

MEDIA RELEASE

5 March 2017

FIRST TIME FISH STOCKING INTO THE MARIBYRNONG

The Maribyrnong River will be stocked with estuary perch for the first time next summer to improve recreational fishing opportunities and get more people fishing, more often.

Member for Essendon, Danny Pearson said more than 50,000 fingerlings would be released into the freshwater reaches of the river from Essendon upstream before Christmas.

Increasing fish stocking and developing new fisheries is all part of the Andrews Labor Government's *Target One Million* plan for recreational fishing, which aims to grow participation to one million anglers by 2020.

The Maribyrnong River was once home to healthy numbers of estuary perch more than a century ago and fisheries managers hope the stocking will re-establish a self-sustaining population in the years ahead.

The fingerlings will be two or three centimetres long when stocked and likely take three or four years to reach a catchable size.

Mr Pearson joined members of the Essendon Anglers Club today to make the announcement and also celebrate the club's new sign, which has improved the profile of the clubhouse and already attracted new members.

The sign was funded by the Labor Government's *Target One Million's* Stronger Fishing Clubs grants program, which offers clubs registered before January 2015 with grants of up to \$2,000 to improve facilities and promote membership.

Estuary perch stockings elsewhere in the state are showing encouraging signs with fish being caught by anglers at Devilbend Reservoir, Albert Park Lake, the Werribee River, Melton Reservoir and Karkarook Lake.

Since 2012, more than 500,000 estuary perch have been released into 12 waterways across the state, funded by *Target One Million* and recreational fishing licence fees.

Learn more at www.vic.gov.au/estuaryperch

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Quotes attributable to Member for Essendon Danny Pearson

“Stocking estuary perch into the Maribyrnong River for the first time is great news for urban anglers and youngsters who can walk or ride a short distance to wet a line.”

“The Andrews Labor Government’s Target One Million initiative is doing great things for recreational fishing, helping to get more people active and exploring Victoria’s great outdoors with family and friends.”

“Our \$47 million investment is improving access and facilities for anglers, increasing fish stocking to five million, helping clubs grow membership and ending commercial net fishing in Port Phillip Bay.”