

# MEDIA RELEASE

From the Minister for Energy and Resources

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## STREAMSIDE IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE GOULBURN RIVER

Streamside habitat and recreational fisheries will be improved along the Goulburn River in the Eildon- Thornton area with \$165,000 funding from revenue raised from the all waters recreational fishing licence, the Minister for Energy and Resources, Candy Broad, said today. The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority has generated seven different projects mostly involving the removal of willows from the banks of the Goulburn river which will improve the environmental conditions for landholders and anglers.

The program is part of the CMA's larger river improvement program. The project was developed in conjunction with Fisheries Victoria and VRFish.

"It's reassuring to see the benefits beginning to flow from the licence monies back into country areas and also knowing that any of the improvements carried out will benefit local anglers and residents," Ms Broad said.

Amendments to the Fisheries Act currently before Parliament will see the establishment of a dedicated trust fund for all recreational fishing license revenue and fulfil a Brack's government election commitment.

The Member for Benalla, Denise Allen, said the removal of the willows was important for environmental reasons, and she welcomed the improved fishing opportunities which would bring more anglers to the area.

The projects include:

- Willow removal from Eildon Pondage on Crown land;
- Willow removal from the waterway and some replanting on five private properties fronting Crown land including the Thornton Bridge area which fishermen use;
- Willow management and revegetation on four sites at the Eildon Waters Caravan Park which fronts onto Crown land.

More than \$400,000 from the licence revenue is going into four projects around the state including \$65,000 for the purchase of native fish fingerlings as part of an overall fish stocking program, \$96,000 for habitat restoration works at the Tambo and Mitchell Rivers and \$10,000 for the construction and installation of a fish screen on the outlet at Lake Toolondo.

Lake Eildon will receive a share in an extra 50,000 golden perch fingerlings and the Goulburn River will receive a share in 87,000 Murray cod fingerlings to be delivered under the restocking funding. These stockings are in addition to those normally undertaken by the department and are in addition to the co-operative native fish stocking projects carried out by Fisheries Victoria and the Rex Hunt Futurefish Foundation.

"The new system with the Recreational Fishing Licence Revenue Expenditure Committee recommending the projects which I then approve, is working well and I look forward to having more projects funded in the future. I see this project as being of wider benefit as a model for similar projects elsewhere in the state," she said.