VISION

“Healthy waterways supporting diverse aquatic and riparian flora and fauna, and providing high quality ecosystem services.”

Rivers and their associated ‘riparian’ edges are critical to people’s health and wellbeing, the sustainability of our city and nature conservation. Rivers, lakes, wetlands and aquifers are critical habitat for many native plants and animals, provide water for human consumption and are sought out as aesthetically beautiful places. Rivers provide important conduits and connectivity in the landscape for people, plants and animals.

Conservation, protection and rehabilitation of our waterways and riparian areas is essential for the protection of threatened species, maintaining ecosystems and their services, and providing recreational opportunities. It is vital to conserve these areas for now and the future.

The ACT Government is asking the community and expert stakeholders to comment on the draft Aquatic and Riparian Conservation Strategy and seven associated action plans for threatened species.
THE STRATEGY

The strategy provides guidance on the conservation of aquatic and riparian areas and seven threatened species in the ACT.

Significant rivers and riparian areas in the ACT are already located within the ACT’s extensive reserve system. The emphasis is on management and enhancement of aquatic and riparian ecosystems with a focus on areas that provide habitat for threatened fish, crayfish and plants.

In particular, the strategy outlines how we can:
> conserve aquatic and riparian habitat, species and communities by identifying and managing threats
> maintain and improve ecological connectivity, ecosystem function and biodiversity
> undertake monitoring and research programs
> partner with the community to support aquatic and riparian conservation
> enhance the resilience of aquatic and riparian areas to damaging disturbance and climate change.

The strategy provides overarching conservation goals and principles on which to base the actions in threatened species action plans. It provides a framework for planning and prioritising actions across aquatic and riparian areas in the ACT, including actions for sites where there are multiple threatened species present and multiple conservation objectives.

The strategy builds on the successful management of ACT waterways achieved since the original 2007 ACT Aquatic Species and Riparian Zone Conservation Strategy. It provides a regional approach to conservation and management of aquatic and riparian environments, addresses current and future issues, such as a changing climate, and focuses on best-practice conservation in an adaptive management framework.
THE ACTION PLANS

The Conservator for Flora and Fauna prepares action plans under the Nature Conservation Act 2014. Each action plan outlines conservation and protection proposals to maintain viable, wild populations of that species. Many of the generalised management guidelines from the strategy are reflected in specific goals or actions in the seven action plans:

> Two-spined Blackfish
  (*Gadopsis bispinosus*)

> Trout Cod
  (*Maccullochella macquariensis*)

> Macquarie Perch
  (*Macquaria australasica*)

> Murray Crayfish
  (*Euastacus armatus*)

> Silver Perch
  (*Bidyanus bidyanus*)

> Tuggeranong Lignum
  (*Muehlenbeckia tuggeranong*)

> Murrumbidgee Bossiaea
  (*Bossiaea grayi*)

The Government has separately developed a Native Species Conservation Plan for the Murray Cod (*Maccullochella peelii*), which is listed nationally, but not in the ACT.

WHAT’S NEXT

The ACT Government seeks community and expert comment on the draft ACT Aquatic and Riparian Conservation Strategy and the seven species action plans that sit under it.

Go to [www.yoursay.act.gov.au](http://www.yoursay.act.gov.au) to:

> See the draft strategy and action plans
> Comment on the draft strategy and action plans

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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