

**KON VATSKALIS  
MINISTER FOR FISHERIES**

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## **BACKING THE TERRITORY LIFESTYLE WITH MORE SUPPORT FOR RECREATIONAL FISHING**

Budget 2005 continues the Government's strong support for recreational fishing, Minister for Fisheries Kon Vatskalis announced today.

"This investment will fund improvements to boat ramps, signage, and protection for cars and property at popular recreational fishing spots to better back our unique Territory lifestyle," Mr Vatskalis said.

"We will continue to listen to fishermen who tell us what infrastructure is required and where.

"It will also fund improved access to fishing spots, as well as research and development to ensure that the Top End fishing experience remains one of the best in the world.

"The Martin Government's commitment to recreational fishing has seen recreational fishing access to the coastline doubled.

"Budget 2005 also continues the Martin Government's strong support for environmental protection, particularly in the Daly River area, to protect the Territory's pristine fishing spots."

Highlights of Budget 2005 include:

- \$2 million over four years for new fishing infrastructure
- \$900 000 for recreational fishing programs
- Close to \$170,000 for the Amateur Fishermen's Association NT, including grants to clubs
- Continuing research on the major fisheries used by recreational fishers (barramundi, Spanish mackerel, black jewfish and mud crabs)
- Continuing fingerling and stocking programs in known major areas. Areas such as Manton Dam, Lake Bennett, Lake Todd, Darwin Harbour have already received fingerlings
- Continuing work to improve access to Mule Creek, Rocky Creek and Palmerston boat ramps
- Funding improvements to Channel Point and Point Stuart for new recreational fishing access areas

"Fishing is the lure of the Territory and provides a boost to local business through tourism, with up to half of all Territorians and 107,000 tourists fishing here every year," Mr Vatskalis said.

"It's an important part of our great Territory lifestyle.

"Through Budget 2005, the Martin Government is continuing to back recreational fishing in the Territory."

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