

NORTHLAND FISH & GAME COUNCIL
CONFIRMED MINUTES OF A MEETING
HELD AT THE NORTHLAND FISH & GAME OFFICE
NELL PLACE, WHANGAREI
7.00PM FRIDAY 28th MARCH 2025

PRESENT:

Chairman: Phil Durham

Councillors: Cameron Shanks, Mark Bell, John McEntee, Russell Daniels, Barrie Barnes, Sean Brickland

Staff: Craig Deal (Manager), Rachael Quin (Administrator)

The Chairman welcomed the councillors. The Conflict-of-Interest register was circulated around the table for all councillors to sign and declare any conflicts.

APOLOGIES: Darryl Reardon, Kelvin Ellis, Lloyd Altham, Lewis Peart (leave of absence)

It was moved: *That the apologies be accepted.*

Mark Bell / John McEntee **CARRIED**

Previous Minutes

It was resolved: *That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 21st February 2025 are confirmed as true and correct.*

Cameron Shanks / Russell Daniels **CARRIED**

Matters Arising

Action carried over to next meeting

Action: The manager will investigate any existing Waitangi Wetland agreement and resource consent.

1225 Flaxmill Maintenance

Cr Shanks enquired on progress of poplar removal. Nothing to report.

Action: The manager to investigate whether poplar pulp is a viable option.

Managers' Report

1160 Trout Releases

The Manager reported back that enquiry regarding releasing two-year-old trout revealed studies showing more takeable fish available for a longer period of time supporting Northland Fish & Game to release more viable 2-year-olds in the face of high mortality rate of yearlings. Issue is transporting and ordering limitations. Cr McEntee offered the use of his trailer and vehicle.

Action: Manager to talk to Mark Sherburn (hatchery manager from Eastern Region) regarding transport capacity for 2-year-old trout. Manager is to work with Mark to commence a transition to releasing 2-year-old trout only.

The Council felt that 2-year old trout would be of more value than the current yearly releases.

Cr Brickland queried the identification of released trout. It was noted that reporting of caught trout is not high in the region and fin clip reporting has proven to be inaccurate in other regions. The manager suggested a sign be erected at the dams to encourage reporting along with submitting a photo.

The Pheasant Preserve in Mangakahia was discussed and what is excluded as a gazetted game bird. The Chairman commented that an opportunity is lost when hunters in a preserve are not required to have a game bird licence.

1172 Game Gazette

The Manager noted the increased bag limit for paradise shelduck has been accepted.

1210 Resource Management Act

The Manager intends to request Whangarei District Council implement a botulism management plan as part of the resource consent renewal at Hikurangi Wastewater Treatment Plant as well as introducing limits to improve discharges into the trout fishery at Mangahuru Stream.

1242 Botulism Monitoring and Clean Up

The Manager reported progress with a sludge clean up planned at Kaitia Wastewater Treatment Plant but the timeframe is for over 2 years with no plan for bird dispersal in the meantime. The media release is to be put on hold considering the progress made and a point of contact for the plant management secured. The council's advice was to keep the pressure on and to check in after the shooting season. Cr Barnes and Cr Shanks queried the sludge disposal process and consent requirements.

1311 Forestry Negotiations

The Manager reported that Rayonier Forests had been sold and is unsure how that may affect hunter access in the future. Summit Forests has provided a Memorandum of Understanding between Summit Forests, Te Hiku Iwi and Northland Fish and Game Council to formalise hunting access.

1313 Ballots and Permits

Cr Shanks questioned whether stand holders should be eligible for a ballot allowing existing stand holders to move before balloting out to the public. The Manager reminded council that a ballot policy was put in place in 2023.

Action: Manager to send current ballot policy to Councillors to review at the next meeting.

1840 National Liaison

The Manager highlighted the national initiative to support women anglers. The Council supports the initiative and although Northland has limited exposure the Chairman suggested a program targeting high schools and coordinate it with the release of 2-year-old trout. Cr Barnes stated that 'Women on the Fly' is very successful.

Field Officers Report

The ongoing issue of how DoC issue game bird hunting permits was discussed.

It was moved: That the Manager and Field Officer reports be received.

Cameron Shanks / John McEntee

CARRIED

Field Days

The Manager reported on the recent Northland Field Days event and concluded that there was value for national messaging and brand awareness, recommending Northland Fish & Game have a stand again in 2026. The council agreed to run a stand in 2026 and discussed potential messages to focus on. Cr Brickland suggested occupying a small corner site in 2026 but to book now.

Action: The Manager to book a site at the 2026 Northland Field Days.

Wetland Management Costs

The Manager explained the difficulties in establishing a baseline and an accurate idea of wetland costs and outlined the inconsistencies and restrictions of permit pricing. Cr Barnes asked about the different permit fees for stand holders and stated that the Conservation Act allows for cost recovery to be charged on permit fees. The Council discussed exclusive stand holder only hunting periods, costs to recover and permit bundles.

Action: The Manager to compile permit conditions and fees for review for 2026 season.

NZFGC Update

Cr Barnes suggested Northland Fish & Game take a step forward in requesting the Northland and Auckland/Waikato boundary be changed to the harbour bridge. The Council discussed involvement of licence holders in the prospect of a boundary change. Cr Bell suggested a poll emailed to Auckland/Waikato licence holders. The Chairman suggested involvement in duck

shooting social nights near the boundary. The Manager suggested it be broached at the national level by NZC and not initiated by Northland Fish & Game as it may appear as an attempt to procure additional licence money rather than a matter of management efficiency.

Cr Barnes advised the Council that the NZC meeting summary was emailed and he highlighted the following from the recent meeting.

- Corina Jordan resigned, and Richie Cosgrove is deputy CEO
- Zero based budgeting
- New management initiative

Cr Barnes explained the concept with the current example of North Canterbury F&G and its intention to create efficiencies and invited regions to join the group of interested parties exploring its viability.

It was moved: *That the Northland Fish & Game Council join as a party to the North Canterbury management initiative.*

Cameron Shanks / John McEntee

CARRIED

Time 9.05pm

The Council moved into a public excluded session of the meeting.

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982 which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:

ITEM	REASON UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982	SECTION	PLAIN ENGLISH REASON	WHEN REPORT CAN BE RELEASED
XX.	Protect the privacy of natural persons.	Sec. 9(2)(a)	Information provided identifies a particular person or can easily be connected with a particular person.	Once the person to whom the information relates consents to its disclosure.
	Protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information	Sec 9(2)(b)(ii)	Commercial information about a third party would likely prejudice the commercial position of that party if released.	Once the third party to whom the information relates consents to its disclosure.
	Protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence ... where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied	Sec 9(2)(ba)(i)	Disclosing the information would jeopardise the relationship with the supplier because the supplier may no longer trust the Council to hold its information in confidence.	Not unless there is a public interest in disclosure of the specific information.

	Maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of such Ministers, members of organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment.	Sec 9(2)(g)(ii)	Prejudice or harm is likely to occur making it necessary to withhold the information to prevent that occurring.	Only where the public interest in disclosure of the information, in whole or part, outweighs the need to withhold the information.
	Maintain legal professional privilege	Sec. 9(2)(h)	To enable the Council to discuss legal advice.	Once the matter is completed and the legal advisor agrees to its release.
	Enable a Minister of the Crown or any Department or organisation holding information to carry out without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations.	Sec.9(2)(j)	To enable the Council to discuss the information without improper gain or advantage being given to third parties.	Once agreement has been reached or contract signed.

Time 9.20pm

The open meeting of the Northland Fish and Game Council resumed.

Policies for Consultation

- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Resource Management and Legislation Fund Policy
- Lone Worker Support Policy

The Lone Worker Support policy was discussed. The Chairman suggested the SOP requirement be excluded from the document and further advice sought from Adrienne Murray.

Action: The Manager to consult with Adrienne Murray for clarification of what would be required in terms of regions having their own SOP's.

Policies for Adoption

- Time in Lieu (Voluntary) Policy

It was moved: To adopt the Time in Lieu (Voluntary) Policy in future employment contracts.

John McEntee / Russell Daniels

CARRIED

- Fatigue Management Policy

It was moved: To adopt the Fatigue Management Policy.

Time 9.43pm

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Time 9.50pm

The open meeting of the Northland Fish and Game Council resumed.

Action: The Manager engage an independent occupational health professional to assess an employee's suitability for work tasks.

Health and Safety Report

Northland Fish & Game is required to give a Health & Safety report at each council meeting detailing:

- The implementation and adherence to Health & Safety policy/manual
- Any new issues or hazards that have arisen and how these have been addressed
- Progress with any ongoing issues
- Outcomes of audits and reviews required in the Health & Safety manual
- Any near misses or injuries

It was moved: **That the Health and Safety Report be received.**

Barry Barnes / Mark Bell **CARRIED**

Executive Limitations Report

It was moved: **That the Executive Limitations Report be received.**

Russell Daniels / Sean Brickland **CARRIED**

Financial Report

The Manager stated that the fish licence sale LEQ's are forecasted very high which may result in Northland Fish and game receiving a lesser grant than in previous years.

The Manager circulated the most current draft 2025/2026 Budget recently submitted to NZC.

Cr Barnes stated personal vehicle use and any changes has a value in remuneration.

It was moved: **That the Financial Report ending 28 February 2025 is adopted.**

Barry Barnes / John McEntee **CARRIED**

General Business

The Manager requested the self-governance report.

Cr Shanks invited the Manager and Councillors to the Kaipara Hunting and Fishing Club sporting clay target shoot on 13 April 2025.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.06pm.

Phil Durham



Chairman