

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 27 September 2025

Feedback – There has been positive feedback from the region's access initiatives, particularly the mapping project led by Mr Jarvic-Child. [Select here](#) to view map.

Infringement System - The Chief Executive advised that a further document had been provided by NZC for regional consultation. The Chief Executive confirmed that a reply had been sent to Richie Cosgrove to ensure NZC was still operating on the basis of a two-meeting cycle timeframe for regional councils to provide feedback. The consultation document will be included in the next agenda.

Bethels Wetland Rates - Councillor Barker noted that Council is paying rates on the wetland and questioned whether rates relief may be available. The Chief Executive confirmed he would follow this up again, as no response had yet been received.

Budgeting - Council discussed the updated 2025/26 Budget and Operational Work Plan. Concerns were raised about the ongoing low level of general reserves, with forecasts showing reserves falling below the 20% threshold by 2026 despite recent budget reductions. Members noted that levy payments had redirected savings away from reserves and highlighted the risk of cashflow pressures given the timing of licence income. Council agreed to approve the updated Budget and OWP, and requested that the Chief Executive write to NZC seeking clarification of the levy structure, a reduction in levy payments, and deferral of payments until after the game bird season.

Matters Arising from the Chief Executive's Report

SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Trend Counts

Shoveler Counts – Dani, Beau, David and a few volunteers conducted the regions annual shoveler count as part of the national census over the first 2 days of August. There seemed to be good numbers of birds in and around Whangamarino wetland and Lake Waikare.

Population Surveys

Lake Arapuni Spawning Survey - Monthly spawning reports have been conducted since June 2025. Although small numbers of brown trout have been spotted in the Mako Stream Trib C has been the dominant spawning location for rainbow trout. Several springs were visited on Old Taupo Road, but no new spawning sites were observed.

Fish harvest survey

Sterile fish report - An analysis of the tag return data has indicated that 95% of the remaining tags should be turned in by June of 2026. Based on the return data to date the report for the project should be produced in July or August of 2026. Trout Releases

Game Harvest Survey

Six of the seven rounds of harvest surveys have been completed, and 762 people have responded so far. The results of these gamebird harvest surveys will be compiled and reported later in the year.

HABITAT PROTECTION/MANAGEMENT

RMA

Waihi North Gold Mine Project submission (Fast-track Consent) - Clare and Adam wrote a submission on the Waihi North Gold Mine Project consent application which was a substantive application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 ("FTAA"), which does allow new mines on conservation land to be approved.

Request for a management plan at Parkinsons Lake - Adam has contacted Waikato Regional Council again to request a management plan for Parkinsons Lake due to recent data showing multiple low dissolved oxygen event.

Council Land

GBHT Fieldtrip - We recently hosted GBHT board members, as well as Richie Cosgrove, and Dame Lynda Topp (Recently appointed Patron of Fish and Game), for their Annual General Meeting. As part of this Dani and David, along with Kevin from RiverCare, took the group around the region to show them some of the projects GBHT have helped fund over recent years.

Trees

Order - The annual tree order was received and distributed to F&G clubs, committees and individuals for specified projects.

Non-Council Land

GBHT Funding - We secured \$8000 for a small-scale habitat project with Bob Clark. The project aims to create a 0.8 ha area of shallow water habitat, adjacent to, but unconnected to the Mangapiko Stream.

PARTICIPATION

Access Negotiation

Fishing access and regulation mapping – Beau contributed to a national working group that prepared a document for regional managers outlining the potential opportunities available to improve how we present access and regulation information.

User Group

Magazine - The magazine articles were finished, and proofs have been approved.

Hamilton Anglers Club talk - Adam gave a talk on catch and release fishing and the potential changes to Fish & Game to the Hamilton Anglers Club 28 July 2025.

Hamilton Lake Matariki Children's Fishing Competition - Adam helped organize and ran a kid's fishing competition with the assistance of Hamilton Anglers and Whakamana Ki Rotoroa. The competition attracted a record 105 children who were accompanied by at least one adult.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Ranging

Ranging - Staff have done several field trips combined with CLE ranging activities, however no anglers or hunters were encountered.

Legal

Prosecutions: Clare is now finishing the last of the prosecution files from Game Bird Opening Weekend (3–4 May 2025). On 20 August she attended court in Te Awamutu to observe how the cases were handled by Fish and Game's lawyer, Pamela Wright. This was a valuable learning opportunity for Clare, giving her first-hand experience of the court process and how Wildlife Act cases are run.

PLANNING REPORTING

National Liaison

Gold clam compliance – Adam conducted visits of three agencies (report in draft) in the USA using the NZC Staff Scholarship. The learning from visiting US agencies impacted by aquatic invasive species were passed on to government and industry experts in a series of webinars

4x4 Hunting and Fishing Expo – Beau spent a couple of days with the team at Eastern, who had a stand at the NZ FISHING HUNTING & 4x4 EXPO. This is a similar set-up to the Sika show and provided a good opportunity to engage with current and prospective license holders.