



UPPER MURRUMBIDGEE

DEMONSTRATION REACH

Established in 2009, the Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach is the youngest of the seven reaches in the MDB. The Upper Murrumbidgee River has a history of aquatic and riparian habitat loss due to land use practices. In many areas of the catchment this has led to a highly degraded river and a significantly altered native fish community.

Despite this degradation, the Upper Murrumbidgee River is valued as a significant riverine ecosystem containing critical habitats for several threatened species, including Trout Cod, Murray Cod and Macquarie Perch.

On-going works are focused on woody weed control, managing stock access to the river, restoring native vegetation along the banks and in-stream, engaging communities, encouraging adoption of best management practices, improving fish passage and recreating geomorphic complexity.

Currently, the Tharwa Fish Habitat project is a focus for activities. Large sections of the Upper Murrumbidgee Reach area suffer from sedimentation and establishment of ‘sand slugs’, which smother critical habitat and breeding areas for native fish, and inhibit the migration needed to better quality habitat up and downstream for the completion of life cycles. The project aims to recreate in-stream habitat, including engineered log jams, and improve fish passage.

Community engagement of key stakeholders is an ongoing activity and strong relationships have been formed with local fishing groups, schools, landholders and community groups.

Annual fish monitoring is now being carried out and has recently detected a range expansion of Murray Cod and natural recruitment of the endangered Trout Cod.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The reach is a collaborative partnership between the ACT Government, Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority, NSW Department of Primary Industries, local communities and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority’s Native Fish Strategy.

Trout Cod and Murray Cod are frequently caught in Kambah Pool on the Murrumbidgee, ACT. Photo Mark Jekabsons.

Inset: Willow control workshop. Below: ACT Australia New Guinea Fishes Association community sampling under scientific research permit. Both photos Charlie Carruthers.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Lisa Evans — lisa.evans@act.gov.au

Felicity Collins —

felicity.collins@cma.nsw.gov.au

<http://www.upperbidgeereach.org.au/>