

INLAND FISHERIES COMMISSION

NEWSLETTER

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JET BOAT PROPOSAL

A proposal is under consideration by an entrepreneur to establish a jet boat service on the Huon, Derwent and Tamar Rivers. A formal proposal has not been submitted to the authorities concerned, but it would appear that before the project is approved, an environmental impact statement would be necessary. A number of instrumentalities, as well as the public, would be interested in the proposal.

MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRY

On 23 July 1981 Dr. Julian Amos, Minister for Primary Industry, met members of the Inland Fisheries Commission and discussed matters relating to inland fisheries.

SEIZED GEAR FORFEITED TO THE COMMISSION

A 13' aluminium dinghy, a 9.5 Evinrude outboard motor, a trailer and graball nets seized at Dee Lagoon at 2 a.m. on 21 December 1980, have been confiscated. At a court hearing on 10 February 1981, two persons were fined \$20 on each charge of taking fish by means other than a rod and line and having possession of two graball nets in a boat on an inland water. Consequently, representations were made to the Governor for the restitution of the boat and motor. The Governor-in-Council declined to make restitution of the confiscated gear.

A SUGGESTION FOR RESTRICTED FISHING FROM BOATS

The Northern Tasmanian Fisheries Association has suggested that in the western lakes, fishing from boats be permitted only in lakes Augusta, Ada and Double Bar. The Association suggested that other lakes in the Central Plateau west of Great Lake, be closed to fishing from boats.

LAKE FERGUS

It has been proposed that Lake Fergus be reserved for fly fishing only. Lake Fergus is a relatively shallow water, ideally suited to this type of fishing.

ANSONS RIVER WEIR

Officers of the Inland Fisheries Commission and the Rivers and Water Supply Commission inspected the gauging weir over Ansons River. The weir is similar in construction to the Duck River weir with a number of sections with horizontal steel lips separated by concrete buttments. The lower section in the middle of the weir carries the entire stream flow in summer. It has been reported that many fish attempted to jump over the weir. Fish were unable to swim over the steel lip and an attempt was made to aid the fish by constructing a rough concrete ramp against one of the buttments on the lower section. It is proposed to hold another joint inspection in the summer so that arrangements may be made to permit lampreys, eels and galaxiids to pass up over the weir.

LAKE SORELL AND LAKE CRESCENT

In the summer of 1980/81, Lake Sorrell was drawn down to its lowest level ever. The discolouration of the lake, noted by anglers late in the season, could have been due to wind and the wave slap against the bottom of the diminished lake. In normal times, Lake Sorrell is considered to be a clear water lake and Lake Crescent a muddy lake.

The measurements of the lakes are set out below:-

	Lake Sorrell	Lake Crescent
Maximum depth (m)	3.98	2.31
Length (km)	10.058	6.6
Mean breadth (m)	4741	3594
Volume (km ³)	.114	.035
Area (ha)	4770	2365
Mean depth (m)	2.38	1.48

From the table it is seen that Lake Sorrell holds 3¼ times more water than Lake Crescent.

The dry season prompted discussions on how more water could be taken from Lake Sorrell and how water could be conserved in the lake.

Recently the Clyde Water Trust considered the options of raising the level of Lake Sorrell and/or Lake Crescent. There are hydrological problems to be considered in raising the level of either of the two lakes. Lake Sorrell has a better catchment and it would be possible to raise the level of Lake Sorrell and to remove water to the Clyde River by a new canal which would bypass Lake Crescent. A levee would need to be erected at Kermodes Bay. If the full supply level of Lake Sorrell was increased

by means of a dam, then more water would be available for summer irrigation, but the draw down in the summer months would not be conducive to good fishing.

Another way of getting more water out of Lake Sorell would be to deepen the outlet. As a consequence, it would be necessary to deepen the canal connecting to Lake Crescent and to deepen the outlet from Lake Crescent to the Clyde River. All of these would take time and cost money.

If taxpayers are putting money into water storage works at Lake Sorell or Lake Crescent, then, consideration should be given to all uses of the water so impounded and it may be possible to have a clause guaranteeing a minimum level of water in either lake.

The fisheries implications of any new work should be clearly stated:-

1. Lake Sorell has the greater angler patronage. It has a very good head of fish maintained by natural reproduction in an excellent spawning stream, Mountain Creek, as well as Dogshear Creek and Silver Plains Creek.
2. Lake Crescent produces large fish but is fished by few anglers. It has no spawning grounds other than Clyde River and the streams flowing into Lake Sorell.
3. Brown trout and galaxiids may move between the two lakes.
4. The lakes contain a population of eels which are harvested as migrating eels in the Clyde River.

The Commission should accumulate further evidence of angler useage of Lake Sorell and Lake Crescent:-

1. Condition of the fish.
2. Ages of the fish taken.
3. Look at new shorelines for any new proposals to elevate the water levels.

Lake Sorell is a fishery of international standard much used by local anglers as well as visitors.

Lake Crescent is less well patronised by anglers seeking trophy size fish because of the popularity of Lake Pedder.

BROWN TROUT SPAWNING RUN - LAKE SORELL

Commission staff estimated the run of brown trout spawners up Mountain Creek to be in excess of 12 000. The spawning run was successful and the spawners returned safely to Lake Sorrell. A number of factors contributed to the success. In the summer programme, field staff cleared obstacles in the creek and rebuilt the weir. The main factor however, was the good flows of water down Mountain Creek which ensured that the spawners spent a short time in the creek. The Commission collected about half a million eggs from 2 000 spawners towards the end of the run. The latecomers posed an embarrassment in that they dug up redds which had been constructed earlier in the run. The eggs were put down at the Commission's hatcheries.

As usual, some poaching occurred in Mountain Creek and proceedings are in course against people for taking trout from the creek.

INTERNATIONAL SLALOM CANOE COURSE FEASIBILITY STUDY - BRADYS LAKE

A proposal to establish a fish farm near Bradys Lake several years ago, caused anglers to investigate the value of the trout fishery. Anglers should be aware of the likely effects of the proposed canoe course and they may care to consider the effects of the proposal on the fishery.

The following parts of the proposal are of concern to anglers:-

1. The prohibition of camping in the general area.
2. The placing of stop logs in the water course.
3. The placing of wires, gates and poles across the water course.
4. Increased manipulation of the water flow.
5. The installation of a boat ramp on whitewater point.
6. Admission fees to the area.

At the whitewaters there are two different types of fishing undertaken which require different facilities from the radial gates down to the lake. The water is reserved for the use of artificial lures only. The principle lures used are spinner and wobbler, although some fly fishing is also undertaken.

Both methods of fishing require a reasonable amount of "air room" to manipulate the rod and the lure. The placing of wires across the water course in sufficient numbers, is going to create a number of obstacles which may effectively stop the angler from fishing parts of the watercourse.

At the bottom of the whitewaters, the water flows into the lake and a great deal of bait fishing takes place here. It is one of the best bait fishing areas in the State. This view is supported by creel census on opening weekends. Throughout the season the area is frequented by many anglers. However, the major requirement for bait fishing is that the angler can "camp on the job". Most of the fish caught in this area are caught at night and during the early hours of the morning. If the anglers cannot camp here, it will effectively ruin the potential of the area.

Regarding stop logs in the watercourse, on page 13 of the study mention is made of installing stop logs in the course. This immediately raises the question of fish being stranded through the manipulation of the stop logs, either by canoeists or by poachers.

Manipulation of water flow is given as one of the advantages of the site. It is clearly envisaged that the canoeists will seek to have the water flow at "optimum" level. The water level through the radial gates effects the water level of Bronte Lagoon, Bradys Lake, Lake Binney and Tungatinah Lagoon. As the water level often determines quality of fishing, problems are likely to be encountered.

The area proposed for the slalom canoe course is the spawning and nursery area for brown and rainbow trout in the Bradys, Binney and Tungatinah lake system.

A summary of trout activity in the area is given below:-

Brown Trout

1. Adult residents - some trout resident all year.
2. Spawning run - influx of adult spawners in April, May and June.
3. Spawning nests (redds) - eggs incubate in gravel nests during April, May, June, July and August.
4. Recruits - young trout, most abundant as fry during August, September, October and November but some present all year.

Rainbow Trout

1. Adult residents - some trout resident all year.
2. Spawning run - influx of adult spawners in August, September and October.
3. Spawning redds - eggs incubate in gravel during August, September, October, November and December.
4. Recruits - fry most abundant in November, December and January but some remain all year.

Details of these life history stages may be outlined as follows:-

Adult Residents

As some adult trout reside in pools all year, the area attracts a considerable number of anglers. The 'nursery' nature of the area has long been recognised and fishing is only permitted for a restricted season from 1 November to 29 March.

Manipulation of water flows at any time of the year may result in such fish becoming stranded.

Spawning Runs

During the periods indicated, some spawning trout will be in the area. Trout have specific substrate and water flow requirements in order to spawn successfully. In general terms, they prefer a 15-30 cm depth of loose substrate, consisting of coarse gravels and small stones. They generally select areas with a water depth of between 20-100 cm, and with current velocities in the order of 1-3 ft/second. Such streams are common in the study area and spawning usually takes place in the small channels and backwaters away from the main flow, where the gravel banks are deeper and the water velocity is reduced.

For these reasons, manipulation of water flows at spawning time may result in unsuccessful spawning and stranding of spawners. Straightening, deepening or streamlining the water course will result in a reduction of suitable spawning areas.

Spawning Redds

Trout eggs incubate in nests or redds in the gravel for about six weeks. While the eggs and newly hatched fry (alevins) are living in the gravel they are extremely susceptible to mechanical damage, smothering from siltation and to desiccation and freezing (if water levels drop). Consequently, any major digging or construction work or water manipulation during the period April to December, will result in egg and/or alevin mortality.

Recruits

After hatching and emerging from the gravel, the young trout reside in the nursery area for part or all of the following year, before migrating back into the lake system. Manipulation of water levels any time, but particularly during summer, may result in substantial losses of young fish due to stranding.

From the outline given above, it is clear that stream improvement and water flow manipulation are the two factors most

likely to effect the trout population.

In the "International Slalom Course Feasibility Study", page 15, the proposed improvements to the slalom course are outlined. It is proposed to contour the course and to control spillage of excess water and to thereby create a secondary course for novices. Such major reconstruction work is likely to reduce the presently available spawning habitat as outlined above.

It is also proposed to construct a concrete spillway. At low water flows (up to 200 cusecs) all the flow would be through the novice course. During heavy flows, proposed stop logs could direct all the water down the main course. In this manner it is proposed that flow could be manipulated (presumably by the canoeists) down the main or secondary channel to suit requirements.

From the outline above, it should be clear that such flow manipulation could have a devastating effect on various life stages of trout at any time of the year, and thus would reduce trout recruitment to the Bradys Lake System.

Effect on Trout Angling

The proposed 'Bradys Lake State Recreation Area' is also likely to directly effect trout angling in the area.

Firstly, the proposed slalom course is a popular angling area. During the fishing season, from the 1 November to 29 March, any restriction on, or change to, entry into the area will effect these anglers.

Secondly, the area where the canal discharges into Bradys Lake, is a very popular bait fishing and camping area. Restricting this region to 'day use only' is likely to meet with strong opposition from local anglers. In general, bait fishing takes place in this area, predominantly at night and anglers prefer to camp 'on the spot', in order to attend their rods at all times. Providing an alternative camping area will not alleviate this problem.

In conclusion, it appears that two of the main advantages of the Brady Lake site as outlined on page 10 of the feasibility study, these being "minimal environmental impact" and "general support of the local community", appear to be serious over-statements. The well being of trout and trout anglers in this area should be considered very closely before this feasibility study is accepted.

PROSECUTIONS

A summary of recent court cases is set out on the following page for information. Further cases are listed for hearing.

Court Date	Offender and Address	Nature of Offence	Fine	Costs
19.6.81	Robert Maxwell Jones Bothwell	Disturbing spawning fish. Take fish from closed water. Take fish by means other than rod & line. Take fish within 100 m of trap.	212-00	8-10
14.7.81	Max Geoffrey Scott Westbury	Fishing without licence. Possession assembled rod.	70-00	15-10
14.7.81	Garry John Gossage Hadspen	Fishing without licence. Possession assembled rod.	70-00	15-10
16.7.81	Nigel John Scott Mole Creek	Unattended set rod. More than 1 rod and line.	80-00	
16.7.81	Dean How Mole Creek	More than 1 rod & line.	40-00	
22.7.81	Paul Anthony Shadbolt Ulverstone	Fishing without licence.	60-00	15-10
22.7.81	Russell George Grice Ulverstone	wilfully disturbing spawning fish. Using light to take fish. Take fish in closed waters. Attempting to take fish other than rod & line.	115-00	7-55
22.7.81	Stephen Miles Punsobny Ulverstone	wilfully disturbing spawning fish. Using light to take fish. Take fish in closed waters. Attempting to take fish other than rod & line.	115-00	7-55
24.7.81	David Lockmore Hazlewood George Town	Possession of net. Take freshwater crayfish with ring net.	40-00	8-10
24.7.81	Craig Anthony Little George Town	Possession of net. Take freshwater crayfish with ring net.	40-00	8-10

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