

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 213th MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW
ZEALAND ON THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY AT 1 PM.**

Present

Crs. Mark Sceats, Murray Ferris, Lindsay Lyons, Alec McIver, Scott Nicol, Mike Jarvie, Pat Swift.

In attendance

Arash Alaeinia, Kate Thompson, Mark Sherburn (Eastern Fish & Game); Barry Roderick and Liam Tapsell

1.0 WELCOME

1.1 Cr Mark Sceats opened the meeting at 1.04pm welcoming all present.

2.0 APOLOGIES

2.1 Apologies were received from Cr Kevin Coutts.

2.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mark Sceats) that the apologies for the 213th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [25/02/2.2]*

3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (7 DECEMBER 2024)

3.1 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Alec McIver) that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [25/02/3.1]*

3.2 IDENTIFICATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN COUNCIL POLICY

No items were identified for inclusion in Council policy from the minutes of the meeting held 7 December 2024.

3.3 MATTERS ARISING

Cr Lindsay Lyons asked if a copy of the letter sent to minister be circulated to Council. Cr Mark Sceats confirmed he would circulate the final version.

4.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS

Lindsay Lyons – CEO’s review
Arash Alaeinia – Lake Okataina update
Mike Jarvie – Access and closed waters

5.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER

5.1 Councillors were asked to inform the chair of any conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were recorded.

6.0 HEALTH & SAFETY

6.1 Arash Alaeinia informed Council of a recent staff injury resulting from a duckling rescue which was yet to resolve. Cr Scott Nicol highlighted a date error on the report.

6.2 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Scott Nicol) that Council receives the Health and Safety report. [25/02/6.2]*

7.0 ANGLERS NOTICE REVIEW

7.1 Arash Alaeinia informed Council that the first Anglers Notice communication had been sent to clubs and interested parties and that to date, no feedback had been received. Council did not identify any issues for further discussion.

7.2 *Agreed (Mark Sceats/Murray Ferris) that Council agrees to the consultation process and time frame for considering changes to the 2025-2026 Anglers Notice. [25/02/7.2]*

8.0 DRAFT FATIGUE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- 8.1 Arash Alaeinia provided some background to the Draft Fatigue Management Guidelines. Arash advised this was in response to Maritime rules and regulations but also other aspects of our work. The guidelines were put together by NZC after receiving feedback from regions and is now distributed to regional councils to see if there is support for it. It will then be put through NZC to become policy.
- 8.2 Cr Scott Nicol questioned the statement “ensuring staff work no more than 14 hrs in a day” and wondered whether this could be clearer ie. what happens if they do, are they required to seek manager approval should this need to occur? Arash Alaeinia advised that staff rarely work longer than this but if there was a requirement to do so they would need to ensure they take appropriate breaks. Cr Mark Sceats suggested that discussions would need to occur with the CEO if this were likely.
- 8.3 *Agreed (Scott Nicol/Pat Swift) that Council receives the Draft Fatigue Management Guidelines and suggested feedback was to seek clarification on the statement “ensuring staff work no more than 14 hrs”. [25/02/8.3]*

9.0 GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE 2025-2026 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN

- 9.1 Arash Alaeinia explained how he had structured the paper and highlighted that many priorities roll from year to year. Arash talked about the current priorities, our risks, and opportunities that can come from those risks. He also provided detail of the NZC priorities which were supported by this Council and asked if there were any areas Council would like to focus on.
- 9.2 Cr Scott Nicol thanked Arash for the well thought out paper and supported some of the new initiatives. Scott was concerned that the outcomes from this year’s banding projects were not being considered for the season regulations and questioned the purpose of banding if the data is not being used. Scott was absent for the December meeting. Cr Murray Ferris reiterated his disappointment in the outcome of the Game Season Regulation discussions.
- 9.3 Arash Alaeinia advised that the banding projects were particularly important, especially this year with HPAI on our doorstep and were valued by MPI. Cr Lindsay Lyons and Barry Roderick had received feedback from Wlodek Stanislawek (MPI) of the significance of this work in detecting not only HPAI but other avian viruses too, Wlodek had thanked Fish & Game for their contribution to this important work. Cr Alec McIver was aware of the importance of capturing the data and was concerned that some regions were not undertaking banding work. His experience with the Game Animal Council had shown the data capture was critical to support discussions with the politicians.
- 9.4 Council supported the proposed priorities with two amendments and agreed that Water Quality and Quantity did not need to stand alone as this generally sat under both fishery opportunities and greyland habitat. Proposed priorities were;
- 1 Access
 - 2 Increasing revenue
 - 3 Enhancing Fishery Opportunities
 - 4 Improvement of Greyland Production and Habitat.
- Council agreed with 1 and 2 but 3 and 4 were amended as follows;
- 3 Enhancing Fishery Opportunities and Water Quality
 - 4 Improvement of Gamebird Production and Habitat
- 9.5 Discussion also covered.
- High cost in creating Habitat, drains are integral part of duck habitat
 - Regional Councils drain management practices affect duck breeding season
 - Opportunities through Game Bird Habitat Trust for funding projects
 - Wetlands not being looked after by hunters appropriately
 - Ballot process and expectations

- NZC to advocate strongly against private capture
 - Walking access not doing what they were established to do
 - Access portfolio of all lost waters sent to NZC, it is a high priority for them
 - Collaboration with iwi
 - Lake McLaren and immigrant fishing opportunities
- 9.5 Arash Alaeinia concluded that the priorities as listed 1-4 are the overarching priorities from a governance perspective and these will filter through to the Operational Work Plan (OWP) outputs which would be considered at Councils March meeting. Council would have the opportunity to contribute to the OWP at that time.

10.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS

Finance Report

10.1 There were no questions raised on the finance report.

10.2 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Alec McIver) that Council receives the finance report approves payments for November and December 2024 totalling \$377,466.47. [25/02/10.2]*

Management Report

10.3 Cr Scott Nicol queried whether fish kill situation at Lake Okaro had been resolved and whether this was still occurring. Arash Alaeinia advise that this was due to environmental changes in the lake for a short period and was pleased that there had been no resulting cases of botulism in the area.

10.4 *Agreed (Mark Sceats/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the Management Report. [25/02/10.4]*

Licence Sales Report

10.5 Kate Thompson advised while sales are still positive against last season the positive result had dropped to 6.7% since the last report. She believed this was due to the significant weather events at the start of last season meaning people delayed their purchases until the summer period, this season the opposite has occurred in that purchasing occurred earlier at the start of the season and has slowed over summer as many already have their licences. Kate also commented on sales still not having recovered following covid. Discussion continued around current economic climate and impacts that this is having on sales, noting that short term sales have seen an increase compared with season categories which may be indicative of this.

10.6 *Agreed (Scott Nicol/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the Licence Sales Report. [25/02/10.6]*

11.0 LIAISON OFFICERS REPORTS

11.1 *Report from Bay of Plenty Conservation Board*

No Report

11.2 *Report from Department of Conservation*

No Report

11.3 *Report from New Zealand Council*

Arash Alaeinia had circulated the NZC report prior to the meeting. The Southland/Federated Farmers issue was raised and Cr Mark Sceats advised that this was currently ongoing. Arash Alaeinia highlighted recent news item with Southland doing positive work in wetlands with farmers.

12.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

12.1 *Managers Review*

Cr Lindsay Lyons queried whether the manager's 360° had occurred? Arash Alaeinia confirmed a review had occurred in August 2024 with the Executive Committee at the time. Lindsay informed Council of the usual process whereby the Executive Committee is responsible for collating and recommending but highlighted this needed to be put

back through all of Council meeting in a Public Excluded session. Cr Mark Sceats was not Chair at the time and could not recall what had occurred but recommended this be placed on the next agenda.

12.2 *Lake Okataina Update*

Arash Alaeinia advised that the gate at Lake Okataina is currently being installed and has been funded by the Regional Council, Lakes District Council, and Ministry for Primary Industries. Arash detailed the process needed to access the gate once operational. The Regional Council was managing the gate and would deal with issues and maintenance and the Okataina Lodge would be a point of call for people having issues on site. Cr Pat Swift asked if there could be an instructional video developed to show users the new requirements including the wash process and navigating access through the gate. Arash Alaeinia advised that he would recommend this to the Regional Council as they are the lead organisation. Council discussed the potential pitfalls that might occur with the process. Arash advised that the wash station suggested for the Rotoiti rugby grounds was not confirmed but was under discussion.

12.3 *Access and closed waters*

Cr Mike Jarvie queried where we stand with access across private land to waterways as he understood some landowners did not allow access or just allowed friends and, in some cases, guides to access water through/on their properties. Mike asked if Fish & Game negotiates with these landowners and questioned the legality of not opening these waters. Cr Lindsay Lyons advised that closing waters is different to not opening waters which is something Fish & Game can do under the legislation but there needed to be a biological reason for doing so. Arash provided an example of an area now closed for access because of a sale of a property and the new owner not wishing to have anglers accessing through their land. Staff liaise with landowners on behalf of anglers and investigate situations where exclusive capture may be occurring.

12.4 Cr Mark Sceats congratulated Scott Nicol on the arrival of his daughter.

12.5 Cr Murray Ferris advised that he preferred to have a paper Agenda rather than the electronic version and asked if those that wanted the paper version could get one? Cr's Lyons, Jarvie, Ferris, Sceats, Coutts have requested paper agendas in future.

12.6 Cr Lindsay Lyons had brought up with last Council to look at a five-year plan, that is where did we want Fish & Game to be in five years. He asked whether we could put together the cornerstones that we want in a five-year plan at the next meeting. Cr Mark Sceats requested Arash to add this to the March agenda for discussion.

13.0 MEETING CLOSED

13.1 Cr Mark Sceats closed the meeting 2.33 pm.



.....
Mark Sceats
Chairman

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

2.0 APOLOGIES

2.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mark Sceats) that the apologies for the 213th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [25/02/2.2]*

3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (7 DECEMBER 2024)

3.1 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Alec McIver) that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [25/02/3.1]*

6.0 HEALTH & SAFETY

6.2 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Scott Nicol) that Council receives the Health and Safety report. [25/02/6.2]*

7.0 ANGLERS NOTICE REVIEW

7.2 *Agreed (Mark Sceats/Murray Ferris) that Council agrees to the consultation process and time frame for considering changes to the 2025-2026 Anglers Notice. [25/02/7.2]*

8.0 DRAFT FATIGUE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

8.3 *Agreed (Scott Nicol/Pat Swift) that Council receives the Draft Fatigue Management Guidelines and suggested feedback was to seek clarification on the statement "ensuring staff work no more than 14 hrs". [25/02/8.3]*

10.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS

10.2 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Alec McIver) that Council receives the finance report approves payments for November and December 2024 totalling \$377,466.47. [25/02/10.2]*
Management Report

10.4 *Agreed (Mark Sceats/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the Management Report. [25//02/10.4]*

10.6 *Agreed (Scott Nicol/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the Licence Sales Report. [25/02/10.6]*