

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 168<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND  
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT THE ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW  
ZEALAND ON THURSDAY 15<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2018 AT 12.00PM**

**Present**

Murray Ferris, Lindsay Lyons, Alan Baird, Barry Roderick, Neal Hawes, Ken Coombes, Peter Storey, Sandy Bull, David Woolner, Laurance Tamati, and Steve Scragg.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Andy Garrick, Matt McDougall, Kate Thompson, Lynne Sands, Nigel Simpson, Eben Herbert, John Meikle, Lloyd Gledhill, Anthony van Dorp, Matt Osborne, and Mark Sherburn (Eastern Fish & Game); Peter Shepherd (Department of Conservation), Jeff Hay, Ray Bushell, and Margaret Woolner.

**1.0 WELCOME**

Cr Murray Ferris opened the meeting at 12.05pm and welcomed Councillors, staff, Margaret Woolner, Jeff Hay, and Ray Bushell.

**2.0 APOLOGIES**

2.1 Apologies were received from Cr Annaka Davis, and Nicki Douglas (Te Arawa Lakes Trust).

2.2 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Lindsay Lyons) that the apologies for the 168<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [18/02/2.2]*

2.3 Cr Murray Ferris thanked Lindsay Lyons for his chairing of the November meeting in Murray's absence.

**3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (30 NOVEMBER 2017)**

3.1 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Neal Hawes) that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2017 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [18/02/3.1]*

**4.0 IDENTIFICATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN COUNCIL POLICY**

4.1 There were no items for inclusion in Council policy.

**5.0 MATTERS ARISING**

5.1 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 November 2017.

**6.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS**

- Laurance Tamati – brown trout and catfish, Te Weta Bay
- Laurance Tamati – security cameras on private land

**7.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER**

7.1 No conflicts of interest were identified at this point, but later in the meeting when Agenda Item 9 (B9) in relation to use of GPS outboards was being considered Cr Steve Scragg advised he had a potential conflict of interest and would abstain from any vote taken. When Agenda Item 11 came up, and in response to a query from Cr Lindsay Lyons, Cr Alan Baird also declared a potential conflict of interest in relation to captive reared mallards. Cr Laurance Tamati also declared a conflict of interest

during the course of his presentation on Te Arawa Fresh Water Fisheries Bylaws (Agenda Item 14).

**8.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2018-2019 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN**

8.1 Andy Garrick kicked off Council discussion providing a brief overview of the process and timeline for the development of the 2018-2019 Draft Operational Work Plan. At this meeting Council was being asked to review its current priorities and identify if there were other areas or projects it would like to incorporate into the 2018-2019 planning process. He noted that much of our work was reactive and/or focussed on core activities, and to accommodate new projects may mean we need to reduce effort and resources elsewhere. Items raised at this meeting would be given further consideration by staff and included in the April agenda for further discussion by Council.

8.2 Cr Barry Roderick asked that Council consider scheduling a strategy meeting annually for the purpose of reviewing and planning for the Operational Work Plan. Cr David Woolner endorsed this and felt that it was important that Council doesn't just do 'business as usual' but looks for new, innovative, or different objectives. Council discussed the merits of doing this and the following comments were made:

- the New Zealand and Otago Fish & Game Councils undertake a strategy/planning meeting annually;
- milestones are identified for both short term and long term objectives;
- ideas and discussion generated from similar exercises elsewhere in the country may be of benefit to this Council and vice versa;
- governance is about setting strategic direction; and
- any strategic discussion should also involve staff.

Council supported the concept of a strategic planning meeting and the flow on that would have to the following Operational Work Planning process. Andy Garrick advised that the agenda item prepared for this meeting was an attempt to stimulate strategic thinking ahead of the current OWP process, but agreed there wasn't really sufficient time available in a normal meeting to do justice to the exercise, and an additional meeting set up and dedicated solely to this purpose had merit. He noted that we are typically committed to a tight national timetable for preparation of OWPs and we wouldn't have sufficient time to set up a special meeting for the current planning round, but Council could consider meeting later in the year to undertake a strategic review and identify objectives and timelines for incorporating into the planning process for the year after. Council acknowledged there would be additional costs associated with having a special meeting, but noted these could be reduced by having a meeting on the same day as one of Council's regular bi-monthly meetings. There was support for Council having its first annual meeting on the morning of 18 October 2018 in the Rotorua office. It was noted this would mean some Councillors would need to come over the night before and would require accommodation.

8.3 Cr Barry Roderick asked that Council consider rewarding those ballot holders who do significantly more work in the reserves than others by providing them a further year in the same stand. Cr Murray Ferris recalled that this topic had been discussed at length in the past and it had been recognised that there was great difficulty in establishing the level of work undertaken by individual ballot holders. He said that while some need to, or do do a lot of work, some stands/areas did not need a lot of work and we need to ensure those stand holders are not penalised. John Meikle acknowledged the issue

- raised but reminded Council of its support for a habitat maintenance contribution fee which would provide for general reserve maintenance meaning the only requirement of ballot holders would be to maintain the stand itself. He said that this would alleviate the need to establish a process to address the concern of some ballot holders doing more than others, and asked that Council give this proposal a go first. Council reconfirmed this course of action, and Andy Garrick suggested that if Council still had concerns at a later point in time it could be put onto a future agenda for consideration.
- 8.4 Cr Barry Roderick queried whether it was possible to use funds from the region's non-resident licence reserve for proposed research on Lake Tarawera for which funding was still sought. Andy Garrick agreed this is an option given that Lake Tarawera ranks quite highly as a fishery eligible for funding from the reserve using the framework Council recently approved for assessing eligibility.
- 8.5 Cr Barry Roderick noted staff concerns relating to the water supply for the hatchery and its vulnerability during significant weather events, and suggested there needed to be a long-term strategy in place to reduce risks. Andy Garrick advised that staff have a risk assessment and management process underway which will identify specific elements of the system which are of concern, whether there are options for reducing the risks identified, and prioritise actions needing to be taken to do this.
- 9.0 **ANGLERS NOTICE REVIEW**
- 9.1 Andy Garrick briefly outlined the process and timeline for the review of the Anglers Notice for the 2018-2019 season. Andy advised that the purpose of the current meeting was to identify the submissions to be included in the issues and options paper to be put out for consultation with clubs and other interested parties.
- 9.2 Cr Steve Scragg queried what had happened to an undertaking made in 2014 to undertake further consultation in relation to spin fishing in the lower Ruakituri River. Cr Murray Ferris advised that the intention had been to gather further information and go to a public meeting for feedback from all interested parties, Council's resolution being:
- “Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Barry Roderick) that regulations for the Ruakituri River shall remain the status quo until more information is gathered and disseminated. [14/06/8.8]”***
- Councillors indicated their support for undertaking this consultation with interested parties as soon as possible. Andy Garrick advised that timing would be very tight if the intention was to do this as part of the 2018-19 Anglers Notice review process. Matt Osborne suggested for practical reasons that gathering and disseminating information and consulting with interested parties should be deferred until the following review of the Anglers Notice. Council registered their support for further consultation being undertaken with interested parties in relation to spin fishing in the lower Ruakituri prior to any decision being made to include this in the next review (2020) of the Anglers Notice.
- 9.3 Cr Sandy Bull queried the submission which related to opening Lakes Tuai and Kaitawa to spin fishing, his understanding being that this had previously been rejected by both the Gisborne and Wairoa Angling Clubs. Matt Osborne noted that some spin fishing was already allowed at Kaitawa, but added that whether or not submissions had previously been considered, all submissions received for the current review needed to be presented to Council for discussion and a decision made as to whether they were to be included for consultation with clubs and interested parties, or dismissed.

- 9.4 Cr Barry Roderick suggested that Council did not require further discussion on items B1, B2(a), B3, B4, B5 as these items had been considered at meetings last year and Council had agreed that they would be included in the 2018-19 issues and options paper.
- 9.5 Cr Laurance Tamati spoke to Item B2(b), a submission from the Ngati Pikiaio Fishing Club, which suggests that the entire Ohau River Channel should be opened to spin fishing to provide opportunities for children to get involved in trout fishing, and for other anglers who do not fly fish. He advised that the land bordering the lower parts of the channel was Maori land and by opening this area to both fly and spin angling, opportunities would be enhanced greatly, particularly for children. Council conducted a show of hands and agreed that this item be included in the issues and options paper.
- 9.6 Item B6 was discussed and Council supported the staff recommendation that the current position of the landmark pole on the Takinga Street side of the Ohau River Channel is acceptable and that no change was needed. Council agreed there was no need for this item to proceed to the next round of consultation.
- 9.7 Item B7, relating to the addition of a definition for the downstream extent of the Mangakino River where it enters Lake Maraetai was discussed, Council agreeing with the staff recommendation that there was little to be gained from this proposal and that regulation was not seen to be necessary. The basis for this was that angler use was not high in the area concerned, and the issue was primarily a concern for the operation of a fishing competition than anything else. Staff suggested the issue could be addressed within the competition's rules rather than adding more regulations. Council voted by a show of hands and agreed that this item would not proceed to the next round of consultation.
- 9.8 Item B8 relating to the opening of Lakes Tuai and Kaitawa to spin fishing was considered to be similar to the situation that had arisen in relation to the Ruakituri four years ago, and had the potential to stir up a lot of emotion. Council agreed to set this aside for now pending the outcomes of proposed changes within the Rotorua lakes fisheries. Accordingly this item would not be included in the issues and options paper for the 2018-19 anglers notice.
- 9.9 Item B9 relating to the inclusion of electric GPS outboards within the definition of being "anchored" was also rejected. Council agreed with staff's compliance concerns and the difficulties that would be experienced trying to determine from a distance whether a vessel was anchored or not if physical anchor ropes were not visible. Council agreed by a show of hands that the "status quo" should be retained. Cr Steve Scragg abstained from voting due to a potential conflict of interest, i.e. his involvement in the marine industry and the selling of these types of motors.
- 9.10 Cr Barry Roderick spoke to Item B10 advising that this submission had been considered during the 2015-16 anglers notice review and had been put on hold pending additional monitoring being undertaken at Waikaremoana. He said that the additional survey work had been completed and that the staff recommendation, based on that work, was that there was no reason to alter the regulations relating to the Lake Waikaremoana spawning tributaries. Cr Sandy Bull asked whether the Waiotukupuna fish trapping programme will continue which he felt it should do. Matt Osborne advised that the trapping operation as presently undertaken was not providing robust information and we had been investigating alternative and more effective monitoring approaches with Genesis. Council voted in favour of retaining the status quo for B10.
- 9.11 Cr Neal Hawes spoke to his submission which was tabled at the meeting in relation to prohibiting the use of treble hooks within the Eastern region. Neal highlighted in

particular, situations such as the Te Wairoa stream mouth where catch and release of jacks was mandatory and the potential damage that could be caused to fish while playing, landing, and removing hooks. Matt Osborne provided some background to how treble hooks came to be allowed in the Eastern Region and the national review that took place in 2002-03. The review had noted that mortality was no higher using treble hooks than not, and led to the First Schedule provision enabling their use in all regions. Cr Neal Hawes proposed that if treble hooks could not be outlawed, would Council consider re-introducing fly fishing only to the Te Wairoa Stream mouth and other such areas? Cr Steve Scragg advised that historically this Council had not supported the change and Cr Murray Ferris queried whether a further review should be undertaken. Steve said that there would be no point in carrying out a review if there was no means of altering the regulations. Matt Osborne advised that he enquire as to whether a regulation could be made under the Second Schedule of the Anglers Notice which prohibited the use of treble hooks. Council voted in favour of undertaking a review of the use of treble hooks so long as there was leeway to alter the regulations depending on the outcomes of that review.

- 9.12 Matt Osborne spoke to a second submission tabled at the meeting in relation to an amendment to Section 3.0 Closed Waters. Following some illegal activity that had occurred on our premises, staff had identified a need to set a higher level of protection for properties such as the Fish & Game Hatchery site and those that hold fish in captivity for display purposes such as Rainbow Springs and the like. Matt also requested that Council consider altering the wording for the Closed Waters area at the Tarawera Outlet which currently identified the area between the landmark poles at the outlet extending approximately 150 metres downstream to landmarks in the river. As there were no landmarks in the river Matt suggested that the wording be amended to the area from the landmark poles located at the outlet extending to the Tarawera walking bridge. Council supported these proposed amendments for inclusion in the issues and options paper.

#### **10.0 DATES AND VENUES FOR AUGUST AND OCTOBER 2018 MEETINGS**

- 10.1 Andy Garrick noted that at its last meeting Council had discussed the extent to which meetings held out of town had been attended in the past, and that the question had been raised as to whether Council needed to go away at all. Cr Sandy Bull advised that he had since been in touch with the Waikaremoana Boating & Fishing Association, and the Gisborne and Wairoa Angling Clubs and they were all supportive of having Council meet at least once in Gisborne or Wairoa. Sandy suggested that giving greater notice beforehand and advertising might improve attendance, but Cr Murray Ferris advised that out of town meetings are typically if not always advertised in advance and that this had never produced great results. Cr Steve Scragg added that meetings in Wairoa and Gisborne had taken place on a number of occasions, and that it had been a long time since Council had met in Whakatane. Cr Barry Roderick suggested that meeting on a weekday was likely to be a prohibiting factor for people attending. Cr Alan Baird queried whether 'local' concerns of members of the public could be raised via their local Councillor rather than having to set up an out of town meeting?
- 10.2 It was noted that Council had agreed earlier in this meeting (refer 8.2 above) that Council would meet for the full day in Rotorua on 18 October 2018 so an out of town meeting would not be an option for that occasion.

**10.3** *Agreed (Alan Baird/David Woolner) that Council's meeting on 16 August 2018 would be held in Rotorua, and meetings out of Rotorua will not be scheduled unless they were specifically requested by a group and assurance is given that they will be well attended. [18/02/10.3]*

**11.0** **RELEASE OF CAPTIVE REARED MALLARDS**

**11.1** Prior to the discussion Cr Lindsay Lyons wished to confirm with Cr Alan Baird that he did not have a conflict of interest with this item as he had heard that he might be interested in setting up a preserve type hunting operation if it was an option to do so. Cr Alan Baird considered he did not have a conflict as this was not something he was considering at this point in time, and that this discussion was about "Release of Captive Reared Mallards". Cr Lindsay Lyons believed there was potential for conflict as per the conflict of interest rules. After some discussion Council and Cr Alan Baird agreed that it would be appropriate to declare a potential conflict of interest and added this to the Conflict of Interest register.

**11.2** Andy Garrick informed Council of the need to consider, and provide responses to the five New Zealand Council questions listed on pages 45-46 of the agenda in addition to a further question raised by Mr Jeff Niblett in his submission as a Director of NZ Gamebirds Ltd. Andy informed Council that Fish & Game had concerns relating to DOC's performance in relation to permitting and compliance monitoring for the rearing and releasing of game birds, but this was a secondary issue that we did not need, or would have time to focus on in this meeting.

**11.3** Cr Barry Roderick asked for confirmation that pheasant preserves, which have been in operation for many years now, had originally been established on a trial basis. Andy Garrick advised that this was his understanding, and added that the NZC had signalled its intention to review the policy, guidelines and terms and conditions associated with upland game properties later this year.

**11.4** In relation to the first question posed, Council discussion focussed on the lack of scientific evidence available to support the proposition that captive reared mallards released in New Zealand could be a viable way of significantly enhancing wild populations. It was noted that there was a large body of scientific evidence showing this was not the case elsewhere in the world. Cr Barry Roderick suggested that those with financial interests in breeding and selling CRMs needed to prove scientifically that the release of captive reared mallards will increase populations, e.g. by tracking CRMs fitted with radio transmitters. He felt that the onus should be on them as there would be a significant cost in undertaking this research.

Cr Lindsay Lyons queried the Eastern Region's 2017-18 OWP objective "to investigate further, the merits of releasing captive reared mallards into areas where populations are depressed". Andy Garrick advised that staff have been recording two years' of live trapping and game season band recoveries from c.200 CRMs released at two sites in Reporoa in 2016, and Nigel Simpson has been regularly observing the ponds on which 100 of these birds had been released. The band recoveries have provided some limited insight into the survival and dispersal of these birds, but because the CRMs can't be distinguished from wild birds unless they're in the hand, no conclusions can be drawn as to the extent to which they might be adding to wild populations. He said that the intent of the first question being asked was to determine whether Council endorsed the releasing of CRMs as a tool to augment wild populations based on the information currently available, as this is the justification for releasing CRMs that is being promoted widely. Andy suggested that while it is the

prerogative of individuals holding the appropriate permit from DOC to purchase birds, Fish & Game has a moral obligation to those individuals and others contemplating the purchase of birds to be aware of whether or not Fish & Game considers the releasing of CRMs to be an effective option for achieving the outcomes being promoted. Cr David Woolner noted that the information available to date did not show that releases of CRMs were successful in augmenting wild populations, though it could be that the New Zealand environment may produce different results.

Cr Sandy Bull wondered whether the demise of mallards and waterfowl in general was a result of a loss of habitat, and if so, was there any point in releasing more birds? He advised that there had been releases in Gisborne, and he had received a letter (circulated to Councillors at this meeting) indicating that the game bird hunters involved believed that the majority of the birds they had released had dispersed or remained on site to breed and enhance the wild population. Andy had also received correspondence from western Bay of Plenty hunters who had released CRMs stating their belief that they had made a significant difference to local mallard populations and opportunities for other hunters. Andy commented that band returns did not support the claim that other hunters elsewhere in the district had benefitted significantly, but noted that its very likely that there will have been birds shot that have not been reported. He commented that all information that we have received to date from hunters and those releasing CRMs in support of their conclusions that CRM releases are making a significant difference is anecdotal, and speculative.

Nigel Simpson commented that it appeared that people applying for permits from DOC to release mallards have been advised to state that the purpose for releasing birds was to augment wild populations as this was likely to be more favourably looked on by the Department than if the stated intention was to have more birds to shoot that season.

Cr Alan Baird queried whether our banding recoveries of wild mallards have been compared to those for released birds? Matt McDougall advised that we banded approximately 50 wild birds at St Legers in 2017 where CRMs have been released since December 2015, and we also band at another site in the Gisborne area, Grandieks, which is just over the hill from a recently established CRM release site. He said we have also trapped and banded at the two sites at Reporoa where CRMs were released in 2016. Matt commented that we had insufficient data at this stage to make meaningful comparisons of wild birds and CRMs. Andy Garrick advised that of the 203 CRMs released at the two sites at Reporoa, neither of which is shot over, four were shot elsewhere in 2016, none were reported shot during the 2017 game season, 47 were re-trapped in January 2017, and 10 were re-trapped in February 2018. Supplementary feeding was undertaken for one year at one of these sites but has been ongoing at the other ever since the birds were released, and predator trapping is undertaken at both locations. At St Legers, the permit holder reports that 500 CRMs have been released and about 10% of these are shot. Banding recovery data indicates that eight birds have been reported shot 'offsite', seven of these within 3-7 kms, and one 230 kms away in the Waikato.

Cr Alan Baird advised that he shoots on a couple of game preserves that release mallards and had queried their breeding success rate. He was advised that both had

seen an increase in the number of broods produced on their properties with one in Cambridge reporting their CRMs had produced 150 ducklings. Andy Garrick queried how they knew whether the birds with the broods were CRMs versus wild banded birds? Matt McDougall added that it would be difficult to determine without transmitters on them and noted also that this year appears to have been a very good breeding year. Cr Murray Ferris queried whether coloured bands could be used. Andy advised that radio telemetry was probably the most effective method currently available.

Cr Alan Baird said you can't say definitively that wild mallards are being decoyed to properties on which CRMs have been released, and commented that if duck populations continue to diminish, licence sales will reduce, and staff will be made redundant.

Cr Lindsay Lyons noted that it was ludicrous that DOC was issuing permits to release game birds, and that Fish & Game should be the issuing authority.

- 11.5 *Agreed (Steve Scragg/Peter Storey) that the Eastern Fish and Game Council does not support the release of captive reared mallards as a tool to augment wild populations. Carried seven/three, Sandy Bull abstained [18/02/11.5]***
- 11.6 Cr Murray Ferris wished to move an amendment to incorporate into the resolution the concept that until such time as additional information was available Council could not support this. Cr Neal Hawes stated that Council was not suggesting CRMs can't be released, it was simply saying that it didn't support their release as a means of increasing populations. Cr Steve Scragg advised that the motion was put and the question had been answered. Andy advised that the NZ Council appreciates feedback on matters discussed, so in addition to advising whether this Council had voted Yes or No to each question he would provide them with some insight into the discussions underlying each of the decisions this Council had made.
- 11.7 In relation to the second question some Councillors felt that if Council did not support question one they couldn't then support question two.
- 11.8 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Barry Roderick) that Eastern Fish and Game Council does not support releasing CRMs as a tool to hasten the recovery of wild populations that are at low levels. Carried four/three, four abstained. [18/02/11.8]***
- 11.9 Andy noted that Council might have misinterpreted what this second question was concerned with, it being about populations that had been severely affected by, for example, a major botulism outbreak or avian epidemic of short duration but serious consequences, and most importantly, where habitat values and carrying capacity had not been diminished. Andy noted that in these circumstances it would be highly likely that hunting, if any, would have to be very restricted for a period while the population was being nursed back to former levels.
- 11.10 The third question generated concern that large 'put and take' operations could impact adversely on opportunities for neighbouring hunters by decoying wild mallards to the 'put and take' property. It was also noted however, that this can occur in situations where landowners heavily pond feed.
- 11.11 *Moved (Ken Coombes/Steve Scragg) that Eastern Fish and Game Council does not support the concept of 'put and take' operations where CRMs are released for the principal purpose of providing an immediate hunting opportunity. Motion lost two/eight, 1 abstained. [18/02/11.11]***



- 11.12 Crs Ken Coombes thought it highly likely that released birds would draw in wild birds, and that it would be highly unlikely that overall populations would be enhanced as habitat availability already limited the numbers that could be supported. Cr Steve Scragg agreed that the feeding of CRMs would draw more wild birds to a site from what was an already depressed population elsewhere. Andy Garrick said he was unaware to what extent operators provided feed beyond the end of the game season. Matt McDougall believed that some did, and Steve Scragg noted that some did in Gisborne. Jeff Hay asked Cr Alan Baird whether he knew if the Cambridge preserve he had been to was fed? Cr Alan Baird said he had seen feed buckets but could not confirm if they were in use. Jeff Hay queried how otherwise could they keep the released mallards there? Andy suggested that unless supplementary feeding was provided year round it was unlikely birds were going to be present in large numbers beyond the hunting season or whenever feeding came to an end.
- 11.13 *Agreed (Ken Coombes/Steve Scragg) that the Eastern Fish and Game Council supports the concept of 'put and take' operations where CRMs are released for the principle purpose of providing an immediate hunting opportunity. Carried eight/two, 1 abstained. [18/02/11.3]***
- 11.14 Cr Peter Storey left the meeting at 2.49pm.
- 11.15 The fourth question related to whether or not Council would accept 'put and take' operations, if allowed, being commercialised and run along the lines of many upland game properties. Cr Lindsay Lyons suggested that put and take operations could be seen as a pre-cursor to commercial duck hunting in NZ.
- 11.16 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Lindsay Lyons) that 'put and take' operations are to be of a non-commercial nature only. Carried six/four, Cr Alan Baird abstained. [18/02/11.16]***
- 11.17 The fifth question was concerned with the manner in which CRMs in 'put and take' operations are hunted, i.e. some practices could be seen as unethical and unacceptable in the eyes of many, and this could discredit and be damaging to the wider hunting community and game bird hunting more generally. Eben Herbert noted that it's illegal to drive game birds unless a special permit is issued to allow this. Cr Barry Roderick proposed a motion that Council does not support driven hunts for CRMs in 'put and take' operations. The motion was not seconded, and not put.
- 11.18 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Sandy Bull) that if 'put and take' is allowed for non-commercial operators then those birds need to be hunted according to the game season regulations in place at the time. [18/02/11.18]***
- 11.19 In response to the question raised by Jeff Niblett's query "Do you think you have been supplied with enough information to make informed decisions on the five questions that the NZ Council has asked surrounding Fish and Game's position relating to captive reared mallards?" the consensus of Council was "yes" in the sense that it was able to take a position based on the evidence and information that is currently available. Councillors who spoke to this noted that the anecdotal and unsubstantiated information that had been provided by NZ Game Birds and other parties was insufficient for them to reject the body of science available from overseas relating to question one, though some acknowledged that although they considered it very unlikely, the situation in NZ could be unique as there was no science available to demonstrate this one way or the other. Further to this Council agreed that if the release of CRMs was for the purpose of augmenting wild populations then the operators needed to provide evidence to support this.

**11.20** *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Steve Scragg) that it is up to those who breed and sell mallards to provide the evidence that the release of captive reared mallards augments wild populations. [18/02/11.20]*

**12.0 EXTENSION OF MEETING TIME**

Cr Murray Ferris asked that the Council agree to extend the meeting by 30 minutes.

**12.1** *Agreed (Alan Baird/Neal Hawes) that the meeting be allowed to proceed over the 3 hour time limit by an extra 30 minutes. [18/02/12.1]*

**12.2** Cr Murray Ferris indicated that it was looking like there would be insufficient time to cover all of the agenda items for this meeting and suggested deferring items 12 and 13 relating to the National Salmon Committee and Species Monitoring Report to the end of the meeting where they would be considered if time permitted.

**13.0 TE ARAWA FRESH WATER FISHERIES BYLAWS**

**13.1** Cr Laurance Tamati tabled a hard copy of a power point presentation on the Proposed Bylaws for the Management of Ngā Taongā Ika (treasured fish species). Laurance spoke to the document providing the background of how it came about, the lakes and the Ngā Taongā Ika to be covered by the bylaws, and the management measures and objectives proposed. He also provided an overview of the time line and action to be taken commencing with public consultation 24 January through to 16 March, with the expected implementation once approved being June 2018.

**13.2** Cr Lindsay Lyons queried a rumour that he had heard that removal of trout in some lakes was being suggested. Laurance advised that there was a need to undertake some research which might result in proposals for the removal of trout from some locations, e.g. Lake Okataina, but he emphasised this didn't mean it would happen. Andy noted that staff would address issues such as this in the submission it prepared on behalf of Council. Other questions/matters raised that Laurance elaborated on included:

- definition of traditional methods;
- compliance;
- definition of inanga;
- where smelt fitted within the proposal;
- the difference between trout and taongā species living in the same waterways.

**13.3** Laurance advised that he wished to declare a conflict of interest and withdraw from future discussion and voting pertaining to any submission the Council might wish to make. He felt it was important that the relationship between Council and Te Komiti Whakahaere (Te Arawa Lakes Fisheries Management Committee) was beneficial to both parties and would like to lead the development of that relationship. Andy Garrick noted that staff have a relationship with the Te Arawa Lakes Trust at an operational level but not at a governance level.

**13.4** Laurance thanked Fish & Game staff for their support at the recent Tangaroa Fishing Competition.

**14.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS**

**14.1** With time being of the essence the Operational Reports were accepted and required no further discussion.

**14.2** *Agreed (Steve Scragg/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the Health and Safety report. [18/02/14.2]*

**14.3** *Agreed (Steve Scragg/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the Management, Finance, and Licence Sales reports, and approves payments for October, November and December 2017 totalling \$486,260.78. [18/02/14.3]*

**15.0 GENERAL BUSINESS**

- 15.1 Cr Laurance Tamati queried rumours he had heard of a proposal to release brown trout into Te Weta Bay to assist with the control of catfish found there. He informed Council of Te Arawa's view that it did not want brown trout released into any of the Te Arawa lakes. Andy Garrick advised that brown trout were already in these waters and Laurance responded that while that might be the case they did not want any more put into the system.
- 15.2 Cr Laurance Tamati queried the use of CCTV on private land, such as on the various streams running through private land on Lake Rotoiti, and whether Fish & Game followed protocols or obtained permission to undertake these activities. Anthony van Dorp advised that Fish & Game's use of CCTV/security camera surveillance was governed by the Search and Surveillance Act 2012. He said that installation of surveillance equipment could be undertaken 'as of right' on public land, but not on private land unless the land owner had provided authority to do so.

**16.0 LIAISON OFFICERS' REPORTS CONTINUED**

**16.1 Reports from other agencies**

**16.2 Department of Conservation**

Pete Shepherd provided Council with an update on the Taupo fishery saying that last season was exceptional, and fishing was good up until Christmas. Since then he had heard anecdotal reports of mid summer being a mixed bag with a lot of recovering fish being caught. Access to the river via Troutpool Road had been reinstated and agreement gained from the landowner to put the toilet facility back in. The Department was continuing to work on this and was also looking at options for access to Lake Otamangakau. Cr Neal Hawes understood that there was no road access to the lake but there was a Queens Chain around it. Pete confirmed this and advised that people were within their rights to access the shoreline by boat and camp on it. He advised the Department was also working with Genesis Energy on the possibility of establishing alternative camping opportunities on its land.

**17.0 GENERAL BUSINESS CONT...**

- 17.1 Cr Sandy Bull queried whether staff had investigated what appeared to be unlawful earth works on the Motu River with the Gisborne District Council. There had been further work on the bridge approaches and he understood that no resource consents had been obtained. John Meikle confirmed that the Gisborne District Council had phoned him as soon as they became aware of this and had placed an abatement notice on the works. John advised that the GDC had been in touch with Fish & Game since then too, and confirmed that staff were maintaining a close watch on what was happening.

**18.0 MEETING CLOSED**

- 18.1 With the meeting having run overtime, Cr Murray Ferris asked that Councillors submit any views they might have on the proposed National Salmon Committee directly to Andy. Andy noted that this item was not particularly relevant to this region but advised that he would consult with staff before communicating any issues raised by staff or Councillors to the NZ Council.

Murray advised Council that the Species Management Report included in the agenda was primarily for information and did not require further discussion at this point in time.

18.2 The meeting was closed at 3.38 pm.



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**Murray Ferris**  
**Chairman**

*Lindsay Lips*  
*Acting Chairman*

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## SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

### 2.0 APOLOGIES

- 2.2 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Lindsay Lyons) that the apologies for the 168<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [18/02/2.2]*

### 3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (30 NOVEMBER 2017)

- 3.1 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Neal Hawes) that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2017 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [18/02/3.1]*

### 10.0 DATES AND VENUES FOR AUGUST AND OCTOBER 2018 MEETINGS

- 10.3 *Agreed (Alan Baird/David Woolner) that Council's meeting on 16 August 2018 would be held in Rotorua, and meetings out of Rotorua will not be scheduled unless they were specifically requested by a group and assurance is given that they will be well attended. [18/02/10.3]*

### 11.0 RELEASE OF CAPTIVE REARED MALLARDS

- 11.5 *Agreed (Steve Scragg/Peter Storey) that the Eastern Fish and Game Council does not support the release of captive reared mallards as a tool to augment wild populations. Carried seven/three, Sandy Bull abstained [18/02/11.5]*
- 11.8 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Barry Roderick) that Eastern Fish and Game Council does not support releasing CRMs as a tool to hasten the recovery of wild populations that are at low levels. Carried four/three, four abstained. [18/02/11.8]*
- 11.11 *Moved (Ken Coombes/Steve Scragg) that Eastern Fish and Game Council does not support the concept of 'put and take' operations where CRMs are released for the principal purpose of providing an immediate hunting opportunity. Motion lost two/eight, 1 abstained, [18/02/11.11]*
- 11.13 *Agreed (Ken Coombes/Steve Scragg) that the Eastern Fish and Game Council supports the concept of 'put and take' operations where CRMs are released for the principle purpose of providing an immediate hunting opportunity. Carried eight/two, 1 abstained. [18/02/11.3]*
- 11.16 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Lindsay Lyons) that 'put and take' operations are to be of a non-commercial nature only. Carried six/four, Cr Alan Baird abstained. [18/02/11.16]*
- 11.18 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Sandy Bull) that if 'put and take' is allowed for non-commercial operators then those birds need to be hunted according to the game season regulations in place at the time. [18/02/11.18]*
- 11.20 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Steve Scragg) that it is up to those who breed and sell mallards to provide the evidence that the release of captive reared mallards augments wild populations. [18/02/11.20]*

### 12.0 EXTENSION OF MEETING TIME

- 12.1 *Agreed (Alan Baird/Neal Hawes) that the meeting be allowed to proceed over the 3 hour time limit by an extra 30 minutes. [18/02/12.1]*

### 14.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS

- 14.2 *Agreed (Steve Scragg/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the Health and Safety report. [18/02/14.2]*
- 14.3 *Agreed (Steve Scragg/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the Management, Finance, and Licence Sales reports, and approves payments for October, November and December 2017 totalling \$486,260.78. [18/02/14.3]*