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Fish Passage Remediation through the NSW Recreational Fishing Trust Habitat Action Grants

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More habitat – more fish: better fishing
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Habitat Action Program

Recreational Fisher?

- Not much of a fisher ☹️
- Gained some good advice from dad and grandpa



Recreational Fishing License

- NSW, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania have licences
- NSW License (all waters) brought in 2001 (since 1998 fresh only)
- Applies to **all types of recreational fishing** including spear fishing, bait trapping and prawn collection
- 3 days (\$7), 1 month (\$14), 1 year (\$35) and 3 years (\$85)
- Exemptions
 - under 18 (and an adult assisting a person under 18)
 - private dams 2 Hectares or less
 - an Aboriginal person
 - Pensioner card holders (various)



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Funding

- Funds held in Trust and split into SW / FW
- 6 Funding platforms:
- Compliance
- Recreational fishing enhancement
- **Aquatic habitat protection & rehabilitation**
- Research on fish and recreational fishing
- Education
- Fishing access and facilities
- *Administration*



Aquatic Habitat Rehabilitation Projects

■ Habitat Action Grant Program (HAG)

- Running since 2003
- Funding up to \$40,000 per site (require 1:1 contribution from applicant)
- Open to anyone (fishers, landholders, Councils)
- **Funded nearly \$3.5 M for fish habitat improvement**



Recreational fishers giving back

Fish Passage Projects

- Long term, beneficial outcome for fish and fishers
- Viewed very positively
- Since 2003
 - 43 fish passage projects
 - nearly \$950,000 allocated (to weirs and roads)
 - total value of projects ~\$7 M
 - helping fish access over 2,500 km of habitat



Fish Passage Projects

- Projects range in size - Small road crossings / weirs

Causeway with narrow
pipe restriction,
now with bridge



Causeway with narrow
pipe restriction,
now with box culvert



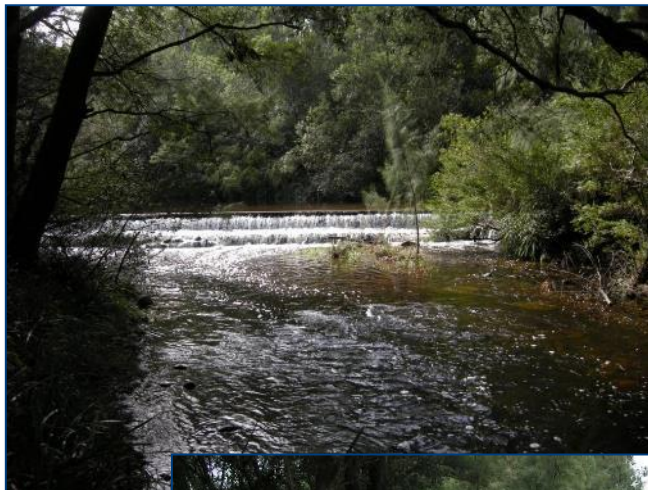
Low weir,
now removed



Fish Passage Projects

- Smaller fishway construction

Full-width rock ramp fishway

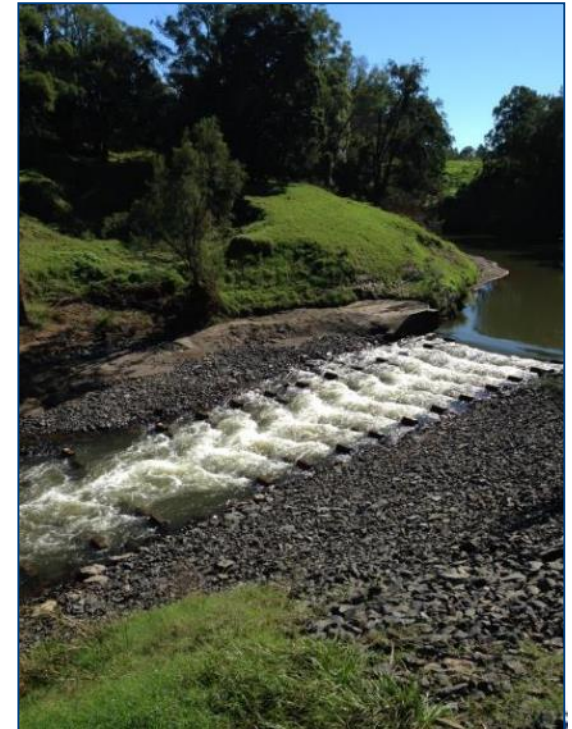


Culvert and partial-width rock ramp fishway



Fish Passage Projects

- Large fishway construction
- **Kyogle Fishway**
 - Kyogle Council
 - Mainstem fish barrier
 - Full width rock ramp fishway (prefab)
 - Opened up 405 km Richmond River
 - \$1.365 M total cost (\$40,000 HAG)

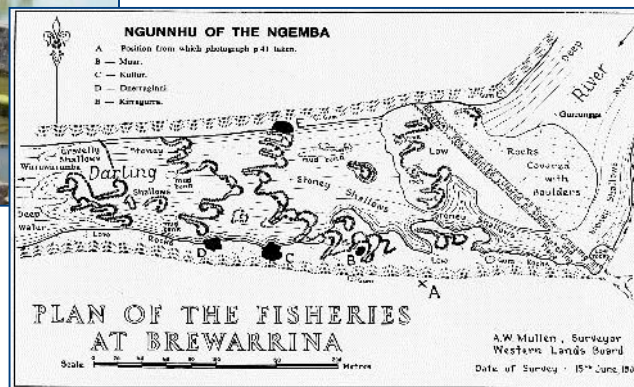


Fish Passage Projects



■ Brewarrina Fishway

- State Water, Western CMA, NSW Environmental Trust
- Mainstem fish barrier, fish traps adjacent
- Partial width rock ramp fishway
- Opened up 1,039 km Barwon River
- ~\$1.6 M total cost (\$50,000 HAG)

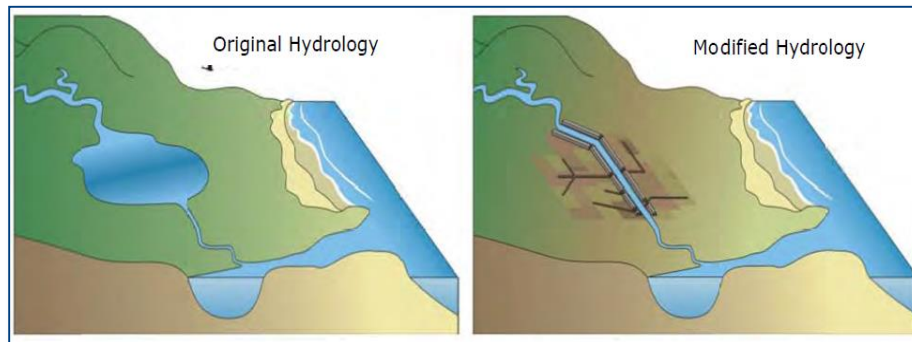


Fish Passage Projects

- Habitat Action Grants always smaller contributor!
- Not enough to get a project over the line itself
- Enter the Flagship program!

Flagship Habitat Rehabilitation Projects

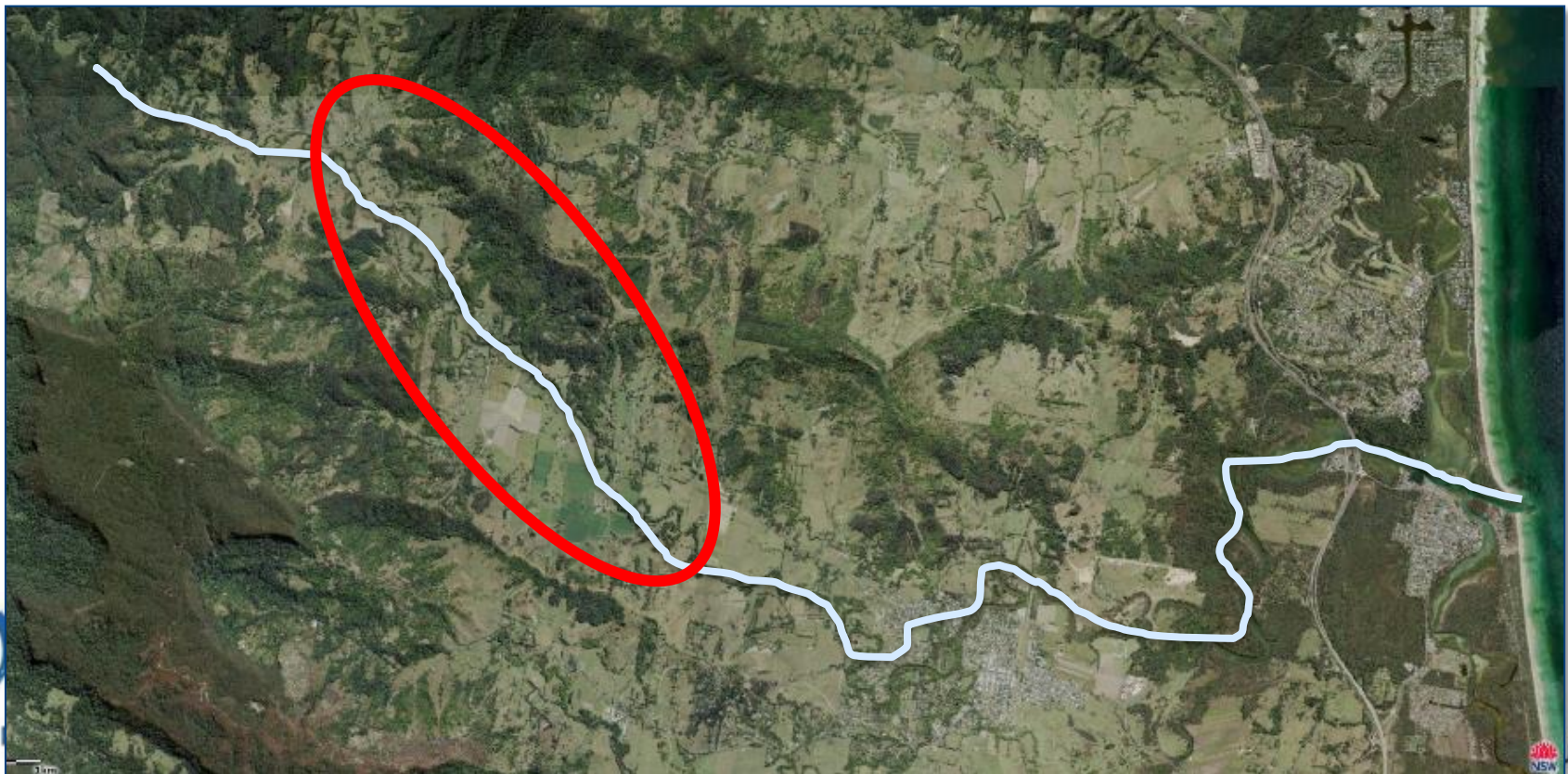
- Flagship Habitat Action Program
 - Running since 2016 (recent)
 - **Funding from the Saltwater Trust for up to \$400,000 per project**
 - Open to more skilled applicants
 - **More complex projects – more difficult, greater gains in long term**
 - 3 projects funded to date: 2 coastal wetlands...



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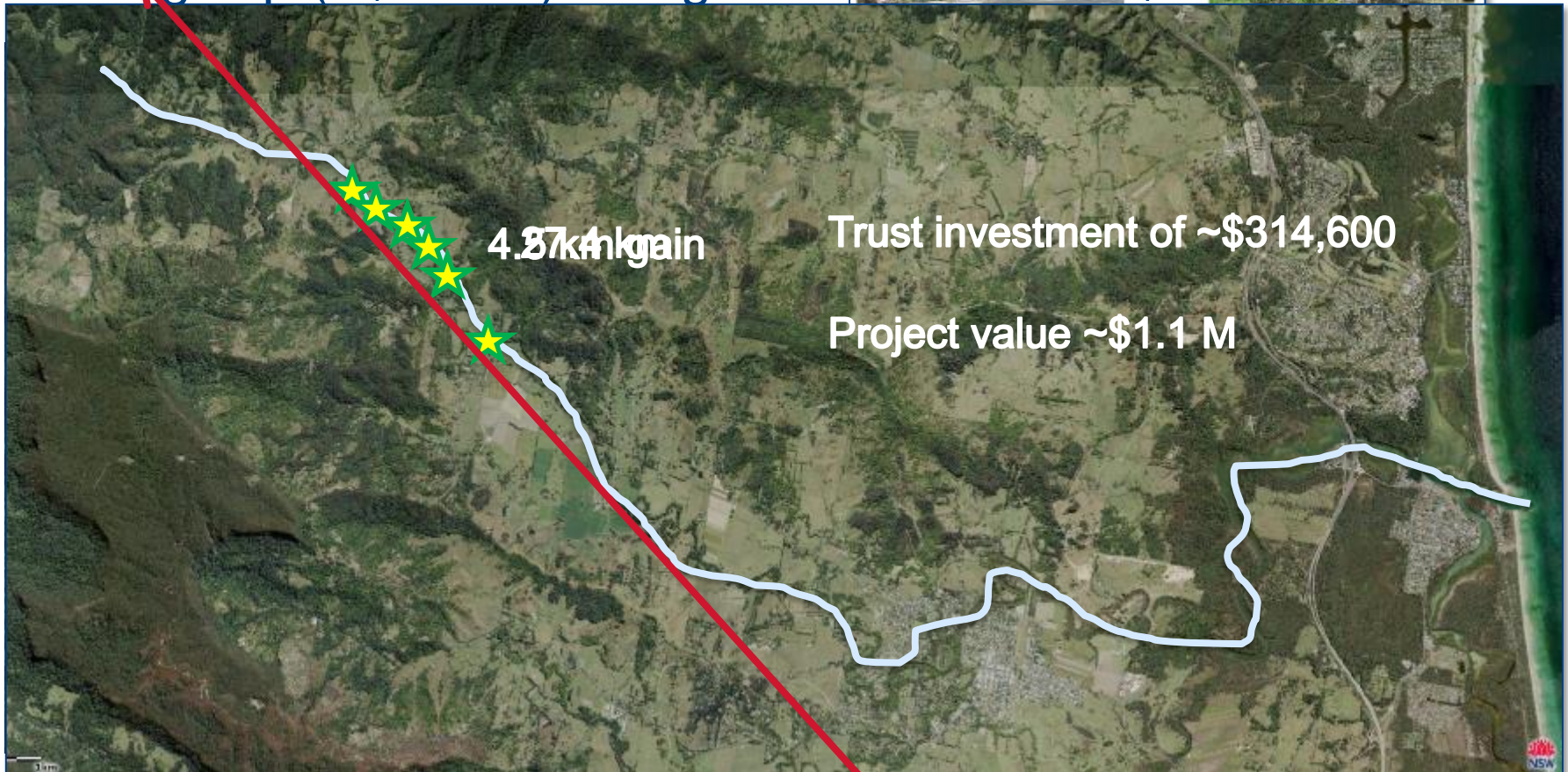
Fish Passage Projects: HAG & Flagship

- Strategic approach - value add to HAG
- Proponent (Byron Council) achieves works crew efficiencies
- Flagship funding to achieve ...nearly all mainstem



Fish Passage Projects

- HAG (\$40 K): 3 low cost barriers (+ 1 bridge): ~\$385 K total
 - Strategic use of funding to create free passage
- Flagship (~\$275 K): 2 high cost barriers: ~\$715 K total



- Gain from 4.5 km to 27.4 km



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More Focus on Fish Passage

- NSW Fish Passage Strategy for coordinated remediation at priority barriers
- Development of a 20-year state-wide fishway infrastructure strategy
- Aim to remediate the top 160 priority barriers to migrating fish
- Will significantly improve native fish populations and recreational fishing opportunities.

Fish Passage Projects

- Great outcome for fish and fishers!



Recreational
Fishing Trusts

Connected

More Habitat

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Better Fishing!