

Eden Creek Weir removal

Project update July 2026

As part of our environmental studies for the Eden Creek Weir removal project and in response to landholder feedback, WaterNSW commissioned an expert review of the Platypus Management Plan, and DPIRD Fisheries undertook studies into the creek's fish population.

The findings from the platypus management plan expert review, fish surveys and environmental DNA (eDNA) testing results are summarised in this update. The next steps for the project are also outlined.

Platypus Management Plan – expert review

An independent review of the Eden Creek Weir Removal Platypus Management Plan by Associate Professor Gilad Bino found that platypuses are actively using Eden Creek both upstream and downstream of the weir. Evidence from community observations, recorded burrows and eDNA sampling confirm platypus presence throughout the area.

The review found that the weir pool currently provides important platypus foraging habitat, with water depths preferred by platypuses for feeding. Removal of the weir will reduce these deep-water habitats and change the area from a weir pool to a more natural flowing creek.

Platypuses are capable of moving to alternative habitat and are likely to gradually relocate if water levels are lowered slowly and carefully. Research shows platypuses can adapt to changing conditions and move considerable distances along waterways when needed.

The expert review recommended:

- A staged, gradual drawdown of the weir pool to allow platypuses time to move naturally to nearby habitat
- Monitoring during works to identify any animals that may need assistance
- Capture and relocation only if required, such as where animals become stranded
- Protection and restoration of creek habitat through stock exclusion fencing, revegetation of creek banks and installation

of large woody habitat

- Ongoing monitoring and community involvement to support long-term recovery of the creek ecosystem.

The review concluded that while the weir pool currently provides platypus habitat, the risks associated with weir removal can be effectively managed through careful planning and staged implementation. Over the longer term, restoring a free-flowing creek and improving riparian habitat is expected to benefit the broader freshwater ecosystem, including native fish and platypus populations.

Fish surveys and eDNA testing

Aquatic ecologists surveyed six locations in Eden Creek and Wyndham Creek between 24 and 27 March 2026. They used a combination of fyke nets (special fish traps), snorkelling surveys and visual observations from creek banks and bridges.

eDNA sampling was undertaken at the same time by DPIRD Fisheries in the same locations.

These surveys and eDNA results provide a snapshot of conditions at the time of sampling and may not be representative of the complete aquatic fauna throughout a year or across seasons.

What we found

At the time of sampling, no carp were caught or observed upstream of Eden Creek Weir, nor was their eDNA detected. This is consistent with feedback from local landholders, who reported there were no carp in the upstream reaches.

These findings are unusual given Eden Creek Weir is regularly submerged during flood events. It's important to note the survey and eDNA results provide a snapshot of conditions at the time of sampling, and the results do not confirm the ongoing absence of carp from the upstream reaches.

Species present at all sites were Australian Smelt and Rainbowfish (non-migratory), Australian bass, longfin eel and Cox's gudgeon (all migratory fish species and either good swimmers or able to traverse obstacles). Catfish were present at all sites, including the downstream sites where carp were present.

The following species were only detected at the two downstream sites below Eden Creek Weir: carp, sea (bully) mullet, freshwater mullet and Australian herring. These species may be prevented from moving upstream by the weir, noting mullet and herring are species that would typically access habitats considerable distances upstream where access is available.

Platyus eDNA was detected at all six sites. The highest detection was recorded at Upper Eden Creek, followed by Eden Creek Weir and Cambells Bridge.

The numbers of fish species caught in nets are found in the table below, and the eDNA results are graphed on page 3.

Other species collected in fyke nets included two species of turtle (most abundant in the weir pool) and giant spiny crayfish (Cambells Bridge and Upper Wyndham Creek).

Next steps

Further environmental investigations are required before Eden Creek Weir removal project can progress.

DPIRD Fisheries is planning further fish surveys in the upper reaches of Eden Creek to better understand the fish biodiversity upstream of the weir and potential outcomes should the weir be removed.

It's proposed that the surveys will be repeated over a number of seasons to provide a comprehensive understanding of fish populations and habitat use.

While these investigations are underway, construction works planning will cease.

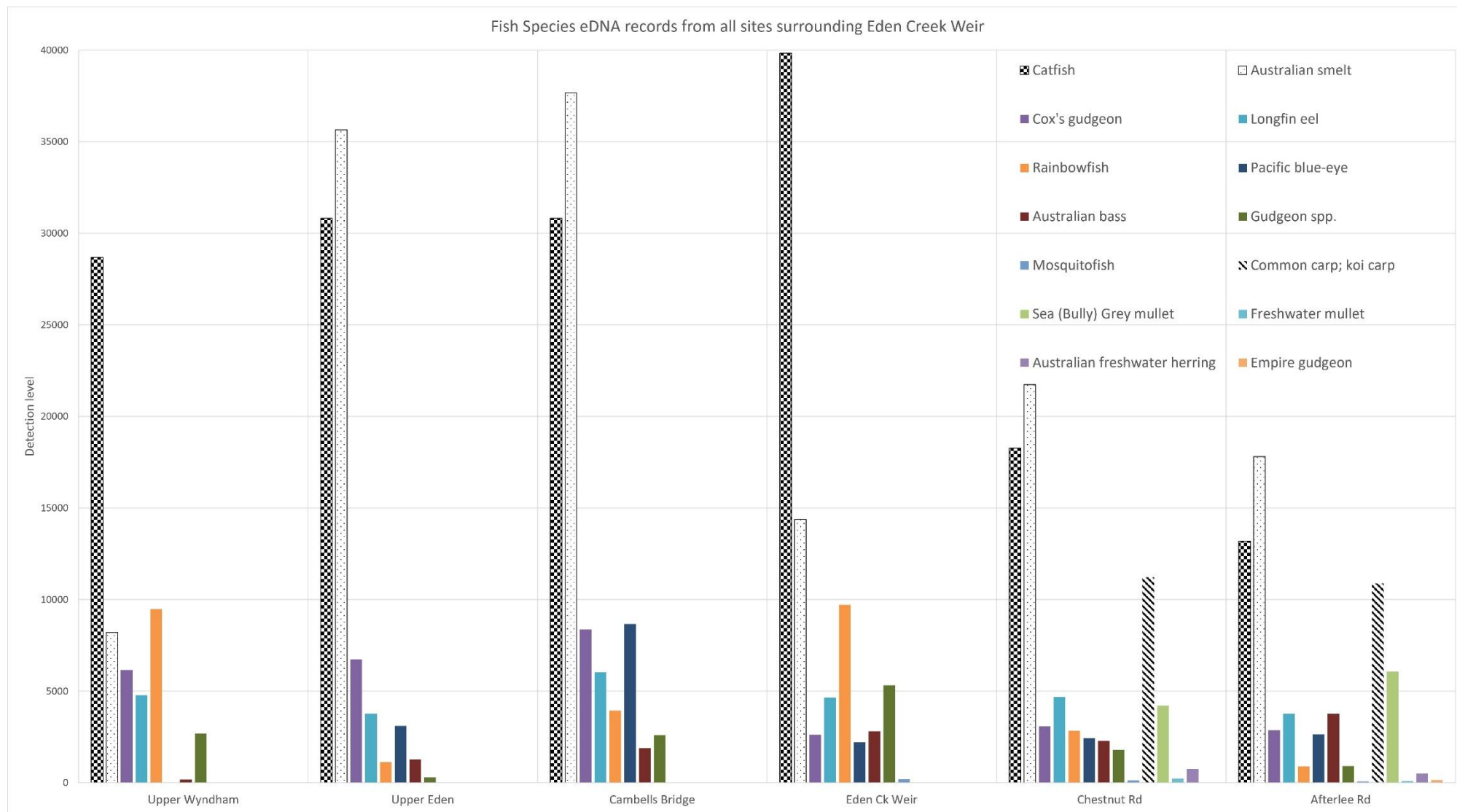
The investigation findings will inform the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and support future decisions for WaterNSW and DPIRD Fisheries about the project.

We would like to thank landholders and the community for their involvement to date.

For more information, please contact DPIRD Fisheries NSW on fish.passage@dpird.nsw.gov.au

Common name	Scientific name	Upper Wyndham Creek	Upper Eden Creek	Campbell's Bridge	Eden Creek Weir	Chestnut Road	Afterlee Road
Longfinned eel	<i>Anguilla reinhardtii</i>	4	1	17		5	10
Eel-tailed catfish	<i>Tandanus tandanus</i>	7	28	2	14	8	15
Australian bass	<i>Percales novemaculeatus</i>		1	2			
Crimson spotted rainbowfish	<i>Melanotaenia duboulayi</i>	54	140	101	43	53	63
Australian smelt	<i>Retropinna semoni</i>	12	60	20		1	12
Empire gudgeon	<i>Hypseleotris compressa</i>	1					
Striped gudgeon	<i>Gobiomorphus australis</i>	2					
Flathead gudgeon	<i>Philypnodon grandiceps</i>	1	1				
Carp gudgeon	<i>Hypseleotris sp.</i>				15		
Number of species		5	3	5	3	3	4
Total fish		81	231	142	72	67	100

Left: type and number of species caught in fyke nets at each location.



Above: level of detection of fish species at each location. The species with the highest eDNA detection were eel-tail catfish and Australian smelt.

Species in the legend are listed from left to right.