

Hughes Creek Project Update

Hi All,

It has been an up and down year for more than the flows on Hughes Creek. We've had success securing the instream structures to withstand the many high flow events experienced this spring, which is great news following our repair and reinforcement works undertaken after the January flood damage. Embedding and rock anchoring habitat logs instream has been proven effective. Autumn surveys will help to evaluate the changes achieved with these structures.

Unfortunately, the revegetation trials to stabilise sand haven't been as enduring. Given the sedges were inundated soon after planting and remained so for several months of varying high flows, the plants did not have sufficient opportunity to grow and attain purchase in the sand. The weight of the bulk units has enabled some to stay in place, though several of these were buried in shifted sand. Some hessian bags were found in close proximity, having been scoured out and rolled/tumbled along the bed, though unfortunately very few have survived. We have plans to try again this coming autumn, with hessian lined boxes of sedges/rushes that will occupy a greater area per unit. With aims to plant earlier and more densely at the same locations, we will hope for better establishment before winter high flows.

In the last few months, we have seen several fences completed to control stock along the Hughes Creek and its tributaries, protecting some excellent remnant vegetation. More than 52ha will be protected by 7.3km of fence on the Hughes Creek and 190ha protected with 2.34km of fencing on a tributary, Woolshed Creek. It has been a very productive year, which will continue into 2017 with planned revegetation works and further fencing. Thank you to all the landholders involved in these works to improve the health of the Hughes Creek.

Below are a series of photos showing a mix of sites protected late this year:





In addition to instream works planned at three locations to enhance habitat connectivity, we are hopeful of attaining more funding for refuge pool enhancement through a DELWP crowdfunding pilot. Financed through the Regional Riparian Action Plan, *Funds For Fish* is a joint initiative between the Australian River Restoration Centre, Goulburn Broken, Glenelg Hopkins and Corangamite CMAs. If successful, each CMA will match the funding targets of their project. The GBCMA will be chasing \$15,000 to accelerate delivery of habitat enhancement and community awareness of Macquarie perch populations in the GB catchment. With a current focus on Hughes, Hollands and Seven Creeks, the project works will include:

- Improve instream habitat (install snags and create structures to enhance shelter, pool refuges and connectivity)
- Revegetate the bed and banks (particularly with reeds and sedges in channel to stabilise sand)
- Erect signage to increase public awareness of Macquarie perch

If we don't reach our target we don't get any of the money, but if we exceed our target, we get to keep the additional dollars to do even more. The campaign pages will be completed soon for a start of February launch date. There will be some cool perks available for varying sums pledged, including

MaccaBuck\$ badged duffle bags and neck gaiters/sun protectors. Your assistance with Maccabuck\$ and project promotion through your networks in the new year will be very much appreciated. The success of this pilot will not solely be about attaining further funding, but will also be about increasing public knowledge and support for Macquarie perch. With public interest and support, a MaccaBuck\$ Crowdfunding project could be repeated in future years to continue to accelerate works on Macquarie perch streams.



I will be in touch in 2017, with hopes it is a Maccabuck\$ year for Macquarie perch. May is also be a great year for you. Best wishes for a lovely Xmas and happy new year.

Kind regards,
Christine

Christine Glassford
River Health Officer