



Media Release

FROM THE OFFICE OF VRFISH - VICTORIA'S
RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY

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NEW REEFS TO MAKE FISHING BETTER IN GEELONG

VRFish, the recreational fishing peak body in Victoria, is thrilled with the upcoming construction of new recreational fishing reefs near Geelong, as announced by Minister for Fishing and Boating Melissa Horne today.

VRFish Chairperson, Mr. Rob Loats, said "The reefs will provide enhanced fish habitat which will in turn provide our fishers with more fishing opportunities for popular saltwater species such as snapper, King George whiting, flathead and calamari."

"VRFish has been advocating for the expansion of coastal purpose-built artificial reefs and recommended the area as ripe for creating recreational fishing reefs."

VRFish facilitated a meeting with local fishers to help identify the most promising areas for recreational reefs in Corio Bay and the Geelong Arm. Three sites were ultimately selected at St. Helens, Kirks Point and Outer Harbour, with each site to receive 5 to 6 patch reefs.

"We are excited the new reefs will benefit our avid land-based fishers at St. Helens as well as boat-based fishers at the two other sites within easy access of existing boat ramps."

The new reefs will be created using 100 tonnes of local limestone and 2000 tonnes of basalt rock from a nearby Department of Justice & Community Safety (DJCS) construction project - an innovative arrangement that came to fruition thanks to the vision of VRFish Board Director, Russell Conway and the support of the Community Safety Building Authority (CSBA) Cherry Creek Project.

Once constructed, the reefs will be seeded with native oysters and mussels to form a productive fish habitat for marine life and improve water quality.

The Victorian Fisheries Authority are overseeing the project with construction of the reefs planned to occur between October and December 2020.

Through *Target One Million Phase 2* the Victorian Government committed \$2.5 million into improving reef habitat in Port Phillip Bay. The installation of three reefs in Corio Bay will receive \$700,000 in funding.



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