

# Katfish Reach

Balancing the Scales for Fish and Floodplain  
www.katfish.org.au

**Katfish  
Reach**



## Newsletter

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### CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON NEW REGULATOR AT ECKERT CREEK (BANK J)

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**This year sees another win for native fish in Katarapko, as the construction of a new major regulator and fishway commences in mid-September at the entrance of Eckert Creek, to improve water flow and native fish movement.**

The new regulator and fishway, known as Bank J, is the main inlet for the Katarapko floodplain and its mosaic of creeks and wetlands. The flow of water and movement of native fish between the River Murray and Eckert Creek has been restricted for many years, with Bank J creating the biggest stumbling block as the gateway to the Katarapko system.

The construction of a new regulator (estimated to be completed by March 2017) will allow water to once again flow naturally down Eckert Creek into the Katarapko system, and native fish, such as Golden perch, Silver perch and Freshwater catfish will have conditions to breed. By providing the flow of water, we allow native fish to follow their natural cues to move and breed, which has great benefits for improving native fish numbers

The works are part of the \$155 million SA Riverland Floodplains Integrated Infrastructure Program which is funded by the Australian Government through the Murray Darling Basin Authority. The South Australian Government is implementing the program to improve the watering and management of River Murray floodplains in the Riverland.

Reopening Eckert Creek will benefit native fish, and provide other long-term floodplain health benefits for frogs, waterbirds and the unique ecosystems that exist.



Photo: Before and after Illustrations of the New Regulator and Fishway (Artwork by Belinda Cale)

### MOUNTAIN BIKE EVENT THROUGH KATARAPKO

**The Katfish Reach project in conjunction with the Berri Bike Boys hosted a challenging mountain biking event through Katarapko on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April.**

Attracting over 60 participants of all ages, the ride weaved through the Katarapko floodplain environment, taking in the surrounds of the Murray River National Park. Key messages about the project were provided along the way, to inform the participants about restoring the floodplain. There were two routes on the day, one to challenge those already active mountain bikers, and the other as an easy introduction into the sport. A free cooked breakfast by the Lions Club was on offer to all those that participated.

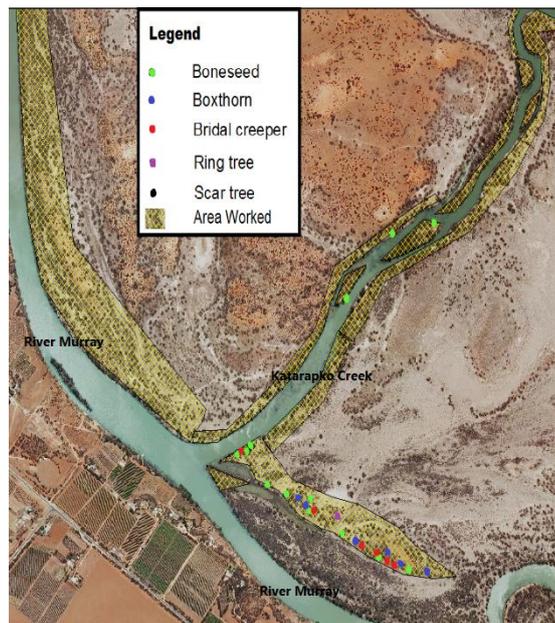


Photo: Junior riders ready to start the event and enjoy the Katarapko Floodplains bike track

**BONESEED WEED CONTROL ON KATARAPKO**

Boneseed readily disrupts native vegetation. Its lack of natural predators, fast growth rate and large amount of attractive seed allows the weed to invade many types of native ecosystems. The weed has potential to form dense thickets reducing the chance for other native plants to thrive. It also disrupts the natural soil seedbank with its large seeding rates.

The control work recently carried out by the District team of Natural Resources SA Murray Darling Basin, in the upper reaches of the River Murray, not only helps the ecosystems of the Riverland district but also all those downstream by reducing the seed supply. At this stage the species does not have a strong grip in the areas of Katarapko and Loch Luna, but is present along much of the river's, creeks and tributaries banks. At this smaller scale of infestation the species is easier to control.



*Photo: Shows the area investigated along Katarapko Creek at the bottom end near the Loxton opening*

**REHABILITATION WORKS IN FULL SWING**

**With the completion of structures to improve the flow of water and movement of native fish within the Eckert Creek system, many sites required erosion control and targeted rehabilitation works.**

To help the rehabilitation process, bollards were installed in strategic locations around the new structures to prevent damage as a result of vehicle access. This was complimented by the installation of Jute Mesh, a material specifically designed to kick start revegetation.

Jute Mesh is an organic, flexible, loose-woven 'cargo-net' mesh used for erosion control and seed establishment. It is easily separated so it can be placed around existing vegetation and the coarse nature of the fibres assist in capturing windblown soil and native seeds. It also has the ability to retain moisture in the micro-environment which increases water infiltration and helps increase germination rates. The results have been outstanding.



*Photo: Jute Mesh being installed by the Green Army with assistance from John Mitchell and Wayne Ahrens*

A big thanks to the Green Army who did a great job installing the Jute Mesh with assistance from John Mitchell and Wayne Ahrens..

Looking for more information?

Visit the Katfish Reach website [www.katfish.org.au](http://www.katfish.org.au)  
 Or contact Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin  
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