

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP

Minister for Water
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy
Minister for Equality



Friday, 7 July 2023

NATIVE FISH TO THRIVE WITH NEW FISHWAY AT BUCHAN RIVER

Native fish can now migrate freely up the Buchan River with construction of the first fishway in East Gippsland now complete.

Minister for Water Harriet Shing visited the Buchan River to officially open the completed rock ramp fishway in the Buchan River between Lousadas Road bridge and the Buchan water supply log weir.

The project was funded from a \$275,000 investment by the Andrews Labor Government and will remove the barrier caused by the weir and allow fish to migrate further along the river.

Removing this barrier will provide native fish populations with access to an additional 127km of the largely undisturbed forested reaches of the Buchan River upstream of the Buchan township.

Construction of the fishway involved placing a range of different sized rocks within the Buchan River in accordance with a specialised design, that allows fish to swim up and over the weir.

Monitoring of fish populations before construction showed seven native fish species lived downstream of the weir.

Species identified included Long-finned eel, Australian bass, Congoli or Tupong, Common galaxias, Flat-headed gudgeon, Australian smelt and Southern pygmy perch.

Finding Southern pygmy perch in the Buchan River is particularly significant because they are listed as a threatened species.

The results from the monitoring confirmed there were fewer fish species upstream of the weir compared to downstream.

Further fish monitoring will be undertaken in Spring 2023.

The fishway is part of a \$248 million investment by the Andrews Labor Government to improve the health of waterways and catchments across regional Victoria.

Quote attributable to Minister for Water Harriet Shing

“This great project is a first for the East Gippsland and will ensure our precious native fish species can now move freely upstream on the Buchan River and access high quality habitat to feed and breed.”

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh

“The Buchan River is a much loved destination for locals and visitors to fish and explore nature, this new fishway will help boost the native fish populations and health of the river for generations to come.”