

# CENTRAL SOUTH ISLAND FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of Central South Island Fish and Game Council held in the Boardroom, 32 Richard Pearse Drive, Temuka, on Thursday 4 February 2021 at 7:00 pm.

Present: A Brooks  
S Gerard  
S Bannister  
C Fulton  
M Hall  
D Isbister  
L Koevoet  
C McKenzie  
A Simpson (Chair)

In Attendance:

*F&G Staff:* J Graybill, B Dolan, A Christensen

*Department of Conservation:* Brad Edwards

*Environment Canterbury:* Elizabeth McKenzie

*Public:* J de Wit, 1 member of the public, 2 members of the press

## 21-001 APOLOGIES:

B Growcott, J Henry (Ngai Tahu).

Resolved (Koevoet/McKenzie)

21-001

**THAT THE APOLOGIES OF B GROWCOTT AND J HENRY BE ACCEPTED.**

## 21-002 COUNCILLOR INTEREST REGISTER:

Chair queried if Councillors had any new interests to add to the register or any conflicts between their current interests and the business of tonight's meeting? None were advised.

## 21-003 HEALTH & SAFETY:

Chief Executive pointed out exit points of the building and assembly points for evacuation of the premises in case of an emergency.

## 21-004 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – 3 December 2020

Resolved (Hall/Koevoet)

21-002

**THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 3 DECEMBER 2020 BE ACCEPTED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD.**

## 21-005 RECEIVE OPERATIONS AND STAFF REPORTS:

Resolved (Isbister/Koevoet)

21-003

**THAT THE OPERATIONS AND STAFF REPORTS OF 4 FEBRUARY 2020 BE RECEIVED.**

## 20-006 DOC LIAISON:

Chair thanked Brad Edwards for attending this meeting. Brad advised that he was available for questions from Council.

## 20-007 ECAN LIAISON:

Chair thanked Elizabeth McKenzie for attending this meeting. E McKenzie gave Council an update including the following:

007.1 Spraying of Riverbeds

E McKenzie advised that discussions are being held to reduce spraying of riverbeds with the effects it has on aquatic plants and replacing with light grazing.

007.2 Freshwater Farm Plans

E McKenzie advised that Freshwater Farm Plans are being developed that are more stringent to replace Farm Environmental Plans. ECan find that they are short of auditors to audit FW Farm Plans and will seek Covid-19 funding.

007.3 Plan Change 7

E McKenzie advised that some of the recommendations for Plan Change 7 may be more stringent. She further advised that ECan is applying for Covid-19 funding to employ unemployed people and upskill them to undertake audits.

007.4 Roles and Responsibilities of Zone Committees

E McKenzie advised that Zone Committees will largely continue as they are with main focus on implementation and adapting to NPS-FM, and workshops around climate change and Te Mana o te Wai.

**21-008 BUDGET AND FINANCE:**

008.1 Financial Reports & Expense Listing (7.1)

Chief Executive gave Council an update on the CSI financial situation. He noted that fish licence income to 31 December 2020 is better than expected even with few non-resident licence sales due to the borders being closed. Overall, fish licence income stands at 94% of the 2020/21 income budget. The negative effect of the absence of non-resident licence sales will continue and likely worsen as we progress through the fishing season.

**Resolved (McKenzie/Brooks)**

**21-004**

**THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES THE FINANCIAL REPORT AND RATIFIES THE SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS FOR DECEMBER 2020 AND JANUARY 2021 IN THE GST INCLUSIVE AMOUNTS OF \$58,636.14 AND \$108,537.46, RESPECTIVELY.**

**21-009 CHAIR'S REPORT:**

009.1 CSI Finances (8.1)

Chair advised that the ongoing effects and uncertainty surrounding Covid-19 will remain with Council for the 2020/21 financial year. He urged members to continue to pay close attention to our financial statements and to the changing environment in which we do business.

009.2 NZ Council (8.2)

Chair advised that M Taylor has resigned as CEO of NZ Fish and Game Council and P Shortis will be Acting CEO until a new appointment can be made. He noted that NZC appears to be progressing work on its proposed policies in respect of councils' reserves, and "resource allocation."

009.3 Ngai Tahu Freshwater Rangatiratanga Action (8.3)

Chair advised that he applied to the High Court requesting a copy of the Statement of Claim. His application was supported by the Crown but opposed by counsel for Ngai

Tahu. Associate Judge Lester denied his application but noted that “the application can be revisited if the request is renewed prior to the substantive phase of the litigation.”

009.4 Expanding Stakeholder Engagement (8.4)

Chair reminded members that he has previously requested ideas from them in increasing CSI’s engagement with its stakeholders. He advised that he has requested meetings with the new Minister of Conservation, the NZ Game Animal Council, and the two Conservation Boards within our region. He urged members to submit their ideas regarding groups we should be making contact with and channels for engagement with other parties.

009.5 Sports Fish and Game Management Plan (8.5)

Chair reminded Council that we will be revising our current Sports Fish and Game Management Plan. He further noted we will be considering the next Operational Work Plan shortly, prepared in accordance with our strategic goals and outcomes-based reporting.

**21-010 CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S REPORT:**

010.1 Planning for 2021/22 OWP

CE provided Council with the approved 2020/21 Operational Work Plan (last year’s OWP) and the effort and costs table (new format). He noted that it was restructured to align with the 7 strategic goals adopted by Council. He advised that the planned activities are organized under the strategic-goal headings of surveys and investigation, advocacy, enhancement, engagement, and statutory functions.

He asked Councillors to review and discuss the planned activities as appropriate to meeting each strategic goal. From that input he and staff will develop a draft 2021/22 OWP for consideration and approval at the 18 March 2021 meeting.

**Resolved (Isbister/Bannister)**

**21-005**

**THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES THE 2020/21 OWP FOR GENERAL DISCUSSION PURPOSES.**

010.2 Risk Register

CE provided the latest Risk Register advising that a collaborative project has begun involving ECan, DOC, Runanga, North Canterbury & CSI Fish and Game and NIWA to investigate the Hapua fish community. This project is targeted on smelt populations but will also address the state of the sea-run trout fishery.

**21-011 DEPUTATION:**

011.1 J deWit

J deWit addressed the Council on the following topics: 1) the decline of Stokell’s smelt; 2) ECan/DOC/CSI liaison (salmonids being removed from Mackenzie waterways); 3) resignation of M Taylor as CE of NZ Council; 4) Minister Woollaston’s address to Transitional Fish and Game Council (July 1990) on audit function and operational work plans; and 5) his intention to stand for council at next Fish and Game election.



## 21-012 MEMBERS REPORT:

012.1 Submission to Council about the Sport Fish Resource (M Hall)

Resolved (Hall/Brooks)

21-006

### **THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE SUBMISSION OF M HALL ON THE SPORT FISH RESOURCE FOR DISCUSSION.**

M Hall addressed the Council listing a number of concerns, particularly relating to management of the region's trout and salmon resource. He felt that immediate hands-on action was needed as a number of factors have led to the decline across the region's waterways. He was concerned to see that birdlife had been affected on the Rangitata River in late December due to lack of food. He recognised there were a number of factors at work, including ocean conditions and changing patterns in land-use. He added that Fish and Game only have control over a tiny subset that affect populations such as bag limits and licencing conditions but have no statutory control over the habitat itself which has an impact on those resources.

Moved (Hall/Brooks)

**THAT THE COUNCIL AGREES THAT THE ENVIRONMENT IN RESPECT OF THE HABITAT OF SPORTS FISH IS SERIOUSLY COMPROMISED AND:**

- A. THE WILD SEA RUN SALMON FISHERY IS IN A CRITICAL STATE.
- B. THE SEA RUN TROUT FISHERY HAS VIRTUALLY DISAPPEARED.
- C. MOST LOWLAND RIVERS AND WATERWAYS IN THE CENTRAL SOUTH ISLAND ARE COMPROMISED AND NO LONGER SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND RECREATION.
- D. THERE ARE HEALTH RISKS ATTACHED TO SEVERAL LAKES IN THE REGION WITH EXCESSIVE WEED GROWTH AND TOXIC ALGAL BLOOMS.
- E. THERE IS THE FEAR THAT CRITICAL ECOSYSTEMS ARE COLLAPSING SUCH AS THE SMELT FISHERY.

The Chair and Councillors expressed support for M Hall's comments. E McKenzie (ECan) and B Edwards (DOC) agreed that rivers are becoming more degraded and the loss of wetlands is impossible to deny. E McKenzie suggested the Minister of Conservation be approached to convey the concerns.

B Edwards advised that he had visited the Rangitata in early January and didn't see a lot of dead birds. He added that DOC have engaged with CSI and North Canterbury Fish and Game, ECan, and Runanga in a collaborative study to assess the fish life in the hapuas of the Rangitata, Ashburton and Rakaia rivers. This is a repeat of the 1983/84 NIWA survey of the Rangitata that would be reported when completed.

Discussion ensued on the wording of clause C of the motion. The view was expressed that clause C should include "and fisheries" after "lowland rivers".

The Chief Executive expressed the view that he supported the general concept of the motion but had concerns about the language that most lowland rivers and fisheries "*no longer support sustainable fisheries and recreation*". He expressed concern for the integrity of the Council if statements were made that couldn't be supported by evidence.

M Hall (mover) and A Brooks (seconder) agreed that the words “*and fisheries*” be inserted after “lowland rivers”, and that the words “*no longer support sustainable fisheries and recreation*” be deleted from the motion. The substantive motion then became:

Resolved (Hall/Brooks)

21-007

**THAT THE COUNCIL AGREES THAT THE ENVIRONMENT IN RESPECT OF THE HABITAT OF SPORTS FISH IS SERIOUSLY COMPROMISED AND:**

- A. THE WILD SEA RUN SALMON FISHERY IS IN A CRITICAL STATE,**
- B. THE SEA RUN TROUT FISHERY HAS VIRTUALLY DISAPPEARED,**
- C. MOST LOWLAND RIVERS AND FISHERIES IN THE CENTRAL SOUTH ISLAND ARE COMPROMISED,**
- D. THERE ARE HEALTH RISKS ATTACHED TO SEVERAL LAKES IN THE REGION WITH EXCESSIVE WEED GROWTH AND TOXIC ALGAL BLOOMS, AND**
- E. THERE IS THE FEAR THAT CRITICAL ECOSYSTEMS ARE COLLAPSING SUCH AS THE SMELT FISHERY.**

Council **AGREED** to have the rest of M Hall’s recommendations lie on the table to allow the issue to be discussed at a Council workshop.

Resolved (Hall/Brooks)

21-008

**THAT RECOMMENDATIONS 2, 3 AND 4 BE DEFERRED TO THE 18 MARCH 2021 COUNCIL MEETING.**

012.2 Member’s Workshop (S Gerard)

It was **AGREED** that a workshop be held before the 18 March 2021 Council meeting to discuss M Hall’s paper on the Sports Fish Resource and the 2021/22 Operational Work Plan. It was noted there needed to be an agenda for the workshop. Chair reminded members that as a statutory body Council must hold the majority of its deliberations in a formal public setting. He was agreeable for a workshop to take place for these two specific topics and would liaise with the office to arrange.

012.3 Ashburton Stock Water Consent at Cracroft (M Hall)

M Hall tabled a paper on the above topic expressing his views on the Ashburton District Council resource consent for water from the Rangitata at Cracroft. He questioned whether it was in order to transfer a non-compliant consent to another location and questioned if that consent could be activated while it is non-compliant. He noted that the Rangitata River has been over-allocated, and the current minimum flows could not be sustained in an argument supporting the environment.

Chief Executive reminded Council that it had established the principle to oppose transfer of water from one use to a different use as it was better for unused water to go back to the river rather than be used for a different purpose. He asked Council to contemplate if it agreed to water being taken from Rangitata River to be used for a different purpose, at a different location, and to benefit a different catchment?

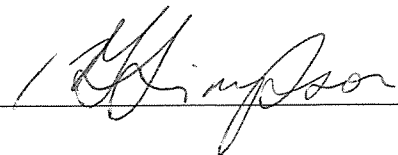
## 21-013 NZFGC REPORT:

D Isbister gave an update on NZC issues. He advised that:

- the NZC Chief Executive had resigned to take up new challenges. NZC would now be looking to employ a temporary CE until the ministerial review is reported back, probably by late March. Therefore, it was unlikely there would be a replacement permanent CE for the next six months,
- that portfolios have been assigned to NZ Council councillors, and
- that NZC will separate its budget into 1) the NZC budget (costs that relate specifically to the running of the NZC) and 2) the National budget (costs that benefit the whole of Fish and Game).

Meeting closed: 9:35 pm.

Next Council Meeting: Thursday 18 March 2021.

Signed  Date 18/3/21