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2nd May, 2004

The Honourable Ian MacDonald, MLA
Minister for Department of Primary Industries
Level 30 Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Dear Minister,

Thank you for letter stamped 10th March 2004 being a reply to 2 previous letters freshwater fish stocking. However, one question was not answered, and that was the source of funding for the stocking of bass in Galston Gorge, north of Sydney. Our understanding is that this was part paid for by the Dollar for Dollar scheme. As you are well aware, this scheme was established in 1998 and "aims to enhance recreational fishing opportunities; support the efforts of local stocking communities, assist in the development regional aquaculture industries; and increase community and industry involvement in, and awareness of, responsible stocking".

In your reply to our questions regarding the stocking of bass at Galston Gorge it is stated that:

"NSW Fisheries approved the stocking on the basis of an Aquatic Bio-Indicator Survey report commissioned by Council, which showed that native fish stocks have declined historically and that exotic gambusia and carp are now proliferating in this area. The survival of stocked fish will be monitored by the University of Technology"

So it appears that the stocking of 12,000 bass into Galston Gorge was done as an environmental fix without first looking at the reason for the proliferation of gambusia and carp.

Funding questions that we would like answers to are:

- Excepting for Hornsby Council's contribution, was the funding for the Galston Gorge bass stocking from the Dollar For Dollar Scheme? If not, then what was the funding source?
- If it was funded from the Dollar for Dollar scheme, then why was it, as the stocking program appears to be for environmental and possibly some research purposes which do not fit in with Fisheries own stated aims of the Dollar for Dollar scheme.

The other point we have issue with is the reason stocking is undertaken as a cheap alternative to environmental issues without looking first at the reason stocking is considered necessary. It was stated that there was a proliferation of gambusia and carp, but were the reasons for this proliferation examined prior to the stocking, and were other remedial actions considered?

It seems the Galston Gorge stocking of bass does not fit in with the aims of the Dollar for Dollar scheme, especially the one for responsible stocking.

Yours sincerely

Phillip Ingram

President
Anglers Action Group (Sydney Northside) Inc.