

MEDIA RELEASE

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QUEENSLAND
**MURRAY-
DARLING**
COMMITTEE



Murray Cod among first to take advantage of new fishway

A Murray Cod was among the first native fish to make its way over a new fishway on the Reilly's Weir at Condamine, which was officially opened on March 26.

Native fish, including Yellowbelly, Catfish, Bony Bream, Smelt and Spangled Perch, now have improved passage along more than 70km of the Condamine River thanks to the dedicated work of a landholder and a host of experts.

Queensland Murray-Darling Committee Water and Wetlands Regional Coordinator Paul Webb said native fish now had improved passage along more than 70km of the Condamine River thanks to the dedicated work by the landholders and a host of experts.

"The weir on 'Lennie Brae' was built by the Reilly family in the 1930s and while it's an admirable piece of infrastructure, the addition of the fishway is a great boon for the native species previously had limited passage along more than 70km of the Condamine River," Mr Webb said.

"The weir itself, strengthened to ensure stability, now has a cutting edge fishway attached with special poly cones developed by Fisheries Queensland specifically for fishways in more inaccessible areas or where minimising on-site construction time was a priority. This means the fish now have passage along the full 70km stretch, including the ability to swim upstream into the Reilly's Weir pool during small flows for spawning and access to a fisheries habitat reserve stretching for 14km upstream."

The existence of the habitat reserve was just one of the reasons the project was so enthusiastically supported by Geoff and Sue Reilly of "Lennie Brae".

"It's a fact that we all have awfully busy lives and fish species are something we all would and should find interesting," Mr Reilly said.

Western Downs Regional Councillor George Moore said the council, which provided the more than 200 metres of rock necessary for the fishway, was always supportive of projects that protected and enhanced the natural environment.

"The Reilly's Weir was built in 1936 and now with this fishway attached, I hope it lasts us into the next century," Cr Moore said.

Fisheries Queensland Fisheries, Habitat and Assessment general manager John Robertson said the project was a success story because of the partnerships between the Reilly family and local, State and Commonwealth governments.

QMDC Chair Peter Blundell said fish were a major indicator species for waterway health and the organisation was keen to continue the good work.

"QMDC is all about partnerships for environmental and sustainability outcomes and this project is a great example of that," Mr Blundell said.

As well as enthusiastic partners and landholders, the project also involved local businesses, including the Geldard family's RED Industrial at Condamine.

RED Industrial's Ashley Geldard said it was exciting to think about the number of fish already using the fishway, the first with which the company had been involved.

"It would have been a lot more challenging if we didn't have such a good team to work with, including Fisheries Queensland and the Reilly family," Mr Geldard said.

The Reilly's Weir fishway is a joint project between the Reilly family, Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC) and the Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI). This initiative is supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Recreational Fishing Community Grants program. The project has also been supported by the Western Downs Regional Council, Maranoa-Balonne Catchment Management Association, RED Industrial and GHD.

Photograph: 260310_Reillys_official group shot

Celebrating the official opening of a new fishway constructed on the weir at "Lennie Brae" are landholders Sue and Geoff Reilly (front) with (back from left) Fisheries Queensland technical officer Peter Wrench, Western Downs Regional Councillor George Moore, RED Industrial's Ashley Geldard, Fisheries Queensland Fisheries, Habitat and Assessment general manager John Robertson, QMDC chairman Peter Blundell and Fisheries Queensland senior fisheries biologist (fishway) Andrew Berghuis.

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