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MEDIA RELEASE

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Local anglers can rejoice with fish stocking underway at Lake Awoonga

Recreational anglers at Lake Awoonga will soon be enjoying even more bites, with more than 660,000 barramundi fingerlings released into the popular freshwater fishing impoundment during March.

The highly anticipated milestone concludes GAWB's first major fingerling release in four years, following the successful commissioning of the organisation's new \$12 million multi-species fish hatchery, Aquaculture Gladstone, in 2022.

Gladstone Area Water Board's Chief Executive Officer, Darren Barlow, said the milestone signals a welcome return to regular fish stocking activities at Lake Awoonga.

"As part of our Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), GAWB has an obligation to undertake sustainable fish stocking to support the biodiversity and health of Lake Awoonga," Mr Barlow said.

"GAWB has been part of this community since 1973, and our multi-species fish stocking program is just one way we enhance local amenities and improves the liveability of our region.

"Today's release will conclude our 2023 barramundi restocking effort here at Lake Awoonga and the team will now turn their attention to our Mangrove Jack and Sea Mullet breeding programs. All I can say is, it's a great time to be a Lake Awoonga angler."

Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing, Minister for Water and Member for Gladstone, Glenn Butcher, was on hand to assist with the fingerling release.

"The future is bright for our region's visitor economy with the recent launch of Aquaculture Gladstone, a new multi-species hatchery at Awoonga Dam. This facility will enhance the lifestyle of Central Queenslanders and creates tourism and recreation opportunities.

"Aquaculture Gladstone is driving the future growth and development of Queensland's aquaculture industry and I'm pleased to be a part of it.

"On top of that, the Palaszczuk Government's recent announcement that we are funding the \$983 million Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline will ensure Lake Awoonga remains a must visit destination for world-class recreational freshwater barramundi fishing," Minister Butcher said.

The Aquaculture Gladstone multi-species fish hatchery has the capacity to produce up to 5 million fingerlings a year and will open to the public in the second half of this year.

ENDS.

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