

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Regional Development

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council



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NEW TROUT RULES TO IMPROVE RECREATIONAL FISHING

The Andrews Labor Government has announced a suite of improvements to recreational fishing rules for trout that will boost angling opportunities in Victoria's freshwater rivers and lakes.

Minister for Agriculture Jaala Pulford announced the changes today, which include the introduction of a minimum size for trout in several waters set out in the Labor Government's *Target One Million* plan, which is investing a record \$46 million to get more people fishing, more often.

The new rules commence on Saturday, 2 September 2017 and include:

- A minimum size of 25cm for all species of trout in the Rubicon River, Mitta Mitta River upstream of Lake Dartmouth, Ovens River upstream of the Porepunkah Bridge, and Nariel Creek upstream of the Colac Colac Bridge
- A minimum size of 30cm for rainbow trout and 45cm for brown trout at Lake Toolondo, and a reduced daily bag limit 3 trout – down from 5
- A minimum size of 45cm for all trout and a daily bag limit of 3 at Hepburn Lagoon
- Removal of the trout closed season from the Merri and Hopkins rivers.

The introduction of a minimum size in four rivers will help promote these waters as high quality trout fishing destinations.

The changes are expected to produce more trophy trout in the two lakes, both of which are stocked annually with yearlings grown at the Victorian Fisheries Authority's Snobs Creek hatchery, funded largely by fishing licence fees.

The removal of the closed season in the Merri and Hopkins rivers will give anglers year-round access to stocked populations of brown trout, some of which grow to more than 2kg.

The changes complement other Target One Million commitments that improve freshwater fishing that include the removal of boating restrictions at Blue Rock Lake and increasing fish stocking from less than 3 million under the former Liberal and National Government to more than 5 million in 2018.

For more information, visit vfa.vic.gov.au/bettertrout

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaala Pulford

"We recognise the social and economic value of trout fishing to Victoria – that's why we've listened to anglers and made changes that improve freshwater fishing and support regional businesses that depend on tourism."

"We're doing all we can to get more people fishing more often. These new rules will help grow recreational fishing opportunities across the state."

"There's never been a better time to wet a line than this weekend, with our free Trout festivals kicking off at Eildon and Ballarat – so don't miss out, get involved and enjoy the great outdoors."

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