



Yanco Creek and Tributaries Advisory Council Inc.

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26 October 2023

Invasive Species Review
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Formal Submission

Invasive Species: Carp

YACTAC's footprint is in the Riverina, between Narrandera and Moulamein, connecting the Murrumbidgee and Edward Rivers. The Yanco Creek System includes the Yanco, Columbo, Billabong and Forest Creeks and ana branches. It contains slow moving, relatively shallow water with warmer temperatures than the Murrumbidgee River.

The Yanco Creek System is a haven for many native aquatic species including trout cod, eel tailed catfish, murray cod, platypus and rakali. The system is included in the MDBA's MER program for the mid Murrumbidgee wetland network. It is within living memory that the creek system ran with clear water, but that changed in the 1970s.

Carp are regularly caught in the vast network of creeks and YACTAC has undertaken studies and carp removal in the past. It is by far the most dominate species of fish in the creeks. As carp are a generalist species and prefer slow moving water with soft vegetated sediments, the Yanco Creek System is a perfect habitat for them. ¹

The current program for environmental water is to increase flow frequency, duration and inundation which enables carp reproduction and population. There doesn't seem to be a program designed to mitigate the prevalence of carp within waterways, yet carp have a major detrimental impact on the health of the environment in the Murray Darling Basin. Carp numbers can be up to 90% of fish biomass in some areas². Water quality will never be significantly improved whilst the carp are at these levels. The degradation of aquatic habitat

¹ <https://pestsmart.org.au/toolkit-resource/overview-of-carp-in-australia>

² <https://www.mdpi.com/2410-3888/5/2/17#:~:text=Carp%20comprise%20up%20to%2090,the%20turbidity%20of%20the%20water>

and turbidity of water is also significantly impacted by carp, particularly in the numbers currently being experienced.

There is significant work being undertaken by federal and state governments to improve the environmental health of the Murray Darling Basin but without tackling the issue of feral invasive species, like carp, those efforts will be ineffectual. The current situation is not dissimilar to the rabbit plagues of the last century³.

It appears current federal policy is focused on a volumetric target, essentially to add more water to the environment within the Murray Darling Basin. However, adding more water won't solve environmental issues that are being experienced because of the impact of carp, in fact they will escalate the issue by creating a perfect breeding ground for carp. Reducing carp numbers must be one of the highest priorities of all agencies, otherwise efforts will be in vain.

Yours sincerely



³ <https://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2009/04/08/2538860.htm>