

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Local angler has 1,000 reasons to smile**

A local angler has 1,000 reasons to smile today after reeling in an elusive Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB) pink tagged Barramundi at Lake Awoonga, claiming \$1,000 in prize money in the process.

Local Gladstone resident and frequent Lake Awoonga visitor, Earl Haigh, was the lucky winner and first person to catch one of the prize-winning pink tagged Barramundi since the promotion began three years ago.

GAWB CEO Darren Barlow was delighted that one of the prized fish had finally been caught.

“It’s taken more than 3 years to do, so the entire team is very excited. It’s a great challenge for our region’s keen anglers and Earl’s achievement proves that these Barramundi can most definitely be caught.

“Lake Awoonga is synonymous with Barramundi fishing not only in the Gladstone region, but Australia wide.

“We know that 4-in-5 Gladstone residents visit Lake Awoonga at least once a year and 1-in-4 at least once a month. More than half of those visitors go fishing.”

GAWB has sponsored the Tagged Fish Category of the Boyne Tannum HookUp for the past three years. Each year, three ‘pink tagged’ Barramundi have been released into Lake Awoonga worth \$5,000 each if caught over the HookUp weekends, or \$1,000 outside of the event dates.

But the uniquely tagged Barramundi have remained out of sight and out of reach until now.

After three years of anticipation, Boyne Tannum HookUp President Jennifer McGuire was thrilled with the development.

“Both GAWB and the Hook Up team share a long-term commitment to supporting sustainable recreational fishery at Lake Awoonga. Our hope is that this news supports the continued growth of Gladstone’s fishing tourism sector,” Ms McGuire said.

“We couldn’t have had a better winner than Earl. He is a strong advocate for fishing the Awoonga Dam impoundment.

“The good news for other anglers is that there are still eight other pink tagged HookUp Barramundi waiting to be caught at Lake Awoonga.”

Mr Barlow also reminded anglers to continue uploading all their catches to the Track My Fish Lake Awoonga Mobile App.

“We’re reliant on the regular use of the Track My Fish Lake Awoonga app by local anglers to help us gain as much data as possible which will provide valuable insight into the fishery.”

To sign up to the app, search for Track My Fish Lake Awoonga in the App Store or Google Play. For more information visit GAWB’s website at [www.gawb.qld.gov.au](http://www.gawb.qld.gov.au).

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