

**NORTHLAND FISH & GAME COUNCIL  
CONFIRMED MINUTES OF A MEETING  
HELD AT THE NORTHLAND FISH & GAME OFFICE  
NELL PLACE, WHANGAREI  
7.00 PM FRIDAY 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2015.**

**PRESENT:**

**Chairman:** Dave Nicholson

**Councillors:** Kris Batelaan, Noel Birchall, Maurice Blyde, Phil Durham, Chris Lynch, Wayne Pepper, Cameron Shanks.

**Staff:** Rudi Hoetjes (Manager), Nathan Burkepile (Field Officer),  
Fay Stodart (Office Administrator)

**Member of  
the Public:** Chris Jenkins (Ex North Island Northern Conservator of Department of  
Conservation)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the table and made a special acknowledgement to Chris Jenkins.

The Chairman thanked Chris for the support and assistance by DoC over the past 11½ years especially in the development of the co-managed wetlands between DoC and Northland Fish & Game. The Chairman wished him well for the future and invited the Manager to continue. The Manager spoke of the history and the strong partnership which developed over the years between DOC and Fish & Game. The Manager presented Mr Jenkins with a Habitat Print of the Bittern on behalf of the Northland Fish & Game Council, other regional Fish & Game Councils and licence holders.

Mr Jenkins thanked the Council and the Manager for the Habitat Print and the support that Fish & Game have given him over the years.

The Chairman asked for any apologies.

**APOLOGIES:** Leo Leonard, Mike Newson, Mark Williamson,  
Richard Robbins (Northland Conservation Board),  
Nicola Douglas (Department of Conservation)

**It was moved:** *That those apologies are accepted.*

*Cameron Shanks/Maurice Blyde* ***CARRIED.***

**Previous Minutes**

**It was resolved:** *That the minutes of the meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015 are confirmed as true and correct.*

*Kris Batelaan/ Phil Durham* ***CARRIED.***

### **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **Wetland Restoration and Creation Workshop Report**

Nathan Burkepile organised an American expert on wetlands, Tom Biebighauser to visit New Zealand and held several workshops over three weeks in February. Two of these workshops were held in the Northland region, one in Central North Island and another in the South Island. Nathan gave a power point presentation on all of the workshops explaining the different types of wetlands that were created over the three weeks. Nathan stated that 19 wetlands were constructed within the workshops. He has received very positive feedback from everyone who attended the wetland restoration workshops.

The Council commended Nathan on his presentation and written report.

At this point of the meeting, both Nathan and Chris Jenkins left the meeting.

### **Manager's Activity Report**

The Council considered the operational report on a page by page basis with discussion on some items.

### **1228.2 Greenheart Development**

The Manager reported to Council that the repairs to a dam in the neighbouring forestry block of the Greenheart Property have been completed and a gravity fed water system has been installed. The repairs to this dam involved removing the raupo and repairing the wall and spillway to re-establish an open water area. The polythene pipework for the gravity fed water system has been buried and this new supply of drinking water will benefit the livestock which grazes the flats of the Greenheart property.

### **1241 Purchasing Properties**

The Manager showed Mr Mike Lee from the Nature Heritage Board, the Underwood Property in Dargaville, so Mr Lee could see for himself and inform the rest of the Board the uniqueness of this property when they meet on 21 April. Mr Lee was very impressed with the property and queried whether Northland Fish & Game could possibly provide financial support when coming to purchase this land.

The Manager believed that the Councillors should visit the property and make a decision on whether to use some or all of their dedicated reserves to help purchase this property. The Council discussed the matter and they decided to wait until the Nature Heritage Board had met on 21 April and learn of the outcome of the meeting. The Manager was instructed to inform all Councillors of the results and the Council will make a decision upon the outcome.

**It was moved:**            ***That the Manager's Activity Report is received.***

***Chris Lynch/Dave Nicholson***

***CARRIED.***

### **The Northland Fish & Game Habitat Trust**

The Council received confirmation from the Auditors and the Office of the Auditor General that the changes to the Charities Trust do not affect The Northland Fish & Game Habitat Trust and the financial reporting requirements remain the same.

**It was moved:** *That the Council provides their approval to the Trustees for winding up The Northland Fish & Game Habitat Trust.*

*Noel Birchall/Phil Durham* **CARRIED.**

*Cameron Shanks abstained from voting due to a conflict of interest.*

### **NZFG Council Update**

The Manager apologised to the Council for not sending out the NZFGC agenda as the office did not receive any papers. Councillor Chris Lynch attended a NZFG Council meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> March and he highlighted the following points from the unconfirmed minutes:

- Changes in ethnicity in Auckland and other parts of the country. The Council discussed the correspondence from the Chairman of NZFG Council on the changes in ethnicity. The Council concluded that NZFGC should be treating this as an opportunity to educate people on what Fish and Game represents and on the rules and regulations for game bird hunting and freshwater fishing. The Council instructed the Manager to respond back to the NZFG Council Chairman with the Council's views on how to treat the increasing ethnic mix in New Zealand.
- Non Resident Fishing Licence Revenue. NZFG Council has reminded all regions to ring fence the extra revenue (\$37.00) from the new Non-resident licence category for Annual Reports. The Minister of Conservation stipulated that any extra revenue should be directed to specific management to improve back country fisheries. The Manager advised Council that the Northland region does not have any back country fisheries and this extra revenue should be kept at a national level so regions can apply to NZFGC for any improvements to any back country fisheries within their region.

**It was moved:** *That the Manager writes a letter to NZFG Council and express his concerns on how the extra funds from the Non-resident licences are held and that a system should be established where funds are kept at national level.*

*Noel Birchall/Maurice Blyde* **CARRIED.**

- Department of Conservation Representative. The Director General, Lou Sanson, attended the NZFG Council meeting and provided an outline of what the Department had been doing recently and what it plans to do over the coming year. He also enquired on the number of regions who have representation of DOC, if any, at their regional council meetings.
- Health and Safety Manual. NZFG Council, with the help of Eastern Fish & Game, has prepared a generic Health & Safety Manual to distribute to all councils. Employers will have a greater health and safety obligations once the new reform bill becomes law later this year. The Manager will ensure the new Health & Safety requirements are implemented by consulting the employees on a more regular basis.
- NZ Council's Consideration of the Governors workshop. The NZFG Council reviewed the November 2014 Governors' workshop and conveyed the results to all regions.

### **Elections – Eligibility to Vote**

Correspondence was received on Section 26Y of the Conservation Act, the eligibility to vote in Fish & Game Elections. When nationally-valid licences were introduced, an unintended consequence - which has only come to light, meant that all whole season licence holders became eligible to vote in each and every Fish & Game regional elections. The Council discussed this matter and no recommendations were made.

### **Application for Pond Subsidy**

The Council considered the application by Ray Ward to fund to re-establish a hunting site. The Council believed that there was no discretionary money in the budget to fund this application. The Council instructed the Manager to write back to Mr Ward and inform him of the Council's decision and that he should look at applying to the NZ Game Bird Habitat Trust.

### **Correspondence**

The Northland Regional Council drafted some conditions for the resource consent application to repair a dam wall and install a control structure in the Awakino Wetlands and a legal opinion from Thomson Wilson Law was also sent with the conditions.

Corina Jordan, Environmental Manager of Fish & Game, made some comments on these conditions and the Council discussed this advice. The Manager will contact the CEO at Northland Regional Council to discuss these draft conditions.

It was moved: ***That the Manager is authorised to proceed with the consents process and to get a legal letter drawn up to challenge these consent conditions if needed.***

***Noel Birchall/Cameron Shanks***

***CARRIED.***

### **2015-2016 Draft Budget & Contestable Funding applications**

The Manager included a breakdown of staff hours and priority ratings of each operation output class with the budget. The Manager and staff are struggling in many areas to carry out all of what is required in the operational work plan. The Council reviewed the budget and its priority ratings, made by the Manager, and concluded that certain areas of the work plan have to be discontinued.

The Council directed the Manager to write to stake holders and warn them that these services will no longer be carried out by Northland Fish & Game staff due to limited amount of staff and other staff constraints.

The Manager explained to the Council that the 2015-16 budget is identical to the current year. The Manager advised the Council that the budget level of \$392,785.00 is the Councils allocation under current budget policy and any amount exceeding budget needed to be considered as contestable funding applications.

The Manager will make three contestable funding applications:

1. To contract a professional planner to write and prepare a draft Sports F&G Management Plan.
2. To purchase plants and a series of traps to complete the development of three identical wetlands in the Greenheart Property as part of the Mallard Research Project.

3. To continue the same survey work for the annual trend counts. The Charter Company is located at Ardmore, south of Auckland and costs have increased considerably.

**It was moved:** *That the Council approves the draft budget and the contestable funding applications that the Manager has made.*

*Noel Birchall/Dave Nicholson* *CARRIED.*

**Executive Limitations Report**

**It was moved:** *That the Executive Limitations Report is received.*

*Noel Birchall/Phil Durham* *CARRIED.*

**Financial Report for period ending 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

**It was moved:** *That the Financial Report is adopted.*

*Chris Lynch/Wayne Pepper* *CARRIED.*

**Other Business**

The Chairman circulated the accumulated results of the Council's Performance Evaluation for the Councillor's information.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 11.00pm.



*Dave Nicholson*  
*Chairman*