Fish & Game NEW ZEALAND

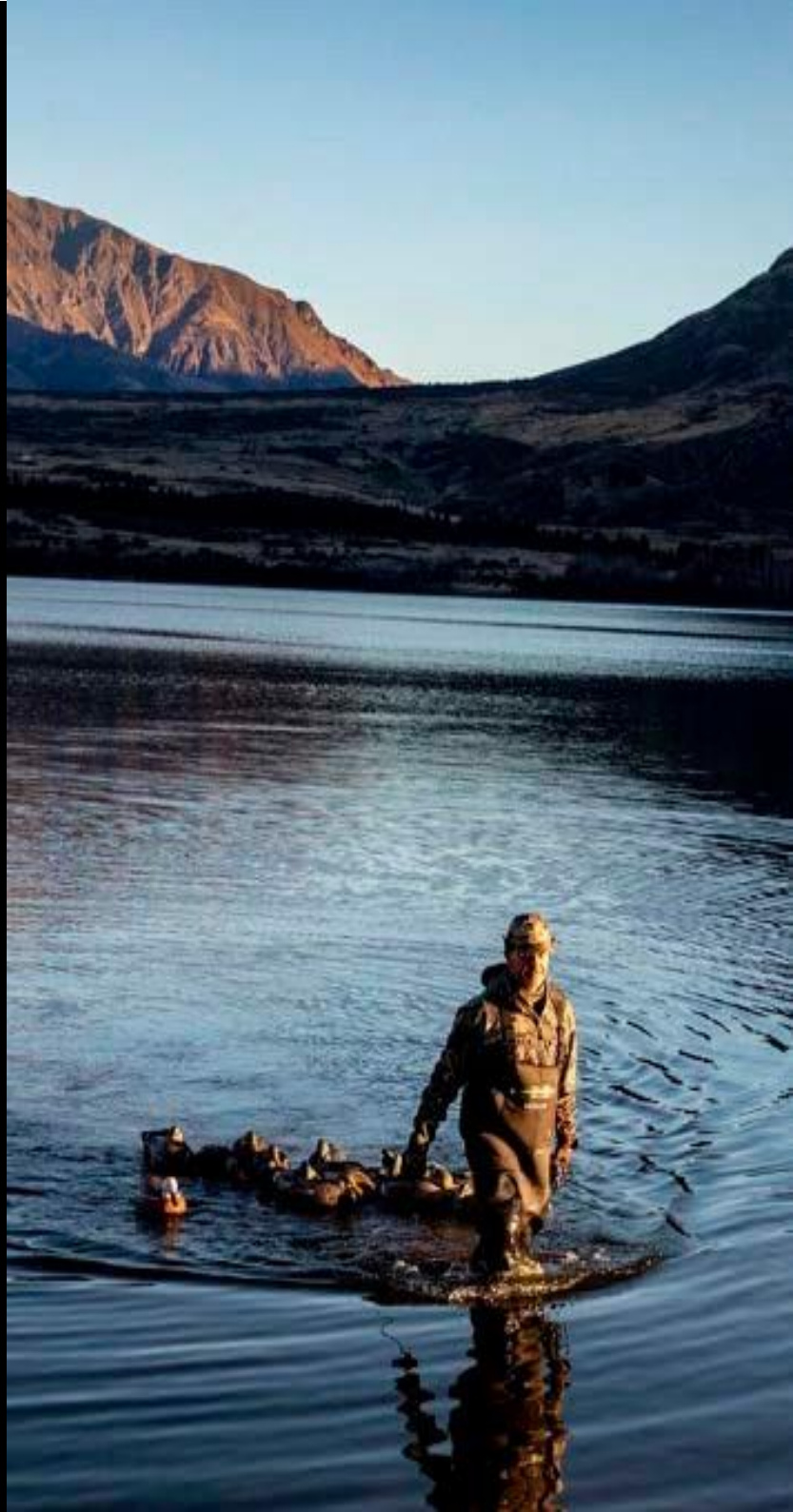
Fish & Game North Canterbury Purpose and Priorities

2026-2027



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Introduction

North Canterbury Fish and Game Council Statement of Purpose and Priorities for the period 2026-2027

This is the framework prepared by the Council that is intended to give direction to the preparation and implementation of a 3-year operational plan and other plans (e.g. the Statutory Fish and Game management Plan). It was originally developed and adopted in February 2019 and reviewed and revised in February 2025.The Council will continue to monitor organisational performance and progress and, as necessary, refine this document over the planning period to ensure that its intentions are clearly defined, and that the priorities remain relevant to the Council's operating environment and the availability of resources.

Even in the 12 months since this Statement was adopted it is apparent there have been changes to the organisation's operating environment which the Council needs to take account of. These include:• An apparent shift in angler pressure from salmon fishing to high country fishing which has a range of implications for the trout fishery (including the stocking of lakes).• Dropping licence sales – which is placing pressure on the recruitment of new licence holders. More finely grained information is needed where the loss of licence sales is occurring.• Pressures on habitat relevant to both sports fish and game birds continue to increase, and the Council is intending to elevate its attention to achieving its 'habitat' outcome. Among other things, the NCFGC will need to find a way to increase its staffing capability in relation to participation in local authority resource planning and consenting processes.

North Canterbury Organisational Purpose

Consistent with the requirements of the Conservation Act 1987 the Council has determined that:

1. The North Canterbury Fish and Game Council exists so that anglers and hunters have access to sustainable sports fish and game resources in the North Canterbury Region

2. Make Fishing and Hunting Easier!

3. Our Priorities are linked to the National Organisational Strategy

NZC-National Organisational Strategy 2023 – 2028

Fish & Game oversees the management of New Zealand's sport fish and game resources. Fish & Game New Zealand is a not for profit public entity with statutory powers and is funded through licence fees.

This strategy was developed in 2022 following a ministerial review conducted in 2021 which noted that Fish & Game New Zealand plays an important role in environmental advocacy and stewardship. The review also noted that the organisation is relatively unchanged since establishment in 1990 and identified significant opportunity to strengthen governance and good management practice.

The strategy outlined here is intended to provide a strengthened, fit-for-purpose organisation more connected with licence holders, wider stakeholders, and Mana Whenua, to sustainably manage fresh water fish andgame, to protect and enhance freshwater habitats and the values precious to all New Zealanders.

OUR VISION

Our vision is a New Zealand where freshwater habitats and species flourish, where hunting and fishing traditions thrive and all Kiwis enjoy access to sustainable wild fish and game resources.

OUR PURPOSE

Fish & Game New Zealand maintains and enhances sports fish and game birds, and their habitats, ensuring access for current and future generations of New Zealanders.

OUR VALUES

- TRUST
- INCLUSION
- CONNECTION
- SERVICE

Our priorities and objectives

What success looks like for our strategic priorities

UNIFIED & ENDURING ORGANISATION

A national and regionally cohesive organisation built on a culture of shared values, trust and engagement. Delivering on vision and purpose for stakeholders and Mana Whenua. Maintaining the statutory mandates that enable effective service delivery.

ATTRACT & RETAIN LICENCE-HOLDERS

Deliver well-valued and cost-effective experience for licence holders by understanding their needs, providing simple and effective communication, making fishing and game bird hunting more attractive to a wider group of future participants.

MANA WHENUA CONNECTED

Māori values are understood and reflected within Fish & Game with aligned advocacy and a positive collaborative approach that builds upon Te Tiriti obligations defined in the Conservation Act.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION & LEGITIMACY

Understanding and reshaping public perception of Fish & Game New Zealand, angling and game bird hunting through positive messaging of natural environment protection , wild food harvesting and well-being through outdoor recreation.

HEALTHY SPECIES, HABITATS, & ECOSYSTEMS

Sport fish and game bird habitats are healthy. Species are monitored and maintained and sustainable wild harvest opportunities are secured for future generations.

North Canterbury Governance and Management

The Council has determined that an essential foundation to the achievement of these outcomes is the establishment and continuation of good governance and management. The Council is committed to demonstrating good stewardship of the North Canterbury Fish and Game organisation and to restoring stakeholder confidence in its leadership. Success will be judged by receipt of an explicit expression of confidence in the governance and management of the organisation by the NZ Fish and Game Council.

Organisation Values

The Council acknowledges responsibility both moral and, in certain respects legal, for the culture of the organisation. To that end the Council has adopted the following expressions of the core values that should characterise the culture of the organisation. Members of the governing body, staff and volunteers will be expected to demonstrate these values both in the conduct of their NCFGC roles and responsibilities and in any other circumstance where their actions might bring the Fish and Game organisation locally and nationwide into disrepute. Note: Still to be developed

Implementation

All operational activity must, at all times, be justifiable in terms of the fulfilment of this purpose and consistent with the Council's priority outcomes, its stated values, and the spirit and intent of the authority delegated to Council committees and the Chief Executive. Unless the Council explicitly resolves otherwise, in planning and conducting the Council's operations to fulfil this purpose, the Chief Executive and staff are expected to accord priority to the interests of licence holders.

Status

First adopted as a working document 19 February 2019 and revised February 2026.

Overarching Strategic Outcomes

These 'unbundle' our purpose statement and inform all our plans and operational activity. They are integral to the discharge of Fish & Game's statutory duties.



1 Our Species Populations are Enhanced

Our species populations will be enhanced by:

- Priority habitat identification and restoration
- Better understand our Species and their population status and Monitor populations to ensure they are sustainable. Applied available best-practice science and scientific methods too.

The immediate success indicator in relation to the headline outcome will be:

- that Priority Habitats are identified
- that plans are in place to protect those priority habitats from further degradation
- that possible restoration projects and partners are identified
- that best practice science is applied
- that we understand population trends and sustainability



2 Key stakeholders are more engaged.

Social, economic, and environmental changes that affect, or potentially affect, our licence holders' ability to enjoy the activities that are central to our organisation's purpose, constitute a growing threat to the principles and values that we promote. This underlines the importance of the organisation (at national as well as regional levels) developing channels of communication and relationships that will maintain stakeholders' knowledge and acceptance of our sport and engender trust and confidence in the organisation.

The Council will focus on two priorities within this outcome.

4. Ensuring that stakeholders (particularly licensed and active anglers and hunters) receive communications from NCFGC that informs them about the steps the organisation is taking and why and meet their information needs and expectations and keep them connected in a positive way to the organisation and its aims. The use of social media is a central means to achieve this priority, but we must also recognise that some categories of stakeholder (particularly older age groups) are more difficult to reach than others.

5. That NCFGC has collaborative and respectful relationships with organisations that have interests in common and pursue objectives that confer mutual benefit. We recognise that stakeholder organisations with these characteristics must deal with their own pressures and resource constraints. Strong, mutually respectful relationships are needed to steer through situations when full alignment is not possible to achieve. Our limited resources mean that operationalising these two priorities will require further prioritisation between different categories of stakeholder.

Key stakeholders are defined as:

- Licence holders
- Those entitled to fish and hunt who are not required to be licenced holders (landowners or occupiers)
- The Department of Conservation
- Local authorities (particularly in respect of their environmental regulatory responsibilities)
- Future anglers and hunters (including those who have been but are not currently active)
- Next generation farmers
- Members of the public interested in the values promoted by NCFGC



3 Participation in sports fishing and game bird hunting is increased

A continuing downward trend in licence sales and therefore participation has occurred over the last 8 years from a high in 2014. It is important to maintain participation to ensure that anglers and hunters continue to have a voice in decision making into the future. It is considered important to encourage more diversity including more females into sports fishing and game bird hunting. It is also considered that game bird hunting participation could be increased in the North Canterbury Region by actively promoting the benefits to new groups like big game hunters.

The Council will focus on two priorities within this outcome.

1. Identify and develop a range of fishery opportunities close to the major population centre of Christchurch. The intent is to assist part time or learner fishermen find opportunities applicable to their current skill level and, in a broad sense, convert more of all ages into fishermen who can catch wild fish with reasonable success.

2. Promote and develop game bird shooting in our region particularly at Lake Ellesmere due to its close location to Christchurch.

5 The North Canterbury Fish and Game Council has a relationship with iwi in its region consistent with its obligations to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

North Canterbury Fish and Game Council has an obligation under S. 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. There is no guidance within the Conservation Act as to how Fish and Game Councils should interpret and operationalise this obligation. In practice it is not a matter which, until recently has been actively pursued within the organisation except where Fish and Game interests have directly intersected with iwi interests. Historically Fish and Game has given iwi reason to see the organisation as an adversary rather than a partner. From a North Canterbury perspective, we are clear that we wish to invest in a mutually respectful and advantageous relationship with iwi and hapu in our region. To better understand how they would want to engage with us we need to invest time in 'meeting and greeting' appropriate groups.

This priority 'Outcome' description is necessarily broadly stated to avoid predetermining an outcome from what should be a collaborative approach. As the relationship with mana whenua develops, the priority 'Outcome' can become progressively more focused to reflect the aspirations that emerge.

Ten-Year Plus Aspirations

To ensure that it takes a longer-term view the Council has determined the following components of its longer-term ambition.

- There is transparent resource allocation equity between Regional Fish and Game Councils that reflects angler and hunter activity.
- Regulators are held to account for carrying out their statutory responsibilities.
- The social licence of anglers and hunters to pursue their sport and put food on their table is protected.
- Licence holders accept their compliance obligations.
- Licence holders have opportunities to give back to the sport (e.g., as sponsors, donors, volunteers).
- The physical and mental health benefits of fishing and hunting are widely acknowledged.
- Information is available that assists them to find suitable opportunities Marginal riparian strips are a legal requirement on all rivers Licence holders at all levels of ability and residential locations have access to opportunities to fish and hunt.
- There is an open relationship between the organisation and licence holders.
- The organisation is well respected and sought out by present and potential partner organisations.

2025-2026 Priorities

With these aspirations in mind, the Council will focus on achieving or making measurable progress over the next 12 months on:

1. Staff are tasked to develop a small native plant nursery on the Fish and Game site. Work with volunteers to source and grow native seedlings which can be donated to landowners who have valuable habitat that is suitable for planting. Work with the volunteers to plants the plants in combination with appropriate fencing. Ensure the McIntyre wetland planting days are help each spring and autumn. This is now completed



2. Staff have been tasked with establishing a population base line for our high-country lakes and stepping stone fisheries. This information will be used to develop an enhancement plan and the development of a 'Trout Plan' Having completed a 'Salmon Plan' and a 'Game Bird Plan' and given the increasing relative importance of the trout fishery in the region, the Council intends to work on developing a wide range of initiatives to protect and enhance the trout fishery and licence holders' enjoyment of it. This work is ongoing and will continue in 2026-2027



3. Staff are tasked to review the Salmon Management Plan. A review paper is to be provided to council with the completed 2025 Salmon report. The review should include engagement with licence holders. This will be complete and provided to council prior to the next financial year (September)



4. Staff are tasked to review our population monitoring programs to ensure robust monitoring design and ensure the output of a long term scientifically valid data set. Staff are to provide a written report to council with any recommendations for improvement of the monitoring programme. Staff are to consider developing operational standard operating procedures (SOP's) for monitoring. This will be complete and provided to council prior to the next financial year (September)



5. Staff are tasked to develop further our stepping stone fisheries close to Christchurch Roto Kohatu (Rua) (put and take). Provide a written report to council on the effectiveness of this fishery as a stepping stone fishery. This work is ongoing and will continue in 2026-2027



6. Staff are tasked to develop a written regional communication plan. While this is a continuing challenge the Council considers that the organisation could and should be more active in communicating with licence holders (particularly via social media) to ensure they have an accurate understanding of NCFGC's activities and the research and policies on which its activities are based. This will be complete and provided to council prior to the next financial year (September)



7. Maintaining a high level of compliance with applicable fishing and hunting regulations The Council acknowledges that pressure on staff resources may require some reduction in this activity but task staff to find ways to maintain the visibility and impact of the compliance effort so that licence holders comply with the terms of their licences and those fishing or hunting without licences are also held to account. This work is ongoing



2026-2027 Priorities

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4. Staff are tasked to review any additional overcrowding issues (other than those that have already been addressed) in our fisheries and consider options for the management of pressure, conflict and ensuring future sustainability. Provide a written report to council detailing any issues and recommendations.



5. Staff are tasked to investigate other statutory land managers, land and plans for land parcels of land that could be managed by or on behalf of NCF&G for our licence holders' values. Other agencies are (but not limited to) DOC, ECAN, CCC, SDC, WDC and LINZ. A particular area of interest would be the land adjacent of Te-Waihora.



6. The council acknowledge that without good quality habitat our species will not thrive, habitat quality is directly linked to the success and enjoyment of our licence holders. Staff are tasked to investigate other habitat enhancement or restoration project opportunities. Provide a written report to council detailing those opportunities including potential funding models.



7. Staff are tasked to review opportunities to increase the regions licence holder base, please incorporate upland game hunting opportunities. Provide a written report to council detailing any opportunities with recommendations.



8. Staff are tasked to report to council on opportunities to access external funding for habitat and access projects in our region.



Governance and Management

The Council has determined that an essential foundation to the achievement of these outcomes is the establishment and continuation of good governance and management. The Council is committed to demonstrating good stewardship of the North Canterbury Fish and Game organisation and to ensuring there is continuing key stakeholder confidence in its leadership and operational effectiveness.

The way we work (added February 2023)

Our ambition is to be efficient and effective. To that end we will be:

- Outcome oriented
- Data driven