



Minister Steve Whan

Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Emergency Services
Minister for Rural Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

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Bigger is better on NSW South Coast

One of the State's most popular fishing locations is set for makeover this month, with the expansion of the St George's Basin artificial reef on the NSW South Coast, NSW Primary Industries Minister Steve Whan, said today.

"The re-development of the St George's Basin artificial reef will make it the largest artificial reef in NSW," Minister Whan said.

"This is absolutely fantastic news for the State's recreational fishers.

"The St George's Basin Artificial reef was part of a pilot study program in 2006, consisting of 180 reef balls.

"Once expanded, an additional 600 reef balls will be spaced over an area of 5 hectares, occupying approximately 650 m² of seabed.

"This project will provide exceptional fishing opportunities for the State's estimated one million recreational anglers, and a great boost for the beautiful NSW South Coast."

Artificial Reefs are deployed in areas lacking reef habitat, creating places for recreationally important species of fish to live and shelter.

"The NSW Government, through I&I NSW, has worked closely with researchers, fishers, community groups and other regulatory bodies to ensure the reef is in the ideal location to maximise its effectiveness," Minister Whan said.

"Artificial reefs are funded by the NSW Saltwater Fishing Trust, and are a great example of recreational fishing license fees being put back into the water, to improve recreational fishing in NSW."

Artificial reefs are also located at Lake Conjola, Lake Macquarie, Botany Bay and Merimbula.

The reefs are constructed using three size combinations of 'Reef Balls', which are specially designed concrete modules which promote marine growth and provide fish with a complex, almost natural habitat.

The largest Reef Balls are around 1.2 metres wide, 0.9 metres high and weigh up to 1000 kilograms.

Detailed scientific monitoring of the reefs showed that the artificial reefs were effective at providing new reef habitat for a high diversity of fish species and had limited impact on existing habitats.

The results also showed a number of unusual, highly sought after sport fish were moving back into the areas to make use of the newly deployed artificial reefs

For more information on artificial reefs visit:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/recreational/saltwater/artificial-reefs