

# Media Release

**Steve Dimopoulos MP**  
Minister for Environment  
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events  
Minister for Outdoor Recreation



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## NEW HABITAT FUND BOOSTING VICTORIA'S FISH POPULATIONS

More Victorians can now play a part in boosting fish populations across Victoria, with a new grant program to improve fish habitats in freshwater, marine and estuarine fisheries, made possible by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Outdoor Recreation Steve Dimopoulos today announced the Fish Habitat Improvement Fund, with \$2.5 million in funding to help recreational fishers and organisations create better fish habitats.

Administered by the Victorian Fisheries Authority, the grants program includes two streams of funding for recreational fishing groups and large-scale projects.

Stream one will support recreational fishing groups to apply for grants of up to \$50,000 to complete small-scale works such as planting native trees and shrubs, weed and erosion control, and fencing on public or private land.

These grants will remain open until the funding amount is allocated.

Stream two enables larger-scale project partnerships to restore, recover and rebuild fish populations with up to \$200,000 available and co-investment from funding partners required. These grants will remain open until 1 March, 2024.

Organisations eligible to apply for the grants include catchment management authorities, local, regional and statewide fishing bodies, councils, water authorities, traditional owner groups and land councils and community organisations.

The fund has been supported through the Labor Government's \$96m investment to improve fishing, boating, piers and aquaculture.

The Government has previously invested in fish habitat through the installation of kingfish reefs in Port Phillip, shellfish reef restoration, and rocky reef modules in Corio Bay.

Recreational fishing licence fees have also been reinvested into several projects in recent years including woody habitat into the Goulburn and Little Murray Rivers, Waranga Basin and Lake Eppalock as well as structures into the Maribyrnong River.

More habitat is good news for fish populations and recreational fishers, who can wet a line for popular species near woody snags, reef modules, restored shellfish reefs or from a shaded riverbank.

For more information, head to [vfa.vic.gov.au/fishhabitatfund](https://vfa.vic.gov.au/fishhabitatfund)

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Outdoor Recreation Steve Dimopoulos

*"Funding projects to provide more habitat is yet another way we're making Victoria's fisheries even better and complements our record-breaking fish stocking program."*

*"Whether it's woody snags in a northern river to provide homes for Murray cod, bankside vegetation to provide shelter for trout or shellfish reefs for snapper in the bay, the fund will make a wide range of projects possible."*

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