

Discussion with Jim Harnwell 11/03/2024

Dear Jim

Am sending you this letter as a heads-up. I would like to have a chat with you so I will ring you later in the day. (the letter was the second letter to the Federal Minister for the Environment Tanya Plibersek)

Topic

University of Canberra students with key to Kosciuszko National Park, pretext being to survey feeder streams of the Tooma River for native fish with electro fishing equipment whilst having fly-fishing gear in back of truck.

Jim's response was that he would look into the matter, talk to NPWS on how they got access to key. He said the only way he could get in there was to walk as he did not have a key.

Topic

Rumour that Ogilvies Creek above bridge on Cabramurra Road was to be used as a sanctuary for native fish therefore requiring removal of trout.

Jim's response was that he had not heard of this initiative. I pointed out that Ogilvies was heavily fished and was very popular amongst medium to beginner fishers as a place where they could go to catch a couple of very pretty Brook trout. Ogilvies has a self-sustaining population of Brook trout. My recommendation was that Ogilvies was not a good site for a sanctuary – he agreed.

Topic

Major factors pushing *Galaxias terenassus* (round-snout) to extinction. Excerpt from letter;

The MAS requests that Federal Government show its intent for the protection and recovery of the round-snout galaxias by investing in habitat recovery through the following measures (in whose delivery the MAS is well-equipped to assist):

- offering financial incentives to private landowners owning riverbanks on streams of the Snowy/Monaro region to fence riparian zones within all areas considered to comprise the round-snout galaxias range;
- provide funding to allow replanting of native species vegetation within the said riparian zones;
- the development of education and incentive programs to encourage landowners to value good water quality and reduce sediment runoff from their farms and cultivations; and,

- to assist the Gaden Hatchery to develop a captive breeding program for the round-snout galaxias, and the capacity to distribute the round-snout galaxias to enhance the species' well-being and survival.

Jims response was that he was thinking hard about these matters. He believes that with a little local assistance, that suitable refuges could be found where barriers to trout could be successfully installed. He said DPI had funds to fence these areas and improve habitat. With the assistance of a captive breeding program that was now built at Gaden Hatchery and where the capability to breed the Galaxias was being developed, we might end up with thriving communities of round-snout Galaxias and trout stocking bans then could be lifted. He did not comment about the Federal Government contributing to funding, this is something we need to vigorously persue.

I need to point out that this is a possibility, not a given.

Topic

Phone calls and letters about the bans.

It would seem that DPI has been deluged with people both writing and phoning about the trout stocking bans. This is a good thing and people should keep it up. No one has yet guaranteed us that we will be informed in good time when the next environmental threat to trout fishing will occur. We need to demand to be part of the process.

Jim Harnwell is going on leave for a month and Matt McLenen is filling in whilst he is away.

The date for the TAC meeting is provisionally set as the 21st of May and the Gaden Hatchery Management Committee is set for September.