

WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL,
HELD ON TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2015 AT 3.10PM AT COACHMAN HOTEL, 140
FITZHERBERT AVENUE, PALMERSTON NORTH.**

1. Present:

Chairman Strato Cotsilinis, Councillors Eric Neumann, Andy Tannock, Brad Johnson, Chris O'Meara, Jim Cook, Andrew Morris

2. In Attendance:

Staff: Phil Teal (Manager), Steve Pilkington, Hamish Carnachan

Licenceholder: Roger Smaile

Conservation Board: Jim Rainey

3. Apologies:

Councillors Richard Moore, Mark Grace, Simon Muckley, Brad Johnson (for lateness)

Staff: Corina Jordan

**It was then moved that:
*the apologies be accepted.***

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris
Carried

4. Public Participation

Chairman Cotsilinis welcomed members of the public arrived and invited them to address the meeting with any specific issues for Council to consider.

5. Conflicts of Interest

A list was available for viewing of the existing declarations of Conflicts of Interest. No further updates were added to the register.

6. Minutes of Previous Meeting of 7 April 2015:

After a brief discussion it was moved that:

the Minutes of the Wellington Fish & Game Council of 7 April 2015 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Jim Cook/Chris O'Meara
Carried

7. Matters Arising

Mr Teal gave a review of the completed action points resulting from the 7 April 2015 Council meeting including:

- an update of the progress and implications of health and safety legislation,
- contestable funding items progressed as part of the licence fee recommendation;
- an update of the Fish in Schools programme with schools participating about to receive their first shipment of ova, and
- inclusion of a question on hunter preference for three or five shot capacity in multi-shot shotguns; and
- an update of the access seminar and no reported issues for access to Pencarrow lakes.

8. NZ Council Business

Councillor Morris provided a brief overview of issues discussed by NZ Council at its meeting held on 22 May 2015.

Councillor Morris confirmed that the Fish & Game election would be held on 9 October and confirmed on 13 October 2015.

Councillor Morris noted that farmer uptake for the Hunter Downs Irrigation Scheme had been slow which may have been exacerbated by the downturn in dairy price returns.

Councillor Morris noted that lowland streams in Canterbury were still recovering from the summer drought and that salmon had been seen in unusually high numbers in Marlborough rivers.

Councillor Morris noted that Adult Wholeseason Licence sales across the country (to date) had been off set by over 4500 Non-resident licence sales.

Councillor Morris noted that it was unlikely that grey teal would become a game bird as it would open up considerable bureaucratic debate and resistance to the management of an additional native game bird.

Councillor Johnson arrived at 3.25pm.

Councillor Morris gave an overview of recent progress of the mallard research projects and new initiatives by staff to consider duck management units based on environmental climatic zones. He noted that this being the third year of the mallard research project, some regions were considering whether the \$1 tagged for mallard research be retained or removed. Following discussion it was moved that

A letter be sent from Wellington Fish & Game Council to NZ Fish & Game Council that supports the continued use of \$1 of the game licence

fee be dedicated to mallard research after three years of the current project.

Andy Tannock/Eric Neumann

Carried

After further discussion it was moved that

It was then moved that

The report from Councillor Morris (as Wellington Region's appointee for NZ Council) on the NZ Council Meeting 22 May 2015 be received and accepted

Chris O'Meara/Andy Tannock

Carried

9. Draft Annual Plan

Mr Teal gave an overview of the draft Annual Plan considered at the April Council meeting and confirmed that the adjustments for bulk funding level and a one year funding of \$25,000 otolith research work had been recommended by the Fish & Game managers. The budget for the Annual Plan would be confirmed once the licence fee recommendation was confirmed by NZ Council and then the Minister of Conservation.

10. Licence Fee Recommendations for 2015/2016

Mr Teal gave an overview of the licence fee recommendation process and referred to the consultation paper from NZ Council's Finance and Administration Manager (Alison Lyall) **2015/16 Licence Fee**

Recommendation dated 27 May 2015. After discussion it was moved that

Wellington Fish & Game Council supports the 2015/16 licence fee recommendation of a \$124 Adult Whole Season Fish Licence fee (an increase of \$1) and a \$92 Adult Whole Season Game Licence fee inclusive of \$2 Game Bird Habitat Stamp (an increase of \$1).

Eric Neumann/Andrew Morris

Carried

Mr Teal noted that NZ Council would consider all the regions' comments and feedback at a telephone conference on 17 June 2015.

Mr Teal gave brief explanation of the additional licence categories being considered for approval by the Minister of Conservation, the timing of which could cause some constraints due to inclusion of information in the NZ F&G Magazine which had imminent production deadlines.

11. Draft Recommendations for Wellington Region Anglers Notice 2015/2016

Mr Pilkington provided an overview of the four remits for changes to the District Anglers Notice:

Pohangina River: Two remits referred to a request for increased restriction in harvest conditions for the Pohangina River in response to perceived reductions in catch rate. Mr Pilkington gave an overview of the possible causes for variations in numbers relating to stability of bottom sediments, and extent and frequency of floods. He gave an overview of the recent drift dive counts which confirmed a lower number seen this year at all sites. After further discussion it was moved that

The recommendation for the 2015/16 Season is to place restrictions on the harvest conditions for the Pohangina River (including tributaries), namely;

- 1. a two (2) fish limit be in place below the Totara Reserve Bridge, and*
- 2. a one (1) fish limit and size limit (<450mm) between the Totara Reserve Bridge and Piripiri Road Bridge (Fly and spin fishing only as per policy);, and*
- 3. the river above the Piripiri Road Bridge is closed for winter spawning period.*

Andy Tannock/Jim Cook

Carried

Ohau River: One remit referred to a request for increased restriction in harvest conditions for the Ohau River in response to perceived reduction in numbers of fish and catch rate. The merits of upper size limits for harvesting trout were discussed, and the current policy of restricting methods of fishing to fly and spin fishing where catch and release of large fish are required.

It was then moved

That a maximum size limit of 450mm be recommended for the Ohau River, and that fishing techniques be restricted to spinning and fly fishing only

Andy Tannock/Chris O'Meara

Carried

Ruamahanga River: One remit referred to redefining the description of where fishing waters are closed for the key spawning tributaries of the Ruamahanga catchment on the western side of the river (true right). It was requested that a key landmark ó State Highway Two ó be used as a preferred description for closing the rivers during spawning times. This would increase the area of spawning rivers protected from harvest and would not unduly affect angler opportunity as anglers did not target the sites during the early winter period anyway (NIWA National Anglers Survey 2007/8). Mr Pilkington gave a brief explanation how the proposed designation would affect the Upper Ruamahanga River, Waipoua River, Waingawa River, Waiohine River and Tauherenikau River.

It was then moved that

The following rivers be closed for fishing during the winter spawning period from above the State Highway Two bridges – Upper Ruamahanga River, Waipoua River, Waingawa River, Waiohine River and Tauherenikau River.

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris

Carried

12. **Draft Reparation Policy - National Policy**

Discussion ensued on Reparation Policy based on the paper by Robert Sowman (Policy and Planning Manager, NZ Council) *Reparation Policy for Consultation as National Policy* dated May 2015. Mr Pilkington gave a review of the background of the formation of reparation, the pragmatic treatment of compliance issues, and legal opinions for suggestions for operational process and other issues that should be considered (eg Auckland/Waikato F&G opinion regarding due process).

Council discussed issues relating to the discussion paper:

- Consider all regions should follow the reparation system if national policy;
- Noting the legal opinions and how operational protocols should be carried out;
- That any reparation fees should be the same throughout NZ.
- The alleged offender be made aware that their name will be on an incident database;
- That in any letter relating to reparation , an indication is given as to what the reparation funds are used for.

It was then moved that

Wellington Fish & Game Council recommend adoption of the reparation policy as presented.

In the letter to NZ Council the following points will be noted: all regions should follow the reparation system if national policy; acknowledging the legal opinions and how operational protocols should be carried out; reparation fees should be the same throughout NZ; the alleged offender be made aware that their name will be on an incident database; and that in any correspondence relating to reparation, an indication is given as to what the reparation funds are used for.

Chris O'Meara/Jim Cook

Carried

13. **Draft Sports Fish & Game Bird Management Plan**

Mr Teal noted additional work that had been undertaken on the draft Management Plan to reflect approaches used by other regions including target dates for key actions.

It was agreed to include the draft key actions and commence wider consultation following finalisation of the document between the Chairman and manager.

14. **Rangitikei River Trout Fishery Management Project Report 1112**

Mr Pilkington gave an overview of the report and the main points contained therein. He noted that the Moawhanga had been drift dived this season noting before and after results of flushing flows (positive effect), the Kawahatau

River had been dived with only a few but large fish observed, and two sites near Springvale Bridge where good numbers were seen.

Councillors commended staff for the quality of the report and efforts made to gather data

It was then moved to

Receive the report Rangitikei River Trout Fishery Management Project Report 1112 dated June 2015 by Steve Pilkington

Jim Cook/Andy Tannock

Carried

15. **River Control Fishery Assessment Project Report 1113**

Mr Pilkington gave an overview of the report noting that Otaki River had been included since 2014 although less were observed in 2015.

Council thanked staff for this report and noted that it could now be released to the Greater Wellington Regional for use in their assessments of flood control operations.

It was then moved to

Receive the report River Control Fishery Assessment Project Report 1113 dated June 2015 by Steve Pilkington

Eric Neumann/Andy Tannock

Carried

16. **Trout Sports Fisheries and Trout Spawning Habitat – Greater Wellington Region**

Mr Teal gave an overview of the report that staff had produced for the regional council to justify inclusion of maps in the proposed regional plan. He noted the detail required, the level of scrutiny that the trout inventory was now being placed on this and historical data. A review of requirements would result in work plans in coming years being developed to ensure this information is up to date and techniques used that are robust.

17. **Mallard Research Project Update**

Mr Teal gave an overview of his recent review of the operational efficiency and efficacy for the mallard telemetry project and the recommendations for improvement for 2015/16. Principal points to be addressed is improved communication, and adherence to protocols for data collection.

18. **Wairarapa Water Storage Report**

Messrs Teal and Carnachan gave an overview of current progress of pre-feasibility studies ó with the Regional Council confirming two sites (Black Creek and Tividale) to progress to full feasibility in the next 12 months prior to final resource consent applications. Mr Teal noted that a media strategy

had been implemented to ensure Fish & Game's views were articulated in the media at the time of the announcement.

19. Lake Wairarapa Update

Mr Teal referred to an email sent from Maria Fairburn representing the Featherston Cycle-link and their preliminary ideas of linking a cycle way past Simmonds Lagoon. Mr Teal included an indicative map of likely route and she had yet to provide any further detail. Following discussion it was agreed that a request for more information be sought to confirm a route, and indicate possible restrictions at times of the year (no access), terms may be requested, but Fish & Game would investigate if it can be accommodated.

Mr Teal gave a brief outline of meetings of the Wairarapa Moana Management Group, and a continued research for fish removal at Bartons Lagoon.

Mr Teal also brought to the attention of Council that GWRC were seeking a letter of support for Ramsar Status. It was agreed that any letter of support would be subject to and clearly articulate that any status would not affect gamebird or fish habitat values, and the interests of waterfowl hunting or sports fishing opportunities on the lake or wetlands would remain intact.

20. Management Report 1 April – 31 May 2015

Mr Teal highlighted several items:

- Environmental Duck Management Units for North Island regions was being actively progressed for next year's monitoring programme;
- Cawthron Institute had confirmed the suitability of otolith microchemistry for defining origin of juvenile fish based on water chemistry analysis;
- The Ruamahanga Whaitua (Zone) Committee had commenced their consultation on defining 'community values';
- The Proposed Greater Wellington Regional Plan due for release in July will likely require some funding from legal fund to challenge approach;
- Mr Teal had secured access for several hunters on the water reservoirs at Marton and they had been given notice that hunting would have ceased there;
- Waikanae River Recharge Project commissioned and adaptive management approach to monitoring would now be considered.

It was moved that the

Management Report for 1 April to 31 May 2015 be received and accepted

Jim Cook/Andy Tannock

Carried

21. **Fish Licence Sales Report**
Fish Licence Sales were noted at being 97% of budget as at 28 May 2015.
After brief discussion it was moved to
Receive the fishing licence sales report to 28 May 2015
Andy Tannock/Jim Cook
Carried
22. **Game Licence Sales Report**
Game Licence Sales were noted at being 92% of budget as at 28 May 2015.
After brief discussion it was moved to
Receive the game licence sales report to 28 May 2015
Andy Tannock/Jim Cook
Carried
23. **Expenditure Report**
Mr Teal noted that he had developed an internal operational policy for use of credit cards, including sensitive expenditure.

After brief discussion it was moved that
The expenditure reports 1 March to 30 April 2015, and the financial transactions for March and April 2015 be accepted
Chris O'Meara/Andrew Morris
Carried
24. **Correspondence**
Mr Teal noted that correspondence had been received supporting the outcome and efforts relating to the management of the Lake Ouanu Novice Training Programme
After brief discussion it was moved that
Correspondence and media overview be received
Andrew Morris/Jim Cook
Carried
25. **General Business**
Councillor O'Meara noted the effectiveness of the general advertisement on Radio Live prior to the game season and commended its purpose.

Mr Pilkington noted that the access at Bluff Road had not been fully resolved as the draft lease from LINZ to the adjoining landowner had not been accepted nor fully rejected.

Mr Carnachan noted that a principal access point to the Ruamahanga River near Greytown (Gliding Club) had been sold to the South Wairarapa District Council with a view to irrigate treated wastewater. Options to secure practical access for anglers would be pursued.

The Council agreed *to move into Public Excluded session (at 5.50pm)*

Strato Cotsilinis/Andrew Morris

Carried

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting namely the agenda item:

Wairarapa Water Use Project Update

The withholding of information is necessary to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by councillors or officers and to maintain legal professional privilege and potentially commercially sensitive information.

Implementation of Regional Plan Rules

The withholding of information is necessary to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by councillors or officers and to maintain legal professional privilege and potentially commercially sensitive information.

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a)(II) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982 which would be prejudiced by the holding of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public

Wellington F&GC move out of committee (at 6.00pm) and that the public be invited to return to the meeting.

Strato Cotsilinis/Andrew Morris

Carried

There were no resolutions resulting from in-committee discussions.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 6.00pm.

Next Meeting to be held: Masterton Cosmopolitan Club, 398 Queen Street, Masterton. Tuesday 18 August 2015 at 3.00pm.

Chairman _____ Date _____

