

OUT23/2044
13 February 2023

Mr Radge Diakiw
Secretary
NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers

Email info@freshwateranglers.com.au

Carp Management – NSW DPI Fisheries

Dear Mr Diakiw,

Thank you for your correspondence to Mr Scott Hansen, Director General NSW DPI in relation to the current initiatives supported by NSW DPI to management carp numbers throughout NSW. Mr Hansen has asked me to respond you to and the Council of Freshwater Anglers on his behalf, as I have the responsibility for Fisheries in DPI.

As highlighted in your letter, the National Carp Control Plan (NCCP) has been in development by the Commonwealth since 2016 in conjunction with all states and territories to explore the use of the *Cyprinid herpesvirus 3* (or carp virus) as a biological control agent. Given the widespread nature of carp populations across almost all states and territories, NSW DPI has consistently supported a national approach to managing carp populations.

The carp virus currently represents the only feasible, large-scale control measure to achieve significant reductions in carp numbers. The release of the NCCP in November 2022 indicated the virus had the potential to significantly reduce carp numbers if implemented as part of an integrated pest management strategy. The NCCP also highlighted other measures, taken in isolation to the release of the carp virus (such as physical removal), were unlikely to have a meaningful impact on broader carp populations.

NSW DPI Fisheries and Aquatic Biosecurity have both supported the development of the NCCP and the subsequent implementation of next steps to reach a decision on virus release. The Department has advocated for the next steps to be taken through the Australian Fisheries Management Forum (heads of all Fisheries agencies in Australia) and has continued to offer scientific and policy support to the Commonwealth to help reach a decision on release of the virus.

NSW DPI has also supported the development of smaller, localised efforts to manage carp numbers in specific locations through facilitating commercial take and utilisation of carp, funding projects to exclude carp from wetlands and lateral habitats to promote growth of native vegetation and off-channel fish species, and the management of flow within wetlands to promote the stranding and desiccation of large carp populations.

Given the challenges of managing carp populations more broadly without the use of a biocontrol agent, the Department has also focused on enhancing the competition from native species through broader rehabilitation measures. These have included managing environmental flows to support

native fish recruitment, reducing barriers to fish passage and undertaking large-scale stocking of recreational species such as Golden Perch and Murray Cod.

The challenge of carp remains an ongoing threat to the health of our waterways, and NSW DPI will continue to advocate for ongoing action at a national level in addition to pursuing local solutions to minimise impacts in sensitive habitats. If you have any further queries or would like to discuss the issue of long-term carp management in greater detail, I have asked that Mr Cameron Lay, Director Freshwater Environment (0428 780 060) be available to assist. If your query is related to the impacts on recreational fishing, Mr Peter Turnell, Director Fisheries and Aquaculture Management (0418 263 617) will also be able to assist.

I thank the Council for your ongoing concern for the long-term health of our waterways and would welcome ongoing dialogue on critical issues such as the management of pest species

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sean Sloan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sean Sloan
Deputy Director General
Department of Primary Industries