

**FISH & GAME NEW ZEALAND
NELSON MARLBOROUGH REGION**

MINUTES OF THE NELSON-MARLBOROUGH FISH AND GAME COUNCIL HELD AT 10AM ON 19 MAY 2025 AT DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION OFFICE, 22 GEE STREET, RENWICK.

Present: Owen Baigent
Nick King
Guy Gardiner Arrived 11.55
Bill O’Leary
Kylie Sargeant
Nev Gane
Wayne McDonald Arrived 11.30
Darran Kerei-Keepa (Ngai Tahu Representative)

In Attendance

Rhys Barrier	Manager
Karen Crook	Secretary
Lawson Davey	Field Officer
Vaughan Lynn	Field Officer part meeting

1. APOLOGIES Guy Gardiner and Wayne McDonald for lateness, and Kylie Sargeant for the July meeting.

2. A minute’s silence was held to acknowledge the passing of Councillor Jean Willis – Jean was a long-standing Councillor standing for 2 terms for Nelson Marlborough and 1 for West Coast Region, Jean was also the Secretary and life member of the Nelson Trout Fishing Club.

Under Section 26ZA(5) of the Conservation Act the vacancy will be advertised, if an election is not requested by any licence holders the next top polling candidate at the last election will be asked if they would like to fill the vacancy.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS AND AGREEMENT ON AGENDA ORDER

No urgent business was tabled. It was agreed to defer discussion on the Licence Fee Consultation, Proposed Family Licence Changes and the new item Councillor Feedback, until all Councillors are present.

4. ANNUAL AGENDA AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Annual Agenda was presented and agreed on.

It is noted that Councill Bill O’Leary is now a member of the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board, and this will be added to the Councils Conflict of Interest Schedule, Councillor Nev Gane advised that he has been asked to be a Director of the Lower Waihopai Irrigation Company, and he will let Council know if this happens.

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Councillors were asked to identify any topics to be discussed at this meeting that they perceive to be a potential conflict of interest. No conflicts were identified.

5. CONSIDERATION OF THE MARCH MEETING MINUTES

**C1/05/25 MOVE THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2025 MEETING BE
CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD OF THE MEETING.**

K Sargeant/N King CARRIED

**6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MARCH MINUTES/ ACTION REQUIRED
SCHEDULE**

The Fatigue Management Policy review was carried out by staff and is an agenda item later in the meeting.

7. HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

The Health & Safety Report was tabled and noted.

8. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.

**C2/05/25 MOVE THAT THE MARCH AND APRIL ACCOUNTS FOR
PAYMENT TOTTALLING \$98,643.56 BE CONFIRMED FOR PAYMENT**

B O'Leary/K Sargeant CARRIED

The Financial reports to 30 April 2025 were tabled and accepted.

New Signatory for Accounts – Councillor Jean Willis was a signatory to the accounts; it was agreed to ask Councillor Guy Gardiner if he can take on this role when he arrives at the meeting.

DOC Liaison – Apologies from Gavin Finch

9. NELSON MARLBOROUGH DEDICATED RESERVE'S POLICY

General discussion was held on what the purpose of the dedicated reserves was and when and how these can be set up and used.

Councillor Bill O'Leary was concerned with the wording of the proposed motion –

when setting up such a dedicated reserve the Council will set a policy for the use of that reserve, this policy will be recorded and any money spent from that reserve will be approved by Council before hand and notification to NZ Council at the same time.

It was agreed that this motion would be rescinded and further work on this will be undertaken and this item will be placed on the next Council Agneda.

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10. DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROCEDURE AND POLICY

The presented Drug and Alcohol Procedure and Policy has been adopted by the New Zealand Fish and Game Council.

C3/05/25 MOVE THAT THIS COUNCIL ADOPT THE PRESENTED NEW ZEALAND FISH AND GAME COUNCIL DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROCEDURE AND POLCY AS THIS REGIONS POLICY
B O'Leary/W McDonald CARRIED

11. BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

The presented Bullying and Harassment Policy has been adopted by the New Zealand Fish and Game Council.

C4/05/25 MOVE THAT THIS COUNCIL ADOPT THE PRESENTED NEW ZEALAND FISH AND GAME COUNCIL BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLCY AS THIS REGIONS POLICY
B O'Leary/N King CARRIED

12. FATIGUE MANAGEMENT POLICY

The presented Fatigue Management Policy that has been adopted by the New Zealand Fish and Game Council has been considered by staff and slight wording changes have been suggested by Management. After discussion management was asked to tighten some of the wording so it was not so open ended and the re draft will be considered at the next meeting.

13. COUNCILLOR FEEDBACK SESSION

Councillors welcomed the opportunity to have their own report back session, which can be collated and summarised in the Regions Annual Performance Report and the like.

- Councillor King advised that conditions on the Wangapeka River have not been ideal so the proposed fishing day with the Minister has been put on hold.
- An easy way to receive donations from licence holders/public was discussed and needs further investigation.
- Guy and Nev attended a pre-session clay shot in Marlborough, they talked to the group about NM Fish and Game and presented prizes donated by the Council.
- Kylie will be attending a fishing day with some of the Casting for Recovery attendees at the fishing ponds over the coming weekend.
- Councillors continue to take out new hunters and are encouraged to send photos to Jacob so these can be posted on our facebook page and put in the Fish & Game newsletter Both Barrels.

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- Councillors were encouraged to speak with their local authority councillors on topics such as access and water allocation etc, Marlborough Councillors are happy to attend and support management at any meeting in Marlborough.
- Councillors and Marlborough hunters have made submissions on the draft Grovetown Park Management Plan.

14. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE FAMILY LICENCE

The Council agreed in principle to the proposed change that allows for two primary licence holders equal fishing rights and voting privileges, but noted that caution should be taken:

- to ensure that Fish and Game do not suffer a greater financial loss than what the NZ Council paper indicates. To monitor the financial impacts over 3 years could see Fish and Game losing over half a million dollars during that time before any action is taken to review this. The cost of issuing an additional licence and its impact has also not been shown in any meaningful way.
- data gathered was from a very small data sample and no data or sampling has been collected from current family licence holders, and the licence working party has not been consulted on the likely impact of this change.
- Couples without children or grandchild that currently purchase a whole season fishing licence each may now see this as a discounted licence. One solution to prevent this could be a requirement that there must be at least 1 child/grandchild on the licence to qualify for a family licence (this would be a new requirement as just couples without children can get a family licence at present, it would be good to know the numbers of current family licences that just have 2 adults and no children as this will put them at a disadvantage).
- A second and perhaps more palatable suggestion to avoid heavy discounting and revenue loss could be to issue just 1 licence with both names on that one licence and that the licence can be used by both individuals together but only one individually (i.e. they both can't go fishing at the same time at separate locations), rather than giving both individuals their own licence. This would likely stop those childless couples from getting a discounted licence as only one can use it at a time unless they fish together but still provide for retired campervan travellers etc whom want a family licence simply to provide for their partner to occasionally fish with them, a situation which probably doesn't warrant the purchase of two full season adult licences.

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15. 2025-26 LICENCE FEE CONSULTATION

Other than reservations expressed around redefining the family licence criteria, the Nelson Marlborough Fish & Game Council support the rest of the proposed licence fee changes which are broadly aligned with inflation.

An error in Appendix 2 schedule was noted on the proposed licence fee increases – the 2024/25 adult NR whole season licence fee is stated to be \$273 when it is currently \$270. This will be passed onto NZ Council.

It was highlighted to Council that in the financial information NZC has provided to regions 1.49% is coming from each regions reserves, for NM this equals \$8,771.00, the \$18,795 approved top-up of our reserves to meet 20% has now just reduced to \$10,024 which means we are starting to the new year well below the required 20%. NZ Council will be asked to investigate this.

Also noted the magazine costs again requiring more money. For the 3rd time this Council will ask where has NZC got to with progressing a digital magazine with and “opt-in/pay for” option at the time of licence purchase for licence holders wanting a paper version? The Council notes NZDA went to this model, and it has worked very well for them.

16. DRAFT POLICY FEEDBACK

The following feedback will be provided to NZ Council

Draft Lone Worker Support Policy

NM Council do not see a need for such a policy; this could be included as part of the Lone Worker Policy. A SOP for communication with a lone worker should/could be laid out in the lone worker policy and is also covered by existing workplan risk assessments within the Nelson Marlborough region.

Draft Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy

NM Council found this document needs substantial editing. The use of “Fish and Game New Zealand” is confusing and not a statutory title. It is unclear which parts NZ Council are responsible for and what is a regional responsibility. The approved National Health and Safety Policy sets out the role of NZ Council and Regions nice and clearly. There is no reference to wellbeing in here and Point 7 “Our Expectations of you” Breaches – this seems out of place here not everyone has an employment agreement (Councillors, rangers etc). This policy is not supported in its present form, and recommend a redraft be undertaken.

Resource Management & Legislation Policy

NM Council has no comment or suggestions on this draft policy, noting however the legal fund is essentially now being reframed to cover costs of NZC functions

