

# AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME NEWSBRIEF

If you require further elaboration or clarification of items contained herein, or any other matters relating to F&G business, please don't hesitate to contact your local councillor or the office.

## Matters arising from the Council Meeting of 29 November 2025

**Tri-Annual Game Bird Regulation Review** – Six members of the public attended the meeting and four indicated they wished to address the Council with their perspective.

There was a number of items addressed:

- Increase season length
- Lifting the ban on pond feeding
- Wetlands degradation
- Season start date

It was moved that a 6-week season length for gallards be adopted.

## Matters Arising from the Chief Executive's Report

### SPECIES MANAGEMENT

#### Drift diving

The 2025 drift diving report was completed and submitted for review. There are no immediate concerns from staff on the state of the monitored fisheries.

#### Population Surveys

**Lake Arapuni Spawning Survey** - The 2025 Lake Arapuni Spawning Report has been completed and submitted for review. No significant concerns were detected aside from a high proportion of hatchery fish spawning in Tributary C. Fish harvest survey

#### Fish Harvest Survey

**Wild and hatchery tag returns** - Wild tag returns have started to trickle in with the season opener and Ollie Bassett has agreed to continue tagging when he is guiding on the Whakapapa.

#### Trout Releases

**Potential Kids Fishing Pond** - Adam has had two meetings with the management of the Tamahere Country Club (a new luxury retirement village near the airport) about potentially releasing fish in a newly constructed pond on the property. The location is an ideal kid fishing pond complete with a BBQ area and pontoon for handicap access.

#### Regulation

**Regulation Change Feedback** - There has been minimal feedback on the regulation changes considering the extensive revisions for the 2025/2026 season. The only comments received by staff were confusion as to the location of the new Whakapapa River and Kaniwhaniwha Stream fly fishing only areas.

## HABITAT PROTECTION/MANAGEMENT

### RMA

**Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Council – Outcomes on the Proposed Coastal Plan** - Mischa submitted on several key provisions of the Waikato Regional Council's Proposed Coastal Plan, focusing on habitat protection, water quality, and the management of activities that may impact fish and game resources.

**Island Block Pump Station Replacement Consent Application** - David and Clare have reviewed the consent proposal draft to replace the Island Block South Pump Station and divert its discharge into the northern wetland via a new northern pump station. While the proposal suggests only minor increases in water level and contaminants from the discharge, it raises significant concerns for the Whangamarino Wetland's water quality and ecology.

**Waikato Regional Council Biodiversity Strategy** - Clare attended the Waikato Regional Council Biodiversity Strategy workshop which was held in Thames. The workshop was focused on developing a long-term, collaborative approach to reversing biodiversity loss in the region.

**Perch discovered in Lake Karapiro** - John Carey caught a perch in Lake Karapiro 12 October 2025. Subsequent research revealed that there was an online post of multiple perch being caught in Lake Karapiro in February of 2025 that went unnoticed. DOC and the regional council were informed by staff but to date there has not been a response or official media release.

**Collaborative Science Advisory Group** - Adam and David have attended Collaborative Science Advisory Group meetings being held for the next iteration of the Waikato Regions Freshwater Plan Change.

**Free Authorizations** - Staff issue free permits for electrofishing, fish sampling and fishing contests. Over the last two months seven permits have been issued or modified. There may be some scope for cost recovery as DOC and other Fish & Game Regions charge for permits.

### Council Land

**F&G Wetland works update** - As part of our wetland maintenance consent, Fish and Game are required to provide an annual wetland maintenance plan to Waikato Regional Council for the coming year with details of all proposed wetland maintenance in or around the vicinity of F&G Wetlands. A request for this information was sent out to all pond holders in mid-September with all proposed works under our consent required to be sent back no later the Friday 31st October 2025.

## PARTICIPATION

### Access Negotiation

**Stone Jug Road** - The easement survey and wording have been completed and signed copies submitted to the Ruapehu District Council.

**Toa Bridge Access** - There has been renewed interest in the Toa Bridge access to the Waipa River due to complaint from the public to DOC and Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa.

**Upper Waipa River Access** - Adam has been working with Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa to improve access at the Templeton Farm.

## User Group

**Spring Flyer** - The Spring Fishing Flyer is nearing completion and scheduled to go out in October.

**Lower Waikato Fishing Competition Talk** - Adam attended the Lower Waikato Fishing Competition and gave a talk to the participants. There were 54 entries in total, and the average fish size was 1.15 kg.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

### Ranging

**Fishing Opening Weekend Ranging Effort** - Three groups of rangers were out for opening weekend including two staff members with voluntary rangers. The Pirongia area, Mangatutu and Whakapapa were targeted due to high use on opening day.

**Family licence violations** - The family licence was intended to encourage parents or grandparents to take kids fishing but the discounted licence was also used to reduce the cost of a couple purchasing a licence.

### Legal

**Prosecutions** Clare has continued to progress several cases, with a number of recent court appearances resulting in guilty pleas and fines being issued, along with diversions completed.

## PLANNING REPORTING

### National Liaison

**Gold clam compliance** – Adam presented four webinars including Biosecurity NZ staff, The Gold Clam Enforcement Working Group, Freshwater Biosecurity Partnerships Working Group and Fish & Game staff. In total the webinars reached about 70 industry experts, stakeholders and staff.