



OVENS

DEMONSTRATION REACH

Acknowledgements

Funding for the Namoi Demonstration Reach has been provided by Namoi Catchment Management Authority, Murray–Darling Basin Authority and the NSW Department of Primary Industries. Inkind support has also been provided by local industry, councils, fishing clubs, community groups and individual landholders.

The Ovens River Demonstration Reach project started in 2007 to highlight the benefits of using a combination of river health management actions to increase fish numbers. The Ovens River was chosen due to high environmental values downstream of Wangaratta and the known presence of several endangered native species including Murray Cod, Trout Cod and Macquarie Perch.

So far, the project has targeted the Ovens River directly upstream of Wangaratta using a range of management interventions including woody weed removal, stock exclusion, increased snag loading and riparian revegetation. The reach was chosen for its easy access for all river users to observe the projects' activities and increase community awareness.

Community engagement for the project has been strong, with individual landholders whose properties adjoin the Demonstration Reach area targeted to improve their riparian management practices. Incentives such as fencing materials, weed control and supplying off-stream watering points for stock after river frontages have been fenced off, have been offered.



Demonstration stalls have been well attended at the Wangaratta Fishing and Camping Show, and Native Fish Week, which were aimed at creating greater community awareness about river rehabilitation. Local carp removal demonstrations have improved the community's awareness about exotic fish species. School groups have also been educated about the importance of the Ovens Demonstration Reach as a refuge for endangered native species.

Severe bushfires and flood which resulted in above average river heights have posed challenges to the project. Despite this, many successes have been achieved including:

- reintroduction of more than 150 hardwood snags to improve stream habitat,
- removal of 11 kilometres of willow and woody weeds,
- establishment of 5 kilometres of riparian fencing and revegetation works,
- construction of the Wangaratta Fish Ladder to allow fish species to access the upper reaches of the Ovens River past an artificial weir.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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