

Minister Leon Bignell
Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

Minister Geoff Brock
Minister Regional Development

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Re-stocking the river with prized Murray Cod

River anglers may soon have the chance to catch the prized Murray Cod, thanks to a State Government-funded project to investigate building up stocks of the species in the South Australian section of the River Murray.

Fishing for Murray Cod has been restricted since 2008 due to stock concerns, with the fishery closed to all activity in 2009 and opened for a limited catch and release season each year since 2011.

A project is underway to design a best practice stock enhancement program to improve the conservation status of Murray Cod and support a sustainable recreational fishery in the lower Murray.

Agriculture Food and Fisheries Minister Leon Bignell said a successful stocking program could deliver tourism and economic benefits for lower Murray communities.

“Murray Cod is an iconic and extremely important species to recreational fishers. Enhancing populations of the species will not only provide improved recreational fishing opportunities, but also has the potential to attract interstate and even international anglers,” he said.

“A working group has been set up to oversee the project, ensuring future stock enhancement of Murray Cod is both scientifically rigorous and designed to maximise environmental, social and economic benefits for the community.”

Regional Development Minister Geoff Brock said the project was a win-win for both the health of the River Murray and the local economy.

“Healthy rivers mean more fish and more fish means more anglers will be attracted to the Riverland region, providing a boost to the regional economy and employment opportunities,” he said.

“However, we’re aware this must be done sustainably, and as part of the project there will be a co-management approach to ensure that the aquatic habitat, other native fish and the general health of the river is enhanced.”

The Murray Cod Stock Enhancement Working Group includes representatives from PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture, SARDI Aquatic Sciences, the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR), RecFish SA and experts in stocking and hatchery production from South Australia and interstate.

For information on Murray Cod fishing visit www.pir.sa.gov.au/fisheries or download the free SA Recreational Fishing Guide smartphone app from www.pir.sa.gov.au/recfishingapp