritage Office to conceal artefacts that were found on the access track. It is still hoped that the work will commence on this site in early March. The aim is to have both traps in operation for the 2014 brown trout spawning run.

Compliance – Stephen Hepworth

Compliance Statistics from 1/7/13 to 31/1/14

58 Fisheries Infringement Notices issued for 64 offences.

39 Infringement notices endorsed as conditional cautions issued

\$11,245 in infringement notice fines

Over 2,500 angling and 82 Whitebait licences inspected

An officer attended the Bronte Fly Fishing School and presented on compliance matters

A presentation was given to Deloraine Police in relation to fisheries matters

Prosecution

Wayne Wilfred LING 62 years of Riana was prosecuted in the Devonport Magistrates Court on 6/12/13 for (1) Releasing fish in inland waters without authority and (2) Possess fish on inland waters without authority. The defendant pleaded guilty and convictions were recorded on both charges and an undertaking was given that he be of good behaviour for 12 months.

On 16 January 2014 Peter Thomas Odegaard failed to appear in the Burnie Magistrates Court for offences against officers under the *Police Offences Act 1935* and whitebait offences under *the Inland Fisheries Act 1995*. The matters will be heard at a later date.

9 prosecution matters are being prepared, or are now listed before the Magistrates Court.

An investigation is underway in relation to the taking of giant freshwater crayfish from the NW coast

Fisheries Compliance Over Australia Day Long Weekend

Over the Australia Day Long Weekend Inland Fisheries Officers patrolled many inland waters across the State.

The objectives of the patrols were to ensure recreational angler compliance under the *Inland Fisheries Act 1995*, *inland Fisheries (Recreational Fishing) regulations 2009*, *Marine and Safety Act* to ensure angler awareness of fishery regulations and fishery management strategies.

Officers based from Liawenee patrolled Great Lake, Arthurs Lake, Woods Lake, Little Pine Lagoon, Pine Tier Lagoon, Bronte Lagoon, Brady's Lake, Lake Binney, Tungatinah Lagoon, Tooms Lake and Lake Leake with a further team visiting Lake St. Clair, Lake Burbury, Lake Mackintosh, Lake Plimsoll, Lake Rosebery, Talbots Lagoon, Lake Kara, Pet Dam and Guide Reservoir.

236 angling licences were inspected with 12 Fisheries Infringement and Conditional Caution Notices issued for 13 offences. Those being,

5 x Fish without an angling licence.

5 x Fail to wear PFD on vessel under 6 meters while underway.

1 x Possess assembled rod, reel and line without an angling licence.

1 x Operate vessel on Lake Sorell.

Biological Consultancy – Rob Freeman

The Biological Consultancy covers the external environmental consultancy services offered by the IFS.

The IFS on behalf of Hydro Tasmania recently completed a three week trial to trap native fish (galaxiids, lampreys and elvers) below the Reece Dam, Pieman River, and transfer them into Lake Pieman. During 6-8th November, 2-5 December 2013 and 6-8 January 2014, a trap system in the tailrace area at the Reece Dam was utilised to capture native fish. Runs of galaxiids were well down on the same time as last year with 170 kgs of fish captured and transferred (750 kg were transferred last year). A significant number of lamprey were present but were unable to be trapped under the higher river flows due to power station operations. Several juvenile grayling were also captured during the January survey.

Threatened Freshwater Fish Conservation – Rob Freeman

During January several populations of the threatened galaxiid species, ie Swan galaxias and Clarence galaxias were monitored as part of the ongoing management of Tasmanian threaten freshwater fish. One population of the Swan galaxias in the Cygnet River have been overrun by the Climbing galaxias and have not been found for the last two years. A second population at Lost Falls Creek that were possibly heading for local extinction were found to be present in good numbers despite low flows.

The Clarence galaxias population in Clarence Lagoon was strong with good numbers of fish sampled from a range of size classes.

Several small populations in the Skullbone Plains area were also surveyed and found to be present in low numbers.

Hatchery – Brett Mawbey

The stocking out of brown and rainbow fry has been completed as per stocking plan 2013/14. The hatchery and stocking team have been busy translocating State wide and are well pleased with the quality of fish that were released into their respective waters.

A lower than planned number of rainbow ova were harvested in spring 2013 due to a reduced number of adult spawners entering the Liawenee trap. A total of 120,000 diploid and 50,000 triploid fry were produced and strictly prioritised in the stocking plan.

(See stocking details below).

The hatchery has been fully shut down for the first time this year on a trial basis and will not be back in operation until early winter to coincide with the first brown ova collection and first hatch.

Stocking – Tim Farrell

Stocking of public waters 14 November 2013 to 7 February 2014

| Lake | Date | Number | Species | Age | Type | Stock | Weight (g) | Origin |
|------------------|------------|--------|-----------------|-------|----------|----------|------------|----------------------|
| Lake Waverley | 18/11/2013 | 120 | rainbow trout | Adult | Diploid | Domestic | 1100 | Uni Tas - Newnam |
| Rostrevor Lagoon | 21/11/2013 | 5000 | brown trout | Fry | Triploid | Wild | 3.25 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Gawler River | 21/11/2013 | 10000 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 3.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Rubicon River | 21/11/2013 | 10000 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 3.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Brushy Lagoon | 26/11/2013 | 630 | Atlantic salmon | Adult | Diploid | Domestic | 2000 | Saltas Wayatinah |
| Bradys Lake | 28/11/2013 | 25000 | brown trout | Fry | Triploid | Wild | 3.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Meadowbank Lake | 09/12/2013 | 200 | Atlantic salmon | Adult | Diploid | Domestic | 200 | Tassal Russell Falls |
| Lake Kara | 11/12/2013 | 455 | Atlantic salmon | Adult | Diploid | Domestic | 2000 | Saltas Wayatinah |
| Meadowbank Lake | 11/12/2013 | 200 | rainbow trout | Adult | Triploid | Domestic | 500 | Salmon Ponds |
| Coal River | 11/12/2013 | 10000 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 4 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Meadowbank Lake | 16/12/2013 | 35 | rainbow trout | Adult | Triploid | Domestic | 2000 | Tassal Russell Falls |
| Meadowbank Lake | 16/12/2013 | 20 | Atlantic salmon | Adult | Diploid | Domestic | 1000 | Saltas Wayatinah |
| Bradys Lake | 17/12/2013 | 15000 | brown trout | Fry | Triploid | Wild | 5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Bradys Lake | 17/12/2013 | 12500 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 5 | IFS New Norfolk |

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|--------------------|------------|-------|---------------|-----|----------|------|------|-----------------|
| Bradys Lake | 20/12/2013 | 15240 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 3.61 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Lake Crescent | 07/01/2014 | 5000 | brown trout | Fry | Triploid | Wild | 6.2 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Penstock Lagoon | 07/01/2014 | 5000 | brown trout | Fry | Triploid | Wild | 6.2 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Don River | 09/01/2014 | 500 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 5.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Forth Falls creek | 09/01/2014 | 500 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 5.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Penguin Creek | 09/01/2014 | 500 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 5.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Lobster Creek | 09/01/2014 | 500 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 5.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Dale Brook | 09/01/2014 | 500 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 5.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Western Creek | 09/01/2014 | 500 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 5.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Break O Day | 10/01/2014 | 9000 | brown trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 5.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Dee Lagoon | 14/01/2014 | 40000 | rainbow trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 1.3 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Bronte Lagoon | 14/01/2014 | 10000 | rainbow trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 1.3 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Vale River | 20/01/2014 | 5000 | rainbow trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 0.3 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Lake Mackintosh | 20/01/2014 | 20000 | rainbow trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 0.3 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Lake Mackintosh | 20/01/2014 | 25000 | rainbow trout | Fry | Diploid | Wild | 1.5 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Four Springs Lake | 21/01/2014 | 30000 | rainbow trout | Fry | Triploid | Wild | 0.7 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Penstock Lagoon | 22/01/2014 | 20000 | rainbow trout | Fry | Triploid | Wild | 0.75 | IFS New Norfolk |
| Little Blue Lagoon | 22/01/2014 | 1000 | rainbow trout | Fry | Triploid | Wild | 0.75 | IFS New Norfolk |

Stocking of dams for club/junior fishing 14 November 2013 to 7 February 2014

| Water | Area | Date | Number | Species | Stock | Type | Weight (g) | Origin |
|---------------------|------------|----------|--------|-----------------|---------|----------|------------|------------------|
| NNLA Junior Anglers | Bushy Park | 4-Dec-13 | 100 | Atlantic salmon | Diploid | domestic | 200 | Salmon Ponds |
| Taylors Dam | Latrobe | 5-Dec-13 | 120 | Atlantic salmon | Diploid | domestic | 2500 | Saltas Wayatinah |
| Frombergs Dam | Ulverstone | 5-Dec-13 | 120 | Atlantic salmon | Diploid | domestic | 2500 | Saltas Wayatinah |
| Hiscutt Pond | Penguin | 5-Dec-13 | 120 | Atlantic salmon | Diploid | domestic | 2500 | Saltas Wayatinah |

Meetings/Events/media

- 6-Jul-13 TGALT
- 13-Jul-13 Bothwell Anglers Club
- 25-Jul-13 Quarantine
- 26-Jul-13 Bridgewater Anglers Club
- 1-Aug-13 Quarantine – Mt Pleasant
- 3-Aug-13 Media - Opening of Season
- 10/08/2013 Westbury Anglers Club
- 16/08/2013 Media Event - Mersey River Anglers Access
- 19/08/2013 Fly Tyers Club
- 29/08/2013 Devonport Fly fishers
- 12/09/2013 Flowerdale Lobster Ponds – Official Opening
- 15/09/2013 Anglers Alliance
- 21st – 22/09/2013 Tassie Trout Expo Cressy
- Oct-13 Fly Tyers Club
- 9/10/2013 Media ABC Radio Mornings – Carp Program
- 19/10/2013 Pioneer Fishing competition
- 29/10/2013 Media ABC TV – Carp Program
- 4/11/2013 Tasmanian Craft Fair
- 5/11/2013 Westbury Anglers Club
- 6/11/2013 Bothwell High School – Anglers Access
- 12/11/2013 North West Fly Fishers
- 13/11/2013 Bothwell High School – Fly Fishing Class
- 17/11/2013 Anglers Alliance
- 22-24/11/2013 Lake Burbury Competition
- 26/11/2013 Bridgewater Anglers Club
- 5/12/2013 Kingborough Anglers Club
- 12/12/2013 Victorian Fly Fishers Assoc
- 13/12/2013 Media – Interview 150 years with “Ifish”
- 14/12/2013 MAST Safety Day
- 23/12/2013 Boat draw – Minister
- 2014**
- 8/01/2014 Media Event – Boat Handover Presentation
- 26/01/2014 Derwent Valley Council Fishing Day
Henley on Mersey
- 27/01/2014 Arthurs Lake Residents and Anglers
- 31/01/2014 Salmon Ponds Interview – Bill Classon
- 3/2/2014 Salmon Ponds Interview – Wendy Kennedy

Tassie Trout Expo - Auditor

Exemption Permits Issued from July 1 2013 - - 35

Angling Exemption Permits Issued from July 1 2013 28