

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Roads

Minister for Road Safety and the TAC

Minister for Fishing and Boating



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FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

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INDIGENOUS JOBS BOOST AT NEW SHEPPARTON HATCHERY

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting Indigenous employment in Shepparton, with the new native fish hatchery to employ Indigenous people for up to half of the workforce.

The new fish hatchery is a flagship commitment of the Labor Government's \$35 million *Target One Million* plan to get more people fishing, more often, and will grow millions of native fish annually to boost wild stocks for recreational fishers in Victorian rivers and lakes.

Up to six Indigenous positions will represent half the hatchery's workforce, providing local employment opportunities for people keen on a career growing Murray cod (*Ponde* or *Burnanga*), golden perch, silver perch and freshwater catfish.

Construction of the new hatchery is expected to begin next year, once a suitable site has been selected, with completion anticipated by 2022.

To help Indigenous job candidates pursue the positions, the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) will partner with Melbourne Polytechnic and Deakin University next year to provide education, training and development opportunities.

Training will occur around Shepparton and on-line, as well as on-farm learning at the VFA's own Snobs Creek hatchery near Eildon, and at private hatcheries throughout Victoria.

The two-year course will provide graduates with a Diploma of Applied Science, majoring in aquaculture (fish farming).

The VFA is exploring scholarships for high performing students completing the second year of the course and would hope to offer full-time employment at the new hatchery to high performing students who graduate.

Selection criteria for the course are being developed currently and will likely require the completion of Year 12 and tertiary qualifications in natural resource management or other relevant work experience.

Indigenous people can register interest in the training program by emailing improving.fishing@vfa.vic.gov.au

Updates will be provided as details of the course are finalised later this year. To learn more about the new hatchery visit vfa.vic.gov.au/nativehatchery

Quotes attributable to Minister for Fishing and Boating Jaala Pulford

"Employing Indigenous people to grow native fish like Murray cod will provide valuable jobs for people around Shepparton."

"This is a wonderful opportunity for Indigenous people who connect with fish to land a hands-on job supported by industry experts and leading educational institutions."

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