

**NATIONAL SEA RUN SALMON COMMITTEE**

Fifth Meeting, 27 November 2018

10am Start Time, 4.00pm Finish Time

North Canterbury Fish & Game Office, 595 Johns Road

**AGENDA**

**Committee members**: Martin Taylor (NZ Council), Ben Sowry (Nelson/Marlborough F&GC), Matthew Hall (Central South Island F&GC), Rick Boyd (Otago F&GC), Rob Roney (West Coast F&GC), Paul Hodgson (NZ Salmon Anglers Association), Phil Musson (North Canterbury F&G), Alan Brooks (South Canterbury Salmon Anglers Association).

**Others present**: Richard Cosgrove (South Island Communications Adviser NZ Council) as minute taker. Steve Terry (North Canterbury Fish & Game Field officer).

**Welcome**

1. Chairperson’s introductory remarks
2. Apologies – none all present and correct
3. Identify Conflicts of Interest against items on this meeting’s agenda - done
4. Confirm Minutes of previous meeting -moved RB – Second MH carried note resolve to still send out to managers and to NZ council

**Action Points**

Review Action Register-including answers to questions raised in an email from Paul Hodgson on 18 September 2018 (email attached below). Action 1 - Survey monkey costing; Action 2 waiting for reply from CSI, MT to resend letter to complete table; Action 3 Nelson/Marlborough confirmed response; Action 4 – have voted and salmon management report has been approved Action 5- technical reference group sent and Steve Terry present Action 6 – received from CSI and NC; Action 7 – underway by Rick Boyd; Action- 8 Draft report sent out, waiting for feedback to RB. Review response to Paul Hodgson’s letter (attached) general discussion on management of the fishery and data collection. Is the Eastern factory better than the NC factory? does capex influence opex costs ?

1. Review Strategic Outcomes for new members: point 1 can we affect the sea run salmon abundance and harvest – Point 2 Problem definition: unacceptable decline queried by RB changed to rivers and spawning grounds : decline of juvenile fish coming down rivers and reaching the sea. Point 3 timeframes: AB when does three-year cycle begin? PH NSRSC to make recommendations to affect wild fish harvest by April 2019 Point 4 – RB issue with D what is an acceptable level of fish harvest ? change to harvest and release – MH need to survey to find what anglers think is an acceptable level of harvest PH what we are selling is hope to catch a fish; Stop the decline – MH don’t forget the other rivers PH we should focus on what we can do and get a result, PH we can make recommendations to NZC, and regional councils and will be up to the regions to do it, but we are focussing on the six rivers, NSRSC still agree on the six rivers; Agree wild fish harvest has to be reduced as required -PH use the TRG to tell us the options to achieve those goals MH we are crystal ball gazing to extent and have to have an adaptive management facility for the fishery; MH refer to TRG to examine the stop the decline options; Outcome B Improve Habitat discussion – change heading to protect and improve habitat refer to TRG for recommendations Outcome C RB add point 1 set targets on returns and harvest; add point 2 active management of fishery through regulations; Hatchery reared wild stock must be an option once critical low threshold reached and combine point 5 reached; Outcome D PH ratio of hatchery to wild fish should be no more than 20-30% of hatchery fish MT do we want to set a wild fish harvest level percentage? ST proper angler harvest survey required of all anglers MT NSRSC needs to set wild fish harvest limits now to recover the fishery, need to mark some hard calls RB need to pick two or three options to manage the fishery and happy for the committee to make the recommendations; MT at next meeting TRG tell us how to achieve a wild fish harvest reduction on the six rivers to recover the fisheries PH Do we think the fishery is in crisis enough do we need to cut catch rate from 1-2 ? Outcome D point 4 need to set a cost what we are going to ask the managers to do; wild fish at next meeting with TRG 1-give/agree to fish return target figures ; 2-tell managers what percentage reduction in harvest 3- what are the scope of actions to achieve that target? PH need to focus on reducing angler catch because that is what we can control; what we need to tell anglers is that we need to reduce catch as it is a too big an impact on the fishery – and need to tell anglers the timeline is for the next three generations of fish. AB reality is all rivers are a disaster and they need 30% reduction in angler catch

Because the salmon fishery is in crisis, the NSRSC committee recommends to NZC and to CSI & NC & 0 & NM that the wild harvest percentage catch is reduced on the six rivers, river by river so that not less than 70% of wild fish are returned to the spawning grounds to restore the fishery.

Moved PM seconded RB carried unanimously.

Justification: Harvest is trending up percentage wise; generally accepted 50% harvest rate is acceptable in Healthy fisheries; we are trying to restore the fishery from historic lows.

Action Point: Invite response from CSI & NC & O & NM & WC councils on what regulatory measures to take to achieve this reduction in harvest by the end of February 2019 so they can be included in the regulations for 19/20 year

1. Set a three-year cycle programme based on put and take and wild fishery assumptions.

We may not have received enough responses from regions to fill in the put and take or wild return tables. However, we should assume we will get responses. Those responses will be the outputs from the program. As a first step the committee needs to set a start date for a three yearly cycle and agree on the milestones and triggers for regulatory actions. Set 2019 Start date 2019

1. Fish Screen issue: Where are we at? Where do we want to be? How do we get there?- S Terry gives update on Fish Screen Working Group - pilot study identifies 93% non-compliance in Canty, monitoring programme for 2019 summer in regard to the NIWA guidelines, fixing fish screens irrigation is a $200 million issue in Canty – general discussion around fish screens; PH- F&G needs to come up with a fish screen policy MH-the lesson is for F&G don’t get involved in the testing fish screens – NSRSC to invite ECan to next meeting to show their two year work plan on fish screen compliance and progress to date. NC & CSI staff to come up with Fish Screen policy for adoption by NZC.
2. Discuss New Zealand Council resolution

*That the NZC agree to the establishment of a working party, with particular emphasis on work establishing a best practice on running a hatchery and stocking practices, to draft national policy for NZ Council’s consideration and once approved then consultation with Fish and Game Councils. It is noted the Eastern Regions knowledge and experience needs to be the basis of the hatchery guidelines*. Managers to examine stocking practices

1. Survey Questions for Salmon Anglers focussing on education and regs changes, RB ask questions in an open way for their feedback, use it to communicate to anglers the current state of the fishery-
2. Update from Rick Boyd re literature review-conducted earlier under action points

**Next Meeting**

1. Set time and place for next meeting.

**DRAFT MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION**



**NATIONAL SEA RUN SALMON COMMITTEE**

Fourth Meeting, Friday 14 September 2018

North Canterbury Fish & Game Office, 595 Johns Road

**Present**:

**Committee members**: Martin Taylor (NZ Council), Carey Cudby (Nelson/Marlborough F&GC), Matthew Hall (Central South Island F&GC), Phil Musson (North Canterbury F&GC),Rick Boyd (Otago F&GC), Bruce Erickson (West Coast F&GC), Paul Hodgson (NZ Salmon Anglers Association), Alan Brooks (South Canterbury Salmon Anglers Association).

**Others present**: Richard Cosgrove (South Island Communications Adviser NZ Council) as minute taker.

**Welcome**

1. **Chairperson’s introductory remarks**
2. **Apologies**- Phil Musson lateness
3. **Identify Conflicts of Interest against items on this meeting’s agenda** – Done & Attached
4. **Confirm Minutes of previous meeting** – one slight adjustment note by Rick Boyd then acceptance moved Matthew Hall, seconded Rick Boyd
   1. **Communication with regions**:

* Minutes need to be sent out Managers-resolved by the committee.
* Any recommendations from NSRC would be reported back to NZ Council

1. **Review and evaluate the regional responses to the letter from the Chairman:**

**Otago letter**- Issues raised regarding lack of committee expertise and they disagreed there was enough information to say there was a problem for the whole of F&G. Rick Boyd gave some context to the committee on Otago’s discussion around this issue. Matthew Hall said we need to look at this from the perspective of the fish. Paul Hodgson believes it has implications for whole organisation and that different areas have totally different views of situation. The table was completed to the best of Otago’s ability. Desire by Otago Council to use wild lake fishery to establish hatchery for fish below Clutha dam. Hey didn’t agree with closure option in relation to the Clutha River. Paul Hodgson said we may well need to have a different level of focus for each river. Rick Boyd said if Contact Energy build a hatchery there is opportunity to use Clutha as a resource for testing practices on other rivers. Definition of hatchery reared wild stock required by Otago council. Noted re Outcome D- some options are not fully supported by the Willis report – noted

**CSI Letter.** They believed they were not given enough time to complete task so no tables filled in. Agreed they wanted to stop the decline in spawning numbers. Raised questions on legality of certain proposed regulations ie an annual limit. Felt there needs to be co-ordination between regions in setting regulations. CSI raised lack of committee expertise and felt staff should be involved on committee. Resolved: to ask CSI to complete tables.

**Nelson/Marlborough issues** – Resolved: NSRC would like a response confirmed by the Council.

**North Canterbury issues** - NSRC not sure if the response has been ratified by NC council. Resolved to send back to NC for clarification and would like questions answered and voted on by council.

**Common issues raised across all responses:**

There is a belief there needs to be staff on the committee as a lack of expertise. Paul Hodgson responds that the Committee is strategic in nature looking to set direction once issues clarified then it will require staff involvement on technical issues. There was discussion around the merits of staff involvement at what stage with the committee.

NSRC resolves that a technical reference group of staff be formed and councils are asked to nominate a staff member to attend.

The question of whether the salmon issue is a problem for the whole organisation. NSRC have agreed in strategic outcomes there is a problem.

The letters tables need to be filled out. Not all regions have same issues as CSI and North Canterbury. Agree Nelson/Marlborough, and West Coast need to only provide responses to the other parts of the letter and Otago is operating under a different set of circumstances.

Definition of hatchery reared wild stock. Resolved: Rick Boyd conducting a literature review for the committee, see further reference below.

Legality of proposed regulation changes. Further work required.

Coordination between regions- It was noted this was a key factor for success.

There was no agreement on closure option formula proposed by NSRS. Agree we need further determination by councils and we need feedback from salmon anglers.

Agreed NSRSC will conduct a survey with questions like: do you agree the Sea Run Salmon fishery is in crisis? Do you agree that we should close the fishery? What level of closure would you accept? would you want to catch a 50-pound hatchery fish vs catching a 10-pound wild fish? **Note:** These are only suggestions the actual questions in the survey will be reported back at the next meeting of the NSRS Committee.

Resolved: Write back to regions collectively (i.e., same letter to each); draft a survey; write to regions for staff nominees to be on the technical reference group.

1. **Discuss the Cawthron report into salmonid stocking practices**

What impact does this report have on the NSRC operation: Rick Boyd reasonably happy with report, unless hatcheries are appropriately managed then there are going to be problems.

North Canterbury issues are a failure at all levels. Carey Cudby said if fishery isn’t stuffed don’t dump surplus fish in a river; best value is in lakes fishery. Phil Musson noted the report was quite targeted and it hasn’t actually been discussed at a North Canterbury meeting and there are issues that the North Canterbury council needs work on.

Matthew Hall can’t connect with report, salmon fishery has always been done on a shoe string, bit of disconnect between New Zealand vs overseas, need to pick out the ‘doables’ and look at where there gaps and see what can be done. Does not believe Eastern hatchery is applicable to South Island. Noted SI hatcheries put together after Glenariffe closure.

Phil Musson said the North Canterbury hatchery is run in relation to Salmon management Plan 2012, and there is an opinion that the Glenariffe hatchery replaced wild fish with hatchery Fish.

Matthew Hall believes hatchery operations are under-capitialised.

Carey Cudby believes looking in to the future the report gives guidance and interested to hear Steve Terry’s response to the report.

Alan Brooks thinks the report is a set up, but in principle agrees with a great deal of it but it doesn’t give us any solutions, massive problem in mixing salmon and North Canterbury has mixed too much, wants solutions.

Martin Taylor, said the report has raised issues about mixing wild and hatchery fish. Alan Brooks asks where do you get the fish and smolt from?

Carey Cudby operations need to measurable and scientific. Paul Hodgson this report disappointed in that salmon and trout weren’t separated out, disappointing comments on hatchery; need to transplant the practices from Eastern to make it work down here, need to have national standards around hatcheries, thinks the report writer has transposed personal convictions

Martin Taylor noted report came out of a managers meeting re cost overruns from North Canterbury and was specifically comparing the North Canterbury and Eastern hatchery operation, what things work and what don’t work, report is only asked to look at how to run a hatchery.

Rick Boyd, felt they haven’t done what they need to do very well in relation to answering questions about the fishery. Phil Musson believes there is an absence of good governance to make sure the hatchery is well run and suggested that the NZ Council hatchery and wild salmon good management practices need to be standardised.

Rick Boyd believes we need to develop a set of standards on the operation procedures of hatcheries and raises using the Eastern SOPs. Paul Hodgson ask for review of report by Dave Willis in relation to salmon. Phil Musson, all fish must be marked and protocols around recording used. Alan Brooks, we cannot separate hatchery out, need to control all areas of influence in relation to salmon. Martin Taylor, we must be able to measure the impact of a hatchery in relation to governance decisions; Note: Stocking practices are different to operating a hatchery.

**Recommendation to NZ Council from this committee:**

The Committee resolved we need 1.- Best practice guidelines on running a hatchery; 2 – Agree stocking practices; 3 – Both need to be peer reviewed by David Willis – Moved Paul Hodgson Seconded Phil Musson - Result: carried

1. Salmon Management Plan 2012

Martin Taylor: Plan says nothing about what actions to take when. Gives lots of options but doesn’t say when to apply those options.

Paul Hodgson, it has problems in relation to regulatory issues aren’t addressed.

Matthew Hall we need try and convert parts of Management Plan into a species management plan in the future, doesn’t spell out what to do.

Paul Hodgson thousands of hours went into the formation of the document. Paul Hodgson asks what are the gold nuggets in the plan? Martin Taylor suggests we need a sea run operational plan that sits in under this plan. **Note:** The plan has policies and procedures but no actions; Matthew Hall says the Salmon Management Plan is no more than a policy doc.

The committee sought information on how the management plan was affecting operations in the regions and will request regions to show what decisions have been made by each councils and staff on the management the sea run salmon fishery – in light of the plan.

**Recommendation to NZ Council from this committee:**

Invite Councils to report on how they have used the Salmon Management plan to develop operational salmon management practices since 2012 to improve the salmon fishery on a year to year basis – Moved Paul Hodgson seconded Matthew Hall, Result: carried

1. Discussion of Steve Terry’s report: Restoration of the salmon fishery – A strategic outline

Interesting and well written report on what has happened in North Canterbury in the past, informative on habitat and catch. Lacking detail on the effect of fish screens.

Report was requested by North Canterbury on what they could do to restore salmon fishery. Matthew Hall and Paul Hodgson raise issues with High Country development as there are other things going on in the High Country. Raises the question of where does this committee want to put its resources into? At the moment the committee feels this report is a step too soon.

**Action Point** – Rich Boyd to provide definitions around hatchery fish and wild fish at next meeting.

1. **Next meeting: Early November**

**Action Register**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Action Agreed** | **Date On**  **Register** | **Deadline** | **Responsible** | **Status** | **Comment** |
| 1 | Survey Canterbury Salmon Anglers | 14 Sep 2018 |  | Martin |  |  |
| 2 | Ask CSI to complete tables | 14 Sep 2018 |  | Martin | Done | Waiting for reply |
| 3 | Ask Nelson/Marlborough to confirm response | 14 Sep 2018 |  | Martin | Done | Waiting for reply |
| 4 | Ask NC for clarification and would like questions answered and voted on by council. | 14 Sep 2018 |  | Martin | Done | Waiting for reply |
| 5 | Ask Councils to nominate staff for technical reference group | 14 Sep 2018 |  | Martin | Done |  |
| 6 | Invite Councils to report on how they have used the Salmon Management plan to develop operational salmon management practices since 2012 to improve the salmon fishery on a year to year basis | 14 Sep 2018 |  | Martin |  |  |
| 7 | Rick Boyd conducting a literature review for the committee, | 14 Sep 2018 |  | Rick | On going |  |
| 8 | Rick Boyd Rich Boyd to provide definitions around hatchery fish and wild fish at next meeting. | 14 Sep 2018 |  | Rick | On going |  |

**Letter sent to Nelson/Marlborough, North Canterbury, West Coast, CSI, Otago**

*10 October 2018*

*Fish and Game Regional Chairs:*

*Owen Baigent: Nelson/Marlborough*

*Trevor Isitt: North Canterbury*

*Andy Harris: West Coast*

*Gary Rooney: Central South Island*

*Monty Wright: Otago*

*Dear Chairmen,*

***Re: National Sea Run Salmon Committee (NSRC)***

*On 14 September the NSRC meet and agreed to ask for more information in relation to our 7 August letter. In order to keep everyone informed about what is going to be requested we agreed to put everything in one letter to all Councils.*

*CSI*

*It was resolved to ask CSI to complete the tables in the 7 of August letter. Note the NSRC believe it is important to (1) establish baseline spawning and harvest numbers for wild salmon, (2) set targets for put and take hatchery releases and harvest rate, and (3) set targets over a nine-year timeframe.*

*Nelson/Marlborough: The response seemed to come from the Manager and not the council. We request that the response is considered and confirmed by the Council.*

*North Canterbury: We were unsure that the response had been ratified by the Council and request North Canterbury to clarify its position and fill in the table as requested.*

*Common Issue Across Regions: The responses received to the 7 August letter indicated there were some common issues such as a view we needed more technical assistance. In response the Committee agreed that a technical reference group of staff to be formed and that each of the Councils with significant Salmon runs (CSI, NC, Otago) could nominate someone to be on the group.*

*It was also agreed that when the NSRC was ready to make more detailed recommendations that the technical group would be invited to participate in meetings.*

*Regards*

*Martin Taylor*

*Chair*

*NSRC*

Hi Guys

Interesting meeting.

For completeness and given that these minutes will be in the public domain can the following things be added to the minutes

1. Background to the Cawthorn report, TOR for report, was it the national managers or did the National Council initiate it?
2. Background on Eastern hatchery - how many FTE's, size of the budget, how much capital is invested in the hatchery, how many fish are raised?
3. Staff working group reviewing hatcheries - what is the TOR for them, who is on the review team, are they reviewing all hatcheries and if not why not?
4. Mangers meeting - can the "Ross Millichamp" report be copied to us?

Confirming my comments at the meeting that I found the Cawthorn report confusing. I would like to see the salmon issues separated from the trout issues in the report. There appears to be poor governance from councillors and poor management control/review in the day operation of NCFG hatcheries. Having said that the identification of best hatchery practices should eliminate most of the issues. It begs the question that if these issues were found at NCFG why weren't all the other hatcheries, CSIFG, Otago, Malborough/ Nelson etc investigated at the same time? As a National Salmon Committee member I want to be assured that all the salmon hatcheries are being run in accordance with best hatchery management practices and that the return rates are being optimised. No doubt all the volunteers and FG staff also want that assurance.

PS I will be asking at the next meeting "Would people prefer to catch a 50 lb hatchery salmon or a 10 lb wild fish at the mouth of one of Canterbury's salmon rivers" . For those that are unaware, there were salmon caught at the river mouths in 96 that ranged from 30- 50 lb. Sorry, for me canal fish don't get a look in.

Kind regards

Paul Hodgson

Response Below:

1. Background to the Cawthorn report, TOR for report, was it the national managers or did the National Council initiate it?

Initiated by regional Fish & Game managers in response to North Canterbury’s continual cost overruns identified in the annual budget variance report, NZ Council endorsed the funding of the report, and wanted to find out the hatchery objectives of the North Canterbury hatchery. Terms of Reference exist (printed), developed by Rod Cullinane (Manager North Canterbury) and Glenn Maclean (Manager Taranaki). There are two parts, first part completed by Cawthron Institute but second part on the cost benefit analysis deferred by NZ Council.

1. Background on Eastern hatchery - how many FTE's, size of the budget, how much capital is invested in the hatchery, how many fish are raised? -The NZ council has agreed that we need a hatchery and release policy. Gathering that information will provide the answers to this question.
2. Staff working group reviewing hatcheries - what is the TOR for them, who is on the review team, are they reviewing all hatcheries and if not why not?

Working group is reviewing stocking practices not hatcheries, has not met yet and has not formed terms of reference.

1. Mangers meeting - can the "Ross Millichamp" report be copied to us?

2003 report printed out for committee.