



PO Box 528, PYRMONT NSW 2009
ph 0428 817 282
email inlandriversnetwork@gmail.com
web inlandriversnetwork.org
ABN 34 373 750 383

Media Release

9th September 2021

Inland fish finally get passage funding

Inland Rivers Network is pleased to see that the final IPART determination released today has allocated funding to build long promised fishways in inland rivers.

Since 2009 WaterNSW have had a legal obligation to build eleven fishways in Inland NSW Rivers to offset the impacts to native fish of several dam upgrade projects.

Obstruction to fish passage in NSW Rivers has played a major role in native fish numbers plummeting by 90% in the last one hundred years. Addressing fish passage is a very important undertaking if this decline in population is to be slowed and turned around.

Yet the critically important fishway projects have been delayed at every hurdle, with WaterNSW citing concern over the costs. Even when the funding was raised from their customers several years ago, the money was spent on other projects.

Now, after twelve years of delays, Inland Rivers Network is very pleased to see detailed and cost efficient plans for the construction of seven of the projects in the next few years. Detailed plans for the remaining four projects will continue to be developed.

“Native Fish have strong instincts to migrate to complete their life cycles. Many obstacles have been built in rivers that stop fish movements to feeding and breeding sites. It’s very important that the problem is fixed,” said Bev Smiles, President of Inland Rivers Network.

There has been significant public money invested in planning for these fishways. Cost efficiency assessments for the fishway implementation strategy was completed back in 2018.

“We are very pleased to finally see detailed timelines and budgets for each project presented by WaterNSW. Significant work has happened behind the scenes planning these projects and it is none too soon for our threatened native fish,” said Ms Smiles.

Media Contacts:

Beverly Smiles, President of Inland Rivers Network – 0428 817 282

Melissa Gray, Vice President of Inland Rivers Network – 0431 471 310