



NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

BOARD PACK

for

NCFG COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, 21 May 2025

6:30 pm (NZST)

Held at:

NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

595 JOHNS ROAD, HAREWOOD, CHRISTCHURCH

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AGENDA

NCFG COUNCIL MEETING



Name:	NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL
Date:	Wednesday, 21 May 2025
Time:	6:30 pm to 8:30 pm (NZST)
Location:	NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL, 595 JOHNS ROAD, HAREWOOD, CHRISTCHURCH
Board Members:	ALAN STRONG (Chair), ANDY TANNOCK, CHRIS BRANKIN, DAVE BARRON, DAVE COLL, NIALL COSTER, PHILLIP MUSSON
Attendees:	DEBBIE AMBLER
Apologies:	NICK MOODY

1. Opening Meeting

1.1 Welcome by Chairman 6:30 pm (5 min)

ALAN STRONG

Cr Strong welcomed Councillors, public to the meeting and proceeded to give a health and safety brief.

1.2 Karakia 6:35 pm (5 min)

CHRIS BRANKIN

**Whakataka te hau ki te uru
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga
Kia mākinakina ki uta
Kia mātaratara ki tai
E hī ake ana te atakura
He tio, he huka, he hau hū
Tihei mauri ora!**

Translation:

*Cease the winds from the west
Cease the winds from the south
Let the breeze blow over the land
Let the breeze blow over the ocean
Let the red-tipped dawn come with a sharpened air.
A touch of frost, a promise of a glorious day.*

1.3 Apologies 6:40 pm (5 min)

ALAN STRONG

Apologies were given as stated.

1.4 Interests Register

6:45 pm (5 min)

ALAN STRONG

Supporting Documents:

1.4.a	Interests Register	7
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1.5 Council time

6:50 pm (20 min)

ALAN STRONG

For Discussion

Council discussion about future risks and issues.

2. FOR DECISION

2.1 Confirm Minutes from Previous Meetings

7:10 pm (10 min)

ALAN STRONG

For Decision

Supporting Documents:

2.1.a	Minutes : NCFG Operational Work Plan and Budget Meeting - 26 Mar 2025	8
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2.2 2025/26 Licence Fee Consultation

ALAN STRONG

For Decision

Supporting Documents:

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2.3 Duck Hunting at Muriwai

CHRIS BRANKIN

For Decision

Supporting Documents:

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2.4 Angling Regulation Changes 2025/2026

ALAN STRONG

For Decision

Supporting Documents:

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2.5 2025/26 Sea-Run Salmon Bag Limit Recommendation

ALAN STRONG

For Decision

Supporting Documents:

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2.6 NCFG Property Planting Plan

ALAN STRONG

For Decision

Supporting Documents:

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2.7 Finance Report

ALAN STRONG

For Decision

Supporting Documents:

2.7.a	FINANCE REPORT FOR APRIL TO 16 MAY 25.pdf	38
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3. GENERAL BUSINESS

3.1 General Business

7:20 pm (15 min)

ALAN STRONG

General business from Council.

4. STANDARD REPORTS

4.1 Standard Reports

7:35 pm (10 min)

ALAN STRONG

1. Chairmans' Report (verbal)
2. Operational Update
3. Finance Report
4. NZC Report (Verbal)
5. RMA Update
6. Compliance Report
7. Health and Safety Report
8. Updates from Sub-Committees of Council (verbal)

Supporting Documents:

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4.1.e	HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT MAY 25 (1).pdf	64

4.2 Action List

7:45 pm (10 min)

ALAN STRONG

Supporting Documents:

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5. PUBLIC SESSION

5.1 Public Session

7:55 pm (10 min)

ALAN STRONG

6. FOR INFORMATION PAPERS

6.1 For Information Papers

Supporting Documents:

6.1.a	LETTER TO RACHEL BREWER.pdf	68
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6.1.c	FOR INFORMATION SEA RUN SALMON BAG RECOMMENDATION APPENDIX TO PAPER.pdf	71
6.1.d	FOR INFORMATION - 2025 ANGLING REGULATIONS REVIEW SUBMISSIONS AND NOTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING.pdf	93

7. Close Meeting

7.1 Close the meeting

Next meeting: No date for the next meeting has been set.

Interests Register

NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL



As of: 21 May 2025

Person	Organisation	Active Interests	Notice Date
ALAN STRONG	N/A	No Interest Recorded	13 Nov 2024
ANDY TANNOCK	Gamebird Habitat Trust	Chair	13 Nov 2024
CHRIS BRANKIN	Ministry for the Environment	Staff member	13 Nov 2024
DAVE BARRON	Tallarook Dairies, Nectar Group	Director of Company which leases land for the purpose of dairy farming, Owner of Nectar Group. Not involved in Fish and Game service or support decisions. Nectar now offers it's services free of charge to Fish & Game for service.	9 Nov 2021
DAVE COLL	N/A	No interest recorded	13 Nov 2024
NIALL COSTER	N/A	No interest recorded	13 Nov 2024
NICK MOODY	N/A	No interest recorded	13 Nov 2024
PHILLIP MUSSON	Fonterra	Shareholder Fonterra and ECAN Selwyn River Liaison Committee	13 Nov 2024

MINUTES (in Review)

NCFG OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN AND BUDGET MEETING



Name:	NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL
Date:	Wednesday, 26 March 2025
Time:	6:38 pm to 9:39 pm (NZDT)
Location:	NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL, 595 JOHNS ROAD, HAREWOOD, CHRISTCHURCH
Board Members:	ALAN STRONG (Chair), ANDY TANNOCK, CHRIS BRANKIN, DAVE BARRON, DAVE COLL, NIALL COSTER, NICK MOODY, PHILLIP MUSSON
Apologies:	DEBBIE AMBLER
Guests/Notes:	Cr's Barron and Moody attended the meeting via video link. M Garrick (staff)

1. Opening Meeting

1.1 Confirm Minutes

1.2 Welcome by Chairman

Cr Strong welcomed Councillors and staff to meeting.

1.3 Karakia

Cr Brankin gave the Karakia.

1.4 Council Time

1. Discussion held on how to deal with difficult interactions on social media, particularly when staff are targeted.
2. Keeping Council meeting and public session separate.
3. How to maintain and build good relationships with Federated Farmers.
4. Discussion on Central South Island F&G fishing regulations in particular regarding Lake Heron fishery.



Building Relationships with Federated Farmers

Start a cycle of bi-annual meetings with the Chairman of Federated Farmers and connect with Daniel Maxwell via the Gamebird Advisory Group.

Due Date: 31 Aug 2025
Owner: PHILLIP MUSSON



Regulation Review of Lake Heron

That a verbal discussion followed by a letter to Central South Island F&G on North Canterbury F&G's position on the management of Lake Heron be completed.

Decision Date: 26 Mar 2025
Mover: CHRIS BRANKIN
Seconder: ANDY TANNOCK
Outcome: Approved



Regulation Review of Lake Heron

That a Council-to-Council discussion be held with Central South Island F&G's on North Canterbury F&G's position on the management of Lake Heron.

Due Date: 22 Jul 2025
Owner: ALAN STRONG

1.5 Apologies

1.6 Interests Register

No change.

2. FOR DECISION

2.1 Access Project - Ryton Bay

Due to the road access to the Ryton Bay toilets and boat launch area that has degraded over time, a request to fix the issue by building a culvert was recommended.



Access Project - Ryton Bay

That the Council approve spending up to \$14,000 out of the Habitat Restoration Reserve to repair the Ryton Bay access to Lake Coleridge.

Decision Date: 26 Mar 2025
Mover: NIALL COSTER
Seconder: PHILLIP MUSSON
Outcome: Approved

2.2 Vehicle Replacement

To be discussed in Public Excluded session.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

3.1 General Business

1. Noted that the job vacancy for the Operations Manager for North Canterbury F&G has been notified.
2. Question was raised if carbon credits would be possible for Glenariffe.

4. STANDARD REPORTS

4.1 Standard Reports

1. Chairmans' Report - Attended March NZC meeting to outline the ideas of a proposal of amalgamation. NZC gave support in working with them to raise a Memorandum of Understanding. Advised the resignation of the NZC CEO C Jordan, met with A Thompson

(Department of Conservation) regarding access to Te Waihora for game bird hunters for the forthcoming season.

2. NZC Report - at latest meeting discussed national access issues, of which some regions had not responded. North Canterbury required to respond to this issue.

4.2 Action List

Due Date	Action Title	Owner(s)
22 May 2024	Building Relationships with Ngai Tahu Status: On Hold	ALAN STRONG
21 Aug 2024	Discussion with Central South Island Regarding Management of Lake Heron & Melish Stream Status: In Progress	DAVE BARRON
16 Feb 2025	Shooting Platform for the Disabled Status: In Progress	ALAN STRONG
28 Feb 2025	Development of an Educational and Promotional Strategy for Gamebird Hunting Status: In Progress	ALAN STRONG
21 May 2025	Meeting with NZSAA Status: Not Started	ALAN STRONG

5. PUBLIC SESSION

6. FOR INFORMATION PAPERS

6.1 For Information Papers

6.2 MOVE INTO PUBLIC EXCLUDED MEETING



Move Into Public Excluded Meeting

That the meeting move into Public Excluded.

Decision Date: 26 Mar 2025
Mover: DAVE COLL
Seconder: NIALL COSTER
Outcome: Approved

7. Close Meeting

7.1 Close the meeting

Next meeting: No date for the next meeting has been set.

New Actions raised in this meeting

Item	Action Title	Owner(s)
1.4	Building Relationships with Federated Farmers Due Date: 31 Aug 2025	PHILLIP MUSSON

Item	Action Title	Owner(s)
1.4	Regulation Review of Lake Heron Due Date: 22 Jul 2025	ALAN STRONG

Signature: _____

Date: _____

CONSULTATION:	LICENCE FEE RECOMMENDATION 2025-26
TO:	Regional Managers
CC:	Administrators
AUTHOR:	Corina Jordan, CEO of NZ Fish & Game Council
DATE:	24/04/2025
FEEDBACK DUE:	09/06/2025
FEEDBACK TO:	nzcouncil@fishandgame.org.nz

Recommendations - Ngā taunaki

1. The New Zealand Fish and Game Council seeks consultation from Regional Fish and Game Councils on the following points:
 - a. Recommend to the Minister for Hunting and Fishing of the approval of the 2025-26 Adult Whole Season Sports Fish licence of **\$161** (increase of \$5) and Adult Whole Season Game licence of **\$120** (increase of \$4) (inclusive of a \$5 fee for the Game Bird Habitat Stamp) inclusive of GST be accepted *
 - b. Recommend to the Minister for Hunting and Fishing of the approval of the 2025 26 Non-Resident Whole Season Fishing licence of **\$300** (increase of \$30) *
 - c. That the licence categories be charged at the agreed ratio for all categories
 - d. The sea-run salmon licence endorsement of \$5 (as a cost-recovery mechanism) (no change from 2024/25).
 - e. That Designated Waters Licence as a \$5 annual licence per Fish and Game region for resident anglers and as a day licence to non-resident anglers at a fee of \$40 (no change from 2024/25).
 - f. Recommend the forecast Fish LEQ for the 2025/26 Season being **72,975** and **30,601** for Game.

Discussion - Kōrero

Proposal

2. The New Zealand Fish and Game Council (NZC) is seeking to consult with Fish and Game regional councils on the '2025/26 licence fee recommendations and forecast LEQ' for 2025/26.
3. The NZC met on the 11th and 12th of April 2025 to consider the 2025/26 budgets and licence fees. Following that meeting, NZC agreed to recommend an increase in licence fees. The licence fee for a sports fish adult whole season licence is proposed as \$161 (an increase of \$5), the game adult whole season licence is proposed as \$120 (an increase of \$4), and the non-resident whole season fish licence is proposed as \$300 (an increase of \$30) for 2025/2026. In recommending these fees, NZC also recommended that all other licence categories increase to the agreed proportions. A full list of recommended licence fees and categories is detailed in the Schedule attached (**Appendix 2**).

Background

4. In recommending licence fees to the Minister, the New Zealand Fish & Game Council is required to:

“Give particularly careful consideration to the regional Fish and Game Councils’ assessed management costs, and the potential impact, on their management activities, when reaching its decision as to the level of licence fee that would be “appropriate”; and

Give genuine attention, and thought, to the regional Fish and Game Councils’ views and recommendations before making its recommendation to the Minister. Geddis 2023, NZC fee setting power - s 26C(1)(e) CA - advice 29.05.2023[82][23].

5. Section 26Q of the Conservation Act 1987 sets out the functions of Fish and Game Councils.

Subsection (l)(d)(a) requires councils:

To assess the costs attributable to the management of sports fish and game;

Section 26Q(l)(d)(ii) requires Fish and Game councils:

To develop and recommend to the New Zealand Fish and Game Council appropriate licence fees to recover costs and game bird habitat stamp fees;

Section 26C(l)(e) requires NZC:

To recommend to the Minister of Conservation an appropriate fee for fishing and hunting licences, after considering the views and recommendations of Fish and Game Councils.

Section 26C(l)(ia) also requires NZC:

To recommend to the Minister, after considering the views and recommendations (if any) of Fish and Game Councils and the New Zealand Game Bird Habitat Trust Board, an appropriate fee in respect of any game bird habitat stamp and the form of such stamps (the form of the stamp to be approved as part of the 2011 Game Notice).

6. Operationally, the national policy of NZC specifies that all expenditure needs to be approved as part of the budget round, including capital expenditure and expenditure from reserves for all councils.

Policy

7. At the May 2020 NZC meeting, in response to COVID-19, the NZC set the minimum level of reserves at 20% of total budget for all councils. This level of general reserve is considered adequate to provide security against fluctuations in income and to ensure adequate operational cash flow.
8. The budget policy specifies that all expenditure from general and dedicated reserves needs to be notified/approved by NZC as part of the budget round or by making an application for Exceptional Funding. There are consequences across all sectors of the organisation when any council's reserves are reduced in a manner inconsistent with this policy.

Budget Process

9. The New Zealand Fish & Game Council resolved at meeting 170 (23 and 24 August 2025) that there would no longer be a Contestable Fund Budget round. Instead, NZC, on an annual basis, will be taking a zero-based budget approach whereby the entire budget of a region will be reviewed annually and in setting both Licence Fee recommendations and organisational budgets moving forward.
10. The Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB) approach was to be phased in over two years. With the first year focussed on supporting the regions to work through a ZBB process, updating F&G's budget and application templates, and trialling new/amended processes. Year two is intended to be about refining F&G's templates and processes from the learnings of year one and, if required, more in-depth discussions around any potential financial policy changes, including resourcing across the organisation.
11. Summary:
- a. ZBB is intended to be phased in over two years;
 - b. For 2025/26, Regional Fish & Game Councils are encouraged to consider the previous year's budget as a guide in setting the overall regional budget;
 - c. Councils were encouraged to consider Strategic Priorities for the region – Ideally, utilise the Organisational Strategy as this will be top of mind for NZC;
 - d. Councils were encouraged, when considering their strategic priorities along with legislative functions, to build budgets and their OWP in a manner which considers each line item and whether or not efficiency gains can be made, and whether or not line items should be added or removed;
 - e. The effective outcome may be, an increase, or decrease, relative to the previous year's budget total;
 - f. For material changes in projects from previous years, the preparation of a business case was recommended (i.e.>\$30,000).
12. A comprehensive Zero-based budgeting tool, instructions document, and video was distributed to the regions on 26 February 2025. Drop-in training sessions were also provided. Given the delay in providing the Zero based budgeting tool, NZC accepted regional budgets in either the historic format or in the new ZBB format. Three regions (Westcoast, North Canterbury, and Hawkes Bay Fish & Game Councils) worked with the new ZBB tool and provided their budgets in this format. A Business Case Template and Summary Budget Template were also provided to assist regions in putting forward their recommended budgets to NZC. The Summary Template also provided a structure for Regional Chairs to speak to as they presented their budgets to NZC on the 11th of April 2025. All Regions provided their full budgets.
13. This process is summarised in the following budget cycle:

Feb	All council budgets reviewed against audited actual expenditure. Budgets over or under 10% variance are reported against, reviewed, and discussed. The variance reports for the 2024/25 year are prepared and discussed.
March	Preparation of business and operational work plans for new financial year (NFY). Draft budgets developed by NZC and regional councils.
April	Councils apply for Baseline funding and Business Case funding, with applications circulated beforehand and prioritised at the NZC April meeting
April 11th	NZC meet (by Zoom) with the Chairs of each region to consider the budget funding applications.

April 11 & 12th	NZC make recommendations on licence forecast fees, having considered Baseline funding levels and Business Case fund applications, and sends them to regional councils for consideration.
May	Regional councils consider NZC licence fee recommendations. Due back to NZC (9 June 2025).
June	NZC consider regional response and finalises licence fee recommendations for approval by the Minister for Hunting and Fishing.

14. The funding required to cover Base funds and approved Business Case funding is assessed against the expected licence sales for the year ahead (established from analysis of historical sales trends) to determine the licence fees.

15. The recommended licence fee is effectively set by dividing the sum of the proposed budgets of the 13 Councils by the number of adult whole season licence equivalents that Fish and Game NZ expects to sell during the year (LEQ targets).

2025/26 Licence LEQ Forecast

16. The following table represents the approved forecast for the Licence sales for Fish and Game for the 2025/26 season. NZC is recommending the forecast LEQ for the 2025/26 Season being **72,975** for Fish and **30,601** for Game.

17. The forecast which the Licence Working Party recommended.

Table 1. Extrapolated Fish Licence Forecast (LEQ) for 2025/26 – using the estimated sales for the 2024/25 complete season as of 17 March 2025.

	Actual Fish 2023-24	Estimated Fish 2024-25	Extrapolated Fish 2025-26
Northland	467	618	618
Auckland Waikato	3655	3838	3838
Eastern	8504	9005	9005
Hawke's Bay	2455	3010	3010
Taranaki	1022	1217	1217
Wellington	3039	2910	2846
Nelson Marlborough	4377	4217	4136
North Canterbury	11007	10456	10180
West Coast	2169	2200	2200
Central South Island	12486	12406	12366
Otago	15514	15491	15479
Southland	8740	8300	8080
	73435	73667	72975

Table 2. Extrapolated Game Licence Forecast (LEQ) for 2025/26 – based on the Traditional Method.

	Actual Game 2023	Actual Game 2024	Extrapolated Game 2026
Northland	1552	1521	1506
Auckland Waikato	6518	6463	6436
Eastern	2855	2663	2567
Hawke's Bay	1750	1888	1888
Taranaki	1086	995	950
Wellington	3290	3239	3214
Nelson Marlborough	862	850	844
North Canterbury	2557	2576	2576
West Coast	364	363	363
Central South Island	2266	2031	1914
Otago	3989	3945	3923
Southland	4625	4488	4420
	31714	31022	30601

18. Appendix 1 provides the 2025/2026 Licence Sales and Interest Forecast based on Current Licence Fees.

Following Components Featured in the 2025/26 Budget Discussions: Business Case Funding Applications

19. All Regions provided their proposed Baseline budget for FY26. For most regions this included an increase from their FY25 baseline budgets. Increases ranged from X to x% (appendix x). Total FY26 Baseline budgets totalled \$12,874,509, in comparison to total FY25 baseline budgets which totalled \$12,358,386 (including contestable fund applications that were approved in FY25 as ongoing), an increase of 4.1% and \$516,123.00.

20. For reference, according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), in March 2025, New Zealand's annual inflation rate reached 2.5% for the previous 12 months.

Summary of Base Budget Proposals 2025/26 vs 2024/25				
Region	Base Budget FY 24/25	Proposed Base Budget 25/26	Percentage increase	Value Increase
Northland	\$592,081.00	\$610,346.00	3%	\$18,265.00
Auckland\Waikato	\$881,824.00	\$966,026.00	10%	\$84,202.00
Eastern	\$1,305,544.00	\$1,273,476.00	-2%	(\$32,068.00)
Hawkes Bay	\$434,624.00	\$499,775.00	15%	\$65,151.00
Taranaki	\$427,816.00	\$427,292.00	0%	(\$524.00)
Wellington	\$848,388.00	\$851,300.00	0%	\$2,912.00
Nelson-Marlb	\$564,125.00	\$590,269.00	5%	\$26,144.00
Nth Canterbury	\$1,068,935.00	\$1,145,910.00	7%	\$76,975.00
West Coast	\$375,951.00	\$424,000.00	13%	\$48,049.00
Central SI	\$945,235.00	\$1,030,235.00	9%	\$85,000.00
Otago	\$1,240,968.00	\$1,324,478.00	7%	\$83,510.00
Southland	\$823,059.00	\$885,171.00	8%	\$62,112.00
NZC only	\$1,280,486.00	\$1,513,516.00	18%	\$233,030.00
National	\$1,569,350.00	\$1,332,715.00	-15%	(\$236,635.00)
TOTAL	\$12,358,386.00	\$12,874,509.00	4%	\$516,123.00

21. Fourteen Business case applications were received (59 last year), seeking additional funding of \$960,449 (previous year \$2,200,596).

Summary of Original Base Budget Proposals and additional Business Case Requests							
Region	Net Licence Income	Base Budget FY 24/25	Proposed Base Budget 25/26	Reserves as at 31 Aug 25	Business cases from reserves or Other	Business Cases	Reserves Req 20% of budget
Northland	\$226,447.59	\$592,081.00	\$610,346.00	\$214,033.00			\$118,416.20
Auckland\Waikato	\$1,100,651.55	\$881,824.00	\$966,026.00	\$149,287.00			\$176,364.80
Eastern	\$1,430,366.16	\$1,305,544.00	\$1,378,026.00	\$660,651.00		\$70,347.00	\$264,108.80
Hawkes Bay	\$583,381.66	\$434,624.00	\$499,775.00	\$548,535.00	\$87,000.00		\$115,324.80
Taranaki	\$254,269.29	\$427,816.00	\$427,292.00	\$258,546.00			\$89,805.00
Wellington	\$680,741.13	\$848,388.00	\$851,300.00	\$410,195.00			\$169,677.60
Nelson-Marlb	\$619,641.83	\$564,125.00	\$590,269.00	\$94,030.00		\$35,000.00	\$112,825.00
Nth Canterbury	\$1,574,695.98	\$1,009,935.00	\$1,237,910.00	\$343,326.00	\$39,000.00		\$213,787.00
West Coast	\$327,820.74	\$375,951.00	\$424,000.00	\$256,274.00			\$80,190.20
Central SI	\$1,815,088.60	\$945,235.00	\$1,030,235.00	\$911,992.00	\$40,000.00		\$207,265.40
Otago	\$2,404,585.74	\$1,240,968.00	\$1,324,478.00	\$843,587.00			\$252,794.00
Southland	\$1,481,972.73	\$823,059.00	\$885,171.00	\$672,820.00		\$41,199.00	\$191,966.80
NZC only	\$39,646.00	\$1,280,486.00	\$1,513,516.00	\$1,559,679.00		\$100,000.00	\$674,567.20
National	\$0.00	\$1,569,350.00	\$1,628,715.00			\$436,000.00	
TOTAL	\$12,539,309.00	\$12,299,386.00	\$13,367,059.00	\$6,922,955.00	\$166,000.00	\$682,546.00	\$2,667,092.80

Funding Recommendations from NZC Staff

22. The NZC staff made recommendations to the NZC in three Steps:

- a. Step 1: Recommendation of Salary increases to meet the 2% increase in Market Movement as provided in baseline budgets;
- b. Step 2: if no licence fee increase is to be considered, then recommend:

- i. Retaining FY25 budgets;
 - ii. Approve top-up of reserves;
 - iii. Approve applications from reserves;
 - iv. Approve additional budgets to be spent from reserves, which are a high strategic priority for Fish & Game;
 - v. Approve essential business cases;
 - Licence system RFP \$50,000
 - Increased licence system running costs \$30,000
 - Increase in postage for the magazine \$50,000
- c. Step 3: If a licence fee increase is to be recommended, then consider:
- i. Approval of the Regional Baseline Budgets and increases from 2024/25;
 - ii. Approval of the NZC/National Baseline Budgets, which remain the same as 2024/25;
 - iii. Approval of the essential Business Case applications made by NZC (\$136,000):
 - Increased licence system operation costs (\$30,000):
 - licence system RFP (\$50,000) and
 - expected additional magazine postage costs for the 2026 year (\$50,000)
 - i. Approval of the Business Case applications that meet the organisation's Strategic priorities within the budget envelope that is being considered.

2025/26 NZC Business Case Funding Approval and 2025/26 Budgets

23. Budgets for all councils were received and circulated to the NZC for review before the April NZC meeting.
24. The Chairs of the Regions were invited to present their Regional Budgets to the NZC on Friday, 11th April.
25. The NZC approved Business Case funding applications at a total value of \$960,449. Of this, \$386,000 were ongoing from the Licence fee, and \$574,449 were one-off from reserves.
26. As previously notified via email, the draft budget resolutions are:
 - a. Approve reserve top-up of \$27,077 for Auckland/ Waikato and \$18,795 for Nelson/ Marlborough. A total of \$45,872 for reserves top-ups FY26;
 - b. Approve all budgets from reserves that have been included within business cases or as reserve funded within baseline in the FY26 Budget applications;

- c. Approve all staff salary increases as put forward in the salaries component of baseline budget FY26 applications for existing staff, subject to available budgets.
 - d. Accept essential NZC business cases of \$136,000 consisting of - increased licence system operation costs (\$30,000), licence system RFP (\$50,000) and expected additional magazine postage costs for the 2026 year (\$50,000);
 - e. Recommended approval of a research position with NZC to support NZC's research statutory function and to coordinate and modernize F&G research management, including population monitoring analysis and reporting;
 - f. Agree to top up RMA fund by \$100,000 (\$200,000 was initially applied for to the Council)
 - g. Agree to top up the Research fund by \$50,000
 - h. Recommend approval of the Total Budget of \$13,548,958 funded through forecast licence income and interest from reserves and one off projects funded by the use of reserves;
 - i. Three business cases were proposed to be declined. These included the following:
 - Eastern Compliance Officer \$70,347;
 - NM part-time R³ position \$35,000;
 - Te Anau position declined as a business case, but NZC would support tjs position being funded through the regions reserves \$41,199.
 - j. All regionally proposed baseline budgets were accepted, with some recommended changes in relation to funding aspects of projects from reserves rather than through the licence income. Whether or not a region funds projects from reserves is a decision for the Regional Council.
 - Eastern region moved one project (\$8,000) from their baseline funding to fund it from reserves.
 - North Canterbury moved two projects from their submitted budget to fund them from reserves, (\$19,000 and \$20,000) and
 - NZC moved the HR position from the National projects to place it under the NZC budget. Also, NZC opted to fund the magazine for two editions in 2026 from the unspent reserves previously allocated in anticipation of cost increases.
27. Budget decisions from NZC meeting 174 are subject to ratification at the NZC meeting in June.
28. Final decisions on the licence fee, levies, and grants will be made at the June NZC meeting 175 after consideration of regional feedback.
29. The proposed budget for the 13 Fish and Game councils for 2025/26 (including funding from reserves) is \$13,548,958. Table 3 summarises the draft budget decisions from NZC which are being consulted on. Individual budgets are shown in Table 4 below alongside the previous financial year (both shown as GST exclusive).

Region	Net Licence Income	Proposed Base Budget 25/26	Reserves as at 31 Aug 25	Business cases from reserves	Business Cases	Description
Northland	\$226,447.59	\$610,346.00	\$214,033.00			
Auckland\Waikato	\$1,100,651.55	\$966,026.00	\$149,287.00			
Eastern	\$1,430,366.16	\$1,273,476.00	\$660,651.00	\$8,000.00		Additional compliance Officer \$70,347
Hawkes Bay	\$583,381.66	\$499,775.00	\$548,535.00	\$87,000.00		Additional casual staff member 37k, Tukuituki riv
Taranaki	\$254,269.29	\$427,292.00	\$258,546.00			
Wellington	\$680,741.13	\$851,300.00	\$410,195.00			
Nelson-Marlb	\$619,641.83	\$590,269.00	\$94,030.00			Part time R3 Role \$35,000
Nth Canterbury	\$1,574,695.98	\$1,145,910.00	\$343,326.00	\$39,000.00		
West Coast	\$327,820.74	\$424,000.00	\$256,274.00	\$33,250.00		
Central SI	\$1,815,088.60	\$1,030,235.00	\$911,992.00	\$40,000.00		Fencing
Otago	\$2,404,585.74	\$1,324,478.00	\$843,587.00			
Southland	\$1,481,972.73	\$885,171.00	\$672,820.00	\$41,199.00		One Officer position
NZC only	\$39,646.00	\$1,513,516.00	\$1,559,679.00	\$30,000.00	\$100,000.00	New Research Position
National	\$0.00	\$1,332,715.00		\$296,000.00	\$36,000.00	Increased Licence Costs
National					\$50,000.00	Licence System RFP
National					\$50,000.00	Extra Magazine postage
National					\$100,000.00	RMA Fund Topup
National					\$50,000.00	Research Fund Topup
TOTAL	\$12,539,309.00	\$12,874,509.00	\$6,922,955.00	\$574,449.00	\$386,000.00	

30. Individual budgets are shown in Table 4 below alongside the previous financial year (both shown as GST exclusive).

	Base Funds 2025/26	Approved Business Case from Licence Fee ongoing	Approved Business Case from Reserves - One off	Approved Budget 2025/26 (inc from Reserves)
Northland	610,346	0	0	610,346
Auckland\Waikato	966,026	0	0	966,026
Eastern	1,273,476	0	8,000	1,281,476
Hawkes Bay	499,775	0	87,000	586,775
Taranaki	427,292	0	0	427,292
Wellington	851,300	0	0	851,300
Nelson-Marlb	590,269	0	0	590,269
Nth Canterbury	1,145,910	0	39,000	1,184,910
West Coast	424,000	0	33,250	457,250
Central SI	1,030,235	0	40,000	1,070,235
Otago	1,324,478	0	0	1,324,478
Southland	885,171	0	41,199	926,370
NZC only	1,513,516	100,000	30,000	1,643,516
National	1,332,715	0	296,000	1,628,715
TOTAL	12,874,509	100,000	574,449	13,548,958

1

¹ National issues include the cost of shared services benefiting the organisation nationwide, such as the special editions of the FISH AND GAME magazine, the FISH AND GAME NZ website, licence administration system, administration of elections, ranger health & safety training, etc.

Research Fund Allocation

31. An annual allocation is made to the Research Fund to avoid inflating the budget in any one year. The annual Research Budget (\$155k) historically has been split between General Research (\$100k), the National Anglers Survey (\$30k) and the Research for PhD (Cawthron \$25k).
32. NZC made a Business case application of \$100,000 for the Research Fund. NZC approved a \$50,000 top-up of the Research Fund for the 2025/26 financial year.

Staff Development Fund

33. A staff scholarship of \$10,000 is available annually for Fish and Game staff to apply for support from the organisation for national and international study, work experience or participation in events or conferences. The Staff Development Fund of \$10,000 has been retained and will be available for the 2025/26 financial year.

RMA/Legal Fund Allocation

34. The RMA/Legal fund receives budget allocations on a reimbursement basis. It covers payment of costs through a national fund rather than separate funding allocations in individual councils' budgets where approved legal projects occur.
35. NZC submitted a Business Case to provide an additional \$200,000 to the RM Fund. NZC approved \$100,000 to be allocated to the national legal pool fund for this 2025/26 year.

NZC Licence Fee Recommendations

36. After discussion, the NZC voted to recommend to the Minister for Hunting and Fishing of the approval of the 2025 26 Adult whole season sports fish licence of \$161 (an increase of \$5) and Adult whole season game licence increase of \$120 (an increase of \$4) (inclusive of the game bird habitat stamp) inclusive of GST be accepted
37. The NZC also voted to recommend to the Minister for Hunting and Fishing of the approval of the 2025 26 non-resident whole season fishing licence of \$300 (an increase of \$30)
38. That the licence categories be charged at the agreed ratio for all categories;
39. The licence fee(s) and budget go to the Regions for Consultation;
40. Total income, including interest, is \$13,262,190. The Cost of Sales (COS) is the commission and bank transaction charges relating to the sale of licences is budgeted at 4.0% of licence income.

Table 5: Total Income Summary 2025/26

	Fish Licence Income \$			Game Licence Income \$			TOTAL Licence Income \$				
	Fish \$	COS \$	Net Fish \$	Game \$	COS \$	Net Game \$	TOTAL F & G	Total COS \$	Net Licence		
									Income \$	Interest \$	Net Income
Northland	86,520	3,461	83,059	150,600	6,024	144,576	237,120	9,485	227,635	6,421	234,056
Auckland/Waikato	537,320	21,493	515,827	643,600	25,744	617,856	1,180,920	47,237	1,133,683	4,479	1,138,162
Eastern	1,260,700	50,428	1,210,272	256,700	10,268	246,432	1,517,400	60,696	1,456,704	19,820	1,476,524
Hawkes Bay	421,400	16,856	404,544	188,800	7,552	181,248	610,200	24,408	585,792	16,456	602,248
Taranaki	170,380	6,815	163,565	95,000	3,800	91,200	265,380	10,615	254,765	7,756	262,521
Wellington	398,440	15,938	382,502	321,400	12,856	308,544	719,840	28,794	691,046	12,306	703,352
Nelson-Marlb	579,040	23,162	555,878	84,400	3,376	81,024	663,440	26,538	636,902	2,821	639,723
Nth Canterbury	1,425,200	57,008	1,368,192	257,600	10,304	247,296	1,682,800	67,312	1,615,488	10,300	1,625,788
West Coast	308,000	12,320	295,680	36,300	1,452	34,848	344,300	13,772	330,528	7,688	338,216
Central SI	1,731,240	69,250	1,661,990	191,400	7,656	183,744	1,922,640	76,906	1,845,734	27,360	1,873,094
Otago	2,167,060	86,682	2,080,378	392,300	15,692	376,608	2,559,360	102,374	2,456,986	25,308	2,482,293
Southland	1,131,200	45,248	1,085,952	442,000	17,680	424,320	1,573,200	62,928	1,510,272	20,185	1,530,457
Non Resident licence fee uplift											117,382
NZC only										39,646	39,646
National											
TOTAL	10,216,500	408,660	9,807,840	3,060,100	122,404	2,937,696	13,276,600	531,064	12,745,536	200,544	13,063,462

NZ Game Bird Habitat Stamp

41. The NZC recommended the Game Bird Habitat Stamp for 2025/26 remain at \$5.

Modification to Licence Categories and Ratios with whole Season Fees

42. The NZ Council agreed that the residents sports fish categories and ratios be maintained as in previous years.

Overall Forecast Position and Use of Reserves

43. The recommendation for licence fees of \$161 and \$120, along with the recommendation of a total budget of \$13,548,958, creates an overall potential surplus of \$88,953.

**Table 6: Overall Forecast Position for Fish and Game
Based on Fish \$161 & Game \$120**

For the Year ended 31 August 2026

Net Licence Sales											12,745,536
Interest											200,544
Uplift of Non-Resident licences											117,382
Total Income											13,063,462
Less Approved Budget											13,548,958
Less funded by Reserves											(574,449)
Total Surplus/(Deficit)											88,953

44. Approval for councils to use their reserves to cover one-off projects for the year totals \$574,449.

45. Forecasts as at April 2025 suggest two regions, Auckland Waikato and Nelson Marlborough, may fall below the 20% reserves and require a top-up of \$45,872. This was included in the baseline budget calculations

Conclusion

46. The NZ Council seeks consultation from Fish and Game regional councils on the following points:

1. The licence fees and categories as set out in the appended schedule (Appendix 2) and specifically:

- a. That the 2025/26 Whole Season Sports Fish licence fee is set at \$161 (an increase of \$5), and the Adult Whole Season Game licence fee is set at \$120 (an increase of \$4) (inclusive of a \$5 fee for the Game Bird Habitat Stamp) inclusive of GST be accepted *;
- b. That the 2025/26 Non-Resident Whole Season Fishing licence fee is set at \$300 (increase of \$30) *
- c. with all proportional changes to remaining licence fees
- d. The Licence LEQ of 72,975 (Fish) and 30,601 (Game).

47. To enable the NZC to consider feedback and make recommendations to the Minister of Conservation at its June 2025 meeting, responses to these changes are requested to be submitted before **Monday, 9 June 2025**.



Barrie Barnes
Chairman
New Zealand Fish and Game Council



Corina Jordan
Chief Executive
New Zealand Fish and Game Council

APPENDIX 1.

2025-26 Licence sales and interest forecast based on current licence fees.

Region	Extrapolated Fish 2025-26	Extrapolated Game 2026	Budget Fish \$135.652 (\$156 incl GST)	Budget Game \$96.523 (\$111 incl GST excl GHBT \$5)	less comm 4% \$	Net Licence \$	Plus Interest \$	Net Income \$
Northland	618	1506	83,833	145,362	-9,168	220,027	\$6,421	226,448
Auckland Waikato	3838	6436	520,633	621,214	-45,674	1,096,173	\$4,479	1,100,652
Eastern	9005	2567	1,221,548	247,771	-58,773	1,410,546	\$19,820	1,430,366
Hawke's Bay	3010	1888	408,313	182,233	-23,622	566,924	\$16,456	583,380
Taranaki	1217	950	165,089	91,696	-10,271	246,513	\$7,756	254,269
Wellington	2846	3214	386,066	310,221	-27,851	668,435	\$12,306	680,741
Nelson Marlborough	4136	844	561,057	81,464	-25,701	616,821	\$2,821	619,642
North Canterbury	10180	2576	1,380,939	248,640	-65,183	1,564,396	\$5,495	1,569,891
West Coast	2200	363	298,435	35,037	-13,339	320,133	\$7,688	327,821
Central South Island	12366	1914	1,677,475	184,743	-74,489	1,787,729	\$27,360	1,815,089
Otago	15479	3923	2,099,760	378,655	-99,137	2,379,278	\$25,308	2,404,586
Southland	8080	4420	1,096,070	426,626	-60,908	1,461,788	\$20,185	1,481,973
NZC							\$46,730	46,730
	72975	30601	9,899,217	2,953,662	-514,115	12,338,764	202,825	12,541,589

APPENDIX 2

Schedule of FISH AND GAME NZ's proposed Licence & Fees for 2025/26 (inclusive of GST)

Sports Fish Licence		2024/25	2025/26	
Category of licence	Applicant Class	Current fee \$	Proposed fee\$	Fee difference
Whole season (1 Oct – 30 Sep)	Adult	156	161	5
	Junior	31	32	1
	Child	free	free	Nil
Family		203	209	6
Non-resident Whole season	Adult	273	300	30
	Junior	50	52	2
	Child	50	52	2
Winter (1 Apr – 30 Sep)	Adult	94	97	3
Loyal senior	Adult	133	137	4
Local area	Adult	125	129	4
Short break	Adult	56	58	2
Long-break	Adult	109	112	3
Day	Adult	25	26	1
	Junior	6	6	Nil
Non-resident Day	Adult	38	40	2
	Junior	23	24	1
	Child	23	24	1
Controlled period		free	free	Nil
Sea Run Salmon		\$5	\$5	Nil
Designated Waters- resident	Season	\$5	\$5	Nil
Designated Waters- non- resident	Day	\$40	\$40	Nil

Game Bird Licence*		2025	2026	
Category of licence	Applicant Class	Current fee \$	Proposed fee\$	Fee difference
Whole season (primarily 1st Sat in May to 31 Aug)	Adult	116	120	4
	Junior	27	28	1
	Child	5	5	Nil
Day (available from the 2nd Monday of the season)	Adult	27	28	1
	Junior	10	10	Nil

All licence category fees are set as a percentage of the fish or game adult whole season fee and rounded to the nearest \$; hence, in some instances, the fee difference remains nil.

*Game bird hunting licence fee includes the \$5 NZ Game Bird Habitat Stamp.

Notes:

- A junior means a person aged 12 years or over but under 18 years at the start of the season.
- A child means a person aged under 12 years at the start of the season.
- Designated Waters, Sea Run Salmon and Controlled-Period licence entitles an adult or junior whole season or family fish licence holder to fish in specified waters or for specified species.
- Whole Season for sports fish extends from 1 October to 30 September the following year.
- Whole Season for game birds can extend from the first Saturday in May to beyond the traditional closing dates for upland game hunting at the end of August due to special season conditions between February to April the following year for some species, e.g. Paradise shelduck and Pukeko.
- A Game Bird Habitat Stamp fee of \$5.00 (incl. GST) is payable on all categories of game hunting licence and is included in the fees shown in the game hunting licence table above.

FOR DECISION

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

From: Matthew Garrick & Chris Brankin

Date: May 2025

Subject: DUCK HUNTING AT MURIWAI

Purpose

1. Seek agreement and support from Council to escalate engagement with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu in regards to the approach to managing gamebird hunting on Muriwai (Cooper's Lagoon).

Points of Information

2. The maimai agreement for Te Waihora was established in 1997, from which a procedure was established for managing game bird hunter maimai's. This agreement guarantees access for game bird licence holders to Ngāi Tahu land at Te Waihora. A copy can be found at here: [Te Waihora Joint Management Plan](#) (see page 180)
3. In 2016, the Muriwai Management Plan was drafted, (see [Muriwai Management Plan](#)) which indicates that NCFG agreed to support and manage maimai in the same manner as the Te Waihora Maimai agreement (annual survey of maimai's, fee collection, funding works at Muriwai, etc.) see the bottom of page 4: responsibilities of North Canterbury Fish and Game Council. Despite this, no formal extension of the maimai agreement to capture Muriwai has occurred.
4. During 2023, the North Canterbury Fish & Game CEO was approached about the status of the Muriwai maimai fund by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.
5. A Muriwai maimai fund was established at the end of the 2023/2024 FY and back paid to 2016 in good faith based on the Muriwai Management Plan, and legislation that points to the Te Waihora maimai agreement as being the default agreement.
6. Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu have been issuing hunting permits for Muriwai to hunters that can demonstrate an intergenerational connection to hunting the lake.
7. During the 2024 duck season, at least one hunter was denied a hunting permit by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu as it was deemed he could not demonstrate a multi-generational hunting connection.
8. North Canterbury Fish & Game staff have engaged with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu to express that denying access to Muriwai was counter to the maimai agreement.

9. Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu has indicated that they do not understand Muriwai to be a part of a formal maimai agreement. This is accurate, however our recent approach has been informed directly by the intent and provisions of that agreement.

Risks

1. Indications from Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu are that they only want hunters that can demonstrate an intergenerational connection to Muriwai. This will effectively end duck hunting at Muriwai over the long term.
2. This is publicly accessible land, there could be flow on effects with this precedent to other publicly accessible hunting areas across the country.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Council
 - a. Write to Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu to seek an enduring approach to managing gamebird hunting and maimai at Muriwai.
 - b. Endorse an extension of the Te Waihora Maimai agreement as the preferred approach to managing gamebird hunting and maimai on Muriwai.

FOR DECISION

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

From: Emily Craig

Date: May 2025

Subject: ANGLING REGULATIONS CHANGES FOR THE 2025/26 SEASON

Purpose:

1. To recommend changes in the 2025/26 Anglers Notice for the North Canterbury Fish & Game Region.

Recommendations:

2. Staff recommend the following changes to Schedule 2 of the angling regulations:
 - a. That the opening date for Winding Creek be moved to 10 November (currently 10 December).
 - b. That the opening date for Lake Blackwater be moved to 10 November (currently 10 December).

Background:

3. Regulations were developed in accordance with the regulation setting policy adopted by the Council.
4. As part of the angling regulations review, a public consultation and submission process was held by staff seeking feedback from the public. All fishing licence holders were emailed notifying them of the consultation process.
5. After submissions were received, a public meeting was held on May 7th. Five anglers attended, alongside two staff.
6. The original feedback request asked for comments on the following:
 - a. Bringing the opening dates for Winding Creek and Lake Blackwater forward one month to 10 November.
 - b. Feedback on the controlled fishery trial for the designated waters on the north and south branch of the Hurunui Rivers.

Points of Information

7. A total of 29 submissions were received for both the Regulations review and Controlled Fishery Trial feedback.
8. Eleven of the 29 submissions mentioned the proposed changes to Winding Creek and Lake Blackwater.
9. Seven submissions supported this recommendation, three submissions opposed, and one submission was neutral.
10. Submissions in favour of the changes supported increasing the opportunity for anglers' access to fish these waters.
11. Submissions in opposition raised concerns about anglers obtaining access through the landowner and potential detrimental effects on the fishery if open longer.
12. Similar concerns were also raised by those who supported the change.
13. Five submissions provided feedback about other regulations that were not up for review, including for the Rakaia River, Poulter River, Ashley River and Okuku River.
14. Twenty-one of the submissions (the majority) provided feedback for the Controlled Fishery Trial on the North and South Branch Hurunui River Designated Waters.
15. Refer Agenda Item 6 'For Information Papers' regarding Angling regulations review consultation document for a larger summary of submissions made and public meeting notes.

Workflow Implications

Changing these regulations would not impact the Operational Work Plan nor the budget.

FOR DECISION

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

From: Emily Craig

Date: May 2025

Subject: SEA-RUN SALMON BAG LIMIT RECOMMENDATION FOR 2025/26 ANGLERS NOTICE REVIEW

Purpose

1. Inform Council on the North Canterbury (NCFG) and Central South Island (CSIFG) regions joint sea-run salmon season bag limit recommendation for the annual 2025/26 Anglers Notice review.

Recommendation for Anglers Notice 2025/26

2. That the sea-run salmon season bag limit for 2025/26 for the CSIFG and NCFG Regions complies with the Threshold Management Strategy and be based on the final estimates of the combined Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers sea-run salmon spawning population size available no later than 23 June 2025, as follows:
 - i. Combined spawning population size between 1,200 and 5,100 fish – retain 2 fish season bag limit.
 - ii. Combined spawning population size of less than 1,200 fish – implement 1 fish season bag limit.

Recommendation Outside of Anglers Notice

3. That NCFG staff engage further with CSIFG staff to prepare a paper for their respective Councils by March 2026 presenting season and area restriction options to be applied within the 'severe' spawning population management band.

Background

4. The current condition for 2024/25 is –

Sea-run salmon season bag limit of 2 fish across CSIFG and NCFG regions subject to "low" spawning populations management threshold (refer to table 2).
5. At their respective May 2021 Council meetings, the CSIFG and NCFG Councils received a joint staff report recommending introduction of a season bag limit for sea-run salmon (see Appendix 1 & 2). The report recommended the season bag limit be set at two fish for the 2021/22 season and provided the justification for this through application of a Threshold Management Strategy to a salmon population model developed from the previous 25 years of spawning population size estimates.
6. In May 2021 the CSIFG and NCFG Councils resolved –

That CSIFG Council and NCFG Council adopt the sea-run salmon population model that combines salmon populations for the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers as one harvest management unit and applies the harvest management scenario that has 5%, 20% and 40% harvest reduction targets and season bag limits for healthy, moderate and low spawning population management bands, respectively.

7. The spawning population estimates are calculated using Area Under the Curve (AUC) methodology, which requires up to five aerial surveys of live spawners in key spawning streams for each river. It also identifies both the duration and peak of spawning from a chart of the individual live fish counts over time.

Points of Information

8. As at 15 May 2025, four aerial surveys have been completed in the Rangitata River, three in the Rakaia River, and two in the Waimakariri River.
9. Two aerial counts of Mellish Stream/Lake Heron have been completed by CSIFG staff in conjunction with Rangitata River surveys. However, this data contributes towards the total Rakaia River estimate.
10. From these surveys, an estimated provisional total of **1,036** sea-run salmon will have had spawned in the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers.
11. This estimate would see us move to the severe spawning population management band of below 1,200 fish.
12. Therefore, at this stage, a change to the season bag limit would be justified. The sea-run salmon season bag limit would be reduced to one fish across the CSIFG and NCFG regions (Table 2).
13. At 15 May 2025, all rivers have counts yet to be carried out, therefore salmon spawning population counts are provisional at this stage.
14. On the completion of aerial surveys, final population estimates will be made using AUC. We expect these estimates to be within the severe management band, though may remain in the 'low' band if all rivers have a significant late run over the remaining counts.
15. Recommendations have been provided to Councils covering the range of possible final spawning population estimates. These recommendations enable staff to make recommendations to NZFG within deadlines and with respective Regional Council approval.
16. CSIFGC and NCFGC have not had the opportunity to consider options for season length and area restriction within the 'Severe' band. Once the 2024/25 spawning and harvest monitoring is complete CSIFG and NCFGC staff will have the opportunity to model the potential harvest reductions and increased spawning that could result from various season length and area restrictions options within the 'Severe' population management band.

Table 1. Estimated annual wild sea-run salmon spawning population sizes for the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers and total spawning, harvest and run size for the rivers combined, 1993/94 to 2024/25. Total spawning estimates for 2024/25 are not currently available with figures provided predicted from incomplete surveys (*).

	Wild Spawners	Wild Harvest	Wild Run
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Season	Waimakariri	Rakaia	Rangitata	Total	Total	Total
93/94	1,418	13,586	6,077	21,081	11,485	32,566
94/95	3,637	9,810	3,941	17,388	8,884	26,272
95/96	5,845	15,262	8,352	29,459	18,783	48,242
96/97	3,651	11,833	7,467	22,951	16,593	39,544
97/98	2,308	4,196	2,870	9,374	6,494	15,868
98/99	1,718	4,401	3,236	9,355	8,951	18,306
99/00	555	2,204	1,686	4,445	5,774	10,219
00/01	252	855	497	1,604	1,415	3,019
01/02	1,511	2,280	597	4,388	1,705	6,093
02/03	1,007	1,472	659	3,138	3,318	6,276
03/04	1,417	3,204	1,876	6,497	2,811	9,308
04/05	2,488	2,152	1,135	5,775	3,931	9,706
05/06	489	1,123	512	2,214	1,879	4,003
06/07	2,384	2,673	2,062	7,119	3,434	10,553
07/08	3,105	4,313	3,690	11,108	7,941	19,049
08/09	1,117	3,945	2,714	7,776	5,073	12,849
09/10	1,408	1,817	901	4,126	3,790	7,916
10/11	1,610	1,538	905	4,053	2,531	6,584
11/12	1,107	2,813	1,610	5,530	3,599	9,129
12/13	1,457	1,430	3,042	5,929	4,445	10,374
13/14	858	1,366	1,283	3,507	3,158	6,665
14/15	859	2,140	1,666	4,665	4,226	8,891
15/16	743	1,015	1,055	2,813	2,021	4,834
16/17	741	837	545	2,123	2,538	4,661
17/18	344	537	573	1,454	781	2,235
18/19	312	619	403	1,334	1,328	2,662
19/20	456	734	437	1,627	888	2,515
20/21	316	711	397	1,424	774	2,198
21/22	548	3,217	1,823	5,588	897	6,485
22/23	671	1,332	552	2,555	705	3,260
23/24	327	878	247	1,452	423	1,875
24/25	237*	720*	79*	1,036*	Unavailable	Unavailable

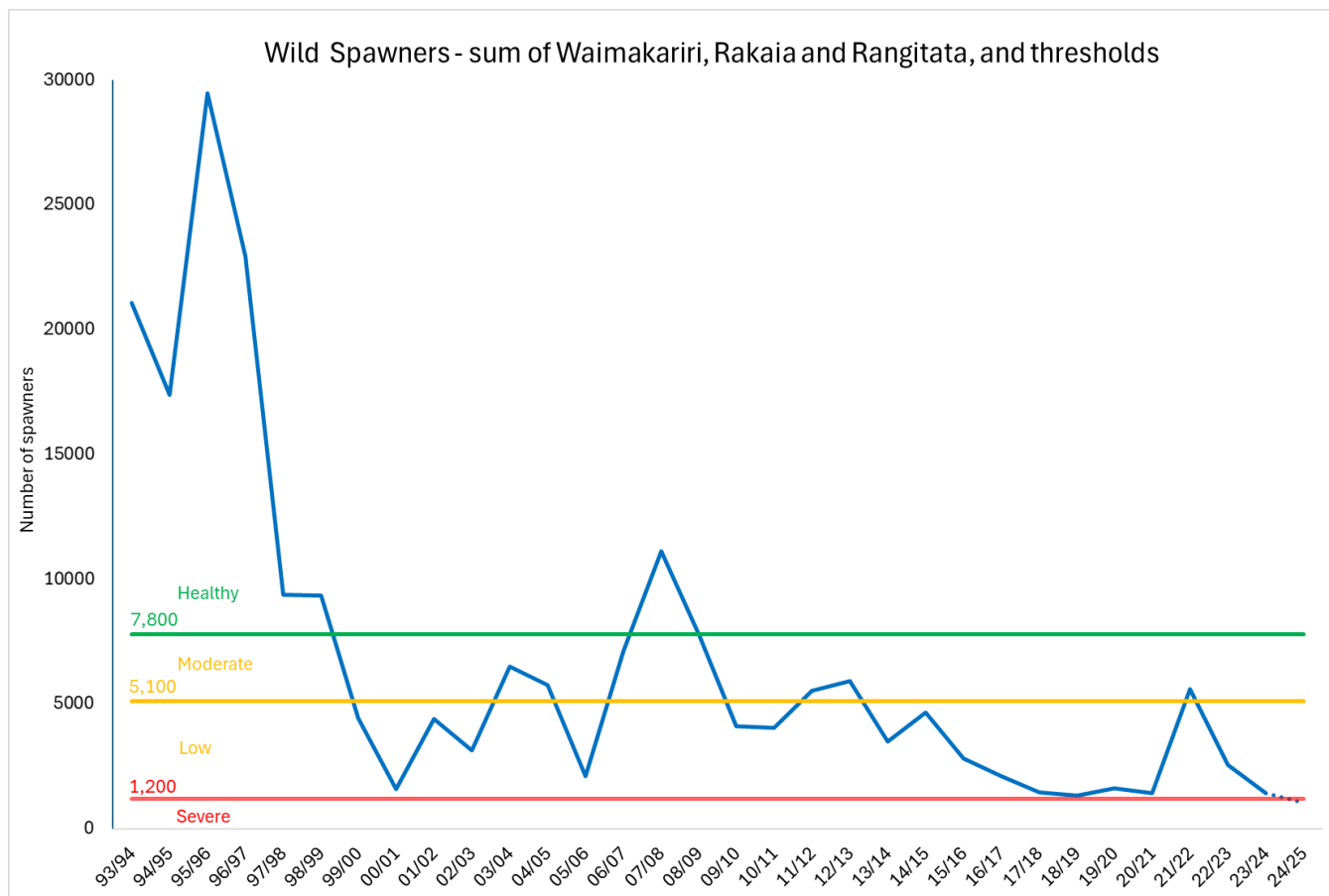


Figure 1. Annual spawning population size for combined Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers' wild sea-run salmon fisheries and thresholds introduced in 2021/22 for implementing season bag limits. The 2024/25 data is provisional awaiting final spawning estimates in early June.

Refer Appendix One in the For Information Papers for background on management strategies.

FOR DECISION

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council
From: Harry Graham-Samson
Date: 9 May 2025
Subject: PLANTING PLAN FOR NCFG PROPERTY

Purpose

1. This document is to seek Council approval on spending money from General Reserves for the enhancement of the NCFG property by planting shrubs in areas as per the planting plan included.

For Decision

2. That Council adopt the planting plan to enhance aesthetics of the NCFG office and to cut down on staff maintenance time.

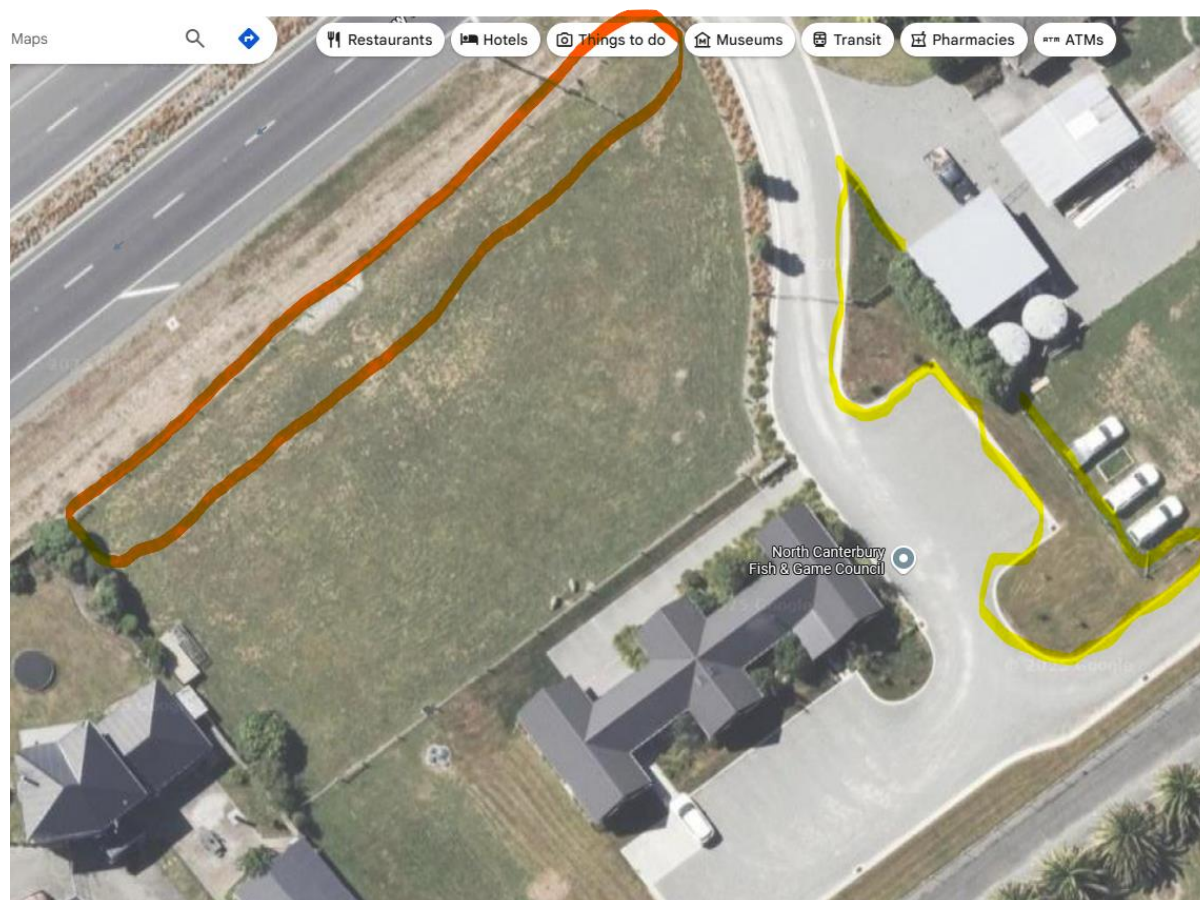
Points of Information

3. The first phase of the planting plan is to plant out the carpark perimeter at an approximate cost of \$570 (excl GST) for shrubs with additional costs for sprays to prepare the site, with ongoing spray maintenance at least 3-4 times per year for weed control.
4. The second phase is to plant a 3-row shelterbelt at the front of the property at an approximate cost of \$792 (excl GST) for shrubs. An additional requirement would be to build a fence inside the paddock to prevent grazing damage. Costings for the fence approximately \$1,500

Recommendation

5. That the recommended planting plan be approved and approximately \$3,000 be used from General Reserves.

The map shows the two sites which could be developed for planting a mixture of native shrubs and trees.



Yellow Site

Planting Plan: Carpark Perimeter Landscape

Site Description:

The site is a 310m² area surrounded by the carpark. Due to its position and the need to maintain clear lines of sight for vehicle safety, planting will consist of **low-growing shrubs** with **sparse, small-canopy trees** to ensure visibility for reversing vehicles.

Soil & Environmental Conditions:

The site comprises **dry to moist soil zones**. All plant species selected are suitable for these conditions and require low-to-moderate maintenance.

Spacing & Quantities:

- Plant spacing: **1.5 metres apart**
- Total number of plants required: **90–95**

Planting Cost Estimate:

- Cost per plant: **\$6.00 (excl. GST)**
- Total planting cost: **95 plants x \$6.00 = \$570.00 (GST exclusive)**

Planting Design Notes:

- **Low shrubs** will be the dominant planting form, providing ground coverage and visual cohesion.
- **Sparse trees** will be included to provide height variation while maintaining vehicle visibility.
- The layout will be informal to blend with the existing environment but maintain safe clearances near vehicle zones.

Proposed Plant Species Table: (All plants will have a plastic guard installed)

Botanical Name	Common Name	Form
<i>Carmichaelia australis</i>	Native broom	Shrub
<i>Coprosma acerosa</i>	Sand coprosma	Shrub
<i>Coprosma brunnea</i>	Groundcover coprosma	Shrub
<i>Coprosma propinqua</i>	Mingimingi	Shrub
<i>Coprosma rugosa</i>	Mountain coprosma	Shrub
<i>Hebe salicifolia</i>	Koromiko	Shrub
<i>Libertia peregrinans</i>	Creeping iris	Shrub
<i>Phormium cookianum</i>	Mountain Flax	Shrub
<i>Sophora prostrata</i>	Dwarf Kowhai	Shrub
<i>Oleria cheesemanii</i>	Daisy bush	Shrub
<i>Pseudopanax crassifolius</i>	Lancewood	Tree

Orange Site

Planting Plan – Native Shelterbelt (Front Paddock/Fish & Game Signage Area)

1. Site Overview

- **Location:** Front paddock near Fish & Game signage
- **Total Area:** 252m²
- **Purpose:** Establish a native shelterbelt that provides wind protection while maintaining visibility to the office and existing signage
- **Topography:** Elevated site on higher ground compared to the rest of the property
- **Additional Requirements:**

Low-growing shrubs in front of the **Fish & Game signage** to ensure visibility

Fencing required to exclude livestock (sheep) from planting area

2. Environmental Conditions

- **Soil Type:** Dry zone (well-drained)
- **Sunlight Exposure:** Full sun
- **Plant Type Preference:** Drought-tolerant native shrubs and trees

3. Planting Strategy

- **Planting Type:** 3-row native shelterbelt
- **Shelterbelt Width:** 6 metres
- **Plant Spacing:** 1.5 metres apart within rows
- **Plants per Row:** 44
- **Total Plants Required:** 132
- **Design Notes:**

Low-growing species in front of signage to preserve visibility.

Planting rows to be staggered with shrubs and trees for windbreak density and aesthetic appeal.

4. Cost Estimate

- **Number of Plants:** 132
- **Cost per Plant:** \$6.00 (excl. GST)
- **Total Planting Cost:** \$792.00 (excl. GST)
- **Additional Cost:**

Fencing required around planting area to prevent grazing damage by sheep (not included in plant cost).

Proposed Plant Species Table: (All plants will have a plastic guard installed)

Botanical Name	Common Name	Form
<i>Carmichaelia australis</i>	Native broom	Shrub
<i>Coprosma acerosa</i>	Sand coprosma	Shrub
<i>Coprosma brunnea</i>	Groundcover coprosma	Shrub
<i>Coprosma propinqua</i>	Mingimingi	Shrub
<i>Coprosma rugosa</i>	Mountain coprosma	Shrub
<i>Hebe salicifolia</i>	Koromiko	Shrub
<i>Coprosma robusta</i>	Karamu	Shrub
<i>Muehlenbeckia axillaris</i>	Creeping wire vine	Shrub
<i>Ozothamunus leptophyllus</i>	Cottonwood	Shrub
<i>Phormium cookianum</i>	Mountain Flax	Shrub
<i>Cordyline australis</i>	Cabbage tree	Tree
<i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i>	Black matipo	Tree
<i>Plagianthus regius</i>	Ribbonwood	Tree
<i>Sophora microphylla</i>	Kowhai	Tree

To prepare the sites before planting, we would need to pre-plant spray 4-6 weeks prior to planting to get the best performance out of our native seedlings once they are planted. Then the ongoing maintenance would be spraying the sites 3-4 times a year for 3 years depending on weed growth and plant performance.

FINANCE REPORT

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

From: Debbie Ambler

Date: MAY 2025

Subject: FINANCE REPORT – UP TO 16 MAY 2025

1. PURPOSE

To inform Council on the financial performance and position, using an accounting accrual basis. It documents income and expenditure against the current annual budget.

The Report gives comments at the bottom of the Profit and Loss Report for each code that has incurred spending over \$1,000.

2. POINTS FOR INFORMATION

a. Profit and Loss – Table 1

The Profit and Loss Report reports direct costs for the period stated. It has been set up in the same format as the year-end Annual Report.

The 24/25 Budget used in this Report is \$1,068,935. This is made up of baseline funding of \$1,038,935, with the addition of approved use of regional reserves (\$30,000).

Note: a Depreciation budget of \$110,000, Levy payments of \$645,290 plus Eyede charges (\$69,038) that are outside the normal budgeting process have been added to the 2024/2025 budget.

Revenue

- i. Licence sales are received by two methods: Public On–Line is paid to NCFG monthly, and Agency On-Line is paid to NCFG on a bi-monthly basis.
- ii. The sea-run salmon and Designated Waters licence charges are included in the overall licence income however are separated out in the Proffit and Loss Report and are accounted for in their respective reserves as shown on the Balance Sheet.

Note: a separate table (1A) behind the profit and loss report compares licence sales and revenue between the 2023/24 and 2024/25 years to 10 February 2025.

b. Balance Sheet – Table 2A

- i. Employee Entitlements: is annual leave and PAYE owing at date of Report.

c. Cashflow - Table 2B

The cashflow is reporting to the end of April 2025.

However, looking at the projected cashflow through to the end of August and into September and October, we will be experiencing some cashflow issues as the income declines through the July, August and September months.

Currently the projected income and expense bank balance to the end of August 25 is expected to be -\$53,815.

in September 25 a levy payment is due (\$185,521 incl gst) and will make our deficit greater. Council approval is sought to ask NZC to spread these payments over three months (Sep/Oct/Nov 25) to assist with our cashflow.

There are two bank accounts holding a total of \$77,540.20 that have sat idle for the past year. It is proposed that the Salmon Card and Designated Waters accounts be closed and funds put into the general pool. This will assist with the deficit to the end of August 25, however we will have a clearer picture at the July Council meeting on transfers required from the 20% Reserve.

d. Asset Replacement Fund 2024/25

Has been updated from the commencement of this financial year – September 2024 to August 2025.

3. USE OF RAKAIA RESERVE

It has been noted in the accounts that a total of \$1,784.81 has been used for resource consents for the Glenariffe project. It is requested the Rakaia Reserve be used to cover these payments.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **THAT THE SALMON CARD AND DESIGNATED WATERS BANK ACCOUNTS BE CLOSED AND THE FUNDS PUT INTO THE INCOME/EXPENSE ACCOUNT TO ASSIST WITH CASHFLOW.**
2. **THAT COUNCIL SEEK NZC APPROVAL TO SPREAD THE SEPTEMBER LEVY PAYMENT OVER A PERIOD OF THREE MONTHS (SEP/OCT/NOV 25) TO ASSIST WITH CASHFLOW.**
3. **THAT \$1,784.81 BE TAKEN FROM THE RAKAIA RESERVE TO COVER RESOURCE CONSENT COST FOR THE GLENARIFFE PROJECT.**
4. **THAT THE FINANCE REPORT BE ACCEPTED TO 16 MAY 2025.**

Table 1 : Profit and Loss

North Canterbury Fish and Game Council For the month ended 30 April 2025

	APR 2025	MONTH TO DATE BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	2024 / 2025 BUDGET	% OF TOTAL BUDGET
REVENUE					
Fish and Game Licence Sales					
Fish Licence Sales	28,199	24,000	1,386,706	1,426,915	97%
Game Licence Sales	125,229	132,350	174,524	246,806	71%
Total Fish and Game Licence Sales	153,428	156,350	1,561,230	1,673,721	93%
Sea-Run Salmon Licence	100	-	21,365	-	-
Designated Waters Licence	670	-	33,309	-	-
Other Income					
Other Income					
Interest Income	859	1,400	6,606	13,367	49%
NZC Secondment Income	9,087	8,754	70,365	105,048	67%
Costs Reimbursed by NZC (Other)	-	-	3,651	-	-
Agency Income - Eftpos Sales	290	-	(2,752)	-	-
Fishing and Hunting Promotions	-	-	2,509	-	-
Diversions - Habitat Restoration	2,700	-	12,950	-	-
Depreciation Recovered	-	-	3,965	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	431	-	7,768	-	-
Rent Received	1,600	2,000	13,600	20,800	65%
RMA Costs Reimbursed	-	-	79,530	-	-
Total Other Income	14,967	12,154	198,192	139,215	142%
Total Other Income	14,967	12,154	198,192	139,215	142%
Total REVENUE	169,165	168,504	1,814,096	1,812,936	100%
EXPENSES					
Outputs					
Species Management	13,757	22,800	26,330	104,100	25%
Habitat Protection & Management	6,817	-	103,660	18,100	573%
Angler & Hunter participation	329	-	5,545	4,500	123%
Public Interface	8	-	10,722	400	2,680%
Compliance	1,270	708	7,695	5,000	154%
Licencing Commission & Fees	6,951	-	59,436	69,038	86%
Council	117	290	5,518	5,000	110%
Planning & reporting	80	-	12,396	20,000	62%
Total Outputs	29,329	23,798	231,302	226,138	102%
Overheads					
Employee Related Expenses	67,156	72,643	659,460	881,735	75%
Other Overheads	11,013	7,318	124,810	123,400	101%
Total Overheads	78,169	79,961	784,271	1,005,135	78%
Depreciation	-	9,166	52,633	110,000	48%
NZ Fish & Game Levies	-	-	322,645	645,290	50%

Table 1 : Profit and Loss

	APR 2025	MONTH TO DATE BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	2024 / 2025 BUDGET	% OF TOTAL BUDGET
Loss on Disposal	-	-	(232)	-	-
Capital Gain on Disposal of Fixed Assets	-	-	6,962	-	-
Total EXPENSES	107,498	112,925	1,397,580	1,986,563	70%
Net Profit	61,666	55,579	416,516	(173,627)	-240%

1. Licence Sales 16

See separate sheet attached, Table 1a. Note the licence sales have been updated to 16 May 2025.

2. Species Management

Main expenses were for three salmon flights, and replacement for a Go Pro damaged while drift diving.

3. Habitat Protection and Management

Main expense was for supply and installing fencing at Greenpark Sands.

4. Compliance

Legal costs to prosecute cases.

5. Licence Commission and Fees

Made up of commissions to Agents and bank charges for Public online sales.

6. Employee Related Expenses

Includes

- 1. Payroll & kiwisaver (higher than normal due to staff leaving & backpay being paid),
- 2. Health and Safety - such as Trackme (field communications systems) and Seaflex (a cloud-based vessel management software package). Also, payment for 4-wheel driver training for all field staff.

7. Other Overheads

Includes, bank charges, field equipment purchases, office cleaning, leasing of eftpos machine / photocopier, office maintenance, photocopying, power, rates, communications, and all vehicle expenses. These are all normal expected expenses.

LE 1A

FISH & GAME SALES TO 16 MAY 2025

Fishing 2023/24	FWFA	FWA	FWNA	FSLA	FDA	FDNA	FWJ	FDJ	SRSE	DWLR	DWLN	Fish Total	Fish LEQ	Fish \$
	2577	4664	415	1120	1870	819	698	302	5899	3604	473	25293	10,764	\$ 1,432,071.00
Fishing 2024/25	2426	4304	402	1167	1719	735	817	376	5222	3051	615	23923	10,193	\$ 1,382,716.00
Difference	-151	-360	-13	47	-151	-84	119	74	-677	-553	142	-1370	-571	-\$ 49,355.00

Fishing 2023/24	GWA	GWJ	GWC	GDA	GDJ	Game Total	Game LEQ	Game \$
	2455	190	96	2	0	2743	2,492	\$ 234,063.00
Fishing 2024/25	2352	189	83	0	0	2624	2,624	\$ 230,635.00
Difference	-103	-1	-13	-2	0	-119	132	-\$ 3,428.00

Fish sales down by 5.3%

Game sales down by 4.1%

- 1 This table shows licence sales of the main categories or where there is significant movement in a category year on year.
- 2 NOTE: Fish/Game total, Fish/Game LEQ and Fish/Game\$ are for overall sales not just those selected above.
- 4 Total Fish\$ include SRSC, DWLR and DWLN in the above table. However, in the Profit and Loss Report, these categories sit outside the YTD Actual as they are accounted for separately for our own accounting purposes.

FISH	Licence Categories	FLBA	Long Break	GAMEBIRD	Licence Categories
FWFA	Family Whole Season	FLBA	Long Break	GWA	Gamebird Adult
FVA	Whole Season Adult	FSBA	Short Break	GWJ	Gamebird Junior
FWNA	Whole Season Non Resident Adult	FDA	Day Adult	GWC	Gamebird Child
FSLA	Loyal Senior	FDNA	Day Non Resident Adult	GDA	Gamebird Day Adult
FLAA	Local Area	FWNC	Whole Season Non Resident Child	GDJ	Gamebird Day Junior
FWIA	Winter Adult	FDNC	Day Non Resident Child		
SRSC	Sea Run Salmon Licence	DWLR	Designated Waters - Resident		
		DWLN	Designated Waters - Non Resident		

Table 2A: Balance Sheet

North Canterbury Fish and Game Council As at 30 April 2025

	30 APR 2025	31 AUG 2024
Assets		
Bank	668,026	327,566
Current Assets		
Accounts Receivable	261,451	151,186
Other Receivables	-	514
GST	-	20,269
Total Current Assets	261,451	171,968
Fixed Assets	2,038,746	2,101,331
Total Assets	2,968,223	2,600,865
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	47,558	55,303
Visa	3,312	1,686
Accruals	8,649	11,171
Employee Entitlements	74,048	91,148
GST	44,786	-
Income in Advance	114,626	182,828
Total Current Liabilities	292,979	342,136
Total Liabilities	292,979	342,136
Net Assets	2,675,245	2,258,728
Equity		
Accumulated Funds		
Accumulated Funds	1,617,811	1,820,334
Current Year Earnings	416,516	(202,523)
Transfer to and from Reserves	212,561	333,692
Total Accumulated Funds	2,246,888	1,951,503
Dedicated Reserves		
20 Minimum Cash Reserve	208,063	130,930
Asset Replacement Funding	47,198	59
Non Resident Licence Revenue	-	105
Designated Waters Revenue	51,898	50,628
Salmon Card Revenue	25,643	25,547
Habitat Protection Revenue	12,695	638
Total Dedicated Reserves	345,497	207,907
Restricted Reserves		
Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere) Mai Mai Reserve	1	17,600
Murawai (Coopers Lagoon) Mai Mai Reserve	1,681	1,681

Table 2A: Balance Sheet

	30 APR 2025	31 AUG 2024
Rakaia Fund Reserve	81,177	80,038
Total Restricted Reserves	82,860	99,319
Total Equity	2,675,245	2,258,728

NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL
ANNUAL CASH FLOW CALCULATION
2024 - 25 FINANCIAL YEAR

NG CASH FLOW

	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25
CASH IN													
License Sales	\$ 20,230	\$ 33,818	\$ 154,222	\$ 408,555	\$ 354,793	\$ 246,737	\$ 214,978	\$ 111,795	\$ 69,931	\$ 108,428	\$ 172,000	\$ 55,960	\$ 22,913
Other Income	\$ 19,219	\$ 38,743	\$ 36,038	\$ 33,211	\$ 82,383	\$ 5,215	\$ 42,029	\$ 14,729	\$ 17,951	\$ 58,200	\$ 38,800	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,600
Total Income	\$ 39,449	\$ 72,561	\$ 190,260	\$ 439,766	\$ 437,176	\$ 251,952	\$ 257,007	\$ 126,514	\$ 87,882	\$ 166,628	\$ 210,800	\$ 57,560	\$ 24,513

	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25
CASH OUT													
Operational Expenses	\$ 53,339	\$ 23,781	\$ 39,436	\$ 49,941	\$ 65,632	\$ 26,737	\$ 20,210	\$ 9,294	\$ 20,158	\$ 25,278	\$ 18,923	\$ 30,135	\$ 14,452
Employee Related Expenses	\$ 76,049	\$ 63,251	\$ 65,351	\$ 63,814	\$ 91,203	\$ 82,644	\$ 79,903	\$ 117,870	\$ 100,482	\$ 59,000	\$ 48,500	\$ 59,000	\$ 59,000
Overhead Expenses	\$ 11,503	\$ 6,665	\$ 12,035	\$ 23,806	\$ 6,915	\$ 21,977	\$ 25,201	\$ 36,358	\$ 20,141	\$ 21,077	\$ 13,077	\$ 11,898	\$ 13,257
NZ Fish & Game Levies	\$ 186,549	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 185,521	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 185,521	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 185,521	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 185,521
GST Expense	\$ 3,127	\$ 33,917	\$ 1,939	\$ 21,603	\$ -	\$ 68,375	\$ 1,045	\$ 28,963	\$ 32	\$ 17,000	\$ -	\$ 6,000	\$ -
Purchase of Assets/Disposal	\$ 27,542	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,998	\$ 4,117	\$ -	\$ 6,982	\$ 11,304	\$ 140,749	\$ 307,876	\$ -	\$ 68,182	\$ -
Total Expenditure	\$ 358,709	\$ 59,780	\$ 118,761	\$ 354,280	\$ 168,654	\$ 198,733	\$ 302,828	\$ 179,170	\$ 140,749	\$ 307,876	\$ 149,682	\$ 94,931	\$ 272,230

Net Cash Flow	\$ 319,260	\$ 12,781	\$ 71,499	\$ 85,486	\$ 269,112	\$ 52,219	\$ 45,821	\$ 52,656	\$ 52,668	\$ 141,248	\$ 61,118	\$ 37,271	\$ 247,717
Opening Bank Balance of All Accounts	\$ 645,140	\$ 325,880	\$ 339,860	\$ 410,159	\$ 495,645	\$ 764,757	\$ 816,976	\$ 816,976	\$ 718,500	\$ 718,500	\$ 665,632	\$ 524,385	\$ 585,502
Closing Bank Balance Implied based on movement above	\$ 325,880	\$ 338,660	\$ 410,159	\$ 495,645	\$ 764,757	\$ 816,976	\$ 771,156	\$ 718,500	\$ 665,632	\$ 524,385	\$ 385,502	\$ 548,231	\$ 300,514
Actual Closing Bank Balance for All Bank Accounts (Incl Visa)	\$ 325,880	\$ 338,660	\$ 410,159	\$ 495,645	\$ 764,757	\$ 816,976	\$ 771,156	\$ 718,500	\$ 665,632	\$ 524,385	\$ 385,502	\$ 548,231	\$ 300,514
Variance	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0

Total In Income/Expense Account (Incl Visa)	\$ 43,614.00	\$ 55,404.00	\$ 725,926.00	\$ 1,793,334.00	\$ 3,864,221.66	\$ 4,151,295.00	\$ 3,665,593.98	\$ 2,835,895.26	\$ 2,366,357.00	\$ 753,887.00	\$ 1,183,604.00	\$ 66,015.00	\$ 53,815.00
Total In Dedicated Reserves	\$ 182,356.00	\$ 183,802.00	\$ 184,244.52	\$ 100,008.17	\$ 100,181.00	\$ 100,181.00	\$ 100,305.41	\$ 100,305.41	\$ 82,860.00				
Total In Restricted Reserves	\$ 99,319.00	\$ 99,654.00	\$ 100,008.17	\$ 100,181.00	\$ 100,181.08	\$ 100,181.00	\$ 100,305.41	\$ 100,305.41	\$ 82,860.00				
Total	\$ 325,289.00	\$ 338,660.00	\$ 410,178.69	\$ 495,645.00	\$ 764,756.22	\$ 816,976.00	\$ 795,187.39	\$ 718,499.57	\$ 664,714.00	\$ 753,887.00	\$ 1,183,604.00	\$ 66,015.00	\$ 53,815.00

Table 3: Aged Payables Summary

North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

As at 30 April 2025

Contact	Current Month		
Aged Payables			
Action Signs	236	0	Signage for Lake Lyndon
ANZ Merchant	14	0	Bank Charges
Avon City Ford	812	0	Service of vehicle
BP FUELCARD	852	0	Fuel for month
Busy Bees Services Limited	161	0	Office Clean
Butler Marine	66	0	Coupling for boat
Christchurch City Council	2,296	0	Rates
Christchurch Helicopters	3,648	0	Salmon Flight
Code 9	49	0	Alarm Monitoring
Eastern Fish and Game Council	92	93	Xero Package
Environmental Defence Society	0	11,500	Invoice received in May
Genesis	790	0	Power
Harvey Norman	749	0	Go Pro - other broke on drift dirve
Hells Pizza	135	0	Volunteer Rangers meeting
Hothouse Communications Limited	403	0	Reminders of salmon card and designated waters
Jennifer North Barristers	1,047	0	Prosecution
Kats Alignment & Tyres	2,008	0	New tyres for vehicle
Kiwi Wader Company	69	0	Repair of waders
Mitre 10	268	0	Shovels for planting day
Nectar	83	0	Security service
New World	4	0	Milk
New Zealand Fish and Game Council	207	207	Seaflux (one account invoiced late)
NIWA	1,599	0	Electric fishing course
NZTA	392	0	Road User Charges
ONE	1,201	0	Internet and phones
Rangitikei Helicopters	11,181	0	Salmon Flight
Ricoh	71	0	Photocopier charges
Sudima	192	0	Accommodation for interview panel attendee
Trailer Parts NZ	46	0	Coupling for trailer
Wear Fencing & Excavation Ltd	7,038	0	Fencing for Greenpark Sands
Worldline	22	0	Bank Charges
Total Aged Payables	35,729	11,800	
Total	35,729	11,800	

Table 4: Aged Receivables Summary

North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

As at 30 April 2025

CONTACT	CURRENT	< 1 MONTH	1 MONTH	OLDER	TOTAL
EYEDE - AGENT 24 / 25	210,084	1,385	-	-	211,469
Gallagher (Insurance)	-	(1,022)	-	-	(1,022)
Joseph Bisha	350	-	-	-	350
New Zealand Fish and Game Council	10,450	-	-	-	10,450
POL EYEDE - 24/25	37,395	-	-	-	37,395
Rakaia River Fishing Promotions	-	2,509	-	-	2,509
S Tudor	300	-	-	-	300
Total	258,579	2,872	-	-	261,451

Notes On Items over \$1000

1. Eyede Agent - licence sales made in March due to be paid May 2025
2. Eyede POL - licence sales made in April 2025 to be paid in May 2025
3. New Zealand Fish and Game Council - Contract income for NZC staff and Rakaia WCO invoices to be repaid.
4. Gallagher Insurance - refund for sale of MZL425
5. Joseph Bisha - diversion payment
6. Rakaia River Fishing Promotions - Levies for Competition
7. S Tudor - diversion payment

ASSET REPLACEMENT REPORT NOTES

NOTE:

\$40,000 will be withdrawn from ARF Reserve to help pay for REF351.
This will leave a balance of \$3,081.
With the sale of the EV in July which we are hoping to get between \$35,000 to \$40,000 for the balance of the difference between the purchase and disposal price will be rebanked into the Asset Replacement fund.

NOTE:

Have just noticed that \$6,961.73 for the part purchase of the Huntercraft boat required to be repaid back into the Asset Replacement fund from Everyday account. This transaction occurred in the previous financial year and has only just been picked up.

OPERATIONAL PROGRESS REPORT

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

From: North Canterbury Fish and Game Staff

Date: May 2025

PURPOSE

1. To provide an update to the North Canterbury Fish & Game Council (NCFG) on work completed by staff to May 2025.

BACKGROUND

2. Below is an overview of achievements, risks, or issues that help or hinder progress on council priorities, followed by a summary of how we are tracking with the Operational work plan projects and activities.
3. This Operational Progress Report provide a higher-level outline.

PRIORITY STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

1. Our Species Populations Are Enhanced

Staff continue to engage in discussions with DOC, regional and district councils, universities, irrigators and Iwi on issues and projects concerning sports fish and game birds.

Staff (and Councillors) have engaged with DOC regarding Fish and Game involvement in managing DOC land around Te Waihora for the benefit of game birds.

Staff are coordinating and working with ECAN, QEII, and DOC to enhance a privately owned wetland near Te Waihora for the benefit of game bird hunters. External funding has been applied to for these works.

2. Key Stakeholders Are More Engaged

New output formats using social media platforms for communications (e.g., Facebook) have improved our outreach which is assisting our ability to keep the public and licence holders informed.

Collaborations with licence agents are working well and are being used to further engagement with anglers to encourage participation. It is also assisting our reach to the general public allowing NCFG to further showcase the fantastic opportunities our region has.

Staff have been involved in some national aspects of angler and hunter outreach, including licence system updates.

3. Participation In Sports Fishing and Game Bird Hunting Is Increased

Salmon and rainbow trout have been ordered for releases during 2025 (July/August).

Collaborative work with other agencies continues regarding vehicle access to laneways around Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere to ensure continued access for game bird hunters.

4. The North Canterbury Fish and Game Council Has a Relationship With Iwi In Its Region Consistent With Its Obligations To Give Effect To The Principles Of The Treaty Of Waitangi

Our focus for this priority outcome remains centred on building local relationships and working with Iwi partners on clarifying cultural values, expectations, and identifying collaboration or co-management opportunities. Going forward, fostering these relationships is essential for achieving improved local environmental protection and/or restoration outcomes. For example, around wetlands buffering lower sections of local rivers and Hapua.

OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN UPDATE

The regional team continue to make good progress on discharging statutory duties to the best of our ability.

Staff continue to work supporting volunteers and short-term contractors to ensure field work and key statutory duties are carried out, also seeking support from external specialist staff (e.g., RMA / planning functions) or national office when needed.

OUTPUT AREA 1: SPORT FISH AND GAME BIRD SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Population Monitoring

Trout management plan

Preparations continue toward the trout management plan. Staff have begun collating and analysing data from existing sources (fishing competitions, spawning surveys, electric fishing data and salvages) to work into the plan. Work on high-country lakes continues to be carried out including creel surveys and data collection from anglers, evaluation of recruitment areas (crossing over with trout-native interaction research – see below). Staff completed several drift dives for key high-country rivers, with a focus on our Designated Waters. An outline for the plan has been developed in relation to baseline monitoring high-country areas.

Lewis Pass Drift Dives

Staff completed drift dives on stretches of Lewis and Boyle rivers. Habitat assessments were completed in conjunction with these drift dives so variation in trout numbers can be related to habitat features and compared with future counts.

Designated Waters system

Staff continue to attend National Designated Waters (DW) meetings and discuss aspects of the system going forward. We continue to work closely with neighbouring regions, the NZC team and our licence service provider, ESL, to improve the overall service and experience provided to licence holders.

The annual North Canterbury DW survey is underway to assess angler usage and satisfaction with the DW system in North Canterbury

For more information on the Trial Controlled Fishery on the North & South Branches of the Hurunui River, see the Regulations section below.

Sea-run Salmon Spawning Assessment

Staff have begun sea-run salmon spawning counts, both on foot and via aerial surveys.

Lake Coleridge Salmon Spawning Assessment

Staff have commenced foot counts of landlocked spawning salmon in Ryton River, Lake Coleridge.

Game Bird Assessments

Staff flew the annual dabbling duck survey with the CSI team in early March. A full report will be available at the July Council meeting.

A dabbling duck adaptive harvest strategy has been drafted and is being reviewed by the CSI team for comments.

Harvest Assessment

Game Bird Harvest Surveys

Harvest surveys were completed to estimate harvest and participation in the summer mallard and paradise shelduck seasons in March.

The first round of the game bird harvest surveys was completed in the week following Opening Weekend. For the first time, a coordinated question to assess hunter satisfaction with the Opening Weekend experience was asked in conjunction with the standard harvest questions in every F&G region across the country.

Fish Salvage

Planned Fish Salvage

Staff conducted the annual salvage at the Amuri Irrigation Leslie Hills raceway on the Waiau Uwha River in early May. A total of 151 sports fish (majority brown trout), and 547 native fish (majority bullies) were salvaged from the raceway and released back into the Waiau Uwha River downstream.

Reactive Fish Salvage

Staff also salvaged fish from drying up pools on the upper Cust River in March after being notified by members of the public. Approximately 200 trout and other native fish were relocated downstream to the lower part of the Cust where the river was still flowing. Rain came in the days following and further salvage was not required.

Regulations

Refer to the separate For Decision Paper - Angling Regulation Review and the accompanying For Information paper.

North & South Branch Hurunui River Controlled Fishery Trial

The first season of the Controlled Fishery Trial concluded at the end of April, and staff continue to survey anglers who obtained a controlled fishery booking. Feedback was also sought from the wider angling community during the regulations review & submission process, which will feed into the review process at the end of the two-season trial period. See the Decision Paper on the Angling Regulation Review Consultation paper for more information on the feedback process.

Creel Survey

High Country lakes Creel Survey

Staff concluded the creel surveys on the high-country lakes. In total, 134 surveys were conducted on Lake Coleridge. The Lake Coleridge Creel Survey report can be found on the Fish & Game website here:

[Lake Coleridge Summer Creel Survey 2024/25 Season](#)

Further surveys have been carried out on other high-country lakes however data collection is ongoing.

Species Management and Control

Game bird Control

Staff have responded to queries, evaluated, and processed applications for game bird control permits. Financial year-to-date, 39 control/disturbance permits have been issued (19 for pukeko, 5 for black swans, 13 for paradise ducks, and 1 for mallards). An additional 3 permits have been issued for cultural harvest of Paradise shelduck and Black swan (birds and/or eggs).

Sports fish Control

Financial year-to-date, 13 sports fishing permits/special licences have been issued (two for electric fishing, ten Special Licences and one Research).

Staff continue discussions with the General Managers of Willowbank Wildlife Reserve regarding re-commissioning their trout display. Staff are currently working on the supply of fish and adequate signage/information to go with the display that reflects the positive work of Fish & Game.

Research

University of Canterbury collaboration

Field support for the University of Canterbury PhD project in the Waimakariri and Rakaia catchments relating to trout/native fish interactions has concluded. Staff remain in contact with the PhD student with the objective of obtaining information/data on the trout fisheries to share with anglers in the coming months.

At the end of last year, staff met with a professor at the University of Canterbury who has submitted a grant application to understand the role of waterfowl and other birds as vectors in spreading disease across the landscape. Staff were listed as collaborators to the grant application as external

advisors to data collection and connection to the national Fish and Game body. A second grant application was recently submitted in relation to this work.

These types of collaborations with university students and professors are both helpful and rewarding, as they significantly improve our ability to take on and complete high-quality research projects of relevance to Fish & Game values and priorities.

OUTPUT AREA 2: HABITAT PROTECTION, MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

Habitat Enhancement

A volunteer planting day was completed at the McIntyre Wetland, Glenariffe with assistance from staff from WSP.

Statutory Planning Process

For a more detailed overview of the RMA advocacy and planning work done to represent the interests and aspirations of anglers and hunters in the statutory planning process see the separate RMA Report.

OUTPUT AREA 3: PARTICIPATION

Increase Participation

Rangers Competition

The Rangers Competition was held mid-April. Approximately 50 anglers braved the weather on the day and joined Staff and Honorary Rangers in celebrating the end of the sea-run salmon season. Fish & Game provided a sausage sizzle throughout the event and held a spot prize draw with fishing gear sponsored by Christchurch and North Canterbury Hunting & Fishing stores, Stoney Creek, Kilwell and Tackleman. This event is a great way to connect with anglers out on the river and hear their thoughts and opinions on the fishery.

Take a Kid Fishing

Discussions continue with the Kids Charitable Fishing trust for their 2025 event to be held at the end of September. Fish are on order from the Nelson/Marlborough hatchery.

Rotokohatu Salmon release

A small number of 500g salmon was released into Lake Rua at Rotokohatu for the April school holidays.

Social Media

The new Bi-Weekly Hunting Report has been released on our Facebook page. Communicating with young anglers, interacting and monitoring with different groups via our social media platforms has been successful.

Boggy Creek Maimais

The last of the six maimais were completed and installed at Boggy Creek at Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere in time for the 2025 Game Bird hunting opening weekend. The new maimais have been well-received by game bird hunters, especially those who obtained one in the Boggy Creek ballot. Small improvements will continue to be made over the coming season.

For more information and photos of the new maimais, visit the Fish & Game website here:

[Boggy Creek Hunting Stand Ballot Information](#)

Girl Guides Fishing

Staff attended the Kaiapoi Girl Guides fishing evening at the Avon River to check licences and to provide positive and educational interaction with a Fish & Game officer. Attendance at similar events is in the planning stages to help expand Fish & Game's outreach to different parts of the community.

Satisfaction Surveys

National Game Bird Hunter Satisfaction Survey

This survey was run by North Canterbury staff and carried out in conjunction with the national Game bird harvest surveys. A draft paper is under review with co-authors.

Access

Access Brochures

The first angler access brochure to help anglers find fishing locations that suit their needs was released. There will be more made.

Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere Access

Staff have drafted a MOU with DOC in relation to access at Te Waihora. DOC has agreed that hunters should be allowed to have continued vehicle access to facilitate game bird hunting at Te Waihora.

The MOU has larger implications and related to F&G involvement with management of DOC land around the lake.

Newsletters

Ezines

The new Bi-Weekly Hunting Report has begun focusing on increased season long engagement to provide increased opportunity awareness.

Website

Staff continue to update the North Canterbury website pages with new documents and updated information.

Client Relations

Club Relations

Staff continue to keep communications with local angling and hunting clubs. Staff visited the new Lincoln University Fishing & Diving club mid-May to give a presentation on what Fish & Game does, licencing, and regulations. Communications with the club will be ongoing to support participation of young anglers.

Staff provided a presentation for game bird hunters at Christchurch Hunting & Fishing's 'Duck Night' before the season began.

Staff have also been booked to appear at other clubs (Canterbury Anglers Club) in the coming months.

OUTPUT AREA 4: PUBLIC INTERFACE

Liaison

Staff continue to respond to queries from licence holders and members of the public

OUTPUT AREA 5: COMPLIANCE

For a more detailed overview of compliance activity and outcomes see the separate Compliance Report.

OUTPUT AREA 6: LICENCING

Licence production/distribution

Staff continue to oversee licence production in the office for the new season.

Agent Servicing

Staff visited key Game Licence retailers when licences went on sale to provide support and answer any questions retail staff had.

OUTPUT AREA 7: COUNCIL

Staff have assisted the Council Chairman in preparation of workshops and Council meetings and have produced updated reports and papers for bi-monthly Council meetings and the recent planning workshop.

OUTPUT AREA 8: PLANNING AND REPORTING

Operational Work Plan

Staff continue to finalise the draft operational work plan for 25/26 financial year. This will be delivered for Council decision at the July 2025 meeting.

INPUT AREA 9: ADMINISTRATION

Staff training

All staff completed 4x4 driver and LUV training. Two staff completed the NIWA Electric Fishing Operator's course.

NZC REPORT

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

From: Dave Coll

Date: May 2025

Purpose

1. This report has been prepared for North Canterbury Fish and Game Council to summarise key New Zealand Council activities undertaken for the period to March to May 2025.

Analysis

2. The New Zealand Council met in Wellington over two days 11 – 12th April 2025.
3. Friday morning was an informal session with the NZ Council and a discussion with each of the regional chairs who attended via a video link. The purpose of the chair's attendance was to allow each of them the opportunity to present their budget and business cases (formerly called contestable funding) applications and to answer any questions from Councilor's. As in previous years the chair's attendance was one at a time so that there was no risk of any debate between regions and the NZC Chair was careful to make sure each regional chair spoke only to the merits of their own budgets and did not take the opportunity to disparage any other region.
4. Following the Chair's presentations to NZC a lengthy debate took place to take an overall look at the finances available as determined by the expected licence fee income and the submitted budget requests from all regions. It was obvious that even keeping budgets at 2024/25 levels plus modest increases for salary commitments and inescapable inflationary costs on items such as power, fuel, rates and insurance there will be a shortfall. We identified that this could only be resolved by one of three options: an increase in license fees, use of reserves or reducing expenditure, or a combination of all these options.

Items of Interest

5. Prior to hearing the addresses by the regional chairs, it had been decided that NZC must agree to all requests for regional staff salary increases in line with the Remuneration Policy and keeping within the bands for the relevant position as per the Strategic Pay analysis.
6. Regional budgets were approved at 2024/25 baseline levels plus increases requested for salary increase commitments. Regions will be allowed to use their reserves to fund up to their submitted budget requests and/or reduce some other costs to stay at the approved budget baseline level.

7. As a result of the difficulties during the preparation of the budget it was understood that the North Canterbury application was still being worked on up until, and even after the deadline for submitting it to NZC. Our 2025/26 baseline budget as presented to NZC was \$1,256,910 which compared to this year's budget is an increase of nearly 20%. This was obviously not acceptable as all other regions had requested budgets much closer to their 2024/25 budgets. Our approved budget for 2025/26 is \$1,145,910
8. Following the budget approval process the NZC agreed to recommend licence fees for the 2025/2026 season be increased from the previous season with an adult whole season fishing fee increase of \$5 to \$161 and a gamebird adult whole season licence increase of \$4 to \$120. These recommendations will now be circulated to regions for their comments before being finally agreed and if necessary, amended before being submitted to the Minister for his final approval.
9. Another decision on licence fees was the proposal to increase the whole season non-resident licence fee by \$30 from \$270 to \$300
10. Yet another adjustment to licence categories was a decision to request the Minister to approve an amendment to the family fishing licence to allow all members of a family licence equal fishing and voting rights. Currently only one person identified as the primary holder has full fishing and voting rights while other members can only fish if accompanied by the primary licence holder or children named on the licence.
11. With Corina's resignation taking effect on 31 May, Richie Cosgrove was officially appointed as Acting CEO from 1 June until such time as a permanent CEO has been appointed and taken up the position.

RMA REPORT

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

From: Emily Craig

Date: May 2025

Purpose

1. This report has been prepared for Council to summarise key RMA activities undertaken by the North Canterbury Fish and Game (NCFG) team throughout the period February to mid-May 2025.

Background

2. As the statutory management agency for sport fish and game birds we are required to consider the Legislation, the RMA, local plans, regional plans, and National Policy Statements applicable to our Region.

Points of Information

Resource Consents General

3. All resource consent applications lodged with the regional council are presented weekly to affected parties to assess whether these are relevant to us. Where relevant we provide feedback to Regional Councils and where necessary propose these be publicly notified.
4. Through the period February-May we have received and assessed **305** resource consent applications, of which **184** (60%) were relevant to the North Canterbury region, with the remainder shared between Nelson/Marlborough and Central South Island regions.
5. Only applications that are relevant to the North Canterbury region are reported on below.
6. Financial year-to-date, a total of **490** North Canterbury region resource consent applications have been assessed.
7. The most common (>50%) theme/priority of applications for the February-May period was Discharge permits (s15); a majority of these discharge permits were either to air or land.

Submissions/Interested parties

8. North Canterbury staff made a joint submission with Central South Island Fish & Game on Environment Canterbury's Gravel Management Strategy revision.

9. Staff met with Landpro Ltd who are processing applications on behalf of Environment Canterbury (ECAN) regarding a water take consent renewal on the Waiau Uwha River and made suggestions on consent conditions.
10. Multi-agency (Fish & Game, Department of Conservation, ECAN and NIWA) discussions continue with Amuri Irrigation Company to discuss technical aspects of the proposed new fish screening facility on the Balmoral scheme of the Hurunui River.
11. Follow-ups/additional information was sought on a number of consent applications, some of which were returned to the submitters by ECAN and are waiting on further information before these are re-submitted.

Other

12. Staff attended a multi-agency meeting regarding the recent detection of hornwort (invasive pest weed) supposedly from a popular North Canterbury fishing area. The investigation is ongoing, and Fish & Game continue to support the joint response to the matter.
13. Staff attended a meeting with Selwyn District Council's Te Komiti Waiora regarding waterway and drain management in the Selwyn District.
14. Central Plains Water notified of their annual shutdown of their Rakaia scheme which includes a fish salvage. NIWA have been contracted to carry out the salvage and results will be shared with Fish & Game, and more detailed fish data has been requested.

COMPLIANCE REPORT

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

From: Harry Graham-Samson/Caleb Ryder

Date: May 2025

Purpose: Provide an update on compliance activities by staff and honorary rangers.

Points of Information:

1. Ranging Activity Year To Date

As compliance is one of Council's five priorities, compliance activities have been a key focus of staff from the beginning of the 2024/25 Fishing Season.

Staff and volunteers have to date completed catchment-based targeted ranging, based on data from the 2021/22 National Angler Survey to gauge angler usage on our lakes and rivers in the North Canterbury Region.

This enabled staff to have an understanding on the number of checks that would be required on each waterway. There were some waterways where targets were exceeded while in other areas, targeted numbers of checks were below on what we wanted to achieve.

Licence checks and compliance patrols were conducted across the whole region, with some anglers commenting that they were surprised to see us where they were.

1000 anglers were checked across 35 locations (refer Table 1). This is 272 more checks than the 2023/24 fishing season.

Staff checked 639 licences and honorary rangers checked 161. North Canterbury also hired two contractors for a short period to assist staff with compliance activities, and they checked 200 licences.

It is important to note that none of these checks include licence numbers gathered as part of competitions or event entries.

62 offences and 49 offenders have been detected due to this compliance activity. Most have been resolved through the offer of Diversion or formal warning letters. Some are currently being processed and are awaiting outcomes from court cases.

Overall, the non-compliance rate for North Canterbury was 4.9% of all anglers checked, and this aligns with New Zealand Councils minimum 5% non-compliance target.

Despite the rate of compliance being within the national target, it's worth noting that non-compliance was much higher at some locations than others indicating that certain areas warranted an increased and/or continued strong presence in the future until we see an improvement in compliance in these locations.

To highlight this, the non-compliance rate at Lake Lyndon was 8.1%.

North Canterbury has detected the most offenders this season in the country.

Table 1: Number of licence checks across various catchments in the North Canterbury region

Catchment	No of Licence Checks	No of Offenders
Rakaia	533	17
Waimakariri	376	23
Hurunui	49	8
Waiau	21	1
Ashley	12	0
Ellesmere	9	0
Total	1000	49

2. Court Action

Five cases from the 2024/2025 fishing season have proceeded to court.

Three offenders charged with fishing without a licence have rejected their diversion offer.

One of these offenders chose to go to Court and was fined \$1180 by the court. One paid court diversion of \$600. The third offender, who fished without a sea-run salmon licence, was ordered to pay the court \$850.

The remaining two angler's cases; one being a non-resident angler who knowingly purchased a resident licence to avoid the non-resident designated waters restrictions, and the other angler has committed 8 offences at Lake Lyndon. Both cases are currently before the Courts.

Each case has been a valuable learning experience for staff and honorary rangers concerned.

3. Opening Weekend of Game Bird Hunting

Sunny and reasonably calm conditions

- 12 offences (9 offenders)
- 7 offences for possession of lead shot
- 3 offences for no gamebird licence
- 1 offence for killing protected species (3 NZ Scaup)
- 1 offence for illegal firearm (6 shot magazine capacity)

The non-compliance level was the same as 2024 where 13 offences were encountered over opening weekend.

Some hunters/landowners were surprised to see us (most likely due to locked gates). The rights Of Fish and Game officers to a enter property to perform their statutory functions was explained. (Compliance and Law Enforcement and Property Entry form.)

8 honorary rangers and 5 staff were involved in Compliance over Gamebird Opening Weekend.

Saturday 3rd May 2025

3 teams were out on Saturday, 1 team (2 staff and 2 honorary rangers) were in the Waipara area, the other in the Waiau area (2 staff and 4 honorary rangers). The final team of one staff member and two honorary rangers were around Lake Ellesmere where a state of emergency was announced 2 days earlier with flooding in the Selwyn district. Low hunter numbers were noted.

Checks for Saturday: 60 checks

Sunday 4th May 2025

Overcast and cool (no wind)

1 team (3 staff and 1 honorary ranger) were north of the Waimakariri river focusing on irrigation and hunting ponds.

Another team consisting of 2 staff members used the huntercraft boat on Lake Ellesmere.

Checks for Sunday: 26 checks

As per the new requirements of the Arms Act Regulations 1992, which came into force in June 2023, The Firearms Safety Authority have been notified of all firearms that were seized.

During the remainder of the season, staff have several ranging patrols planned to reflect critical points of the season, such as the pheasant weekends, and closing weekends.

There are also plans for ranging public areas when lake and weather conditions permit.

4. Next Steps

Seasonal Employed Rangers

Due to the number of offenders and offences detected this season, staff would like to take on two contracted seasonal rangers that would help boost our presence in the North Canterbury Region over the summer months. This would assist staff in completing compliance checks in our lakes and rivers and especially in the designated waters area.

This will also allow staff to free up time in completing other operational tasks.

Catchment-based Targeted Ranging

This system worked very effectively this fishing season, so staff would like to continue this method. To give staff a better understanding, adjustment to targets would be planned according to their usage.

Court Cases

With an increase in offenders detected, more cases have progressed to court. Currently it takes on average, \$1,310 for a prosecutor to take an offender to court.

This budget needs to be increased if the council sees compliance as a priority.

HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

From: Emily Craig

Date: May 2025

PURPOSE

1. This report has been prepared for the Council to provide a summary for health and safety across North Canterbury Fish and Game.

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

2. This report provides a summary of:
 - a. The health and safety performance, inclusive of any contract work.
 - b. Any Health and safety risks.
 - c. Any significant health and safety incidents for the months reported and any recent updates on past incidents.
 - d. Any near-miss events and subsequent follow-up actions.
 - e. The progress against the Health and Safety Strategy Work Programme.
 - f. The report also responds to any matters arising from the last Council Meeting.

ANALYSIS

3. The table below summarises the reporting statistics for this period (February – May). Further information regarding context and follow up process is captured in a register.

Lost time injuries this period	Lost time injuries this year	Incidents this period	Incidents this year	Near Miss Events this period	Near miss events this year	New Hazards reported this period	New Hazards reported this year
0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2

4. This dataset continues to build over time particularly as our work programme grows and the health and safety reporting culture is ingrained into our work ethos.

Near Miss and Incident Events

1. No new incidents were recorded in this period.
2. No near miss events have occurred in this period.

New Hazards

3. No new hazards were identified in this period.

Health and Safety Culture

4. The overall Health and Safety culture continues to be positive and proactive. Staff continue to actively contribute to risk identification, system improvements, and maintenance of Health & Safety equipment and gear.

Health & Safety Meetings

5. Held bi-weekly, with a more comprehensive meeting being held once a month.

Contractors

6. The honorary ranger that was contracted to carry out compliance activities in the high country approximately one day a week during the summer period concluded at the end of February.
7. NCFG updated Health & Safety information was sent to Amuri Irrigation Company for their information to assist in planning for the 2025 fish salvage. The health & safety briefing given by a Fish & Game staff member at the salvage site was well-received by AIC staff and the visiting Director.

Staff Competencies and Training

8. C Ryder and J Meecham completed their two-day NIWA Electric Fishing Operators Course early April.
9. All field staff (M Garrick, H Graham-Samson, E Craig, J Meechan, C Ryder) as well as R Cosgrove completed a two-day light 4WD and LUV course late April with TR Driver Training.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND SAFETY

10. A National Health & Safety committee has been established, and staff continue to work supporting NZ Council by providing regional H&S information and paperwork.
11. Following on from the 4WD/LUV course, staff are looking at using existing TR Driver Training TCLOCS forms (more comprehensive pre- and post-drive vehicle checks) or developing their own for future use.

CONCLUSION / DISCUSSION

12. Staff note that NCFG is tracking well toward our Health and Safety goals.
13. With increased National investment to ensure systems and processes are adhered to, a good Health and Safety culture continues to be developed at a regional and national level.

Action List

NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL



As of: 20 May 2025

Building Relationships with Ngai Tahu

On Hold

Cr Strong and T Anglem (Ngai Tahu) to discuss how to best progress a governance relationship between NCFG and Ngai Tahu.

NOTE DATED 25 SEPTEMBER 2024

Hold until a new Ngai Tahu representative is appointed.

Due Date: 22 May 2024

Owner: ALAN STRONG

Meeting: 22 Feb 2024 North Canterbury Fish & Game Council Meeting, 3.2 General Business

Discussion with Central South Island Regarding Management of Lake Heron & Melish Stream

In Progress

That Cr Barron to reignite discussions with Central South Island F&G.

Due Date: 21 Aug 2024

Owner: DAVE BARRON

Meeting: 24 Jul 2024 North Canterbury Fish and Game Council Meeting, 1.5 Council Discussion on Issues and Risks That May Require Council Attention

Latest Update:

Cr Barron advised that discussions were on-going.

DEBBIE AMBLER | 5 May 2025

Shooting Platform for the Disabled

In Progress

To bring back to Council information on the feasibility of a shooting platform for the disabled at Te Waihora or Muriwai Lakes.

A examination of potential benefits and challenges for a shooting platform for the disabled hunters within the North Canterbury region is underway, and will be presented to Council at their February 2024 workshop (revised date) in conjunction with the educational and promotional strategy for game bird hunting.

Due Date: 16 Feb 2025

Owner: ALAN STRONG

Meeting: 25 Sept 2024 NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL, 4.2 Action List

Latest Update:

As R Gabriellsson no longer with NCFG, Cr Strong to progress.

DEBBIE AMBLER | 25 Feb 2025

Development of an Educational and Promotional Strategy for Gamebird Hunting

In Progress

A draft educational and promotional strategy is being formulated, in collaboration with key stakeholder groups and treaty partners. It is anticipated that a Draft Strategy will be presented to Council at their workshop in February 2025 (revised date).

Due Date: 28 Feb 2025
Owner: ALAN STRONG
Meeting: 17 Feb 2021 COUNCIL MEETING - 17 FEBRUARY 2021, 1.4 ACTION SHEET

Latest Update:

As R Gabriellsson no longer with NCFG, Cr Stong to progress.

DEBBIE AMBLER | 25 Feb 2025

Meeting with NZSAA

Not Started

That a meeting be organised between the NZSAA committee and NCFG Council relating to the state of the salmon fishery.

Due Date: 21 May 2025
Owner: ALAN STRONG
Meeting: 19 Feb 2025 NCFG COUNCIL MEETING, 1.3 Council time

Regulation Review of Lake Heron

Not Started

That a Council-to-Council discussion be held with Central South Island F&G's on North Canterbury F&G's position on the management of Lake Heron.

Due Date: 22 Jul 2025
Owner: ALAN STRONG
Meeting: 26 Mar 2025 NCFG Operational Work Plan and Budget Meeting, 1.4 Council Time

Building Relationships with Federated Farmers

Not Started

Start a cycle of bi-annual meetings with the Chairman of Federated Farmers and connect with Daniel Maxwell via the Gamebird Advisory Group.

Due Date: 31 Aug 2025
Owner: PHILLIP MUSSON
Meeting: 26 Mar 2025 NCFG Operational Work Plan and Budget Meeting, 1.4 Council Time



7 May 2025

Dear Rachel

Thank you for your email.

Fish & Game is committed to encouraging and promoting ethical and sustainable game bird hunting. Game bird hunting is a carefully managed, sustainable activity.

Mallard ducks, in particular, can breed prolifically in the right conditions. Without active management, overpopulation can lead to pressure on resources and the wellbeing of the birds.

Game bird hunting provides a sustainable source of kai for whānau and communities throughout New Zealand.

Game bird hunting is not only a long-standing tradition in New Zealand but also a practical conservation tool. It helps ensure waterfowl populations remain sustainable and healthy. Hunters fund conservation efforts to protect and create wetlands that benefit all wildlife including native birds.

Without carefully managed hunting, we'd likely see problems with overpopulation and predation, this would result in less conservation efforts into wetland conservation and protection. We would also likely see steps taken to control populations such as the use of poison.

Regarding your email - the figure of 0.9% unretrieved birds is based on hunter harvest surveys and reflects a national average estimate. It's important to clarify that this figure does not represent wounded birds. In some cases, birds may be lost to natural elements -- such as being unintentionally carried away by river currents -- or taken by predators before they can be retrieved.

Hunters are encouraged to make every effort to retrieve any bird they shoot in order to put food on the table. We have a code of conduct that stipulates hunters should retrieve shot birds. The code tells hunters to only shoot when confident the bird can be recovered.

Fish & Game promotes the use of trained dogs, appropriate shooting distances, and careful consideration of terrain and conditions to limit the chance of unretrieved birds.

Kind Regards

Alan Strong

On behalf of the North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

Statutory managers of freshwater sports fish, game birds and their habitats

North Canterbury Fish and Game

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FOR INFORMATION

To: North Canterbury Fish and Game Council
From: Matthew Garrick
Date: May 2025
Subject: GAME BIRD REFERENCE GROUP MEETING

Purpose

1. Inform the Council of progress related to the game bird reference group, including the information discussed in the first meeting.

Points of Information

2. This group was established during the month of April, with a terms of reference written outlining the structure and role of the group.
3. The group will meet three times a year – currently there are six members (five local plus one North Canterbury Farmer) on the group.
4. Staff gave a presentation on the history of black swan management in the region from the time of population establishment to modern times.
5. Open discussion was had amongst the group following the presentation (see attached meeting notes outlining topics covered).
6. The meeting was well received by the group, with a lot of productive conversation had between staff, the councillors present, and the group members.

Next steps

1. The next meeting is planned for sometime in August, after the close of the regular duck season.

April 30th 2025

Game Bird Reference Group

1. Introductions

- Members Present: Colin Hewson, James Kean, Malcolm Main, Craig Maylam
- Members Absent: Tom Power
- Councillors Present: Nick Moody, Phillip Musson
- Informal Member: Daniel Maxwell

2. Black Swan Presentation

- History of black swans in New Zealand
- Recent management and conflict abatement
- Landcare research project and publications
- Recent events signalling challenges to management

3. Open Discussion

- Swan hunting competitions
- Summer ducks – what's the purpose
- Permitting of swans during spring
- Dabbling duck monitoring
 - Banding
 - GPS monitoring movements
- Landowners and licences – how can we better understand harvest
- Regulations booklets – pdf's, digital licences (Matthew to follow up with Richie)
- How to communicate with the wider community

4. Next Meeting Discussions

- Summer ducks
- Banding
- Hunter Satisfaction Survey

5. Ongoing regulation considerations

- Regular season swan bag limit

SEA-RUN SALMON BAG LIMIT RECOMMENDATION FOR THE 2025/26 ANGLERS NOTICE REVIEW BACKGROUND PAPER

Appendix 1

The salmon population model applied to historical harvest and spawning records identified the potential benefits to the combined spawning populations of the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers from application of the recommended threshold regime.

The model identified clear and simple links between spawning population size, level of harvest control required and season bag size to be applied (Table 1).

Table 2. Combined Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers sea-run salmon spawning population management bands, the season bag limits to be applied to each band and the expected improvement in spawning population size.

Management Band	Spawning population size	Season Bag Limit	Harvest reduction	Increased spawning
Healthy	> 7,800	8	4%	3%
Moderate	5,101 to 7,800	4	16%	11%
Low	1,200 to 5,100	2	35%	23%
Severe	< 1,200	1 + possible season and area restrictions	56% +	37% +

It was accepted that three thresholds were sufficient to categorise the health of the salmon spawning population. Fewer thresholds were unlikely to provide a timely and strong enough reaction to avoid the fishery falling to the lowest band where there could be justification to close the fishery. More than three thresholds may have resulted in harvest conditions being changed too frequently with little opportunity for the spawning population to stabilise in reaction to a period of stable harvest.

Three thresholds provide for an upper threshold above which the fishery can be considered healthy and where a minimum of harvest conditions would apply. Across the 26 years of spawning population information the 75th percentile was selected as the threshold above which the fisheries were considered to be healthy. The 75th percentile means the level at which 25% of the annual spawning counts were exceeded since 1994. For the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers the 75th percentiles are 1,700 and 3,800 and 2,300 fish, respectively, a total of 7,800 fish.

The moderate and low thresholds delineate two bands where there would be active and increasing application of controls on harvest to try to avoid the fishery falling into the severe management band. The moderate threshold corresponds to the median or middle value of the 26-year spawning records for the Waimakariri of 1,400 spawners, Rakaia 2,200 spawners and Rangitata 1,500 spawners, to total 5,100 fish. The low threshold was recommended to be at the 5th percentile for recorded spawning population size in each of the rivers over the last 26 years. This was the level that 95% of spawning records exceeded and corresponded to 250 in the Waimakariri, 550 in the Rakaia, and 400 in the Rangitata. These individual river spawning population sizes sum to 1,200 fish and the lowest recorded combined spawning population size between 1994 and 2020 was 1,330 fish in 2019.

The threshold strategy targets the spawning population size of wild salmon for two reasons – first, it is from the spawning population generally three years earlier, that provides the next generation of adult returns and second, annual in-season estimates of live fish on the spawning grounds made from repeat aerial counts for the current season are available in May and can be accommodated within New Zealand Fish and Game Council (NZFGC) and Minister of Conservation deadlines for Anglers Notice recommendations for the following season. Using spawning population size as the guide for harvest management ensures decisions are made on the most up-to-date information.

Total salmon run size estimates are not available until completion of angler catch surveys in July – too late for consideration in the Anglers Notice.

It is the intent of the threshold management strategy that if the combined Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata spawning population drops below a threshold, harvest regulations will immediately become more restrictive to promote spawner survival the following year. Conversely, if the spawning population exceeds the next highest threshold and enters a higher management band, the spawning population would be required to remain above that threshold for three consecutive seasons before harvest conditions would be relaxed. Three successive seasons above the threshold would confirm that the increased spawning population was more likely to indicate a true population increase and not just a single year event. In effect a population decrease requires urgency while a population increase requires certainty. Basing an increase of the season bag on the average of the last three years spawning populations being above the threshold does not afford certainty that the population can sustain harvest from a higher season bag. One very good spawning year and two poor years taken as an average could exceed a higher threshold however it would not be justified to take such population variation as indicative of a true population increase.

Appendix 2

CSIFG and NCFG Regions sea-run salmon 2021/22 Angler Notice review

The once famous sea-run salmon fisheries of Canterbury and North Otago that account for almost 90% of all sea-run salmon caught in the South Island, now have less than 10% of the numbers seen in the 1990's. In November 2017 the Central South Island (CSIFG) and North Canterbury (NCFG) Fish and Game Councils organised a Salmon Symposium for the angling community and other stakeholders to consider ways to address the sea-run salmon crisis. From the Symposium it was clear that to kick-start the recovery of the sea-run fishery we needed to initially focus on what is within our direct control.

Current harvest controls, including the daily bag limit, are not precise enough to control excessive harvest by highly successful anglers while also maintaining opportunity for all anglers. In 2019, the two Fish and Game Councils unanimously endorsed a four sea-run salmon season bag across all of their region's sea-run salmon fisheries at the soonest possible time. The season bag policy was approved by the Minister of Conservation in February 2020 and awaits approval by Cabinet. This process has been delayed as a result of Covid-19 and the hoped for introduction of the season bag for the 2020/21 season was not achieved.

Another initiative from the Salmon Symposium was the formation of the New Zealand Sea-run Salmon Committee comprising a group of stakeholders focussed on addressing the crisis. This Committee has supported the season bag limit and development of spawning targets in a proposed threshold management strategy as priority actions to assist recovery of the fishery.

The National Sea-run Salmon Committee has been in recess since February 2020. It is important that the consultative and consistent approach to salmon management continues as developed by CSIFG and NCFG councils at a joint meeting in May 2020.

The purpose of this joint CSIFG and NCFG staff report is to recommend to the respective Councils, that consistent sea-run salmon angling conditions be applied across the two regions for the 2021/22 Anglers Notice (AN) based on current salmon population trends and application of the threshold management strategy. Recommendations are provided for two scenarios – one with and one without a season bag, supplemented with background and supporting information.

Recommendation for Anglers Notice 2021/22

EITHER OPTION 1, 2 or 3 –

OPTION 1

If the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations are not amended to permit a season bag limit to be implemented for the 2021/22 season –

1.1 CSIFG Council and NCFG Council recommend for their regions -

1.1.1 Retention of a daily bag limit of one sea-run salmon, and

1.2 CSIFG Council recommends-

1.2.1 for the Waitaki River, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 December to 31 March, and

1.2.2 for the Ashburton, Orari and Opihi rivers and the Rangitata River below Turn Again Point, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 December to the last day of

February, and

1.2.3 for the Rangitata River and tributaries above Turn Again Point, that the open season for sea run salmon fishing from 1 December to 31 January, and

1.2.4 for Lake Heron, that the sport fishing season shall be from the 1st Saturday in November to 30 April and the minimum length for salmon killed shall be 250mm and the maximum length shall be 450mm [unchanged] and

1.2.5 for Lake Stream, that the sea-run salmon season remains closed [unchanged], and

1.2.6 for remaining sea-run salmon fisheries listed in the AN for CSIFG Region there shall be an open season for sea-run salmon fishing from 1 December to the last day of February, and

1.3 NCFG Council recommends –

1.3.1 for the Waimakariri River downstream of Staircase Stream, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 December to 31 March, and

1.3.2 for the Waimakariri River upstream of Staircase Stream confluence, that fishing for sea-run salmon is not permitted, and

1.3.3 for the Rakaia River downstream of the Coleridge tailrace confluence, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 December to the last day of February, and

1.3.4 for the Rakaia River upstream of the Coleridge tailrace confluence, that fishing for sea-run salmon is not permitted, and

1.3.5 for the Ashley River downstream of Ashley Gorge Bridge, Avon River downstream of the Barbadoes Street Bridge, Cam River from Kaiapoi River confluence to Smith Street Bridge, Heathcote River, Hurunui River below the South Branch confluence, Lee Stream, Saltwater Creek, Tentburn outfall, and Waiau River downstream of Hope River confluence, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 December to the last day of February, and all other parts of these rivers shall remain closed for sea-run salmon fishing.

OR –

OPTION 2

If the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983 are amended to permit a season bag limit to be implemented for the 2021/22 season,

- 2.1 CSIFG Council and NCFG Council recommend for their regions-**
- 2.1.1 a season bag of two sea-run salmon, and
- 2.1.2 there be no daily bag limit for sea-run salmon, and
- 2.2 CSIFG Council recommends -**
- 2.2.1 for the Waitaki River downstream of a line running beneath the power lines across the river at the Stonewall, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 October to 30 April, and
- 2.2.2 for the Waitaki River between the Waitaki Dam and a line running beneath the power lines across the river at the Stonewall, or in any tributary of that part of the river, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 October to 31 March, and
- 2.2.3 for the Rangitata River below Turn Again Point, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 October to 30 April, and
- 2.2.4 for the Rangitata River and tributaries above Turn Again Point, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 October to last day of February, and
- 2.2.5 for the Ashburton, Orari and Opihi rivers, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 October to 30 April, and
- 2.2.7 for Lake Heron, that the sport fishing season shall be from the 1st Saturday in November to 30 April and the minimum length for salmon killed shall be 250mm and the maximum length shall be 450mm [unchanged] and
- 2.2.7 for Lake Stream that the sea-run salmon season remains closed [unchanged], and
- 2.2.8 for remaining fisheries listed in the AN for CSIFG Region with sea-run salmon fisheries, there shall be an open season for sea-run salmon fishing from 1 October to 30 April, and
- 2.3 NCFG Council recommends –**
- 2.3.1 for the Waimakariri River downstream of Staircase Stream, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 October to 30 April, and
- 2.3.2 for the Waimakariri River upstream of Staircase Stream confluence, that fishing for sea-run salmon is not permitted, and
- 2.3.3 for the Rakaia River downstream of the Coleridge tailrace confluence, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 October to 30 April, and
- 2.3.4 for the Rakaia River upstream of the Coleridge tailrace confluence, that fishing for sea-run salmon is not permitted, and
- 2.3.5 for the Ashley River downstream of Ashley Gorge Bridge, Avon River downstream of the Barbadoes Street Bridge, Cam River from Kaiapoi River confluence to Smith Street Bridge, Heathcote

River, Hurunui River below the South Branch confluence, Lee Stream, Saltwater Creek, Tentburn outfall, and Waiau River downstream of Hope River confluence, that the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 October to 30 April, and all other parts of these rivers will remain closed for sea-run salmon fishing,

OR –

OPTION 3

If the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983 are not amended to permit a season bag limit to be implemented for the 2021/22 season,

3.1 CSIFG Council and NCFG Council recommend for their regions-

3.1.1 retain all sea-run salmon conditions as they were for 2020/21.

A simple interpretation of these recommendations is that if the season bag is not able to be implemented then alternative combinations of season and area controls are needed to obtain the equivalent increased level of restriction on harvest that a two-fish season bag would have introduced (Option 1). All sea-run salmon fisheries should have a 1 December season opening applied. The Waitaki and Waimakariri salmon runs are characterised as late run rivers and current March closures and daily bag limit of one sea-run salmon achieve the equivalent harvest restriction as a two-fish season bag limit. The Rakaia and Rangitata rivers and all other sea-run salmon fisheries require a closure of the season at the end of February and retention of a one-fish daily bag limit to achieve the equivalent harvest restriction as a two-fish season bag limit. The upper Rangitata River season will close one month earlier than at present in common with the reduction in season length for the remainder of the river.

If a season bag limit is available (Option 2) it should be implemented across both regions at a limit of two sea-run salmon. A season bag of two is considered a sufficiently increased restriction on harvest that a daily bag limit of one and reduction of the open season outside 1 October to 30 April are not required except for protection of upper river spawning areas.

If the season bag is not available, season conditions for sea-run salmon fishing should remain as for 2020/21 (Option 3).

Supporting Staff Assessment

Background

Salmon entering rivers to spawn are either caught by anglers and removed from the river or avoid anglers and continue upriver to spawn. The sum of angler catch and the number of salmon spawning therefore provides an estimate of the total run of salmon returning to fresh water.

The Waimakariri, Rakaia, Rangitata, and Waitaki rivers and more particularly the first three, have annual monitoring programmes for spawning, angler catch and run size that are robust, have been undertaken for 26 years and have generally been consistent in methodology. Based on these rivers' contribution to the CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon fishery and their on-going population monitoring programmes, it is sensible to use them as indicators of the status and trends across the

CSIFG and NCFG fishery to justify introduction of management actions and for showing fishery response to those actions.

Spawning in the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers occurs in a few well defined and stable spring streams in their upper reaches while spawning in the Waitaki River occurs in the 70km of mainstem below the Waitaki Dam. It is almost impossible to undertake repeat live fish counts to estimate the spawning run size for the Waitaki as occurs in the three other rivers. As a consequence Waitaki run size estimates require a further assumption in converting redd (nest) counts to live fish. For this reason, and that consistent annual redd counts for the Waitaki only began in 2013, the Waitaki spawning and run size estimates are not yet extensive or robust enough for contribution to a cross-region sea-run salmon spawning population database.

Monitoring of wild salmon in the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers provides a record of annual angler catch, spawning population size, total run size and trends across 26 years. These fisheries, including the Waitaki for its shorter period of record, show very similar population trends, either increasing or decreasing together on an annual basis and they all share the current critically low state (Figure 1).

The similarity in trends across the four rivers and particularly for the Waimakariri, Rakaia, and Rangitata rivers, indicate the significance of the reduction in salmon numbers that occurred around 1998 to 2001, the absence of improvement since that time, and also strongly suggests that salmon survival in these rivers is very likely controlled by common influences when salmon are in a common environment. If the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata sea-run salmon fisheries are subject to the same principal population controls this provides strong support for consistent management and consideration of them as one harvest management unit.

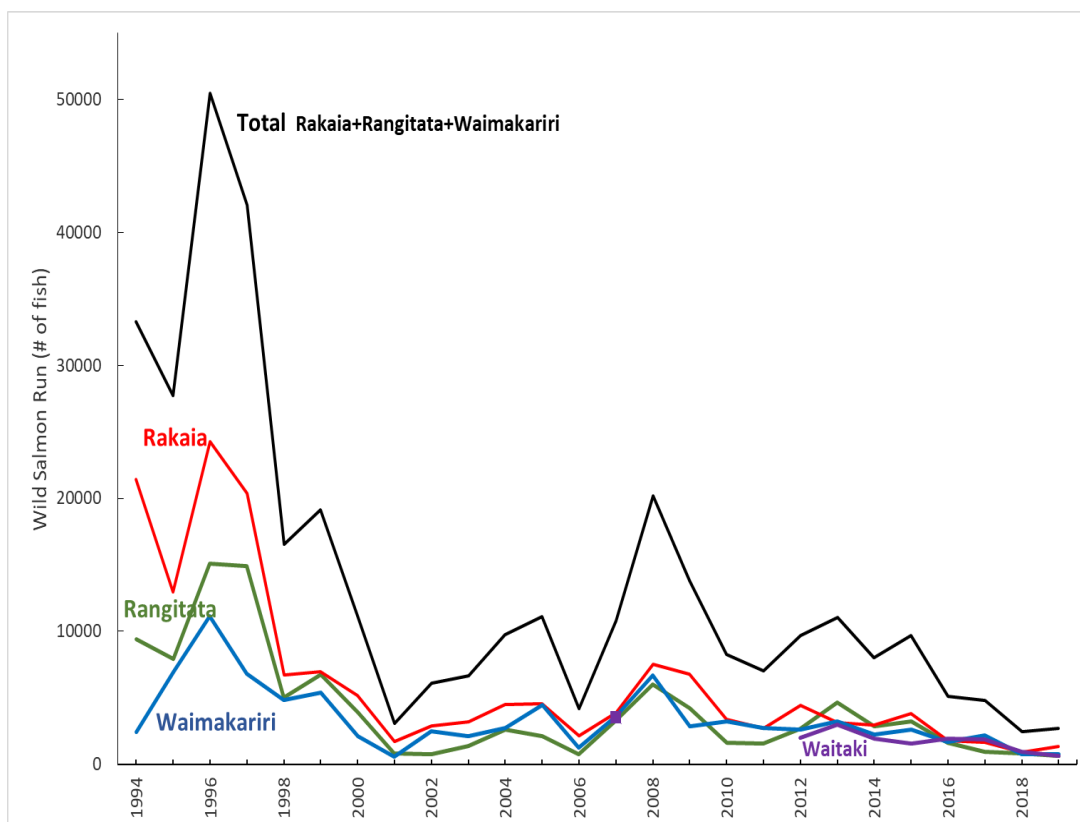


Figure 1. Estimated wild salmon returning to the Rakaia (red), Rangitata (green), and Waimakariri (blue) rivers for 1994 to 2019, Waitaki River (purple) 2007 and 2012 to 2019, and total combined for the Rakaia, Rangitata and Waimakariri (black), 1994 to 2019.

A longer period of record for redd counts in the same reaches of Deep Stream and Deep Creek in the upper Rangitata River since 1957, might suggest salmon population decline has been occurring for longer than just the last 20 years (Figure 2). These reach counts represent between 60% and 80% of the total redd counts for those streams in years when total counts were undertaken and these two streams in turn account for greater than 90% of all known Rangitata River salmon spawning.

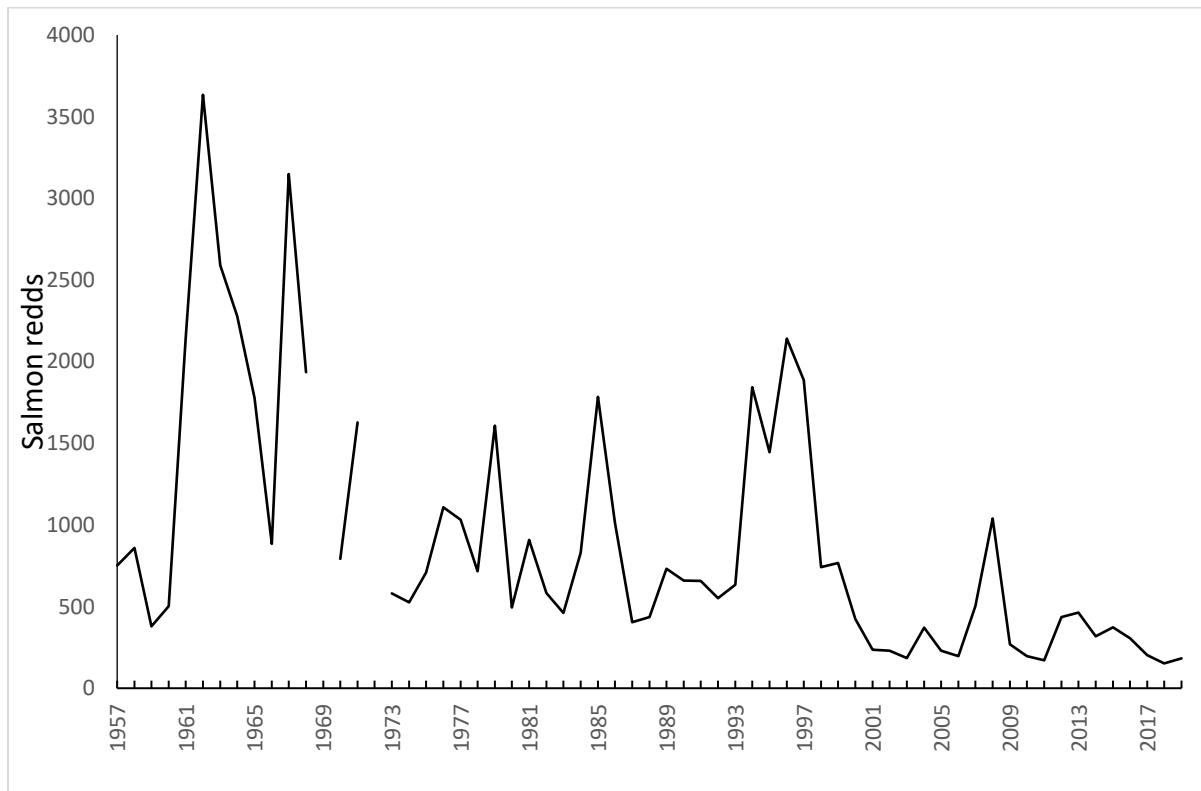


Figure 2. Salmon redd counts in consistently surveyed reaches of Deep Stream and Deep Creek in the upper Rangitata River, 1957 - 2019.

Where Fish and Game can make a difference and where we do have direct control is in the freshwater environment and in particular, regulation of angler catch. Since 1994, angler catch of all salmon returning has averaged 38% for the Rakaia and Rangitata and 54% for the Waimakariri and with a range from a high of 74% in the Waimakariri in 1999/00, to a low of 12% in the Rangitata in 2003/04. While these figures suggest a priority order for harvest control, the CSIFG and NCFG councils should agree to manage angler harvest of the salmon fishery as a whole with consistency and transparency. The similarity of each river's track in Figure 1 supports harvest management of these rivers as a single entity.

A priority identified by the National Sea-run Salmon Committee for improved sea-run salmon management was to manage angler harvest to ensure that each year there are sufficient wild spawners remaining to increase or at least maintain the population size of the next generation of adult returns. This could be achieved by setting thresholds for spawner numbers based on the 26-year historical spawning population range and minimum acceptable spawning population size. Between the thresholds there would be defined spawning population bands each with a different level of harvest regulation associated with it. These regulations would increase the number of fish that survive to spawn when the population is in a low population band or relax angling restrictions when the population is healthy.

The threshold strategy targets the spawning population size of wild salmon for several reasons – it is from the spawning population in any year that the next generation of adult returns are produced, and annual spawning population monitoring programmes are the earliest available measure of the salmon population. Each year the estimates of live fish on the spawning grounds made from repeat aerial counts are available in May and can be accommodated within New Zealand Fish and Game Council (NZFGC) deadlines for Anglers Notice recommendations for the following season. Using spawning population size as the guide for harvest management ensures decisions are made on the most up-to-date information. Total salmon run estimates are not available until completion of angler catch surveys in July – too late for consideration in the Anglers Notice.

This strategic approach increases the transparency of how and why harvest regulations are set and avoids the ad hoc regional reviews of individual fisheries that can produce inconsistencies in regulations. This approach requires –

1. The setting of thresholds based on spawning population targets,
2. The magnitude of change in harvest required to achieve a spawning population target, and
3. The conditions in the Anglers Notice that will be applied to achieve the spawning population target –
 - 3.1. without a season bag limit (Option 1)
 - 3.2. with a season bag limit (Option 2)
4. Retain current 2020/21 conditions (Option 3)
5. Future Harvest Management - threshold management and application of the season bag limit

The following review considers the magnitude of changes needed in angler harvest to achieve levels of spawning population response, and the season bag limits or alternative conditions required to achieve spawning population targets. This information supports the agreement of CSIFG and NCFG councils at a joint meeting in May 2020 for development of a strategic approach to salmon harvest management across the two regions and introduction of a season bag limit.

1. Thresholds

It is proposed that three thresholds are sufficient to categorise the health of the salmon spawning population. Fewer thresholds are unlikely to provide a timely and strong enough reaction to avoid the fishery falling to the lowest band where there could be justification to close the fishery. More than three thresholds may result in harvest conditions being changed too frequently with little opportunity for the spawning population to stabilise in reaction to a period of stable harvest.

Three thresholds provide for an upper threshold above which the fishery can be considered healthy and where a minimum of harvest conditions would apply. Across the 26 years of spawning population information the 75th percentile has been selected as the threshold above which the fisheries are considered to be healthy. The 75th percentile means the level at which 25% of the annual spawning counts were exceeded since 1994. For the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers the 75th percentiles are 1,700 and 3,800 and 2,300 fish, respectively (Table 1).

Table 1. Salmon spawning population thresholds representing healthy, moderate, low, and severe management bands based on 26 years of population records for the Waimakariri, Rakaia, and Rangitata rivers and combined total for all three rivers.

Management Band	Waimakariri	Rakaia	Rangitata	Total, 3 rivers
Healthy	>1,700	>3,800	>2,300	>7,800
Moderate	1,401 to 1,700	2,201 to 3,800	1,501 to 2,300	5,101 to 7,800
Low	250 to 1,400	550 to 2,200	400 to 1,500	1,200 to 5,100
Severe	<250	<550	<400	<1,200

The moderate and low thresholds delineate two bands where there would be active and increasing application of controls on harvest to try to avoid the fishery falling into the severe management band. The moderate threshold corresponds to the median or middle value of the 26-year spawning records for the Waimakariri of 1,400 spawners, Rakaia 2,200 spawners and Rangitata 1,500 spawners. The low threshold is recommended to be at the 5th percentile for recorded spawning population size in each of the rivers over the last 26 years. This is the level that 95% of spawning records exceed and corresponds to 250 in the Waimakariri, 550 in the Rakaia, and 400 in the Rangitata. These individual river spawning population sizes sum to 1,200 fish and the lowest recorded combined spawning population size between 1994 and 2020 was 1,330 fish in 2019.

One of the aims of setting thresholds and application of restrictions in the higher bands is to avoid complete fishery closure. It is recommended that below the low threshold, in the severe management band, while the fishery may not be closed, restrictions would be very severe e.g. a one fish season bag limit in addition to season and area restrictions.

2. Magnitude of change for a spawning population response

In theory a reduction in harvest produces a corresponding increase in the spawning population that, with all other things remaining equal should produce more juvenile salmon going to sea and an increase in adults returning. The increased returning run produces more fish to spawn, subject to harvest conditions in place at that time, and over generations the benefit of having more spawners compounds on an approximate three-year cycle. For simplicity this process assumes all fish return at three years of age. Generally three-year old fish make up 60% to 90% of adult returns in any year.

To identify the level of response by the salmon population to changed harvest conditions a salmon population model has been developed. The model uses actual annual year-class survival rates from the 26-year salmon run record to generate a return run size for each year. In turn, each year's return run over the 26 years was harvested at a known rate to generate the angler and spawning components of each returning run. So, for any given harvest rate or change in harvest rate in year 0 that results in a change to the number of spawners in year 0, the model calculates a different return run size in year 3 following application of the year-class survival rate for that year from the actual returns in the 26-year record. In this way, if a proposed harvest management regime had been implemented in the 1993/94 season and maintained for the next 25 years, the model tracks the annual changes in the number of salmon that spawn, are caught by anglers and the total run size.

Many scenarios have been run through the model for each of the three rivers and for the combined rivers. Scenarios attach various harvest levels to each of the spawning population threshold bands in Table 1, to understand the contribution that harvest management can have in restoring salmon run size and then managing the fishery to maintain runs in the healthy band. Modelled levels of

restriction on angler catch ranged from 5% to 70% and could be a flat rate across all management bands or variable with increasing restriction as the population declined.

All scenarios retained a minimum 5% restriction in the healthy threshold band to exert some control on excessive harvest rates even when numbers were above the healthy threshold. Flat rate scenarios produced significant gains more quickly than variable scenarios but at the cost of greater impact on anglers when it was least required. The greatest benefit to the spawning population occurred in scenarios with the highest levels of harvest restriction balanced against the increased hardship imposed on anglers. The scenarios that generated the greatest benefit for least hardship were those where restriction increased as the need for stronger action was required to address a declining spawning population trend into the moderate to severe management bands.

Overall the scenario that assigned a 5% reduction in harvest to the healthy band, 20% reduction to the moderate band and 40% reduction to the low band had the least impact on anglers of the variable regime scenarios modelled and generated significant long-term increases in spawning, angling and total run population sizes (Table 2).

Table 2. Total number of salmon spawning, caught by anglers and run size across the period 1993 to 2018 under actual (historic) harvest conditions and modelled with harvest restrictions of 5%, 20%, and 40% applied from 1993/94 at individual thresholds for each river.

		Waimakariri	Rakaia	Rangitata
Total spawners	Actual 1994 - 2018	42,029	96,802	58,950
	Scenario 5% 20% 40% applied	86,668	132,373	82,579
	% Change	+106%	+ 37%	+ 40%
Total harvest	Actual 1994 - 2018	45,518	59,033	30,800
	Scenario 5% 20% 40% applied	71,509	62,658	32,423
	% Change	+ 57%	+6%	+ 5%
Total salmon run	Actual 1994 - 2018	87,547	155,835	89,750
	Scenario 5% 20% 40% applied	158,177	195,031	115,002
	% Change	+ 80%	+ 25%	+ 28%

In the period 1993/94 to 1998/1999 for the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers under the 5% 20% 40% scenario, spawning numbers were in the healthy management band so modelled harvest restriction would be only 5%. Over that period there were sufficient gains made so that by 2001/02 the modelled spawning populations remained above the low threshold where the historical actual spawning runs were closer to the severe management band.

From 2000/01 onwards when actual salmon runs remained low, the modelled scenario applied 20% and 40% harvest restrictions when justified. The modelled scenario produced more spawning fish that generated more fish returning and a further increase in the number of fish spawning - a compounding benefit. These restrictions made significant differences to the modelled number of fish returning to the Waimakariri River (Figure 3). Between 2000/01 and 2017/18 the historical actual

spawning population in the Waimakariri River was in the low band (between the red and orange horizontal threshold lines in Figure 3) in 14 seasons. Yet under the proposed 5% 20% 40% regime it would have been in that band only 3 seasons.

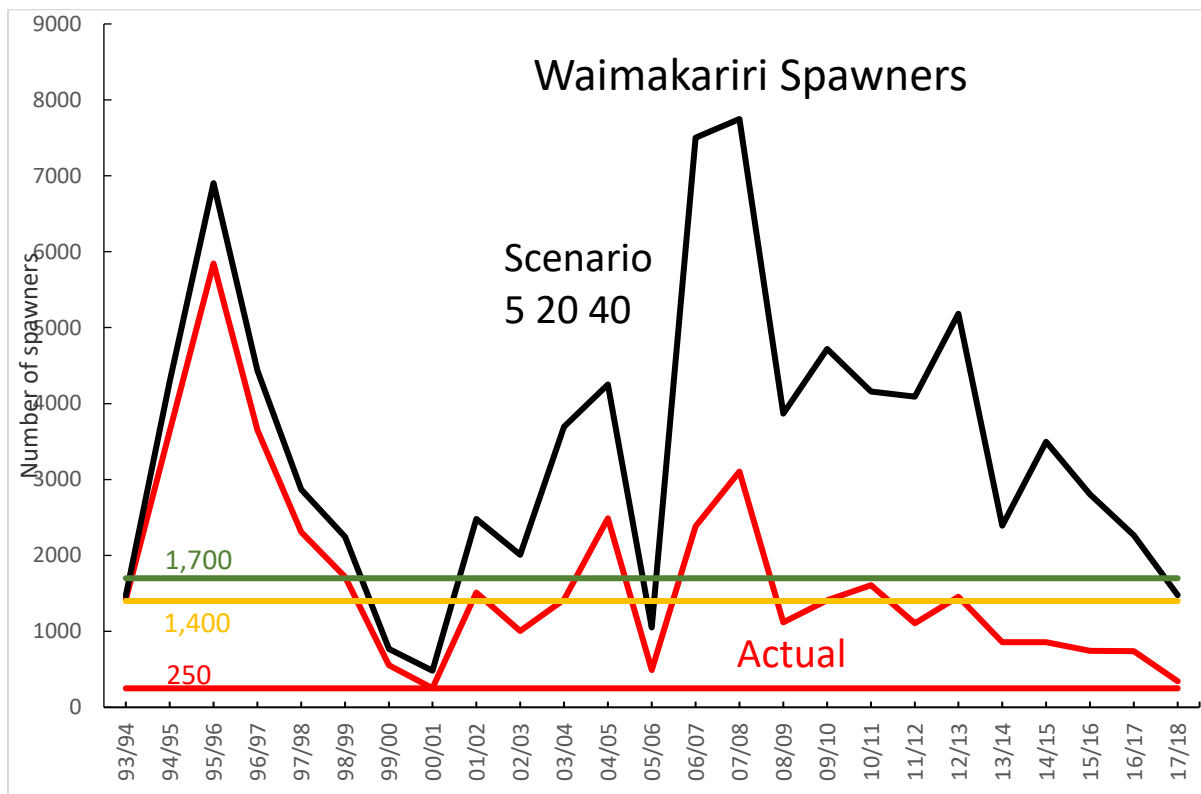


Figure 3. Actual historical (red) and modelled (black) annual spawning population size for the Waimakariri River if management thresholds had been applied since 1994. Horizontal lines represent the healthy (green), moderate (orange) and low (red) management thresholds.

Consideration of harvest management for the salmon fisheries of the Waimakariri, Rakaia, and Rangitata rivers has so far focused on their individual fisheries over the last 26 years and modelled responses to harvest thresholds specific to each river. This has not considered management of the fishery as a whole. As reported earlier the consistency observed over the last 26 years in run-size dynamics across these three rivers points towards management of their harvest as a single population. A season limit bag introduced across the CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon fisheries, even if based on population size and trends in the three fisheries, would be almost impossible to implement and manage if these fisheries continued to have their own thresholds and bag limits.

To avoid these complications an alternative process that sums the individual river thresholds plus spawning, catch and total run size, is proposed as the mechanism for applying changes to harvest conditions in response to management bands being breached. This appears to offer a simple and at least equally effective mechanism as individual river-based regimes to manage harvest in the CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon fisheries (Figure 4).

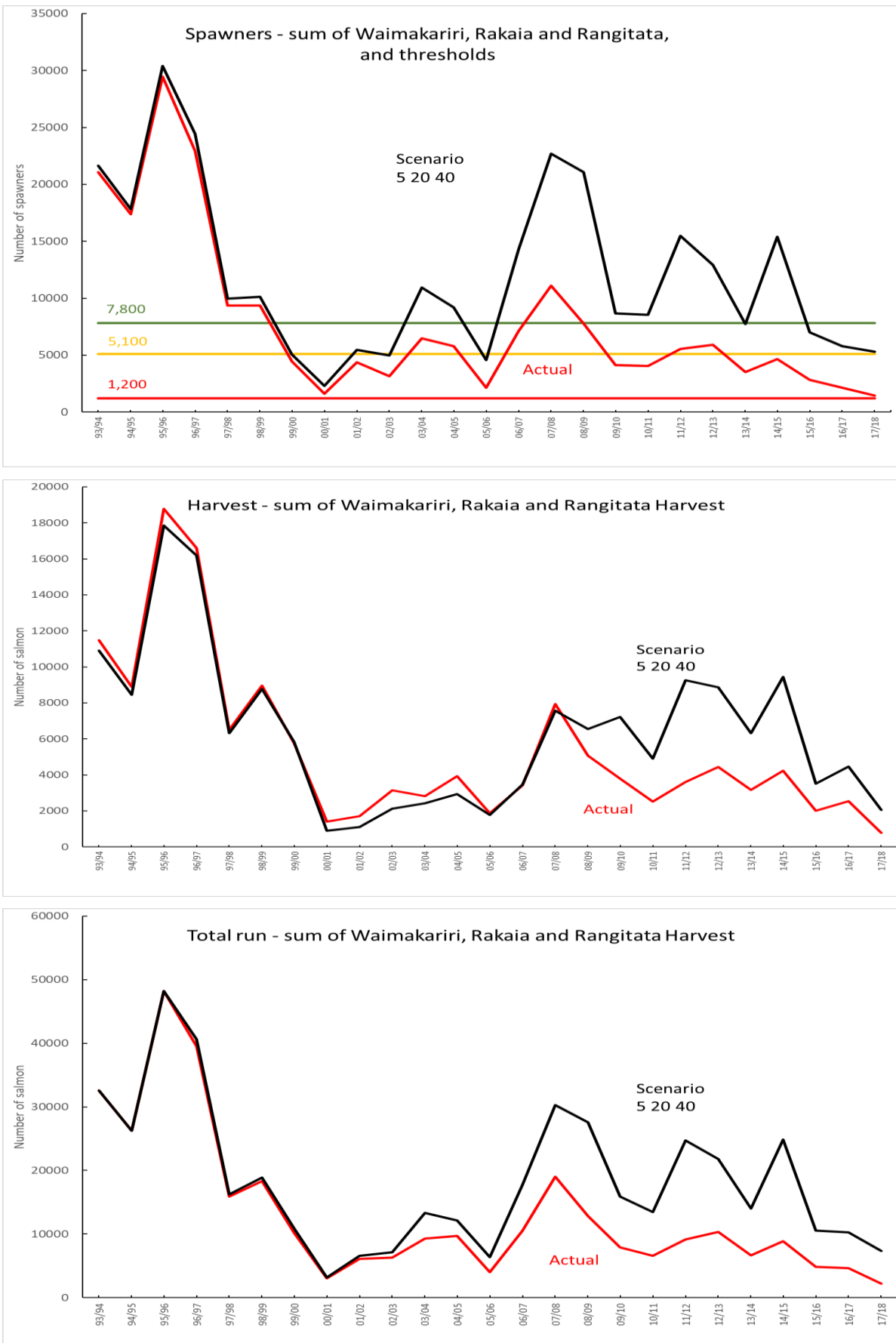


Figure 4. Annual spawning population size, angler harvest and total run size for actual historical combined Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata fisheries (red line) and modelled population sizes (black line) if proposed management thresholds had been in place since 1994.

When the summed thresholds and spawning populations model was compared to the more complex model that provided for individual fisheries responses it was found the individual fisheries model

provided more intense regulation with more frequent regulation changes. The individual fisheries model produced a worse result across the three fisheries. The summed thresholds and populations model provided 3,000 (1%) more spawners and 9,200 (6%) more fish available to the angler than the individual fishery response model over the 26-year period. Fishing conditions required changing only four times under the summed model compared to six times under the individual model.

In summary, the salmon population model that combined the three salmon populations for the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers as one harvest management unit and applied the management scenario that had 5%, 20% and 40% harvest reduction targets for healthy, moderate and low management bands respectively, would have had the least impact on anglers of the scenarios trialled and generated significant long-term increases in spawning, angling, and total population sizes. If the preferred scenario had been applied in 1993/94, then in the poor salmon years experienced from 2000/01 to the present, the model predicted increased spawning that produced stronger returning adult runs that also would have meant more fish available to anglers. The combined population model was predicted to create a simpler management regime and a more positive outcome than the individual fisheries model.

3. Conditions in the Anglers Notice to be applied to achieve the spawning population target with and without application of a season bag limit

Joint CSIFG and NCFG Councillor and Staff meetings in 2019 discussed standardising sea-run salmon fishing conditions across the regions and the need to improve wild salmon spawning numbers. A result of this process was agreement in principle to a threshold management regime based on salmon spawning population targets and introduction of additional daily bag limit and season length restrictions for the 2019/20 season. These were predicted to reduce harvest across the two regions by about 18%.

The 18% reduction remained short of the 40% considered by the two Councils to be necessary given the state of the fishery and it was agreed that introduction of a season bag limit was the next step towards achieving the required control on harvest. Both Councils agreed to seek a four fish season bag limit for the 2020/21 season as an entry level to implementing a season bag, with recognition that the current state of the fishery justified a two fish season bag limit and this would likely be implemented in the second year – the 2021/22 season.

The season bag policy was approved by the Minister of Conservation in February 2020 and awaits approval by Cabinet. This approval has been delayed as a result of Covid-19 and the hoped-for introduction of the season bag for the 2020/21 season was not achieved. There remains uncertainty of legislative support for a season bag for sea-run salmon for the 2021/22 season.

As of 5 May 2021, early spawning survey information for the 2020/21 season sea-run salmon run across the CSIFG and NCFG regions indicates that the 2020/21 spawning population are very likely to be similar in size to those of 2019/20. Recommendations agreed in 2019 by the two Fish and Game Councils that the level of harvest restriction needed for the 2021/22 season of 40%, remain valid. Councils must consider two options for achieving that level of control on harvest – one without a season bag limit, and one with a season bag limit.

3.1 Review of angling conditions if a season bag limit **cannot be in place for 2021/22 (Option 1)**

The 2020/21 Angler Notice recommendations of CSIFG and NCFG councils to NZFGC were to retain the one fish daily bag limit, implement a four fish season bag limit, and apply an open season of 1 October to 31 March.

It was estimated that a four fish season bag and a one fish daily bag would reduce season harvest across all fisheries by 16% and 10% respectively. The impact of the one-fish daily bag limit was based on angler harvest surveys undertaken across a number of years in the 1990's for CSIFG fisheries. Across those survey years regional season harvest of sea-run salmon ranged from 2,900 to 7,100 fish and at that time reduction of the daily bag limit from two fish to one fish was estimated to reduce harvest compared to a two-fish limit by 15% in a good fishing season and 10% in a poor fishing season. The designation of a poor season in the 1990's was considerably different to the poor seasons seen recently where CSIFG regional harvest has been less than 1,000 fish. It is very likely that the impact of a one-fish daily bag limit on current harvest is less than the estimated 10%.

For most CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon fisheries loss of April for angling was estimated to reduce harvest by about 5% due to the earlier salmon runs in those rivers where peak angling occurs in January, February, and March and accounts for about 90% of season harvest. Application of the April closure would have greater impact on season harvest in the Waitaki and Waimakariri fisheries due to their later salmon runs and April angling sustaining a higher proportion of season harvest.

Differential impact of April closure on Waitaki salmon anglers compared to other CSI Fish and Game Region salmon fisheries has been shown in 14 years of catch records available since April season closure was first implemented in the CSIFG Region in 2006/07. Although at introduction it was estimated that the April closure would reduce Waitaki harvest by 27%, monitoring in the 15 seasons since its introduction has indicated the average annual reduction in harvest has been 37% with a range of 6% to 73%.

NCFG staff contend that the Waimakariri River sustains a similarly late salmon run to that of the Waitaki River. While there is no specific information available for the Waimakariri on the monthly distribution of season harvest, there is timing and duration information available for spawning from annual repeat live spawner counts (Figure 5). A comparison of timing of the peak spawning counts in spawning streams in the Rakaia, Rangitata, Waimakariri, and Hakataramea rivers since 1993/94 supports the contention that there is similarity in later timing of the salmon runs for the Waimakariri and Waitaki compared to the Rakaia and Rangitata. There is most commonly a month (30 days) difference in the timing of peak spawning between the paired spawning runs. Other smaller rivers in the CSIFG and NCFG regions with sea-run salmon runs e.g. Hurunui and Opihi, are considered to have early salmon runs comparable in timing to those of the Rakaia and Rangitata rivers.

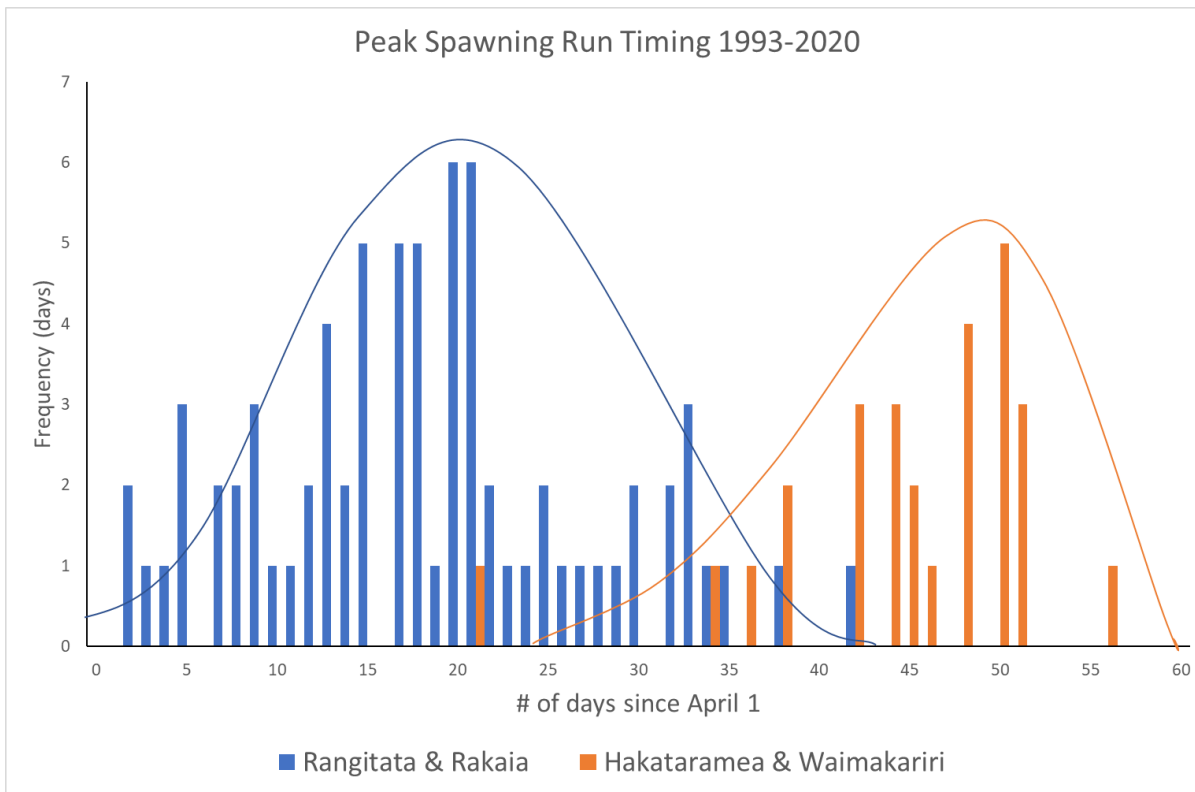


Figure 5. Frequency of timing of annual peak spawning from annual repeat live counts of salmon in spawning tributaries of the Rakaia plus Rangitata and the Waitaki (Hakataramea River) plus Waimakariri from 1994 to 2020.

Since the season bag limit condition could not be implemented for the 2020/21 season, the estimated harvest reduction was 15% (5% for April closure and 10% for 1-fish daily bag) for the Rakaia, Rangitata and all other CSIFG and NCFG salmon fisheries relative to fishing conditions that applied for 2005/06 when both regions last had similar angling regulations (Table 3). The exceptions to the 15% level of reduction were the Waitaki and Waimakariri rivers where the estimated reduction in harvest was 47%, being 37% for April closure plus 10% for 1-fish daily bag.

Table 3. Sea run salmon angler harvest restrictions applied since 2005/06 as a baseline and their estimated impact on CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon fisheries, excluding long term river specific area restrictions e.g. Rangitata River above Turn Again Point and NCFG Western Zone closures.

Season	Region	Conditions	% harvest reduction (summed all measures)
2005/06	CSI & NC	2-salmon/day, Oct-Apr season	0%
2006/07 to 2018/19	CSI	2-salmon/day, Oct-Mar season	average 37% for Waitaki 5% for all other rivers
	NC	2-salmon/day, Oct-Apr season	0%
2019/20	CSI & NC	1-salmon/day, Dec-Mar season	average 47% for Waitaki & Waimakariri 18% for all other rivers
2020/21	CSI & NC	1-salmon/day, Oct-Mar season	average 47% for Waitaki & Waimakariri 15% for all other rivers

In producing these estimates of impact on harvest from the combination of different angling conditions, the individual components have been summed. In reality the total impact on harvest of

a number of compounding conditions is likely to be less than a simple sum of the parts when compliance with some conditions may also limit the opportunity for anglers to fulfil other conditions. Also most of the information on daily bag limits comes from seasons with better runs than at present and restrictions on daily capture are likely to be less effective in years with smaller runs.

Combined spawning populations in the Waimakariri, Rakaia, and the Rangitata rivers in the three most recent seasons ranged from 1,330 to 1,630 fish, have been the lowest since live fish counts began in 1993, and likely to be the lowest ever. These levels are slightly above the severe spawning population threshold of 1,200 fish (Table 1). In the last three years the Waitaki River has sustained the three lowest redd counts from 16 spawning counts conducted since 1976.

Returns of sea run salmon to CSIFG and NCFG rivers for the 2020/21 season are predicted to be historically low based on available angler catch records and aerial spawning counts conducted up to early May. Final spawning counts will not be completed until June and harvest estimates will not be completed before July. If early indications are accepted that 2020/21 salmon runs will be on par with the previous three years, then there is strong justification for immediately seeking the approximate 40% reduction in harvest from its level in 2005/06, as agreed by CSIFG and NCFG in 2019.

If the season bag is not available for implementation for the 2021/22 season and the target for harvest reduction remains at a level of approximately 40% relative to harvest pre-2005/06 as forecast at the 2020 joint CSIFG and NCFG council meeting, then additional season and area closures from those that operated for the 2020/21 season must be considered (Table 4).

Table 4. Impact of a one-fish daily bag limit and contribution to sea-run salmon harvest by month and river area for CSIFG and NCFG fisheries. Monthly contribution to harvest was sourced from five years of CSIFG angler diary records 1987 to 2006, and area contribution to harvest was sourced from three years of combined CSIFG and NCFG email and telephone surveys, 2018 to 2020.

Condition	Application	Contribution to harvest
Daily limit bag	1 fish per day	10% reduction all rivers
Closed period	October + November	0% Waimak & Waitaki, 3% all other rivers
	December	1% Waimak & Waitaki, 11% all other rivers
	January	8% Waimak & Waitaki, 30% all other rivers
	February	14% Waimak & Waitaki, 29% all other rivers
	March	40% Waimak & Waitaki, 22% all other rivers
	April	37% Waimak & Waitaki, 5% all other rivers
Area		
Waimakariri	Mouth to SH1	66%
	SH1 to Gorge Br	26%
	Above Gorge Br	8%
Rakaia	Mouth	25%
	Tidal limit to SH1	35%
	SH1 to Gorge Br	24%
	Gorge Br to Coleridge	16%

Rangitata	Mouth, surf & lagoon	50%
	Tidal limit to SH1	16%
	SH1 to Arundel Br	10%
	Arundel Br to Gorge	6%
	Gorge & above	18%
Waitaki	Mouth & tidal reach	13%
	Tidal to SH1	34%
	SH1 to Stonewall	41%
	Above Stonewall	12%
Waiau	Mouth & tidal reach	40%
	Tidal to SH1	8%
	SH1 to Hanmer Br	44%
	Above Hanmer Br	8%
Hurunui	Mouth & tidal reach	83%
	Tidal to SH1	4%
	SH1 to Mandamus Br	5%
	Above Mandamus Br	8%
Ashburton	Mouth & tidal	100%
Orari	Mouth & tidal reach	100%
Opihi	Mouth to SH1	92%
	Above SH1	8%

Distribution of harvest by month for the Waitaki River is considered applicable to the Waimakariri River. For all other rivers, the monthly distribution of harvest is considered to be represented by that for CSIFG rivers as discussed previously.

In 2020/21, all CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon rivers with season conditions of a one fish daily bag limit and an October to March season, except for the Waitaki and Waimakariri rivers, have been estimated to have reduced harvest by 15% on average from pre-2006 levels. The proposed combination of a one fish daily bag and further restrictions on open season availability, except for the Waimakariri and Waitaki rivers, could reduce harvest by approximately 40% from pre-2006 levels –

- October and November closure for all sea-run salmon fisheries except for the Waimakariri and Waitaki rivers, saves 3%, and
- March and April closure for all sea-run salmon fisheries except for the Waimakariri and Waitaki rivers, saves 27% (22% March + 5% April), and
- Daily bag limit of one fish saves 10%.

In addition, and specifically for the Rangitata River, it is proposed that the open season above Turn Again Point shall be from 1 December to 31 January. The saving in harvest from the February closure in the Rangitata above Turn Again Point is estimated to reduce the effective season in this reach by approximately half and saves 1% of whole season/whole river harvest. This closure is

recommended to ensure that reaches above and below Turn Again Point are consistent in their opening date and both reaches close one month at the end of their respective seasons.

In the Waitaki and Waimakariri rivers the April closure already restricts harvest by an estimated 37% on average. Since introduction of the April closure in the CSIFG Region in 2006/07, the annual reduction in harvest in the Waitaki River has ranged from an estimated 6% to 73% determined by the timing of the run. The current daily bag limit of one fish adds a further 10% to the harvest restriction total. To achieve the targeted 40% reduction in harvest for the Waitaki and Waimakariri rivers it is recommended that current (2020/21) season conditions remain in place –

- a daily bag limit of one sea run salmon, and
- upriver spawning protections, and

a new condition be added –

- an open season for sea run salmon fishing from 1 December to 31 March.

The recommended later opening of 1 December brings consistency of the season starting date across all CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon fisheries. The Waitaki and Waimakariri late runs mean the unavailability of October and November will make negligible difference to angler opportunity to fish for or catch salmon in these rivers. The 31 March season closure retains the status quo for these two rivers.

These assessments have focused on the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers for which we have consistent live fish spawning counts and a large angler population to target for estimating harvest. The Waitaki River has similarly reliable harvest estimates but the wide distribution of mainstem spawning removes our ability to estimate the annual spawning population size in terms of fish numbers.

The remaining CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon fisheries have lower levels of precision for estimates of catchment spawning, salmon angler use of river reaches and season distribution of angler effort. We know that run timing in these rivers is similar to the Rakaia and Rangitata and that their season harvest will be affected to a similar extent by the proposed reduction in season length. The remaining rivers are also characterised by having a substantially higher proportion of season harvest at their river mouths. This confined distribution provides little opportunity to introduce practical and effective harvest restrictions targeting river reaches. Setting sea-run salmon fishing season conditions for these rivers modelled on extensive Rakaia River and Rangitata River records is considered appropriate.

3.2 Review of angling conditions if a season bag limit **can** be in place for 2021/22 (Option 2)

A season bag limit provides a simple and fair method for implementing significant control on angler catch instead of compounding a number of less significant area and season restrictions. Implementing a season bag enables just one condition to be applied to achieve a saving on harvest to meet the spawning target. This is particularly important when a 20% or greater improvement in spawning population size is required and where numerous combinations of season length, area closures and possibly method restrictions, would otherwise be required.

Further support for avoiding significant restriction of the length of the open season is provided by recent scientific evidence that timing of entry to the river and run upstream for individual salmon may

be genetically programmed. This would support spreading angler harvest across the whole of the salmon run rather than confining high harvest to a shorter period of the run that may target salmon that are naturally predisposed to return at that time. Removal of these fish in a concentrated period of the run could impact on the overall resilience of the salmon population.

In May 2020 CSIFG and NCFG councils considered introduction of a season bag limit of four sea run salmon with an associated 16% reduction of harvest. Both Councils agreed that a four salmon limit was sufficient for the first year with a season bag in operation (Table 5).

Table 5. Impact of various season bag limits on 909 successful salmon anglers who caught 2,028 sea-run salmon across all CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon fisheries in the 2018/19 season and potential stock saved that could have improved spawning in the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers in 2019.

Season bag limit	Successful anglers achieving bag size	Number of salmon saved	Proportion of total harvest saved	Potential increase in Waimak, Rakaia, Rangitata spawning
20	0%	0	0	0
10	2%	37	2%	1%
8	4%	81	4%	3%
6	7%	153	8%	5%
5	12%	211	11%	7%
4	17%	313	16%	11%
3	26%	460	23%	15%
2	45%	689	35%	23%
1	100%	1,100	56%	37%
0	0	2,028	100%	66%

A 40% reduction in harvest from its level in 2005/06 is almost completely achieved with introduction of a season bag set at two fish. The estimated 35% saving from a two fish season bag does not require any additional season or area restrictions so the season could return to October to April. This provides a fairer outcome particularly for Waitaki and Waimakariri anglers than the current April closure that in combination with a one fish daily bag is estimated to create a 47% reduction in harvest on those rivers (Table 3).

The Rangitata River would retain its closure of the season above Turn Again Point from the end of February and the upper river closed fishery status for NCFG fisheries would also remain. Conditions that prevent angling for salmon on the spawning grounds after the end of March would be reintroduced for the Waitaki River and tributaries above the Maerewhenua River or at the more effective and practical demarcation at the powerlines across the river at the Stonewall.

A two fish season bag limit also negates the need for a daily limit of one fish. If an angler is able to catch two fish in one day and in so doing end their season or an angler decides to keep one fish on each of two days, the impact on the fishery is the same. The only instance when having both a one fish daily limit and a two fish season bag reduces harvest, would be if an angler catches one fish and would have gone on to catch a second on the same day but was prevented by the daily limit

and the angler does not catch a second fish for the remainder of the season. The incidence of such an event is unknown but likely to be minor compared to the overall benefit of having a season bag.

It is recommended that if a reduction in season harvest of sea-run salmon in the order of 40% from pre-2006 levels is to be achieved in the CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon fisheries and the season bag limit for sea-run salmon is able to be implemented for the 2021/22 season that–

1. the season bag limit shall be two fish, and
2. there be no daily bag limit for sea-run salmon, and
3. for all CSIFG and NCFG sea-run salmon fisheries other than the Waitaki River that the open season shall be 1 October to 30 April except that existing upriver spawning protection zones and season closures will remain as for 2020/21, and
4. for the Waitaki River downstream of a line running beneath the power lines across the river at the Stonewall, the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 October to 30 April, and
5. for the Waitaki River between the Waitaki Dam and a line running beneath the power lines across the river at the Stonewall, or in any tributary of that part of the river, the open season for sea-run salmon fishing shall be from 1 October to 31 March.

The recommendations for the boundary of the March/April open season contained in recommendations 4. and 5. that are specific to the Waitaki River, are not the same as existed immediately prior to 2006 but do revert to the upstream limit that applied prior to 1995/96. Prior to 1995/96 the upstream boundary for the early season closure was “a line running beneath the power lines across the river at the Stonewall”. In the period from 1995/96 to 2005/06 the upstream boundary for the April open season was the mouth of the Maerewhenua River which was approximately 7km upstream from the powerlines at the Stonewall. In 1995 the decision was made to move the upriver demarcation point upstream –

“Council considered that spawning salmon having migrated this far up the Waitaki River should be accorded greater protection in their preferred spawning ground. These are believed to be found above the Maerewhenua River junction.”

In 2009 CSIFG began annual aerial salmon redd counts for the entire lower Waitaki River Catchment that concentrated on identifying the contributions of individual side streams and main river braids. This survey has covered nine years and knowledge of salmon spawning distribution far exceeds that available to CSIFG Council in 1995. The recent continuous record indicates that annually between 3% and 16% and an average of 10% of all lower Waitaki salmon spawning occurs in the reach of river between powerlines at the Stonewall upstream to the mouth of the Maerewhenua River. The contribution of this reach to catchment spawning deserves the protection afforded by siting the boundary for the upriver March closure of the open season at the downstream end of the reach, at the Stonewall powerlines. The powerlines are also far easier to recognise in the river for anglers and for compliance monitoring. Above this boundary the season for sea-run salmon would finish at the end of March and below this boundary the season would finish at the end of April.

4. Retain current 2020/21 sea-run salmon fishing conditions (Option 3)

Retaining current rules for one more year, while awaiting the ability to introduce a season bag limit, is a less preferred but legitimate option.

Without a season bag limit the most significant additional control on harvest proposed under Option 1 is the use of season length restrictions. Reduction in the season length for sea-run salmon angling may cause significantly increased and concentrated angler effort and harvest pressure on the condensed angling season. Option 2, introduction of a season bag limit, provides for season length to revert to its historical October to April period.

Scientific studies overseas have demonstrated that run timing of adult salmon migration into freshwater is a genetic trait. One possible outcome of fishing area regulation changes aimed at reducing overall salmon harvest pressure, while awaiting the ability to implement a season bag limit regulation, could be increased pressure on the core component of the wild salmon run.

In discussions on salmon management some Fish and Game staff and Dr John Hayes from Cawthron Institute have cautioned against implementing regulation changes for extended periods that may increase selective harvest pressure. This could further undermine the recovery of our weakened wild salmon populations. Concerns raised are based on scientific publications made by salmon experts like Professor Tom Quinn from Washington University, who was a key presenter at the 2017 sea run salmon symposium in Ashburton.

In the short-term (1-2 years) it is unlikely that additional season length restrictions recommended as Option 1, will cause significant negative long-term consequences. However, for the reasons stated above, season length restrictions should no longer be seen as a permanent option for maintaining annual catch limits.

In considering the recorded state of the sea-run salmon fishery for the last three years and its likely population level for the 2020/21 season yet to be completed, CSIFG and NCFG staff do not recommend the retention of current 2020/21 season conditions for sea-run salmon harvest (Option 3). However, it is important to consider the precautionary principle and be aware that if anglers change their behaviour, an increase in the concentration of angler pressure could occur. Thus if the CSIFG and NCFG Councils agree to implement reductions of season length (Option 1) while awaiting the ability to implement an annual catch limit, continued investment should be maintained in detailed monitoring to determine if any changes of salmon angler behaviour and harvest pressure occur.

5. Future Harvest Management - threshold management and application of the season bag limit

A range of sea-run salmon season bag sizes can be applied to season harvest to achieve a range of spawning targets. The salmon population model applied to historical harvest and spawning records identified the potential benefits to the combined spawning populations of the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers from application of the recommended threshold regime (Figure 3).

There are clear and simple links between spawning population size, level of harvest control required and season bag size to be applied (Table 6).

Table 6. Season bag limit to be applied for the following season determined by the combined spawning population size for the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Waitaki rivers in the season immediately past and the expected improvement in spawning population size for the next season.

Management Band	Spawning population size	Season Bag Limit	Harvest reduction	Increased spawning
Healthy	> 7,800	8	4%	3%
Moderate	5,101 to 7,800	4	16%	11%
Low	1,200 to 5,100	2	35%	23%
Severe	< 1.200	1 + possible season and area restrictions	56% +	37% +

Recommendation outside the Angler Notice Process

- 4.0 That CSIFG Council and NCFG Council adopt for their regions the sea-run salmon population model that combines salmon populations for the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Rangitata rivers as one harvest management unit and applies the harvest management scenario that has 5%, 20% and 40% harvest reduction targets and season bag limits for healthy, moderate and low spawning population management bands.**

As the period of continuous salmon population monitoring for the Waitaki River Catchment increases and its precision improves, this river will be considered for addition to the combined population model.

North Canterbury Angling Regulations Review Public Meeting

Meeting minutes

Date: 7/5/2025

Location: 595 Johns Road, Harewood, Christchurch

Meeting Start: 6:00pm

Attendees:

Staff: Emily Craig, Caleb Ryder

Submitters: Kieran Lee, Colin Eaton

Additional: David Kirkness, David Godfrey, Andy Sheppard

Kieran Lee -

- Controlled Fishery Trial - First year of Hurunui Controlled fishery - seeking clarification on why this change came into play. One benefit being no anxiety in terms of having the river to yourself. Suggestion being block booking systems and allowing certain days for certain anglers. Non guided water on both of these branches to allow increased opportunity for others. Limit on how many times people can book the system to allow for further opportunities. I.e., if they have a booking on year they are limited the next year. To give everyone a fairer chance to allow for people that don't have access to a phone etc. Another point is not to make the booking system up to the swing bridge. To increase the ability for other anglers that are travelling up from Lake Sumner.
- Poulter and East branch of the Poulter questions regarding increased pressure on the Poulter. Suggestion of designated water for that fishery.
- Suggestion of Rakaia River above white posts being open later to allow for increased opportunities

Colin Eaton -

- Winding creek - disappointed in direction of opening of waters outside of spawning periods. Concerned about winter fishing seasons and areas that are open all year. Concern regarding spawning of Rainbow trout. Reluctance for fishing to be occurring when rainbow trout are spawning.

Additional discussion

David Godfrey-

Doesn't like idea of designated waters and the North and South branch of the Hurunui and make it catch and release only. Thinks it will increase opportunity and thinks that the controlled fishery is limiting families etc in the North Hurunui from the swing bridge to the mouth of the Hurunui River.

Not in favour of booking system but does think that it does limit the guides and likes the idea of it continuing in the short term.

Tried to get booking but was unable to.

Catch and release only given very narrow slot.

David Kirkness –

Thinks some sort of restriction is good. Thinks attention has been brought to the river by the booking system being put in to place. Seen half a dozen days where chopper still gets in. Wider concern around accessibility and removal of 2 months of down season at Lake Taylor. Large variations in the conditions from year to year. Lake Taylor is a heavily fished fishery. Said that people aren't plugged into social media and some people don't take note of change. Concern around small jetboats going up the North Branch of the Hurunui.

Andy Sheppard –

Used to fish it a lot in 70's and ever since the new owners have come owned hasn't really fished. Mentioned that there is a large amount of people spin fishing at Lake Ida. Feedback on regulations and to allow for people to have multiple rods rigged.

Meeting finish: 7:00pm

SUMMARY OF WRITTEN PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS FOR PROPOSED ANGLING REGULATION CHANGES AND CONTROLLED FISHERY TRIAL FEEDBACK

2 May 2025

Prepared by: Emily Craig, North Canterbury Fish and Game Council

North Canterbury Fish and Game Council staff are tasked with reviewing and providing recommendations on regional angling regulations that better align with the Council's policies and priorities^{1,2} This document provides a summary of public submissions received during the angling regulation review process in April 2025. Additional feedback was also sought from anglers regarding the Controlled Fishery Trial on the Hurunui River North and South branch Designated Waters, to feed into the review process at the end of the 2-season trial period.

Consultation opened on April 14th and closed on April 28th. All North Canterbury fishing licence holders were notified by email and encouraged to email their submissions to North Canterbury Fish & Game.

A public meeting will be held at the North Canterbury Fish and Game office at 6pm on Wednesday May 7th to allow submitters to provide any additional relevant information to their written submissions. The Council will make a decision on proposed angling regulations at their Council meeting on Wednesday May 21st, 2025.

Summary of submissions:

Twenty-eight written submission were received by April 28th. One additional written submission was received late. In regard to the proposed changes and feedback:

1. Changing the open season date for Winding Creek and Lake Blackwater in the Waimakariri catchment a month earlier to 10 November (currently 10 December).

Seven submissions supported this recommendation. **Three** submissions opposed this recommendation, and one submission was **neutral**. Opposing or neutral submissions to this proposed regulation were concerned about access to the fisheries through Flockhill Station, and overall impacts on the fishery due to additional anglers and potential interference with spawning.

¹ Regulation Setting Policy – [REGULATION-SETTING-POLICY-AND-PROCESS-9-MAY-22-3.pdf](#)

² Purpose and Priorities – [Revised-draft-statement-of-Purpose-and-Priorities-for-22-February-2024-Council-mtg.pdf](#)

Controlled Fishery Trial Feedback:

Twenty-one submissions included feedback on the Hurunui River North and South branch Controlled Fishery. **Fourteen** submissions shared negative feedback, and **seven** shared neutral feedback

Negative feedback was mostly centred around the system being too restrictive on anglers and reducing their opportunity to fish these waterways. Many also noted issues with the online booking system itself not being user-friendly and unfair on anglers who cannot race to get a booking at 12pm. Other negative feedback included that the controlled fishery favours guides; the system was unneeded as there was no issue previously; the waterways are busier now as controlled fisheries are 'advertised' more, the controlled fishery area is too large for one party, and that the system needs more compliance effort.

Neutral feedback included understanding the benefits of the system but there was need for improvements. Submitters shared some sentiments in line with negative feedback relating to issues with the booking system, enforcement, concerns about guides, and the area being too large.

Other issues raised:

Two submitters suggested changes to the upper Rakaia River, Poulter River, Ashley River and Okuku River. **One** submitter noted more compliance needs to be done at the Hurunui Lakes. **One** submitter suggested more standardised and simpler regulations. **One** submitter noted the need for rules around fish disposal.

APPENDIX 1 – Written submissions

Ken Lloyd

yes i support the rule change for winding creek and lake black water but i have concerns with access as having previously fished winding creek there was an access charge of 25 dollars per person, this is quasi privatisation of a fishery and if this process is to be part of any new arrangement close the fishery to all

regards
ken Lloyd

Kevin Collier

I oppose the proposal to open winding creek a month earlier as this submission will wholly and solely benefit the private owners of Flock hill station and their fee-paying guests. Is there any analysis on the impact of opening the creek a month earlier on the fishery? Will the public get better access to the creek because of this? how will fish and game or the fishery benefit overall from this proposal. The insidious locking out of the public from leasehold land for private use is getting worse. These farms were originally leased for farming - not for the private enjoyment of a wealthy few for holidaying, fishing and hunting. Make the lease holders stick to their core business (farming) and keep the recreational assets on that leased land open to the public.

Thank you.

Thomas Jones

Hey guys,

Better access to lake Blackwater and winding creek would be amazing also didn't even know they existed until I received the regulations change email. The booking system in my opinion is not necessary I've pretty much just canned the idea of fishing those areas can't be bothered with booking and hoping I get a weekend. Also another suggestion is more policing of anglers and checking licenses I've ran into plenty of people at lake Taylor who openly flaunt the fact they don't buy a license, the Ashley and Waimakariri rivers as well seem to be a hotspot for poaching bogans.

Cheers

Leonard Potter

1 Waters on Flock Hill station. More access the better to both waters.

2 Restrictions to access the Upper Hirinui river. No comment since I have not fished there.

Thanks.

Leonard Potter.

License no 6518783

Colin Murphy

The less fishermen you have in those areas the better.

You are only advertising these waters to idiots that would never have heard of them. Preservation should be forthright in your minds, old fashioned fishing secrets have gone out the door and along with them will go these delicate waters.

Regards Colin Murphy

Jeremy Poulter

Hi team feedback on the below.

1: Winding Creek and Lake Blackwater. It's very rare that you can actually fish these waters. Flock Hill seems to have guests staying there, or guides pre booking. I tried twice this season and told people already booked up. So the date change doesn't effect me - would be good if they just had a park here, fish there sign, rather than having to book and pay at their sole discretion.

2: Hurunui booking system. I think you already know the issues you have here. Not one single person I know, who typically can only fish weekends as we all work for a living has had a chance to even get a booking all season long, myself included. I would fish up there 3-4 times a season, but now can't get a look in. When asking online, almost no body gets a booking. So the question is who is booking it? Is it guides? No one knows except fish and game. Introducing a limit to how many times you can fish there might be worth it to cut down o multiple bookings. Local fishing store told me Tom Hodge was telling them he's been in there with clients 10 times this season - I have no actual proof but if thats true the system is broken.

John Richardson

Re: suggested amendments for Winding Creek and Blackwater Lake - SUPPORTED.

Re: Comments on designated waters. My view is effectively neutral. I see these arrangements as merely tinkering at the edges of a much bigger set of problems currently facing our NC fisheries.

Regards,
John Richardson
Licence number 6488832

John Kent

I am all in favour of the suggested changes for Winding Creek and Lake Blackwater. However, it is many years since I have fished both these fisheries. I can't imagine the changes to Winding Creek will alter the Broken River fishery. I am surprised that Lake Blackwater is still fished to any great extent and having no spawning streams entering or leaving the lake would mean it is a put and take fishery. When I have fished it the rainbows caught were in reasonable condition.

I have certainly fished both the Hurunui's branches in the past but not recently. I wonder whether a size limit might be reasonable. In the past, I have landed and released a couple of fish over 10lbs (4.5kgs). I was astounded some years ago when I witnessed two anglers walking out of the upper North Branch with 2 trophy fish. They were not impressed when we balled them out for taking breeding stock.

Cheers,
John Kent

Miles Craighead

Yes I think Lake Blackwater should be 1 November as it's a shallow lake and I expect prone to getting too warm in the later months for an optimal fishing experience. Also Winding Creek. I expect the tributaries of Broken River are better fishing earlier in the season and 1 November sounds like a fair compromise. However as an ordinary angler (not guide or client) I am not sure about the access to these fishing waters and would appreciate knowing how to access them. If access is an issue then maybe the change should ensure that access is available and not just for Flock Hill Station, guides, clients, guests or a selected few. What about some of it being designated fly fishing only? Also if the bag limit is 2 or more maybe restrict to 1 or catch & release?

As far as the booking systems I don't like them full stop. I think its excessively restrictive. The designated waters and bag limit systems should be sufficient. Maybe divide the river up into beats? Give everyone a fair go.

Regards,
Miles Craighead

Colin Eaton

To whom it may concern,

My submission is to leave the regulations as they are as bring the season opening earlier could interfere with spawning in these water due to winter weather conditions.

I am not in favour of a winter opening season at all hence our fishing fisheries are in trouble.

Kind Regards,

Colin Eaton

Licence No 6501090

Stephen Clingin

I agree both those waterways via flock hill station should be opened earlier,winter season is over by then 🙏

Leonie Fraser

Whatever you do, can you please make changes with the purpose of making things as standardised and easy to understand as possible? Charge one fee if possible, standardise access and river seasons, simplify salmon recording and make it easier on us please!

Thanks

Leonie Fraser

Nathan Buxton

It is my view and that shared by my angling colleagues that in the interests of the promotion of freshwater angling close to Christchurch and the Waimakariri district, that

Ashley and Okuku Rivers be treated the same, as they are very much linked,

And, they become spin and fly fishing only with no scented lures, on their lower stretches (below entry to Pinchgut track and Ashley Gorge campgrounds respectively),

And, they become fly-only and catch-and-release fisheries upstream of these two locations,

And, that two releases of hatchlings occur a fortnight apart per season for five years in a row in their upper waters accessed at the top and middle of the Lees Valley, in a bid to establish more upper-river spawning stocks.

Nathan Buxton

Matthew Rivers

Hi,

I would just like to communicate that there should be regulations regarding people catching fish such as Kowhai and thinking its ok just to leave on the bank (especially when there is a good run of them). There should be regulations prohibiting people from doing this (punishable by fines) for anything other than invasive species. Frankly people should be way more tuned in to humane methods of dispatching of any fish when caught.

Thanks,
Matt

Kieran Lee

Gday Team @NC Fish and Game,

Just a couple of suggestions regarding a few of the fisheries.....

The upper rakaia could benefit anglers by staying open till April 30th since no salmon spawn in the main river,I'm all for keeping the spring creeks closed earlier to protect the returning stocks of salmon...

The North and South Branch booking system could be benefited by having a block booking system....ie Mon-tues....wed-thurs...and then fri-sunday for kiwi anglers only and non guided parties....

Also with increased pressure on the poulter and east branch system it could also benefit from being put on the designated waters system..

Just a thought...

Regards Kieran

Bob Jones

The trial was implemented in the 2024/25 fishing season and utilises a booking system on the Fish & Game website. The trial is in place for two seasons and will remain in place for the 2025/26 season. With the first season coming to a close, we welcome any feedback from anglers on the Trial Controlled Fishery, regardless of whether you successfully obtained a booking or not

Firstly, as an avid fisherman of the above mentioned rivers, I was not aware of the ballot system until I purchased a season licence!!!

I'm sure that there will be other anglers that were also not aware.

As far as I'm concerned, the booking system was a total mess. Tried unsuccessfully to book.

A booking system highlights that these rivers are prime river for trout, which is like an advertising board for anglers to fish them.

Why trial for 2 seasons, surely you'd determine if it's worth while in a season.

The booking system was so unreliable, (when I did manage to get a booking) and due to unforeseen circumstances I tried unsuccessfully to cancel my booking, therefore I gave up. I did not fish any of them this season.

On previous seasons I did not encounter any issues with other anglers.

Remove the ballot system, or alternatively, make it a month booking system similar to the Greenstone river.

Regards

Bob Jones

Ritchie Telfer

Hello, I am not really happy with the controlled fishery rules. Trying to book online only a week in advance seemed problematic, someone else seemed to repeatedly beat me to it. And I do suspect this may have been a profit making guiding company, with someone waiting for 12.00 o'clock to roll over. The admin to go fishing in a remote place seems disproportionate. Maybe a huge levy (or tariff) on overseas visitors would help to moderate demand?

To alleviate my concern, I wonder if there is data available on guiding companies compared to private citizen use of the controlled fishery? Could a percentage allocation of spaces available be set aside for private use?

Kind regards

Ritchie Telfer

A usually happy fisher

Richard Cottenden

I have occasionally fished this area, but since a booking system was introduced I have not been back and I will NEVER go back

Jamie McFadden

Below is a comment I posted on Complete Angler facebook about fishing up the North & South branches Hurunui. The booking system penalizes licence holders that occasionally fish on family holidays and this comment explains why. My submission is the booking system should be scrapped.

Jamie McFadden

Hi Malcolm. I was discussing this yesterday with someone who fishes there with his mad keen teenage fly fishing sons and didn't realize the booking system. Like us he heads up there for family holidays and also like us are spur of the moment anglers. I.e we go on holiday tramping, hunting, relaxing, fishing. In January we spent 2 weeks in Hanmer and spur of the moment did the odd trip up the Clarence and one of those decided to duck over Malings Pass into the upper Waiau. This booking system doesn't work for Kiwi family holidays that involve a range of activities and often plan those activities day by day on a range of factors including weather and not a booking system. With the helicopters and fishing generally it is more about etiquette, something that not all anglers have but should be encouraged.

Andrew Riddle

Should be stopped as soon as possible. I am in the firm belief that this gives the very strong appearance of corruption on F&G's part. The only river that this happens on, runs thru land controlled by Auckland rich listers, who in the past have been caught out by regular fisherman (remember cattle standing in the lake). And who else benefits, perhaps Fishing Guides with their English - European - American clients who pay good money so they get that exclusive rights to fish with no one else.

If this was a such a good policy why isn't the Nina or the Doubtful, the Henry or the Hope and most probably several other candidates not also part of this scheme of exclusiveness. The new Minister for Hunting and fishing - James Meager M.P. is trying to get and open up access for all to go enjoy both fishing and hunting everywhere in NZ, which of course I fully endorse.

I also firmly believe in meeting and greeting like minded fellow fisherman even in the middle of nowhere. To Me it's the Kiwi way.

Ian Messenger

I agree with having a booking system, as it controls to some extent, the guides dominating the river

I did manage to get a booking but found the booking system unfriendly when it was a midnight changeover time, and difficult to access. I believe this is now changed to mid-day. The length of river from the lake outlet should be extended up to the swing bridge, having just 500m is very limiting, especially if there a 2-3 anglers wanting to fish 500m

Regards

Ian Messenger

Loyal senior 6492955

Andrew Sturman

Hello,

My feedback on the controlled fishery trial in the upper Hurunui River is that the booking system seems to be unworkable. I fished this area in previous years, but was not able to in the current year. I accessed the online booking system several times, but the slots were already taken by others and I was not able to book a slot, so gave up. I would like to see details of who actually managed to book slots – whether it was mostly guided groups or others, whether it was the same people repeatedly booking slots, or people with clever computer skills, or whatever. The fairness of the booking system should be evaluated by analysing who actually managed to fish the area, as at the moment there appears to be little confidence in the system based on conversations with other fishers.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment,

Andrew Sturman

Keith Hawkins

I feel this favours fishing guides who have advanced bookings from overseas anglers can book for periods that suit them.

The average fisherman doesn't know from week to week when he or she will be going out and when they come to go they can find that someone has already booked there desired date.

I feel this does nothing to encourage anglers to visit these areas leaving them to the mercy of guides

Keith Hawkins

Jaime Reeves

To whom it may concern,

I would like to provide feedback on the Controlled Fishery Trial currently underway on the Upper Hurunui River.

While I support efforts to protect the quality of the fishery and reduce pressure on sensitive river systems, I have concerns regarding the implementation of this trial and its effects on public access and fairness.

1. Excessive Size of Controlled Area

The area of river covered by a single booking is far too extensive for one group to reasonably fish in a single day. This effectively excludes other anglers from large stretches of water unnecessarily and undermines fair access.

2. Booking Accessibility

The requirement to book online—often days in advance—is impractical for many anglers who are already in the backcountry and do not have reliable internet or cell service. This creates a barrier to access for spontaneous or traditional fishing trips and disadvantages those without consistent digital access.

3. Perceived Bias Toward Guided Groups

There is a growing perception that the system has been structured to favour guided groups and commercial operators at the expense of regular licence holders. While guides serve a legitimate role in the fishery, public waters should remain equally accessible to all anglers. The controlled fishery model should not compromise this principle.

In summary, I believe the current trial setup limits fair access, over-regulates an unnecessarily large area, and may erode trust in Fish & Game's commitment to representing everyday anglers.

I urge you to reconsider aspects of this trial before making any permanent decisions. A more balanced approach that ensures sustainable management and equitable access is possible and necessary.

Kind regards
Jamie Reeves

Richard Barltrop

I have fished the Nth Branch for the last 25 years, around 20-30 days per year. This year I have fished it for maybe 10 days and I have found the fishing no better or worse than other seasons.

Over the years I have had no issues with any other parties and I feel it was a knee jerk reaction from F&G to a non-existent problem. I actually believe that it has created a false demand that was never there before.

I fished opening day in 2023 and I was the only person on the river, the second day, there was one other person who I ended up fishing with, which was great. This system is so wrong on so many levels, including giving the whole river to one person/party for the first 3 days of the season.

One of the days I booked, I was halfway up to the swing bridge and a Jet Boat came up the river and sped past me, which obviously ended the morning's fishing.

If F&G needed to implement a system, it really only would be needed above the swing bridge which would give a lot more anglers access to the fishery without the need to try and get a booking. My biggest fear is that once F&G start a system like this on the Hurunui, next it will be the Hope, Waiau, Nina, Doubtful etc.

This system has ruined the whole area for many fishermen who would go up for a week and maybe go fishing on the odd morning if and when the weather allowed. (The weather protects the fishery enough for it not to be an issue) but now you have to try and secure the whole week to be able to make this possible.

Please reconsider this system before many people go completely off F&G and what they are trying to achieve.

Regards
Richard Barltrop

Harry Van Tongeren

Over the past season I have booked online twice for a successful booking for my group. Accommodation from Lake Taylor Station at lake Mason was booked prior with a cancelation policy in place.

While the booking system comes with a few issues the overall affect is acceptable. However what is not acceptable is the constant use by helicopter pilots dropping guides and customers onto the designated area. A real negative when Accommodation and bookings are undertaken. Anecdotal advice of some 10 plus helicopters in the waters from late January to mid February.

Legislation or controls are only acceptable if enforcement is part of the procedures. Entitlement of guides totally controversial and goes against the reasoning and logic behind the system on trial.

Regards Harry Van Tongeren.

Alistair Brown

Hi,

Thanks for the opportunity for feedback, I usually mtb in there a couple of times during the season. It's a great area, I've been going in there for 35yrs.

The booking system has put an impediment on me. Planning to hit the high country depends on a weather window, and although I can arrange a trip about two weeks out, its often postponed due to the weather. This makes booking difficult, I don't really want to book a day, then pull out a couple of days before.

I'm wondering if this booking system was instigated by the guiding community. I have no issue with guides or sharing water, it's a big river.

I'd be interested in knowing how many days the river has been booked over the season, are there more weekend bookings or is it also busy during the week.

I met up with a guide while mtb up the south branch, he said since the booking system had been instigated the North Branch had got busier.

I'd also be interested in how many days this river was booked.

That's my feedback, thankyou for all your work, I'm always prepared to listen to other opinions.

Kind regards,

Alistair Brown.

Gray Prebble

I would like to submit the following on access to the Upper Hurunui River.

I made several attempts book the river in December. Each time I did this immediately the clock switched to the next day but without success and I lost confidence in the technology that it was actually working properly. There is no way for an angler to check. I was left feeling very frustrated.

If I remember correctly, when you were unsuccessful trying to book, you could not tell if it was because someone had already made a three-day booking which covered the time you were attempting to book. I believe there must be a better, more transparent way to do this.

If the river is so popular then perhaps successful applicants should be limited to one visit per season. Maybe there could be ballots for designated times over the season i.e. Two slots per week. Or could there be more than one section of the river allocated each time.

I understand the reason to limit the number of anglers to enhance angling experience and the current system may have done that for those who were successful but I'm sure it left many anglers disillusioned with the process. I feel it may have encouraged some anglers to go anyway and chance their luck on the day. I also wondered how many bookings were not actually used.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Gray Prebble

One submission was received after the deadline:

Jonathan Greensmith

To whom it may concern,

The controlled fishery trial this past season on the Hurunui catchment has been a low point in the North Canterbury Fish and Game region.

The whole concept is flawed and is not a level playing field for all licence holders. For example an elderly fisher cannot type as quick as a computer savvy young one when the clock strikes midday, this is the difference between getting a booking or not. I work mostly out of coverage and a booking at midday is not possible and as well the first midnight booking system was laughable.

As a guide who has utilized this fishery since 1995 I probably have more knowledge of it than certainly most other anglers. This is the first season since 1995 I have not fished it with clients, not because of the weather and all the other factors that normally arise, it was the controlled fishery system which didn't allow it. The system is according to every client that has looked into it a joke and not what they expect from Fish and Game. It has certainly caused some discussion amongst fisherman and a certain level of anti North Canterbury Fish and Game sentiment has been apparent, which possibly may lead to a similar as in Southland.

At present I do not support North Canterbury Fish and Game when buying a fishing or gamebird licence, much like numerous of my sporting acquaintances.

In case it is not apparent I do not support this trial.

Get rid of the Contolled Fishery

Jonathan Greensmith