

WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL, HELD ON
TUESDAY 6 DECEMBER 2016 AT 3.00PM AT MASTERTON COSMOPOLITAN CLUB,
QUEEN STREET, MASTERTON**

1. Present:

Chairman Strato Cotsilinis, Councillors Andrew Morris, Don Scott, Paul Shortis, Marc Flaws, Malcolm Francis, Chris O'Meara, Jim Cook, Andy Tannock, Simon Muckley, Dan Waechter

2. In Attendance:

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

Don Adams (Wellington Conservation Board)

John Pansters (Wairarapa Fish & Game Association)

Peter Fraser (Ropere Consulting)(part)

3. Apologies:

Councillors Eric Neumann, Brad Johnson, Jim Cook (for lateness), Steve Pilkington (for lateness)

Licenceholder: Reg Cull

It was then moved that:

the apologies be accepted.

Malcolm Francis/Simon Muckley

Carried

4. Conflicts of Interest

A list was available for viewing of the existing declarations of Conflicts of Interest. No new conflicts of interest were declared.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting of 11 October 2016

After a brief discussion it was moved that:

the Minutes of the Meeting of Wellington Fish & Game Council of 11 October 2016 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Malcom Francis/Don Scott

Carried

6. **Matters Arising**

Councillor Tannock noted that the “Swamp Comp” promotion undertaken by the Waterfowl Enhancement Trust had again been successful in garnering interest from hunters – with over 1700 mustelid tails entered. It was agreed that there still needed to be wider recognition of this promotion directly to hunters via email and newsletter communications. There also needed to be greater public awareness of the extent of prizes (over \$20,000 worth) and targeted awareness of some individuals in public awareness articles.

7. **NZ Council Business**

Councillor O’Meara provided feedback and report as Wellington Fish & Game Council’s observer from the most recent NZ Council meeting held in Whangarei on 25 to 27 November 2016.

Councillor O’Meara noted that the practice of Council self appraisal was a governance performance technique that was only being undertaken by two Councils – with it suggested that the simplified forms used by Northland and Auckland/Waikato could be used a basis for self appraisal on a wider basis.

Councillor O’Meara noted that NZ Fish & Game Council had purchased from Fairfax the rights to produce the magazine ***Fish & Game New Zealand*** to protect “Fish & Game” name and image. He noted that NZ Council was considering that the magazine needed to be run as a separate legal entity, with various options for moving forward considered. It is likely the magazine will be operated to maximise the benefit to fish and game issues in consultation with regions including consideration of strategic goals and linking to digital media presence.

Councillor O’Meara provided an overview of discussions and outcomes of requests to consider the exemption of sub-12 gauge shotguns from mandatory use of non-toxic shot. He considered that most regions had indicated that they preferred to wait until the previously agreed timetable and process be completed in 2017 including a scientific and review of practical aspects to introduction of any potential changes. He considered that the Minister of Conservation had asked why the use of sub-12gauge lead shot ammunition shouldn’t be banned rather than requiring its use be discontinued. He further noted that there was considerable hearsay in discussions including cost of non-toxic shot for sub-12gauge in the United States that did not translate to availability and cost in New Zealand. Councillor Tannock also noted that consumption of sub-12gauge had not gone up despite claims of wider use of these types of firearms in the field in regions such as Southland. He considered that getting credible information from importers was required to ensure objectivity rather than reacting to a

legal letter with implied facts. Councillor O'Meara noted that on Friday 25 November 2016 that the NZ Council had decided to seek further feedback from regions, and seek information on science projects, and availability of non-toxic alternatives.

Councillor O'Meara noted that there was support from within Fish & Game to extend the licence agreement option for a further two years with EyeDe Ltd for licence sales management.

Councillor O'Meara reported on the field trip undertaken on 26 November 2016 including the Jack Bissett Wetlands, Kai Iwi Lakes (including an issue of whether the local reserves board would allow continued release of trout liberations), appraisal of the \$650,000 farm purchase in conjunction with the Natural Heritage Trust (which including securing \$200,000 fencing and up to 40ha of wetland much of which is suitable for waterfowl habitat and hunting).

Councillor O'Meara further reported NZ Council had gone into public excluded discussions on 27 November 2016 regarding the potential ban of use of sub-12gauge lead shot ammunition for waterfowl hunting. He noted that they were considering informing the Minister of Conservation that NZ Council planned to have a staged introduction of a lead ban over four or five years – starting with a voluntary introduction (as was the process undertaken for ban of use of lead for waterfowl hunting for 12gauge ammunition). John Pansters noted that there appeared to be inconsistency in the basis of ethical arguments used by NZ Council - use of metallic lead in the environment also involved split shot for some angling practices yet was not being considered – even though this was likely to be insignificant in amount. Councillor Tannock expressed his disappointment that an agreed process had not been followed that would have considered scientific and objective information.

After further discussion it was moved that

A letter be sent to NZ Council Chairman expressing disappointment at the way the issue of considering reviewing continued use of lead shot in sub-12gauge ammunition for waterfowl hunting had been concluded - given that there was an agreed and expected process for review to be undertaken in 2017.

Marc Flaws/Andy Tannock

Carried

Councillor O'Meara noted that there was legal funding approval for regional legal cases in Northland, West Coast, Otago, and Wellington.

It was then moved

That the report presented by Councillor O'Meara relating to the NZ Fish & Game Council meeting on 25 -27 November 2016 be received

Andy Tannock/Marc Flaws

Carried

8. Public Participation

Don Adams (Wellington Conservation Board) noted that there were implications for new gun clubs that could be subject to use of steel shot only. He noted that it was good practice of governors to voice displeasure in robust debates that are predominantly politically motivated when representing their constituents.

John Pansters noted that there could be a resolution of issues in the regional plan relating to fencing at Kourarau Dam which may have changed farm practices and access. He noted that this was achieved with all parties resolving to inform the Commissioners during the Proposed Regional Plan hearings of a potential solution outcome.

Mr Pansters noted that the Whaitua Committee consultants should be engaging more with Fish & Game. He further noted that information flow on progress by the Committee had been limited. Councillor Shortis confirmed that the Committee will be reporting back early in 2017 if they follow their amended timetable, and it will be interesting to see if final recommendations are supported by robust justifications.

Mr Pansters noted that the high consistent flows in the early part of the fishing season had largely keep the in-stream works by GWRC Flood Protection out of the river.

Mr Fraser (Ropere Consulting) arrived at 3:50pm

9. Health & Safety Update

Mr Teal confirmed to Council that a template for a Health and Safety Plan had been adapted for Wellington region's requirements and a copy had been distributed to Council to illustrate its development to date.

Discussion ensued on the role of governors to ensure a robust Health and Safety Plan is developed, ensure a positive culture to health and safety issues exists, and planned actions are carried out accordingly. It was agreed that all governors would have a copy of the detailed action plans once developed.

It was agreed that NZ Fish & Game Council be requested to co-ordinate an expert peer review of the 'Fish & Game Health and Safety Plan template' as a matter of priority.

The Council agreed ***to move into Public Excluded session (at 4.10pm)***

Malcom Francis/Dan Waechter

Carried

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

One Plan Regional Plan Implementation

Wairarapa Water Project

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 4:55pm) and that the public be invited to return to the meeting.

Andrew Morris/Don Scott

Carried

10. Recommendations for 2017 Game Regulations

It was agreed that any restrictions to the use of motorised boats on Lake Wairarapa would be investigated. It was not currently a regulation in the Game Gazette and was included only in the access permit distributed to hunters.

The game season conditions were considered by Wellington Fish & Game Council for Wellington region on 11 October 2016 and recommendations confirmed on 6 December 2016. There are two species, namely black swan and paradise shelduck where recommendations are made following counts in mid January.

Mallard Duck/Grey Duck/ and Hybrids

Key points of discussion included:

- the April 2016 mallard transect count was lower than 2015 and consideration was given to potential restrictive season conditions;
- the trend for population change was therefore not established;

- the harvest estimates for mallards in 2016 was increased from 2015 and 2014 (a continuing trend) – which is normally reflective of population abundance;
- a wet spring season in 2016 had created good breeding conditions for mallards;
- a conservative approach was taken in 2016 to have an eight bird limit and an eight week season (when a ten bird limit and eight week season was considered);
- by providing same bag limit as 2016 for 2017 season has an advantage of consistency of messaging to hunters.

It was moved that

Recommended season conditions for mallard be eight week season duration (6 May 2017 to 2 July 2017) and an eight bird daily bag limit per hunter. These are the same season conditions as for 2016 Game Season.

Andy Tannock/ Marc Flaws

Carried

Paradise Shelduck

To be confirmed following trend counts conducted in January 2017. *Season conditions for 2016 were: ten week season duration and eight bird daily bag limit per hunter*

NZ Shoveler

It was confirmed that conservative limits would be recommended as had been the case in recent seasons.

It was moved that

Recommended season conditions for shoveler be eight week season duration (6 May 2017 to 2 July 2017) and a two bird daily bag limit per hunter. These are the same season conditions as for 2016 Game Season.

Andy Tannock/Chris O'Meara

Carried

Councillor Jim Cook arrived at 5:00pm

Pukeko

These season conditions are lined up with the upland game season duration which is the first Saturday in May until the last Sunday in August (16 weeks).

It was moved that

Season duration (6 May 2017 to 27 August 2017) and a five bird limit per hunter per day. These are the same season conditions as for 2016 Game Season.

Andrew Morris/Simon Muckley

Carried

Black swan

To be confirmed following trend counts conducted in January 2017. *Season conditions for 2016 were: eight week season duration and three bird daily bag limit per hunter*

Pheasant

These season conditions for upland game season duration which is the first Saturday in May until the last Sunday in August (16 weeks).

It was moved that

Recommended season conditions for pheasant be season duration (6 May 2017 to 27 August 2017) and a two bird cock pheasant limit per hunter per day for the region (except for Upland Game Properties with Special Conditions). These are the same season conditions as for 2016 Game Season.

Malcolm Francis/Jim Cook

Carried

Upland Game Properties With Special Conditions

Consideration was given to recommending an alteration to the 2016 Game Season conditions for Te Para Hut Game Preserve to allow for an open season in April 2017 (from the 1 April 2017 to 6 May 2016). These season conditions to allow for hunting on game preserves were allowed from 2013-2015 due to a specific request from Rathmoy Game Preserve at Hunterville, but were not included in the 2016 Game Regulation recommendations.

It was moved that

For Upland Game Properties with Special Conditions Season duration (6 May 2017 to 27 August 2017) and no limit on both sexes of pheasant per hunter per day. These are the same season conditions as for 2016 Game Season.

Season duration for 2016 Game Season and 2017 Game Season regulations include an open season for Te Para Hut Game Preserve Only – from 1 April to the first Friday in May each of those years.

Strato Cotsilinis/Andrew Morris

Carried

Councillors Flaws and O'Meara wished to have their dissenting vote recorded.

California Quail

These season conditions for upland game season duration which is the first Saturday in May until the last Sunday in August (16 weeks).

After discussion it was moved

That for California quail the Season duration (6 May 2017 to 27 August 2017) and five bird limit per hunter per day. These are the same season conditions as for 2016 Game Season.

Andy Tannock /Andrew Morris

Carried

Bobwhite Quail

These season conditions for upland game season duration which is the first Saturday in May until the last Sunday in August (16 weeks). It was moved that

Season conditions for Bobwhite quail for Season duration (6 May 2017 to 27 August 2017) and no limit per hunter per day. These are the same season conditions as for 2016 Game Season.

It is recommended that hunting of bobwhite quail be restricted to Upland Game Properties With Special Conditions as those operators are currently the only known people putting effort into establishing local populations.

Andrew Morris/Marc Flaws

Carried

Red Legged Partridge

These season conditions for upland game season duration which is the first Saturday in May until the last Sunday in August (16 weeks).

It was discussed that an option to maintain hunter interest at sites beyond boundaries of the upland game properties with special conditions that a Daily Bag limit of one bird one bird per hunter per day may engender continued interest.

It was further discussed that to encourage interest in the establishment of a wild population adjacent to upland game properties with special conditions that no limit apply to Upland Game Properties with Special Conditions.

It was moved that

The season conditions to be recommended for Red Legged Partridge be: Season duration (6 May 2017 to 27 August 2017) for all region. These are the same season conditions as for 2016 Game Season.

Daily Bag limit: one bird per hunter per day (except for Upland Game Properties with Special Conditions)

Daily Bag Limit - Upland Game Properties with Special Conditions: No limit

Andrew Morris/Paul Shortis

Carried

It was then moved that

All other season conditions from 2016 game season are recommended to remain the same.

Malcolm Francis/Andrew Morris

Carried

11. Hunting Stand Claim Tag

Council considered a paper entitled Hunting Stand Claim Tag (undated) prepared by Robert Sowman (Policy and Planning Manager, NZ Fish & Game Council). This encompassed issues such as:

- the relevance of pegging day;
- who rightfully should receive a claim tag;
- status of stand claim tag;
- tagging two or more separate hunting stands;
- how to provide for future tag options such as a digital licence

Feedback on a series of recommendations was sought by NZ Council. After discussion on each item it was moved

That Wellington Fish & Game Council provide feedback to NZ Council on the following items:

A: no one (outside of Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game region) under the age of 16 is entitled to claim a hunting stand. In the Auckland/Waikato region no one under the age of 18 can claim a hunting stand

NO - Not supported

B: the wording of the Wildlife Regulations 9 (b) be added to the information on the tag – no person shall claim more than one stand

YES – Supported

C: As an interim step, hunters when completing online licence applications can opt out of receiving plastic licences and plastic stand claim tags, accepting just the receipt or digital licence version

YES – supported

D: Longer term (in two-three seasons time) make provision for just one tag per licence – the digital tag

NO – not supported – further information required to clarify

E: A digital hunting claim tag to be made available for printing with hunters encouraged to ‘mark-up’ a stand utilising the printed tag

YES – supported

F: Make writing the name of the claimant and the number of their licence, as was once the practice, an acceptable peg claim method.

NO – not supported – must have evidence of having purchased a licence

Malcolm Francis/Andrew Morris

Carried

12. 2017 Wellington Fish & Game Council Meeting Dates

Council considered the meeting dates available and confirmed the principles of: holding the meetings on a Tuesday, similar dates to 2016 that match NZFGC and Manager meetings, and that the meetings would continue to circulate around the three regional urban centres.

It was then moved that

The timetable for Wellington Fish & Game Council meeting was confirmed for 2017 meeting dates:

<i>14 February 2017</i>	<i>Masterton</i>
<i>4 April 2017</i>	<i>Palmerston North</i>
<i>6 June 2017</i>	<i>Upper Hutt</i>
<i>22 August 2017</i>	<i>Palmerston North</i>
<i>10 October 2017</i>	<i>Masterton</i>
<i>5 December 2017(& AGM)</i>	<i>Upper Hutt</i>

Jim Cook/Chris O'Meara

Carried

13. River Link – Hutt City Centre Upgrade Update

Discussion ensued on a meeting held with GWRC Flood Protection staff and including Councillors Waechter and Cotsilinis to discuss Hutt River works. It was considered that GWRC staff took into account concerns regarding beach ripping and would consider staying away from edges where anglers used the bank edges for access.

Mr Teal and Hamish Carnachan also discussed recent meetings held between GWRC staff in the Wairarapa including the development of Codes of Practice. Mr Teal noted that the consent applications were likely to be notified by the end of January (after initially being planned for end of December).

- 14. Lake Wairarapa Moana Update**
Mr Teal gave a brief overview of process by which the details of the Treaty Settlement are being dealt with. There was a meeting with Fish & Game (included Mr Bryce Johnson (NZF&GC CE) and the Office of Treaty Settlements officials (including the OTS Crown negotiator Rick Barker) and representatives of Rangitaane and Kahungunu iwi in late October. Discussion focused on the letter from the Office of Treaty Settlements dated April 2016 that specifically noted the proposed establishment of a Statutory Board and sustainability of fisheries.
- 15. Mallard Research Project**
Mr Teal gave a brief overview of the mallard research projects and confirmed that analyses are being undertaken by a Massey University students to look potential heavy metal accumulation (including lead) in the blood that may affect fecundity and also for Wellington Fish & Game to assist with a US based research project on DNA analysis for origin of mallard and grey ducks.

Findings from the PhD programme funded by the Fish & Game research fund will direct future research and/or management actions.
- 16. Junior Angler Participation – Fish in Schools**
Mr Carnachan gave a brief overview of participation in schools where most had successful released at least some fish into local streams. He indicated that five of the eight participant schools had sought to re-engage for 2017 and were interested in the Schools to Streams curriculum tools (which were still be refined). A questionnaire will be sent to schools in the new year to engender feedback on how what support the schools needed to make it a successful project. Councillor Francis noted that the local school on the Kapiti Coast was very supportive of the project and the information that Mr Carnachan had provided in his assistance.
- 17. Baseline Trout Spawning Inventory Summary**
Mr Teal gave an overview of the recent documentation undertaken by Adam Canning that summarised data that Fish & Game had collected in the previous 25 years. This involved the intensive and extensive baseline inventory work undertaken in the early 1990s, subsequent visual spawning surveys, and more recent electrofishing surveys. This is the next level of evidential reports that will be required by Fish & Game to report to Regional Councils to confirm spawning rivers. There will be a body of work required to define a monitoring strategy based on these requirements to retain up-to-date and robust and relevant information.
- 18. Management Report 1 October -30 November 2016**

Mr Teal noted that staff were waiting on Cawthron Institute to provide their interpretation of the analyses of the otolith microchemistry assessments to determine the work programme for sampling for 2017 summer period.

After discussion it was moved that

The management report for 1 October – 30 November 2016 be received.

Andrew Morris/Malcolm Francis

Carried

Councillor Don Scott left the meeting at 5.50pm

19. Fish & Game Licence Sales

Mr Teal gave overview of the licence sales for fish were approximately 10% down on previous year's sales at the same period (late November), and there were several reasons postulated included inclement weather conditions causing a delay in purchase. He also noted that most agents were now agency-on-line which provided an up-to-date assessment of sales.

After further discussion it was moved

The Fish Licence Sales report as at 24 November 2016 be received

Paul Shortis/Chris O'Meara

Carried

20. Expenditure Report

After discussion it was moved that

the Expenditure Report for 31 October 2016 and Financial Transactions for September and October 2016 be approved

Marc Flaws/Andrew Morris

Carried

21. Correspondence and Media

Discussion ensued on the continued success from a public awareness perspective of the Fish Out Day run by the Manawatu Freshwater Anglers Club. The efforts of Steve Pilkington in managing the operations on the day were acknowledged

After further discussion it was moved to

Correspondence and Media reports for September –October 2016 be received

Jim Cook/Malcolm Francis

Carried

22. General Business

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 6.05pm.

Next Meeting to be held: Club Masterton RSA, 20 Essex Street, Masterton,
Tuesday 14 February 2017 at 3.00pm.

Chairman _____ Date _____