

**Agenda for the Meeting of the Otago Fish & Game Council
to be held on Thursday 19th April 2018
at St John Rooms, Scotland Street, Roxburgh**

Commencing at 12.15pm

Please note: A Lunch will be provided at 11.45am

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1 Present and Apologies

2 Declaration of Interest

3 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Minutes

Minutes of Otago Fish and Game Council Meeting 10 February 2018, at The Gate, Barry Avenue, Cromwell, commencing at 10.00am

1.0 Present:

Monty Wright (Chair), Dan Rae, Ian Cole, John Barlow, Rick Boyd, Vicky Whyte (arrived 11.00 am), Alan Hammond, Richard Twining (arrived 11.00 am). and Murray Neilson (arrived 11.00 am).

In attendance: Niall Watson (CE) Ian Hadland (OM), Robert Sowman, Jay Graybill (arrived 11.00 am) Lindsay Lyons and ODT reporter

Apologies were received from

Dave Witherow, Adrian McIntyre, Colin Weatherall, John Jillett, Mike Turner, Bruce Jeffries (OCB) Lindsay Lyons (for late arrival) and Vicky Whyte.

(Boyd/Barlow)

That apologies be accepted.

2.0 Declarations of Interest

Nil

3.0 Minutes

Noted that the draft minutes contained a 9.6 which should not have been included and has had since been deleted

Resolved (Barlow/Rae)

That the Minutes of the meetings on the 30 November 2017 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

4.0 Matters Arising from Minutes

8.2 Guides Licence – Discussed under 8.7

5.0 Communications New Zealand Council

5.1 NZC Correspondence

5.1.1 Captive Reared Mallards – discussed and referred to the planning workshop. Noted the communication from Mr Niblet had been circulated by email. Concern was expressed about:

- how the practice aligned with Fish and Game's general philosophy of protecting and managing game habitat (eg: wetlands) for wild populations which produced a harvestable surplus.
- that CRMs send the wrong message
- whether the practice made biological sense – was it feasible to increase the duck population in other than the short term.
- whether CRM was the thin end of a commercial wedge.
- the ethics of releasing farmed ducks for the gun.
- genetic impacts of releasing CRMs from elsewhere into local populations noting DOC's concern about the same issue with blue duck.
- the differences in agreeing to pheasant releases (where there was no existing wild population) and CRMs where the wild mallard population was established and extensive.
- the impact of CRM's on wild mallard distribution and hunting opportunity. Would CRMs pull in wild birds away from other hunters? Would there need to be adjustments to game season hunting conditions?

It was noted that quail and Carolina wood ducks were being reared and released into the wild without consideration of DOC approvals.

It was **agreed** that an extension to the NZC's March deadline for submissions be sought to allow time for a report on the issue.

5.1.2 National Salmon Committee – the proposal to establish a national salmon committee as a committee of NZC was discussed. The dire situation in Canterbury with salmon runs since 2001 was noted since the common cyclic bounce-back had not occurred. Ocean conditions were seen as a key factor but one beyond Fish and Game's control.

The terms of reference were generally aimed at co-ordinating efforts to restore the sea runs of salmon.

It was **agreed** that Otago Council should be part of the committee and that the committee should report to South Island salmon Councils as well as NZC.

It was noted that landlocked salmon populations were the only relatively safe residual populations and were an important source of stock.

The 2006 development of a South Island salmon management plan had stalled because of DOC's view that a statutory plan could not be developed for species.

Recognition of statutory management roles of individual SI Councils was noted.

Eventually resolved (Rae/Boyd)

That Council support proposal with request to be represented and request committee report to NZC and SI salmon Councils including Otago.

5.1.3 Camouflage Rowboats – the matter was discussed, and it was eventually resolved (Boyd/Cole)

That the regulations remain unchanged.

5.2 Correspondence from Otago to NZC - Nil

6.0 Health and Safety – a minor non-injury vehicle accident was noted.

There was a discussion on drone use and compliance with CAA rules. The need for policy was discussed and it was **agreed** that staff using drones needed training in the rules that already applied rather than developing additional internal rules.

It was **agreed** that staff report back on controls on drones for hunting and fishing.

7.0 Election of Office Holders

Mr Wright vacated the Chair and the CE called for nominations for the position of Chair for the coming year up until the triennial election was completed.

Moved Barlow, Seconded Cole – Monty Wright

There being no further nominations Mr Wright was declared duly elected as Chair.

Mr Wright resumed the chair and called for nominations for members of the Executive. He noted the NZC appointee (John Jillett) and Chair were automatically members of the Executive

Moved Wright, Seconded Rae – Colin Weatherall

Moved Cole, Seconded Rae – Vicky Whyte

Moved Cole, Seconded Jillett – Dan Rae

Moved Wright, Seconded Cole – Adrian McIntyre

There being no further nominations Mr Wright declared the four nominees duly elected.

Resolved (Moved from the Chair)

That Dave Witherow be thanked for his service as an Otago Council Executive member over a long period since his initial appointment to the NZC in 2004

8.0 Chief Executive's Report

8.1 Administration

Finance reports to the end of January 2018 were discussed with expenditure running at 52% after five months or 42% of the financial year. This was considered to reflect seasonal patterns of expenditure.

Fish licence sales were about 400 LEQs ahead of the same date last year.

A 'flow tracker' (for gauging flows in smaller rivers and streams) was purchased for use in river monitoring for a cost of \$5217 ex GST.

Resolved (Cole/Hammond)

That Finance and Licence sales reports to the end of January 2018 be approved

8.2 Species

Angler Notice Review

There was some discussion of public meetings and feedback in response the Anglers Notice Review

8.3 Habitat

Bullock Creek

Councillors expressed serious concern about silt in stormwater discharges from the Alpha Series subdivision, upstream from Wanaka Hatchery springs. It was noted that QLDC had not treated the Council as an affected party for the stormwater consents but had peer reviewed the stormwater treatment system design. The CE said it was now clear the system was not capable of doing the required job in its present configuration.

It was **agreed** the Council approach QLDC politicians directly on the matter.

Minimum and Residual Flows

Progress with the transition from mining privileges to RMA consents was noted. The CE advised he had written to the new Minister for the Environment about the matter seeking a meeting

8.4 User Participation

The Operations Manager made a presentation on licence sales trends and the concept of the 3Rs – recruitment, retention and reactivation – marketing programme noting that effort usually fell in the area of recruitment or general awareness raising when the latter two areas were the key.

It was noted that efforts to maintain or increase participation should be targeted rather than general with a clear view about which fisheries could sustain further recruitment. Changing patterns of recreation were discussed along with the potential for virtual fishing.

Mr Hadland noted the marked fluctuations in angler use identified by the National Anglers Survey and questioned our understanding of the massive drop off in fishing licence sales in the North Island.

8.5 Public Interface

No discussion

8.6 Compliance

No discussion

8.7 Licencing

Guides Licence – The matter was discussed at some length noting the importance of an early introduction of the new category. Mr Sowman expressed his appreciation for the input from Otago staff into the drafting of a submission to the Minister of Conservation.

Eyede Contract – the strategic importance of the outsourced licencing system was noted

8.8 Council

The Schedule of meetings for the next 13 months was noted as follows:

10/11 February 2018 Planning - Cromwell
19 April 2018 - Roxburgh
21 June 2018 - Cromwell
16 August 2018 - Dunedin
18 October 2018 - Cromwell
29 November 2018 Dunedin
9/10 February 2019 – Dunedin

Mr Sowman noted that election day for the 12 Fish and Game Council elections was 12th October 2018 and that Council's had to be conscious of the requirement to hold a meeting of the newly elected Council not later than 3 weeks after the new Council assumed office. Assumption of office occurred on the day 10 working days after the date on which the Returning Officer signs the election certificate (30th October 2018).

8.9 Planning and Reporting

No discussion

9.0 Committee Reports

9.1 Clutha Fisheries Trust – Mr Cole advised that recent Trust activity included:

- Monitoring of flows and fisheries on Lake Dunstan tributaries
- Investigations into weed control on Lindis braided reach
- Upper Clutha access signage
- Support for Lindis Environment Court action.
- Follow up on Kane Road access agreement

9.2 New Zealand Council – No meeting

10.0 Technical Reports

10.1 Aerial Trend Counts

The report was discussed noting that paradise duck numbers were up at 19,636 (18,753 in 2017); black swan 3040 (2644) at some length and it was resolved (Cole/Boyd)

That the report be received

11.0 Correspondence

10.1 Upper Clutha Angling Club– Letter of thanks for support for their TAKF day Received.

10.2 Clutha River Jet Boats – Ross Dungey

Mr Dungey's letter complaining about a commercial jet boat operator's inconsiderate behaviour was received. The CE advised he had written to the QLDC Harbourmaster and to the company querying protocols where shore based anglers were concerned.

12.0 General Business

12.1 Casting for Recovery

The request for support for purchase of fly fishing equipment for use in their programme was discussed and it was **agreed** to consider alternatives including the Council holding equipment for loan – referred to staff

12.2 Coal Creek Water Group

Councillor Whyte read a letter from Coal Creek Water Group on issues relating to their application for RMA consents and the heavy workload involved.

The CE noted that as well as the Lindis minimum flow plan change there were five plan impending changes on river flows and one on urban water quality as well as implementation of the rural water quality strategy. He said this was a serious burden all round and many stakeholders were not keeping up.

12.3 Media Mine

There was a discussion about the media mine email service circulating current relevant media links with some concerned about the in discriminant and repetitive nature of the content and others supportive of the breadth of coverage

The meeting closed at 2.00pm

4 Matters arising from the minutes

5 Communications New Zealand Council

5.1 Correspondence from NZC to Otago

5.1.1 Increasing Participation Report

Hello all

The paper on “Developing Revenue Through Increased Participation”, prepared by consultant Steve Doughty, was considered by the NZ Council at its meeting in Greymouth on Saturday 16th March.

The Council’s draft minutes record the following:

Increasing Participation Report

The purpose of the report is to consider strategies for increasing revenue, which can only happen by increased participation, other than continually putting the licence fee up or attracting sponsorship and/or donations.

The paper continues the need to focus on increasing participation through a recruitment, retention and reactivation programme.

Resolved: (John Cumberpatch/Andrew Morris)

- 1. Agree to accept the “Developing Revenue Through Increased Participation’ report.**
- 2. Agree that Fish & Game needs to focus on increasing participation.**
- 3. Agree to circulate the paper to regions with the NZ Council endorsement for feedback by 30 June.**
- 4. Agree to propose a contestable fund bid to establish a position focused on delivering a recruitment, retention and reactivation strategy for the whole organisation.**

This paper is about the need for a greater customer focus within the organisation, and looking at ways to promote participation (away from sensitive fisheries).

Please include the attached for consideration by your council with any feedback back to me by 30 June for inclusion at the NZ Council’s July 2018 meeting.

Cheers
Robert

Robert Sowman | Policy & Planning Manager

New Zealand Fish and Game Council

Level 1, 2 Jarden Mile, Ngauranga, Wellington 6035 | PO Box 13141, Johnsonville, Wellington 6440

P +64 (0)4 499 4767 | F +64 (0)4 499 4768 | M +64 (0)21 290 0625

E rsowman@fishandgame.org.nz | W www.fishandgame.org.nz



Marketing Analysis

Prepared by Steve Doughty

February 2018

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Overview

Background

Revenue is critical for Fish and Game to manage, maintain and enhance New Zealand's sports fish and game resources in the recreational interests of anglers and hunters. Revenue is generated through licence sales and licence sales are generated through participation.

The New Zealand Fish and Game Council has engaged Doughty Consulting Limited to analyse current practices within Fish and Game and recommend a strategy for increased participation and revenue development.

Executive Summary

This report is a scoping study of what needs to be done to maintain and enhance fishing and hunting participation. Setting priorities and actions with defined projects and measurements is essential.

There is currently a trend of reducing revenue from licence sales and declining participation as a percentage of population in both fishing and hunting. This trend, unless corrected, will ultimately impact on Fish and Game NZ operationally. No organisation can sustain reducing revenue with static or increasing costs.

Increasing participation by focusing on recruitment, retention and reactivation appears to be a low priority currently for Fish and Game. This needs to change if the organisation wants to maintain or enhance revenue and develop further. This trend has not been helped by Fish and Game's primary focus on the scientific management of fish and game bird resources, which is a critical and required function.

Critical to any organisation is knowing your customers, having a focus on meeting their expectations and giving them what they need to engage with the products that are being delivered. This requires a greater interaction with these people. A customer centric approach with messages across all regions being unified and strategic is necessary to achieve more participation.

A licence may be the actual item purchased, however the product Fish and Game is selling is the experience, tradition and heritage of angling and game bird hunting in New Zealand and making that appealing, easy and fulfilling. The licence is merely a means to access this.

Easy access, having someone to go with and a good chance of success are proven drivers in participation. Better access information, assistance with how to fish or hunt, enabling connections with other participants and attracting people to the experience need to become Fish and Game's products and services. Angling and hunting in New Zealand is world class, yet is often seen by some as aspirational requiring high skill levels and significant dedication. Many of the messages promoted by Fish and Game and by those in or associated with the sport often portray it as elitist and inaccessible for the average person.

Improving participation requires a strategy and a commitment to what is termed internationally as R3, recruitment, retention and reactivation. With approximately 30% churn of fishing licence holders annually and quite fortuitously 30% recruitment balancing that out, there is a significant need to give individual attention to R3.

There have been reports and recommendations on how to increase participation in the past. However, implementation has been a hurdle. This has led to a paralysis or isolated effort. The barriers to action are more internal than external.

There are some initiatives at work across Fish and Game that fit in to increasing participation. The primary issues are, what is being done, why is it being done and how is the effectiveness being measured? National coordination and focus become essential so that each region can achieve as effectively as others. This is not currently happening.

There is variation in skill base and resources across regions. To increase participation, all regions must promote the same message. This will entail Fish and Game focusing on brand and key message

development which is a vital component of increasing participation. While there is a place for subordinate regional messages reflecting local differences, these should not take the lead.

There is a strong case for focusing on participation and centralising the goal of increasing recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) of all anglers and hunters. The approach would work well on the basis of “thinking nationally and acting locally”.

Introduction

Angling and hunting participation is in decline internationally. An aging angler and hunter population, reduced leisure time and many other factors are all contributing to this global trend which is concerning for the future of Fish and Game. Opportunities for greater participation do exist and capitalising on these must form part of Fish and Game’s future focus.

Without a focus on increasing participation, the cycle of budgets being met by increasing licence prices will continue, perpetuating the perception of reduced value to the licence holder. A focus on the price of a licence rather than the value of the licence is something that needs to be turned on its head. A strategy that targets recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) as three separate yet synergistic functions is being recognised internationally as the way forward.

It is essential that the multiple elements contributing to reducing participation and revenue are not assessed individually but as contributors to a wider problem which if allowed to continue, will become more difficult to address in time.

Licence sales trends

Fishing licence sales have not moved significantly in the last 20 years, averaging 74,000 (*LEQ) with a peak of 80,000 (*LEQ) (1985/6 and 2014/15) and a low of 60,000 (*LEQ) (1991/2). The concerning trend in the last two licence periods is a drop of sales by 3.39% (15/16) and a further 2.49% (16/17), resulting in a 2.5% and 1.7% reduction in revenue for the same periods.

This decline coincides with the ability to buy a lower priced option causing some switching amongst existing licence holders. What remains unknown is if the new licence categories retained licence holders that otherwise may have lapsed or reflects a wider move away from longer term commitments to a more casual focus.

(* LEQ represents licence equivalent. The annual revenue based on the price of a full season licence in that period).

Revenue projections 2018 – 2022

Fishing licence - Current sales trend

If the 16/17 decline of -2.49% continued on a reducing scale to -1.43% over 5 years with no intervention and minor price increases, revenue could continue to fall from fishing licences as below. (Red Line on chart Page 4)

Year	Population	Fish LEQ	Variance	% of Pop	Increase	Revenue	Variance
16/17 Actual	4,733,500	76,147	2.49%	1.61%	0.81%	\$9,518,375	1.70%
17/18 (Est)	4,785,100	74,500	2.16%	1.56%	1.60%	\$9,461,500	0.60%
18/19 (Est)	4,866,446	72,750	2.35%	1.49%	1.57%	\$9,384,750	0.81%
19/20 (Est)	4,915,110	71,000	2.41%	1.44%	1.55%	\$9,301,000	0.89%
20/21 (Est)	4,964,262	70,000	1.41%	1.41%	1.53%	\$9,310,000	0.10%
21/22 (Est)	5,013,904	69,000	1.43%	1.38%	1.50%	\$9,315,000	0.05%

Average of 1.2% growth over 5 years

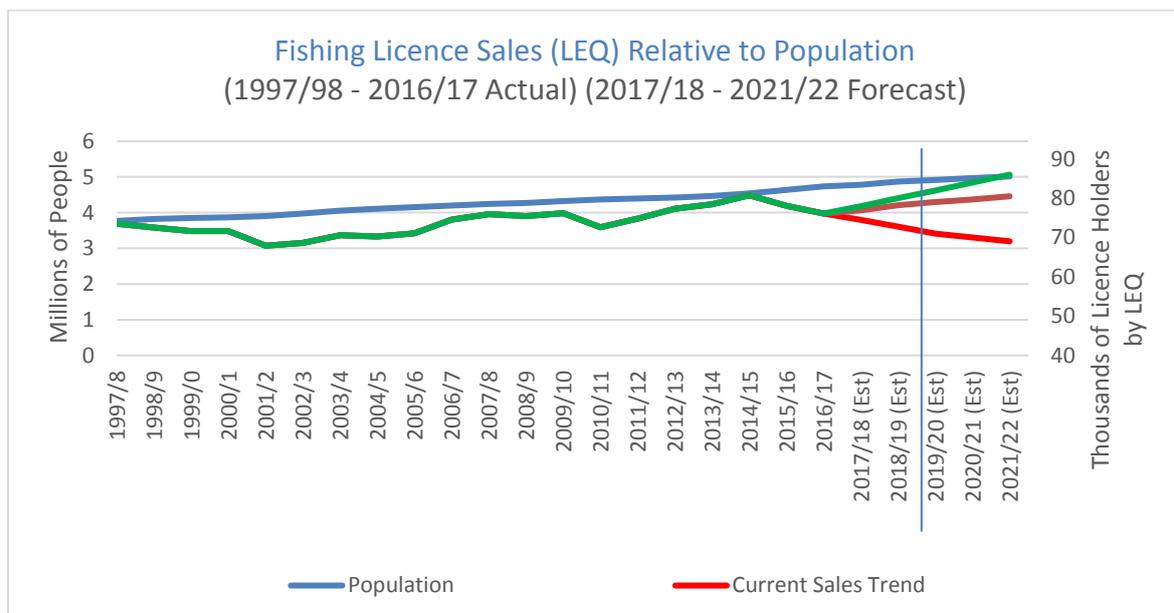
As a percentage of the population Fish and Game's participation is in decline. Fishing licence holders dropped from 1.85% of the population in 2000 to 1.61% in 2016. It is likely that this trend will continue unless active intervention occurs.

If sales as a percentage of population were maintained at current levels (1.61%) with minor price increases through a marketing focus for the next 5 years, revenue would grow as below. (Orange Line on chart Page 4)

Year	Population	Growth	Fish LEQ	Variance	% of Pop	Price	Increase	Revenue	Variance
16/17 Actual	4,733,500	2.15%	76,147	-2.49%	1.61%	\$125.00	0.81%	\$9,518,375.00	-1.70%
17/18 (Est)	4,785,100	1.09%	76,900	0.99%	1.61%	\$127.00	1.60%	\$9,766,300.00	2.60%
18/19 (Est)	4,866,446	1.70%	78,200	1.69%	1.61%	\$129.00	1.57%	\$10,087,800.00	3.29%
19/20 (Est)	4,915,110	1.00%	79,000	1.02%	1.61%	\$130.00	0.78%	\$10,270,000.00	1.81%
20/21 (Est)	4,964,262	1.00%	79,700	0.89%	1.61%	\$132.00	1.54%	\$10,520,400.00	2.44%
21/22 (Est)	5,013,904	1.00%	80,500	1.00%	1.61%	\$135.00	2.27%	\$10,867,500.00	3.30%

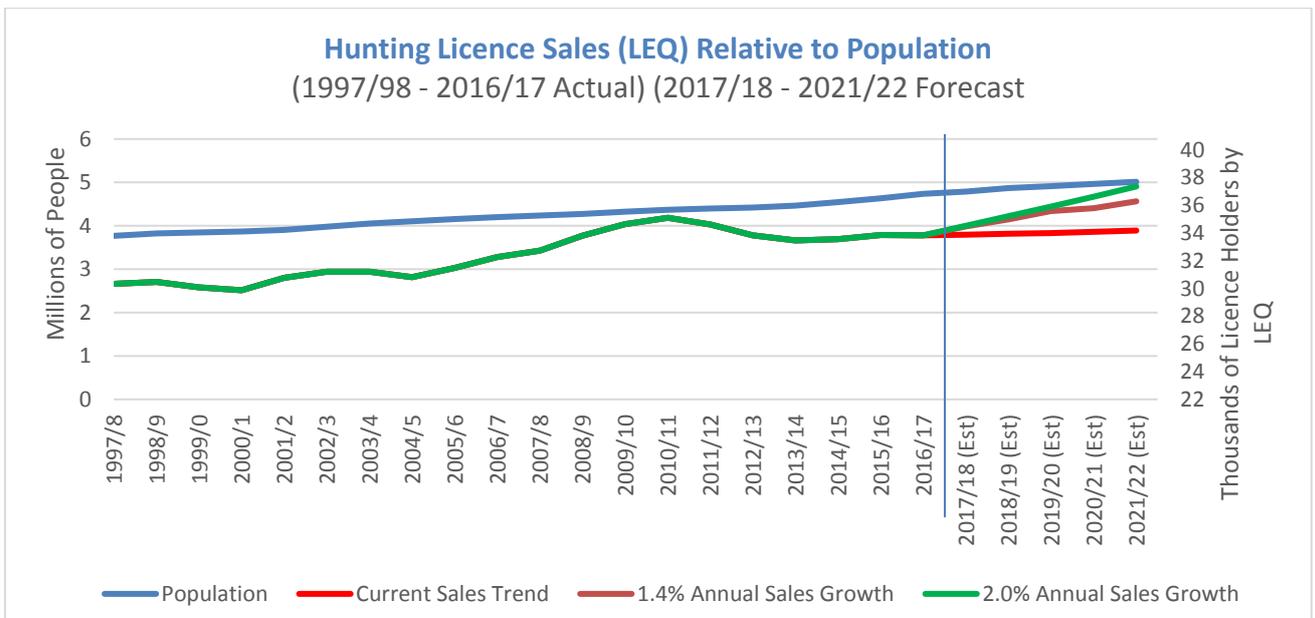
Average of 2.5% growth over 5 years

Whilst ambitious, if growth in sales of approx. 2.5% per year could be achieved with minor price increases, then the organisation would have almost 20% more income by 2022 or an additional \$2 million. (Green line on chart below)



Fishing licence sales are up .8% (LEQ) year to date for the 17/18 season which is positive and may be due to an excellent early summer. However, this trend needs to be higher and sustained for the next 5 years to have any significant effect on revenue and return to previous percentages of licence sales per head of population.

Trends for game bird licences are not dissimilar.



Barriers to increased participation

There are many external factors inhibiting participation such as time constraints, changing values of millennials (18-40 years old), economic factors and perceptions of angling and hunting among others.

Competition for recreational time

This is the single biggest barrier to participation and the number one reason for lack of recruitment and lapsed anglers according to numerous international studies. Changing priorities, lack of time, family structure and declining participation across many pursuits are real factors. Time is a finite factor and requires promotion to draw people to an experience or back to it and show them that a high level of commitment is not necessary participate.

Reducing participation is in itself a key reason for a very proactive approach to marketing and engaging potential customers.

Licence pricing

The perceived value of a licence is important to licence holders. The last surveys of anglers on perceived value of licences was in 2010 and 2012. A reduction in satisfaction over two years and only around 50% believe the licence provides good value was concerning and led to the introduction of more flexibility and choice of licence types. We do not know if perceptions have changed since then or how they have been impacted by the new licence categories.

Anglers who thought their licence represented good value - 2010 – 67%, 2012 – 52%

Hunters who thought their licence represented good value - 2010 – 53%, 2012 – 47%

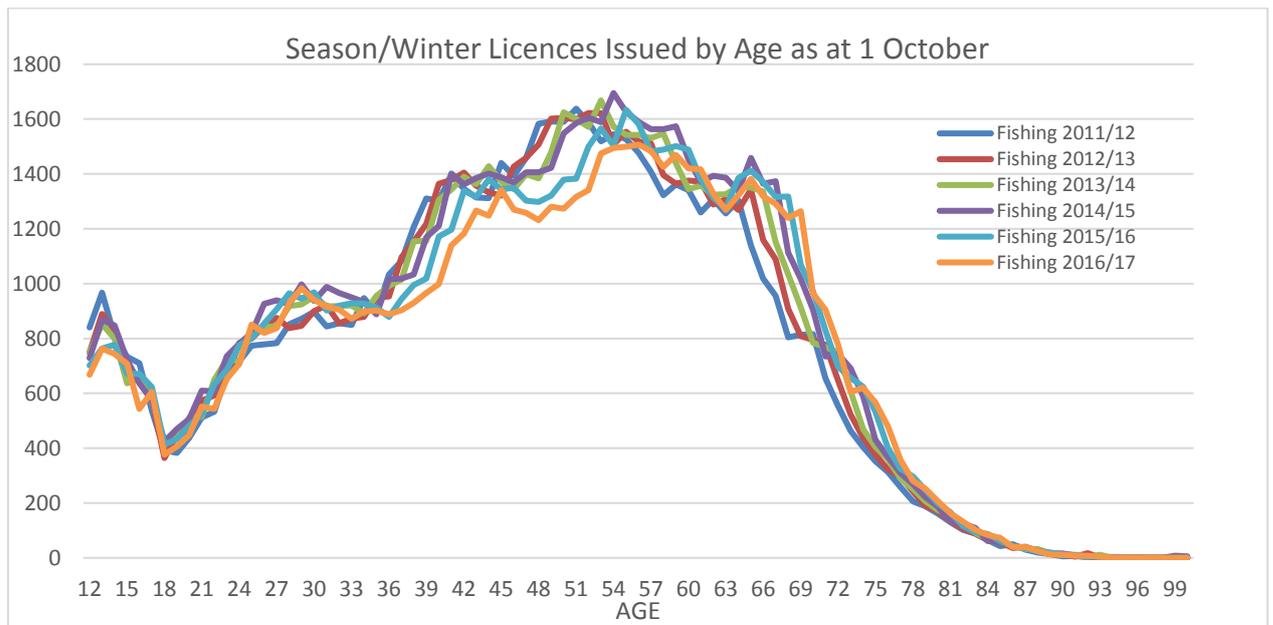
There is good reason for these perceptions. In 1997/98 a whole season fishing licence cost \$62.00. Inflation adjusted the price of the licence today should be \$92.57* yet currently is \$127.00, a 37% increase above inflation. Similarly, a hunting licence cost \$59.00 in 97/98. Inflation adjusted the price of the licence today should be \$88.09* yet is \$94.00, a 7% increase over inflation. Anglers in particular are paying considerably more for the experience than they were 20 years ago. Value versus cost becomes a critical factor in customer satisfaction.

* Figures from Reserve Bank of NZ

Ageing licence holders

The ageing of licence holders is also a significant threat. Low participation in the younger age group and a predominantly older group falling off as each year goes on points to a looming problem that cannot be ignored. In the graph below this is reflected in a gradual movement from left to right across the age spectrum each year.

Understanding the factors that can influence this trend positively needs to be a focus. Recruitment of young people (under 18) is a very important long-term goal. Retention and reactivation of the over 40's is critical for revenue and this group can be used to assist in recruitment and mentoring of younger participants.



Complex regulations

International studies have shown complex regulations are a constraint to participation. Few licence holders can identify boundaries between regions and reaches within river systems as one example. Simplification of the regulations or at the very least the way they are presented is critical. Confusion and fear of doing the wrong thing and being penalised along with lack of understanding are barriers to people participating.

Perceptions of elitism

There is a proliferation of imagery across all media in NZ of big fish, remote destinations and people with expensive fly fishing gear dominating fresh water fishing. This tells a story of inaccessible fishing requiring elite skills which is not the true picture and one that needs breaking down. Minimal skill and resources should be the new mantra.

Ad hoc marketing (or lack of)

There are currently some excellent initiatives in individual regions. These include events, newsletters, fishing reports, pamphlets, Facebook posts and a host of other things. These initiatives are randomly shared between personnel but more often than not are leading to disconnected messaging. The lack of coordination means that there are different approaches and outputs across regions creating a significant lack of cohesion and messaging. An overall marketing plan agreed at a national level should benchmark what is happening and identify the specific goals to be achieved with measurable results.

Licence holder engagement

Organisations reliant on sales must have a customer centric mission. Licence holder engagement is critical to moving forward with a programme to recruit, retain and reactivate lapsed licence holders. Understanding changes to participation and responding as necessary must be a strong driver.

The comprehensive database of current and lapsed licence holders is significant, but underutilised. Data analysis alone tells us “what” is happening but leaves questions unanswered about “why”. Fish and Game must act strategically to mitigate the issues causing declining participation. Having good information about licence holder decisions makes the development of strategy as free from assumptions as possible. Engagement needs to include retention and reactivation campaigns with regular surveying of licence holders an absolute key.

Branding

Branding is important in creating perceptions and there needs to be some work on how Fish and Game want to be perceived. This would facilitate a shift in the licence feeling like a tax from a statutory organisation, to a ticket to the best experience you can have, thanks to the work of Fish and Game.

There is currently a lack of national standards in brand livery, key messages, style and approach to presenting information and consistency of services offered. Fish and Game must be seen as a strong national organisation. The perceptions people have of Fish and Game need to be driven by how the organisation chooses to present itself.

Marketing is storytelling and the story needs to be exciting, engaging and consistent. The best stories have pictures, so imagery is critical to key messages. Every image and video that goes out must not stand alone, it needs to be part of the overall message and support the perceptions being created as part of a marketing plan. Who are the target market, what will they respond to and what is the story that will get that message across?

Key messages

The focus on the science and environmental sustainability that underpins the work of Fish and Game is an essential foundation. “*What we do for you*” is an important message but it is not strong enough in itself.

Changing any culture begins with changing the language, assessing what is being said and why it is being said.

However, are Fish and Game just about hunters and anglers for conservation, or is it also about hunters and anglers out there to have a great time, catching fish, harvesting game birds and enjoying time with family and friends in the outdoors? This is not a shift in Fish and Game’s functions, just a shift in the leading statements with a focus to recruit, retain and reactivate customers.

The messages don’t have to be the same forever. Campaigns are effective and can run alongside enduring messages that underpin the whole organisation. What is needed are enduring, seasonal and short-term messages.

Fish and Game Website

The amount of data on the website is significant and can be difficult to navigate with key information often several layers down making it frustrating and difficult. From a marketing perspective to promote participation, the website is poor. Recent figures on engagement show significant growth in users from the old website to the new. This growth is very good, but it is sitting well below its potential of putting key messages front and centre.

The age demographic of visitors to the website and licence holders differ significantly when comparing these visitors to the age of licence holders. Although there are high licence sales to 40-65-year olds, this group are the smallest group of website visitors. This becomes a significant issue when considering the audience and the purpose of the website which currently does not address recruitment, retention and reactivation specifically.

The Way Forward

If Fish and Game agreed they wanted to set a goal of increasing participation, then the way of delivering this is through an 'R3' strategy. A strategy focused on increasing recruitment, increasing retention and increasing reactivation. The significant lapsing of licence holders offset by recruitment requires understanding and intervention. See Appendix, Chart 1,2 & 3

Recruitment: The enlisting of new participants who have not previously held a licence.

Retention: Encouraging continued participation with annual licence renewal.

Reactivation: Successfully enlisting lapsed licence holders back in to continued participation.

A key to success is having someone or a group being held nationally responsible and accountable for increasing participation through an R3 strategy with support from the regions in implementation.

It is worthwhile to note the participation issues facing Fish and Game are not unique to New Zealand. These trends are being experienced internationally and R3 has become a recognised term with significant work being done in the US across fishing and hunting statutory organisations to identify and mitigate issues of declining participation in angling and hunting.

We have a strong connection to this extensive R3 community through Ian Hadland (Operations Manager, Otago Fish and Game Council) who reports there is a willingness on their part to support the work of Fish and Game New Zealand with their experience, findings and tools. This will be vital for proactive steps to be taken to have an R3 programme operational within Fish and Game that it is coordinated and resourced as part of a marketing focus.

Further insight can be gained on R3 from this webinar by Dr Judd Michael. Whilst 50 minutes long, it is an excellent insight when considering introducing an R3 strategy for Fish and Game.

<https://youtu.be/X2bRhKnxuYA>.

Being successful with an R3 strategy will mean Fish and Game will need to focus on outcomes such as:

1. Identify what is being sold

Correctly identifying what is being sold is critical. We know that a licence is necessary to fish and hunt, but it is not the product, the reason people buy it is because they have to, or they see value in what it does for them. Fish and Game do provide a service however seeing what is offered as products, something tangible that has value to the user, would be a helpful shift in thinking. The shift internally becomes a focus on product development and externally as a benefit to the customer with a strong relationship between the two.

2. Knowing where to go

Access is a product and a critical part of what Fish and Game sells. Having a licence opens this up to someone and changing perceptions from a licence being a ticket to a passport is easier when the focus is on the benefits of a licence rather than the cost. Knowing where to go is an essential first step and needs specific attention to be accurate, complete and very easily accessible. This is an area that needs improving.

3. Competence

Learning how to fish is extremely important. Development of information that will directly benefit anglers in knowing what to do should be a priority for Fish and Game. Very little is currently offered, and significant work is needed here.

4. Success

Being successful or at least having the strong belief of success is also a product. Lack of success is a barrier to recruitment and contributes significantly to lapsing licence holders. Easy access and a good chance of success will address this however work is needed on the messages as catching aspirational trophy fish on the fly does not help the perceptions that it is accessible for the average person.

5. Focus on Youth

We know locally and internationally a high percentage of anglers began when they were young. A United Kingdom Angler Survey (2012) showed of 28,000 anglers, 88% were introduced before the age of 16 by a parent, family member or friend. This clearly makes the adults the key target group in attracting young people to participate.

Perceptions influence behaviour, so this comes back strongly to key messages and imagery being focussed on the target group through the channels being used by young people. Making going fishing cool, social and successful are key. If interest shown by young people is not supported through adults, there is a much lower chance of recruitment.

This is a critical area and needs specific attention. Take a kid fishing, it's a great idea and works but we need to engage participants to fully understand effectiveness and what the impact is on the individuals and families that participate. Evaluation and measurement is a key part of any initiative. This means another key area is following up after the 'take a kid fishing day' event. Partnering with schools, clubs, other groups and volunteers to provide fishing opportunities and experience beyond a contained event is required. There will be many that just want to attend fish out's, but this further step could encourage greater recruitment and retention.

Currently Fish and Game do not collect accurate information on under 12's. They can be hidden in a family licence or be issued a paper licence with no copy kept. This realistically means we have an 8-year period (assuming under 4's doesn't make up a significant number) for which we have no useable data. Issuing a card to under 12's that expires on their 12th birthday with digitally stored personal details would give us much needed data and the kids something they would value.

6. Focus on Method

There are significant opportunities to develop boat, bait and spin fishing in lowland rivers and lakes as well as coarse and canal fishing. Fly fishing is a valid method but gains significant attention for what is a relatively small group of participants. The perceptions and the opportunities are at odds and this requires debunking.

7. A Focus on Women

The NY Times in December 2017 published an article identifying women as the fastest growing demographic in fly fishing and making up 31% of the 6.5 million fly anglers in the US. There are gear issues, safety issues and a male dominated culture which present challenges but work needs to be done to target women.

A specific campaign utilising ambassadors and role models could be developed. Angling is a male dominated sport currently and there is significant scope to attract more women. For women to participate they need to come to the sport in numbers. They need identity, others to fish with and for this to be successful it needs to be a movement rather than just an area to do some work on.

8. Adopting a Business Mind-set

Understanding and responding to customer demand is core and requires a business focus. It also requires a mind-set that everyone in the organisation is involved in the development of product and responsible for a strong relationship with customers who pay for what is being provided.

The Tools Available

1. Digital Marketing and Social Media

The use of digital marketing and social media is presently underutilised. A prime focus of digital media is to reach specific groups and create an online community. This would be improved significantly with a coordinated strategy and the use of organic and targeted messages to attract specific people groups.

The strategic and coordinated use of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and the website, with the possibility of a digital licence is essential. These offer direct contact with current and lapsed licence holders as well as those yet to be licence holders essential to our recruitment initiatives.

2. Website

The website does not require a redesign or change of platform, it is a matter of re-prioritising information, flow and functionality to make it a much more user-friendly experience with a view to recruitment, retention and reactivation. It should be noted that the website will likely work in conjunction with a digital licence with some information such as access, regulations and how-to fish residing on the website and accessible through links. This will have to be considered in any improvements to the website and the development of the digital licence.

Good information on where to fish, how to do it and the best tackle to use is seen by regional managers as our highest priority message on the website. This would equally apply to hunting. Having licence holders see the website as a must visit site in regard to fishing and hunting is a key shift the website needs going forward. In terms of fishing we need to be offering the same information as www.nzfishing.com.

3. Smart Phone App / Digital Licence

A digital licence and or a smart phone app will go a significant way to answering some of the issues Fish and Game face in getting key information in to the hands of the right people. It could provide GPS driven access, how to fish and regulatory information making success and compliance simpler. It could also have strong influence on recruiting younger people to the sport.

4. Agency / Retailer / Wholesaler partnership

A key strategy in developing licence sales is to identify and seek partnership opportunities with people who share some goals with Fish and Game to increase participation. This can be retailers in the fishing and hunting field and importers and manufacturers of equipment. There is a potential lack of appreciation among these businesses of the supporting work that Fish and Game do for the recreational interests that they are supplying in to. Enhancing these relationships by offering support, training and joint venture promotion could have benefits across a number of areas.

5. Fish and Game Magazine

The magazine could be a great publication and resource for promoting participation and selling the public acceptability of angling and hunting. It also has the opportunity to develop greater revenue through advertising, partnership with retailers, wholesalers and industry groups.

6. Marketing to compatible activities

Many people appreciate and spend time in the outdoors in New Zealand. These include hunter's, camper's and tramper's, boat and caravan owners and a host of other people. Fishing could easily become an add on experience for some of these people which they may not have contemplated and they are likely to be visiting areas where fishing is a relatively easy thing to access.

These groups are easily accessible and can be targeted with a campaign to add fishing to something that already takes them in to places where little effort is required to have a go. With good access and how-to information this is an area that could create growth. For example, there are 88 Tramping clubs in NZ and 27,000 registered caravans and motor homes in the Motor caravan association of NZ.

7. Supporters of Fish and Game

Fish and Game is a champion of the environment and water quality in New Zealand. This is something that reaches a much wider group than licence holders. Metrics from the Fish and Game website show a different visitor age group that are typically not licence holders who are likely to be engaging with the environmental and habitat work of Fish and Game.

Financial support could be gained from a group that are not licence holders. These people may be interested in contributing, being on a mailing list and connecting with this work as opposed to participation in angling or hunting. Friends of Fish and Game (or another appropriate name)

could be a group that financially support the valued work of Fish and Game. In return, they would receive membership as a Fish and Game supporter and be kept informed of the work through the magazine, newsletters etc. specifically around environmental issues.

Conclusion

Fish and Game has declining participation which is resulting in less revenue from fishing and hunting licence sales. If this trend continues the operational activities of Fish and Game will have to be reduced across the board and the overall strength of the organisation will diminish. At what point the downward curve will flatten out is unknown.

This report suggests the organisation needs to focus on increasing participation by establishing a focus on recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3). The report also suggests being successful with an R3 strategy, Fish and Game needs to focus on making it easy for people who want to fish and increasing their chances of success. We also need to introduce them to the sport when they are young and do all we can to retain them throughout their lives

If the NZC wishes to focus on increasing participation, then they need to consider:

- Commit to increasing participation through an R3 programme.
- Shifting some resources to an R3 program.
- Revise and develop key messages to influence perceptions of the Fish and Game brand.
- Prioritise licence holder engagement, understand the customer.
- See the how to fish and improving chances of success as a Fish and Game responsibility.

Recommendations

1. Agree the decline in participation needs to be stopped and reversed.
2. Agree in principle to establish an R3 program.
3. Request a proposal for the next meeting setting out what a five-year R3 program entails and the cost.

Appendix.

Chart 1

A snapshot of the 16/17 year showing recruitment (or reactivation after 4 years break) as a percentage of the total of licence holders.

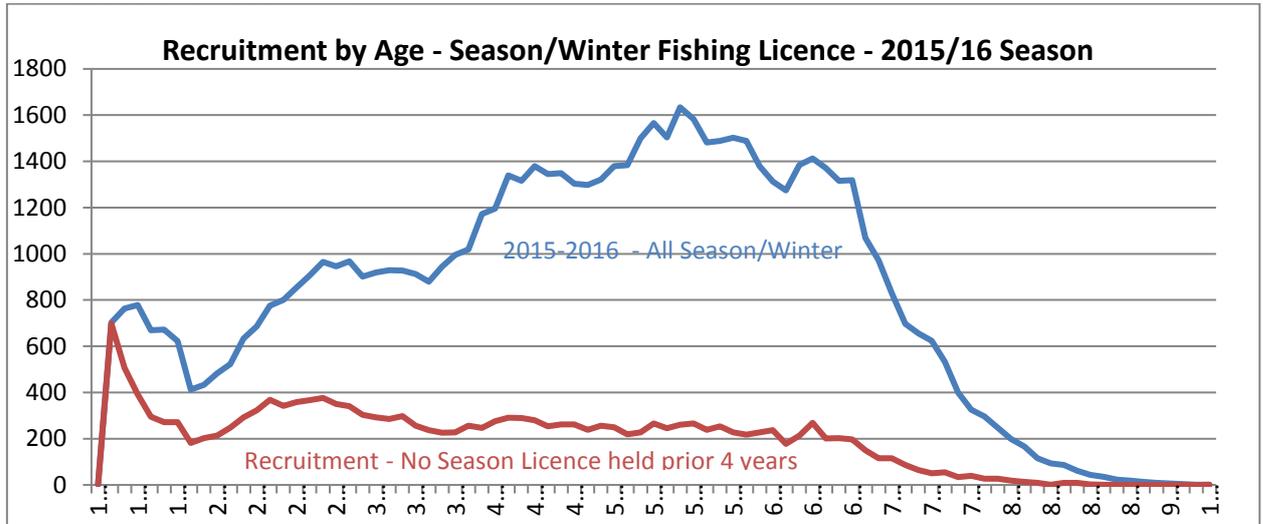


Chart 2.

A snapshot of the 16/17 year showing retention as a percentage of the total of licence holders.

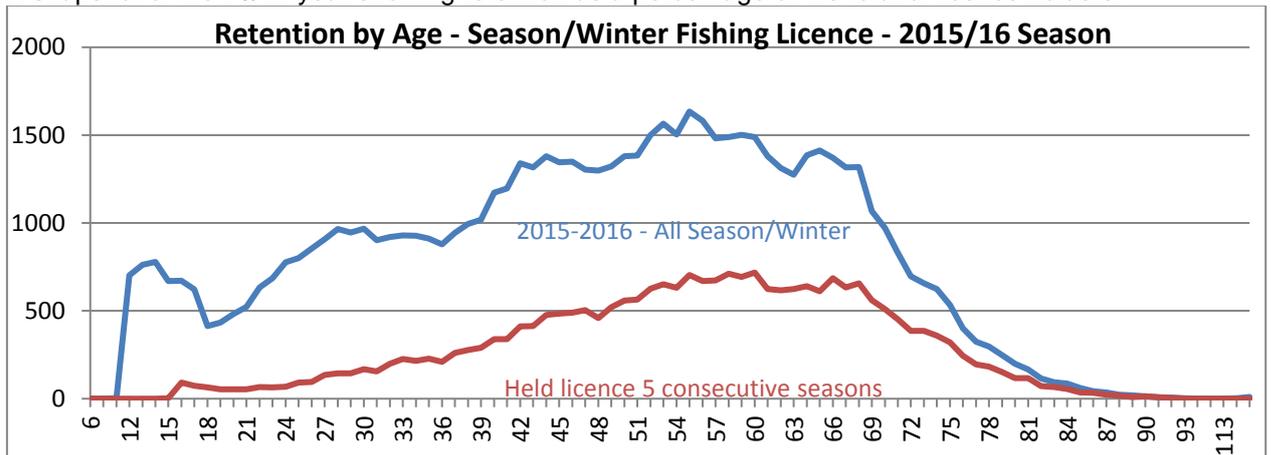
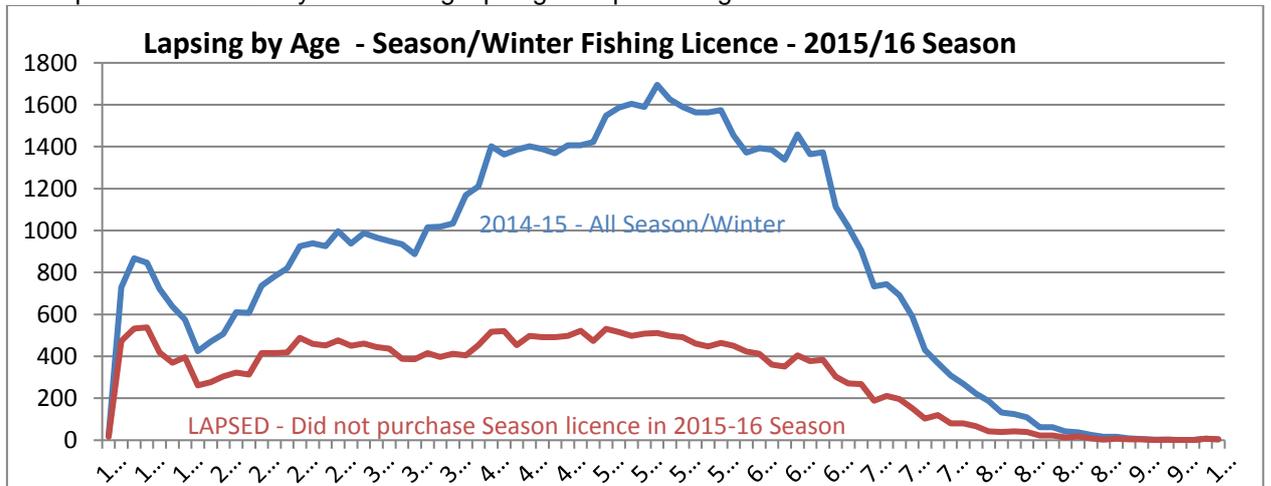


Chart 4.

A snapshot of the 16/17 year showing lapsing as a percentage of the total of licence holders.



5.1.2 National Salmon Committee – CE/ R Boyd to report



27 MAR 2018

21 March 2018

Niall Watson
Chief Executive
Otago Fish and Game Council
PO Box 76
DUNEDIN 9054

Dear Niall

NATIONAL SALMON COMMITTEE

Following the Salmon Symposium at the Hotel Ashburton on November 11 and 12 2017, the New Zealand Fish and Game Council resolved to establish a National Salmon Committee to deal with restoring the sea run salmon fishery in New Zealand. The purpose of the Committee is to develop a co-ordinated approach within Fish and Game and key stakeholders to ways that will maintain and enhance the sea run salmon fishery in the interest of anglers.

The National Committee is to be chaired by a person approved by the New Zealand Fish and Game Council and would report to and be funded by that Council. The Committee will meet at least twice a year in Christchurch, or at another location that the committee decides.

The purpose of this letter is to invite an appointee from your Council to become a member of the National Salmon Committee. Committee members will receive no meeting allowance, but travel and associated expenses will be met from a committee budget set up for that purpose.

The New Zealand Fish and Game Council has asked that appointees to the Committee be identified and for them to meet for the first time by April 16, 2018. To this end, it is proposed that the meeting be held in Christchurch. The time and venue are still to be confirmed. The proposed dates are Monday 9, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 11 or Thursday 12 April.

Please provide the name and contact details of your appointee to me at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Martin Taylor'.

Martin Taylor
Chief Executive

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

New Zealand Council

5.2 Correspondence from Otago to NZC

5.2.1 Guide Licence for Lindsay Lyons



1 March 2018

Lindsay Lyons
Chairman
New Zealand Council
Fish & Game New Zealand
PO Box 13141
WELLINGTON

Dear Lindsay

Guides Licence

Thank you for coming down to our February Council meeting and for the contributions made by both you and Robert.

You will appreciate from the debate that Otago Council sees the implementation of the guides licence as the highest of priorities. That is because it represents the next step in management of pressure sensitive fisheries. We need to get a much better handle on guide activity and fishery use by guided anglers and non-residents if we are to advance.

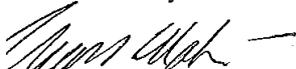
An operational guides licence is fundamentally important in a number of ways, namely:

- All those working as guides will be known to Fish and Game Councils.
- Licenced commercial guides will contribute financially to fish and game management costs at a rate greater than ordinary anglers and hunters to reflect their more intensive use of fish and game resources.
- Fish and Game Councils will be able to consult guides on relevant management issues as they arise and vice versa
- Guides (and their clients) can be routinely surveyed about their success and satisfaction.
- Illegal guiding will can be the subject of compliance action

The long running delays in getting the licence up and running has resulted in missed opportunities for fisheries monitoring, management and enforcement and Fish and Game has foregone significant revenue as well - estimated to be up to \$2 million since 1996.

We are now in a position where those delays have put the original law change at risk even though we have for the first time agreement between guides and Fish and Game. So we must ensure we do not lose the opportunity to secure the regulations required to bring the licence into force.

Yours sincerely



Neil Watson
Chief Executive

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

Otago Fish and Game Council

Niall Watson

From: Niall Watson
Sent: Tuesday, 13 March 2018 1:00 p.m.
To: Robert Sowman
Cc: 'John Jillett'; 'John Jillett'; Ian Hadland
Subject: National Salmon Committee

Dear Robert,

This matter was discussed at our February meeting.

The Council supports the proposal to establish a salmon committee and notes the following:

1. Otago Council wishes to be represented on the committee.
2. The committee should report to both NZC and all South Island salmon Councils.
3. Inclusion of non-statutory stakeholders in the committee is supported.
4. It is important to differentiate between the statutory role of individual Fish and Game Councils in actually managing salmon resources within their respective regions and the role of the committee. There are approved Sports Fish and Game Plans in place for all Fish and Game Councils
5. The draft Salmon Management Plan for the South Island (2005) stalled because of DOC's assertion that an inter-regional species plan could not be a statutory plan despite the previously approved South Island Canada Goose Management Plan. DOC's position is contradictory
6. The scope of the committee should be expanded to cover landlocked populations because they are important as sources of stock for sea run fisheries and although they are residual populations they are relatively secure.

Kind regards

Niall Watson
Chief Executive

7 Chief Executives Report

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT APRIL 2018

7.1 ADMINISTRATION

Finance and Administration

Financial Reports to 31 March 2018

The finance report for the period from 1 September 2017 to 31 March 2018 is attached.

Key budget figures are included in the front of the Annual Work Plan

Expenditure to date is \$1,272,286 (including levies \$459,061 and commission \$63,175 but excluding depreciation (\$45,682) compared with the annual budget of \$1,955,764 (operational expenditure: \$984,399, depreciation: nil, and levies: \$918,122 and excluding commission: \$99,630). As present the budget is 65% spent at a point 58% through the financial year. Summer and autumn see a peak in expenditure, so this is not unusual.

Total income to date is \$1,707,881 compared with budget of \$2,074,287

Fishing licence sales revenue received for the year to 31 January 2018 is \$1,560,594 (including commission). The fish budget figures for the full year is \$1,670,050 including commission.

Game licence sales revenue received for the year to 31 January 2018 is \$nil (including commission). The year's budget for game licence sales is \$322,536 including commission.

Budget and expenditure figures are exclusive of GST.

Licence Sales to 31 March 2018

Sales recorded to 31 March 2018 are outlined for fish and game licences in the attached table from Eyede and compared with last year on the same date. Figures are inclusive of GST. Fishing licence sales for the season so far in whole season licence equivalents (LEQs) are 14,738 LEQs compare with 14,571 for the same period last year.

Game sales have not commenced.

Funds Position at 31 March 2018

ANZ 00 account	\$204,842.93
ANZ 70 account	\$797,323.65

Reparation Trust Account

Account balance to 31 March 2017	\$ 44,333
Revenue for year to 31 March 2017	\$ 8,300
Less grants to 31 March 2017	<u>\$ 9,644</u>
Total	\$ 42,989

There is presently a commitment in grants approved but not spent of approximately \$11,750

Backcountry Management

Account balance to 31 August 2017 \$70,468

Term investments as at 31 March 2018:

ASB 0079 \$331,362.83 @ 3.45% maturing July 2018

SBS 44624 \$496,855.05 @ 3.40% maturing July 2018

The sum of \$77,745 is held by Anderson Lloyd in trust for wetland management via DOC.

Agents and Debts

No liabilities or potential liabilities at the present time.

Capital Expenditure

Two replacement trucks have been ordered as part of the routine vehicle replacement programme

Staff and Health and Safety

Nothing to report

Equipment

The upgrade in office and Councillor tablet software to Office 365 has gone relatively smoothly but if any issues remain, please contact Ian Hadland in the first instance.

Land and Buildings

Freshwater Research Centre Wanaka

ALREC are preparing a draft lease for our consideration to cover their temporary research facility on our Wanaka land for our consideration

Hatchery House

The hatchery house is presently being tendered for removal.

Dunedin Office

The replacement of ceiling tiles and insulation at Dunedin office is continuing but is not yet complete. Delays have been caused by extraordinary demand for the service.

Boardwalk opening

The pedestrian boardwalk along Bullock Creek is complete and consideration needs to be given to a date from which it is available for public use.

CE to report

Recommendation

That the Finance and Licence Sales Report for the period ending 31 March 2018 be received.

Summary of Draft Profit and Loss Statement Expenses 31st March 2018
As At 09/04/18

Expense	Total Budget	Actual Expenditure	YtD %	Comment
		Ytd		
Projects				
Species	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 12,602.00	50%	
Habitat	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 42,018.00	525%	Has less RMA legal expenditure reimbursed and donations to Bullock Creek. Large reserve and wetland costs (spays etc)
Participation	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 16,828.00	102%	Includes donated TAKF cost and newsletters done
Public Interface	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 333.00	33%	
Compliance	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 4,868.00	41%	Ranger training completed
Licences	\$ 500.00	\$ 220.00	44%	
NZC Levies	\$ 918,122.00	\$ 459,061.00	50%	
Agent Commission		\$ 63,175.00		
Council	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 11,643.00	78%	Had extra meetings
Planning	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 14,454.00	111%	Audit costs finished
Projects Total	\$ 1,009,122.00	\$ 625,202.00	62%	
Administration				
Salaries	\$ 757,913.00	\$ 436,138.00	57%	
Staff Expenses	\$ 15,564.00	\$ 9,757.00	63%	Excess CE job interview etc
Office Premises	\$ 82,504.00	\$ 37,884.00	46%	Wanaka base over spend
Office Equipment	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 905.00	36%	
Communication	\$ 25,100.00	\$ 13,856.00	55%	
General	\$ 6,561.00	\$ 3,544.00	54%	Radio advertising extra
General Equipment	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 2,328.00	67%	Extra repairs
Depreciation		\$ 45,682.00		
Vehicles	\$ 49,500.00	\$ 34,969.00	71%	Maintenance and fuel up
Administration Total	\$ 943,142.00	\$ 585,063.00	62%	
Total	\$ 1,952,264.00	\$ 1,210,265.00	62%	

Summary of Position 31st March 2018

Total Expenditure		\$	1,210,265.00
Less Depreciation			45682.00
Less Levies	\$ 918,122.00	\$	459,061.00
Less Commission		\$	63,175.00
Less RMA Reimbursed		\$	-
Net Expenditure		\$	642,347.00
Budget		\$	984,399.00
% Spent			65%

All ready taken out

Summary of Profit and Loss Statement Income 31st March 2018

As At 09/04/18

Income	Total Budget			Comment
Fish	\$ 1,670,050.00	\$	1,559,323.00	
Game	\$ 322,536.00	\$	-	
Prosecutions	\$ 5,000.00	\$	818.00	
Rent	\$ 43,100.00	\$	21,630.00	
Interest	\$ 33,601.00	\$	18,023.00	
Grants Donations	\$ -	\$	72,711.00	
	\$ 2,074,287.00	\$	1,672,505.00	

Otago Fish & Game Council

Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2018

CAPITAL	This Year	Last Year End
Anderson Lloyd Investment	(77,745.39)	(77,745.39)
Opening Equity	1,039,201.00	1,039,201.00
Retained Earnings Brght Fwd	<u>1,671,288.48</u>	<u>1,519,497.04</u>
	2,632,744.09	2,480,952.65
Plus Current Year Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	389,912.66	151,791.44
TOTAL CAPITAL FUNDS	<u><u>3,022,656.75</u></u>	<u><u>2,632,744.09</u></u>
REPRESENTED BY		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash on Hand	200.00	200.00
Stock on Hand	18,111.00	18,111.00
Accrued Interest	5,957.15	5,957.15
Prepayments	25,078.97	25,078.97
ASB Investments	331,362.83	325,456.46
SBS Investments	496,855.05	486,209.07
GST Paid	14,090.41	0.00
PAYE Control	2,595.10	0.00
Trade Debtors	57,671.77	163,031.90
ASB 00 Account	10.98	10.98
National/ANZ 00 Account	205,142.38	120,842.51
National/ANZ 70 Account	797,323.65	397,122.48
SBS Account	<u>24.66</u>	<u>24.66</u>
	1,954,423.95	1,542,045.18
LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Sundry Creditors	22,688.31	22,688.31
Holiday Pay Accrued	43,091.12	43,091.12
PAYE Control	0.00	3,418.25
GST Received	13,116.72	61.04
GST Payments/Refunds IRD	15,144.19	0.00
Funds received in Advance	191,877.47	191,877.47
Trade Creditors	<u>93,139.07</u>	<u>92,066.33</u>
	379,056.88	353,202.52
NET WORKING CAPITAL	1,575,367.07	1,188,842.66
FIXED ASSETS		
Vehicles Purchases	323,715.70	281,931.54
M/V Accum Deprn	(157,295.71)	(130,695.71)
Boat Purchases	100,497.93	100,497.93
Boat Accum Deprn	(85,139.81)	(82,479.81)
Plant Purchases	78,023.57	72,806.18
Plant Accum Deprn	(66,417.07)	(61,699.07)
Furniture & Fittings	34,347.94	34,347.94
Furniture Accum Deprn	(30,062.45)	(29,222.45)
Field Equipment Purchases	36,331.83	34,610.96
Field Eq Accum Deprn	(27,181.82)	(26,901.82)
Land Purchases	414,410.77	414,410.77
Buildings Purchases	643,240.32	642,892.49
Buildings Accum Deprn	(347,848.24)	(339,574.24)
Land @ Fair Value	426,260.00	426,260.00
Building @ Fair Value	162,085.11	162,085.11
Buildings @ FV - Accum Deprn	<u>(57,678.39)</u>	<u>(55,368.39)</u>
	1,447,289.68	1,443,901.43
NET ASSETS	<u><u>3,022,656.75</u></u>	<u><u>2,632,744.09</u></u>

**Otago Fish & Game Council
Profit and Loss - Summary
for Period Ended Mar:2017/18**

	Month to Date			Year to Date			Annual Budget	YTD Actual Budget	Last YTD	
	Actual	Budget	% of Budget	Actual	Budget	Variance				
INCOME										
FISH AND GAME LICENCE SA...										
1000	Fishing Licences Dn Agency	35	0	0%	(1,271)	0	(1,271)	0	0%	179,448
1002	Fishing Licences Income	71,705	139,171	52%	1,580,594	974,197	586,397	1,670,050	93%	1,518,641
1006	Game Licences Income	(245)	26,878	(1)%	(146)	188,146	(188,292)	322,536	0%	33
		71,495	166,049	43%	1,559,177	1,162,343	396,834	1,992,586	78%	1,698,122
OTHER INCOME										
1010	Interest received	232	2,800	8%	18,023	19,601	(1,578)	33,601	54%	9,316
1020	Fines - Fishing & Game Offences	108	417	26%	818	2,919	(2,101)	5,000	16%	4,083
1022	Reparations Trust Fund	200	0	0%	(1,344)	0	(1,344)	0	0%	(19,515)
1025	Rent Received	1,812	3,592	50%	21,630	25,144	(3,514)	43,100	50%	22,377
1065	Fishing Competitions	(22)	0	0%	463	0	463	0	0%	673
1075	Commissions Income	18	0	0%	202	0	202	0	0%	553
1090	Sundry Income	0	0	0%	958	0	958	0	0%	1,479
1092	Merchandise Sales/Other	75	0	0%	616	0	616	0	0%	(6,364)
1094	Donations and Grants Received	20,436	0	0%	72,711	0	72,711	0	0%	13,830
1098	RMA Costs Reimbursed	2,497	0	0%	34,626	0	34,626	0	0%	44,499
		25,356	6,609	372%	148,704	47,664	101,040	81,701	182%	70,931
	TOTAL INCOME	96,850	172,858		1,707,881	1,210,007	497,874	2,074,287		1,769,052
EXPENDITURE										
SPECIES MANAGEMENT										
	POPULATION MONITOR / MMT	1,983	1,000	198%	4,760	7,000	(2,240)	12,000	40%	5,355
	HARVEST ASSESSMENT	0	250	0%	0	1,750	(1,750)	3,000	0%	0
	FISH SALVAGE	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	0
	HATCHERY OPERATIONS	84	833	10%	7,841	5,835	2,006	10,000	78%	10,814
	RELEASES	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	25
	REGULATIONS	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	0
	CONTROL	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	0
	SPECIES MANAGEMENT-...	2,067	2,083	99%	12,602	14,585	(1,983)	25,000	50%	16,194
HABITAT PROTECTION										
	RESOURCE MANAGEMENT A...	3,735	375	996%	56,698	2,629	54,069	4,500	1,260%	57,726
	WORKS & MMT COUNCIL LAND	11,970	292	4,099%	93,024	2,044	90,980	3,500	2,658%	8,357
	ASSISTED HABITAT	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	0
	HABITAT PROTECTION-T...	15,705	667	2,355%	149,722	4,673	145,049	8,000	1,872%	66,083
PARTICIPATION										
	ACCESS	816	250	326%	1,413	1,750	(337)	3,000	47%	680
	SATISFACTION SURVEYS	0	0	0%	6,592	0	6,592	0	0%	5,975
	NEWSLETTERS	1,500	375	400%	3,349	2,625	724	4,500	74%	14,326
	OTHER PUBLICATIONS	0	83	0%	60	585	(525)	1,000	6%	312
	TRAINING	9	333	3%	3,014	2,335	679	4,000	75%	1,307
	CLUB RELATIONS	1,609	333	483%	2,399	2,335	64	4,000	60%	804
	HUTS	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	57
	PARTICIPATION-TOTAL	3,933	1,374	286%	16,828	9,630	7,198	16,500	102%	23,461

Otago Fish & Game Council
Profit and Loss - Summary
for Period Ended Mar:2017/18

	-----Month to Date-----			-----Year to Date-----			Annual Budget	% of Budget	
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance			
PUBLIC INTERFACE									
LIAISON	0	0	0%	7	0	7	0	0%	9
COMMUNICATIONS	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	0
ADVOCACY	0	84	0%	326	588	(262)	1,000	33%	2,174
PUBLIC INTERFACE-TOTAL	0	84	0%	333	588	(255)	1,000	33%	2,183
COMPLIANCE									
RANGER ADMIN	28	208	13%	64	1,460	(1,396)	2,500	3%	882
RANGER TRAINING	0	375	0%	4,804	2,625	2,179	4,500	107%	3,764
COMPLIANCE	0	417	0%	0	2,919	(2,919)	5,000	0%	16,929
COMPLIANCE-TOTAL	28	1,000	3%	4,868	7,004	(2,136)	12,000	41%	21,575
LICENCES									
LICENCE PRODUCT/DISTN	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	0
AGENT SERVICING	11	42	27%	220	294	(74)	500	44%	233
COMMISSION	2,724	0	0%	63,175	0	63,175	0	0%	62,419
NZFG LEVIES	0	76,510	0%	459,061	535,572	(76,511)	918,122	50%	419,868
LICENSES-TOTAL	2,735	76,552	4%	522,456	535,866	(13,410)	918,622	57%	482,519
COUNCIL									
COUNCIL ELECTIONS	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	0
COUNCIL MEETINGS	2,475	1,250	198%	11,643	8,750	2,893	15,000	78%	9,676
COUNCIL-TOTAL	2,475	1,250	198%	11,643	8,750	2,893	15,000	78%	9,676
PLANNING / REPORTING									
MMT/STRATEGIC PLANNING	0	0	0%	1,046	0	1,046	0	0%	1,039
REPORTING/AUDIT	0	1,083	0%	13,408	7,585	5,823	13,000	103%	4,146
NATIONAL LIAISON	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	280
PLAN/REPORT-TOTAL	0	1,083	0%	14,454	7,585	6,869	13,000	111%	5,466
ADMINISTRATION									
SALARIES	57,635	63,451	91%	436,138	444,162	(8,024)	761,413	57%	349,098
STAFF EXPENSES	758	1,297	58%	9,757	9,087	670	15,564	63%	10,272
STAFF HOUSES	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	0
OFFICE PREMISES	(2,703)	6,875	(39)%	37,884	48,137	(10,253)	82,504	46%	40,054
OFFICE EQUIPMENT	34	208	16%	905	1,460	(555)	2,500	36%	2,568
COMMUNICATIONS	4,805	2,082	230%	13,856	14,648	(792)	25,100	55%	11,816
GENERAL	98	546	18%	3,544	3,831	(288)	6,561	54%	6,315
GENERAL EQUIPMENT	47	208	23%	2,328	2,460	(132)	3,500	67%	820
VEHICLES	5,013	4,125	122%	34,969	28,879	6,090	49,500	71%	35,264
ADMINISTRATION - TOTAL	65,686	78,602	83%	539,381	552,664	(13,283)	948,642	57%	456,198
DEPRECIATION	6,526	0	0%	45,682	0	45,682	0	0%	45,682
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	99,154	162,895	61%	1,317,968	1,141,345	176,623	1,955,764	67%	1,129,037
Profit (Loss)	(2,303)	9,963		389,913	68,662	321,251	118,523		640,015

Otago Region Fish Licence Sales to 31st March

2017 Channel		FWF	FWA	FWNA	FSLA	FLAA	FWJ	FWNJ	FWIA	FLBA	FSBA	FDA	FDJ	Total	Fish LEQ	Fish \$
2018	Agency Online	2,563	3,574	457	549	233	535	21	12	36	226	3,040	180	12,058		
	Eyede Call Centre	12	5	12	8	1	2	0	0	0	4	13	0	57		
	Mail Order	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	Public Online	1,684	1,821	775	223	264	276	23	11	41	191	3,895	206	9,543		
	Retail Book	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	Total	4,259	5,400	1,244	780	498	813	44	23	77	421	6,948	386	21,658	14,738.89	\$1,919,113.00
2016 Channel		FWF	FWA	FWNA	FSLA	FLAA	FWJ	FWNJ	FWIA	FLBA	FSBA	FDA	FDJ	Total	Fish LEQ	Fish \$
2017	Agency Online	2,624	3,539	472	511	269	464	23	14	56	277	3,663	232	12,644		
	Eyede Call Centre	10	6	7	11	0	5	1	0	0	2	14	0	56		
	Mail Order	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	Public Online	1,566	1,744	773	229	254	208	25	5	46	210	3,070	134	8,387		
	Retail Book	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	Total	4,200	5,289	1,252	751	523	677	49	19	102	489	6,747	366	21,087	14,571.66	\$1,869,033.00

FWF (Family), FWA (Adult), FWNZ (Non Resident), FSLA (Senior Loyal), FLAA (Local Area),

FWJ (Junior), FWNJ (Junior Non resident), FLBA (Long Break), FSBA (Short Break), FDA (Adult Day), FDJ (Junior Day)

Otago Region Game Licence Sales to 31st March

2018 Channel		GWA	GWJ	GWC	GDA	GDJ	Game LEQ	Game \$
Agency Online		577	42	13	0	0		
Eyede Call Centre		0	0	0	0	0		
Mail Order		0	0	0	0	0		
Public Online		121	8	4	0	0		
Retail Book		0	0	0	0	0		
Total		698	50	17	0	0	708.12	\$66,713.00
2017 Channel		GWA	GWJ	GWC	GDA	GDJ	Game LEQ	Game \$
Agency Online		459	25	16	0	0		
Eyede Call Centre		0	0	0	0	0		
Mail Order		0	0	0	0	0		
Public Online		110	7	6	0	0		
Retail Book		0	0	0	0	0		
Total		569	32	22	0	0	575.40	\$53,655.00

GWA Full Season Adult, GWJ Full season Junior, GWC Full season Child

7.2 SPECIES

Waterfowl Monitoring (1111)

Annual mallard monitoring is being planned. Results will be reported to the June meeting.

Spawning Surveys (1112)

Nothing to report

Population Monitoring:

Nothing to report

Success & Satisfaction (1122)

See separate report on the Pomahaka River.

Fish Salvage (1131)

Nothing to report

Hatchery Operations

Nothing to report

Releases (1161)

Scheduled releases have been completed for the year

Game Notice (1171)

See separate report

Anglers Notice (1172)

See separate report

Game Bird Control (1181)

Nothing to report.

7.3 HABITAT

Resource Management (1211)

Resource Management Complaints 2017/18

Date/Agency	Issue	Response
January 2017	A complaint was lodged with ORC by a third party about stream channel works in Camerons Creek outside Wanaka	ORC prosecution was successful. Sentencing pending
January 2018	Complaint lodged over significant unauthorised channel works in the Shag River	Under investigation by ORC

Resource Consents

There have been further positive discussions with Contact Energy about lower Clutha salmon fisheries mitigation options involving a Clutha catchment hatchery.

Planning (1212)

Minimum and Residual Flow Setting

Dunstan Creek

Staff recently attended an on-site meeting to discuss residual flow issues for Dunstan Creek in the Manuherikia Catchment.

Kye Burn Residual Flows

Discussions are continuing directly with Kyeburn Catchment Limited over an agreement a residual flow for the river.

CE to Report

Lindis Minimum Flow Plan Change

Meetings have been held with Lindis Catchment Group on matters relating to the Environment Court appeal over the minimum flow and their application for catchment consents. Both parties agree there is value in keeping a dialogue going on Lindis River issues

A complaint has been laid with the Ombudsman about ORC's refusal to provide information under the Official Information Act relating to the Lindis River minimum flow process and applications for catchment wide consents. I have deep reservations about the process issues involved in ORC and LCG reaching agreement on a reduced minimum flow which in effect predetermines ORC's positions on the consents and now sees them resourcing those consent applications in a significant way a combined ORC/LCG case going forward to the Environment Court.

An Environment Court hearing date for the Lindis consents and the minimum flow hearing has still to be scheduled but is not expected until at least mid 2018.

Minimum and Residual Flows and Transition from Mining Privileges (TMP)		
River	Activity and status	Status
Lindis	Minimum flow & transition from mining privileges (TMP). Overallocated MALF 1750 l/s	ORC decision on Water Plan Change 5A set a summer minimum of 900 l/s. Decision appealed and went to mediation which was concluded in early July 2017 without resolution. ORC and LCG agreed on a reduced minimum flow of 550 l/s with gallery intakes replacing large race takes leaving Fish and Game to defend their hearing decision Lindis Catchment Group's consents lodged and to be heard concurrently with the minimum flow. Environment Court hearing date still to be scheduled but is not expected until at least mid 2018.

Cardrona	Minimum Flow & TMP Overallocated	ORC held a field trip to provide feedback on surface and groundwater hydrology investigations on the river in January 2018.
Waikouaiti	Minimum Flow Fully allocated MALF 258 l/s	F&G supported a minimum flow of 220 l/s proposed through community consultation in 2016. Further action on the minimum flow has been deferred pending more research by ORC on matters including estuary health.
Pomahaka <i>(Concluded)</i>	Minimum flow MALF 4300 l/s Min Flow 3600l/s (84% MALF)	Plan change complete, setting minimum flows of 3600 l/s (summer) 7000 l/s (winter), primary allocation limit of 1000 l/s, and a supplementary allocation minimum flow of 13,0000 l/s.
Waiwera <i>(Concluded)</i>	Minimum flow MALF 310 l/s Min Flow 280 l/s (90% MALF)	Plan change complete, setting minimum flows of 280 l/s (summer).
Manuherikia	Minimum flow Irrigation scheme investigation. MALF Ophir 3,200 l/s (± 800) MALF Campground 3,900 l/s (± 600) Overallocated	The Manuherikia Catchment Water Strategy Group process completed. New water company established looking at irrigation proposals focused on raising the level of Falls Dam with a focus on a low-raise dam options. The Manuherikia catchment has over 220 mining privileges (or deemed permits) in place. The present minimum flow at Ophir at 820 l/s is considered inadequate and ORC are planning to set a minimum flow for the lower river at the Alexandra Campground and possibly elsewhere in the catchment. A minimum flow plan change for the Manuherikia River is under way but a minimum flow figures and sites have not yet been notified.
Benger Burn	Minimum flow &TMP. Overallocated	Further action by ORC deferred pending more research on water resources and aquifer/surface water interaction.
Low Burn	Minimum flow TMP Overallocated	Catchment group meeting held early 2017

Sow Burn <i>(Concluded)</i>	TMP Overallocated Residual flow of 70 l/s + off-site mitigation	The Sowburn all-of-catchment consent has been granted by ORC. The residual flow requirement is 70 l/s on a stream that is considered to be ephemeral in nature in the middle reaches. Off-site mitigation conditions include a protective covenant over a large area of the Maniototo wetlands
Kye Burn	TMP Overallocated MALF 490 l/s	A consent application was heard in June 2017 and an ORC decision setting a mainstem residual flows of 180 l/s reducing to 160 l/s at the lowest take point on the river was appealed to the Environment Court. The matter went to mediation on 20 th October. Discussions are continuing in an effort to resolve differences F&G position has been that a mainstem environmental flow between 200-300 l/s is required.
Bannock Burn	Minimum flow TMP Overallocated	Catchment group meeting held late 2016
Arrow River	TMP Over-allocated	ORC has held catchment group meetings and community consultation. Minimum flow options have been released for submissions. Fish and Game has supported minimum flows at the upper end of the range
Quartz Creek	TMP Overallocated	Internal reports on fishery values have been completed. Some discussion have been held with landholder r
Tuapeka River	ORC Management Flow Report MALF 314 l/s	No action
Clutha		ORC called for submissions on the Clutha River seeking feedback on the river's attributes as a first step towards setting a minimum flow
12 Mile Creek (Wakatipu)	ORC Management Flow Report	Stream survey work is being undertaken

Fern Burn	Overallocated	Status of flows and takes needs to be investigated. Spawning surveys have been undertaken by Upper Clutha Anglers.
Coal Creek	TMP	Catchment group meeting held May 2017
Long Gully Creek	TMP Overallocated MALF 30 l/s	Agreement has been reached over an environmental flow regime for this Lake Dunstan tributary which is ephemeral in its lower reaches

CE to Report

Transition from Mining Privileges (MPs) to RMA Consents.

A number of smaller applications to transition from mining privileges to RMA consents have been dealt with and there are several under consideration. There have been recent difficulties in securing residual flows on small tributary water takes and these are being taken up with ORC. The matter has been raised with the Minister for the Environment (see correspondence) with the key issue being the cumulative effect of the transition in terms of flow restoration in overallocated waterways being the focus.

Reserves Management (1221)

Nothing to report

Wetland Protection (1232)

Staff attended an ORC meeting on future management of Lake Tuakitoto and have also been dealing with consents for an intake structure on Lovells Creek which controls flows into Robsons Lagoon at the top end of the lake

Aerial plant pest control has been undertaken at Takitakitoa (Glyceria or reed sweet grass) and Tokomariro. Waitapeka Wetland near Finegand Balclutha has also required further pest plant control. Crack willows are the main threat but there are also poplars, blackberry and glyceria present. ORC sprayed about 10 hectares about 3 years ago leaving an additional area of 15 hectares still to be done (see aerial photo below). An opportunity to get further control done at a reduced price came up recently with ORC already working in the area. Approximately \$9000 of work was commissioned and this is likely to result in the wetlands budget being overspent.

CE to report

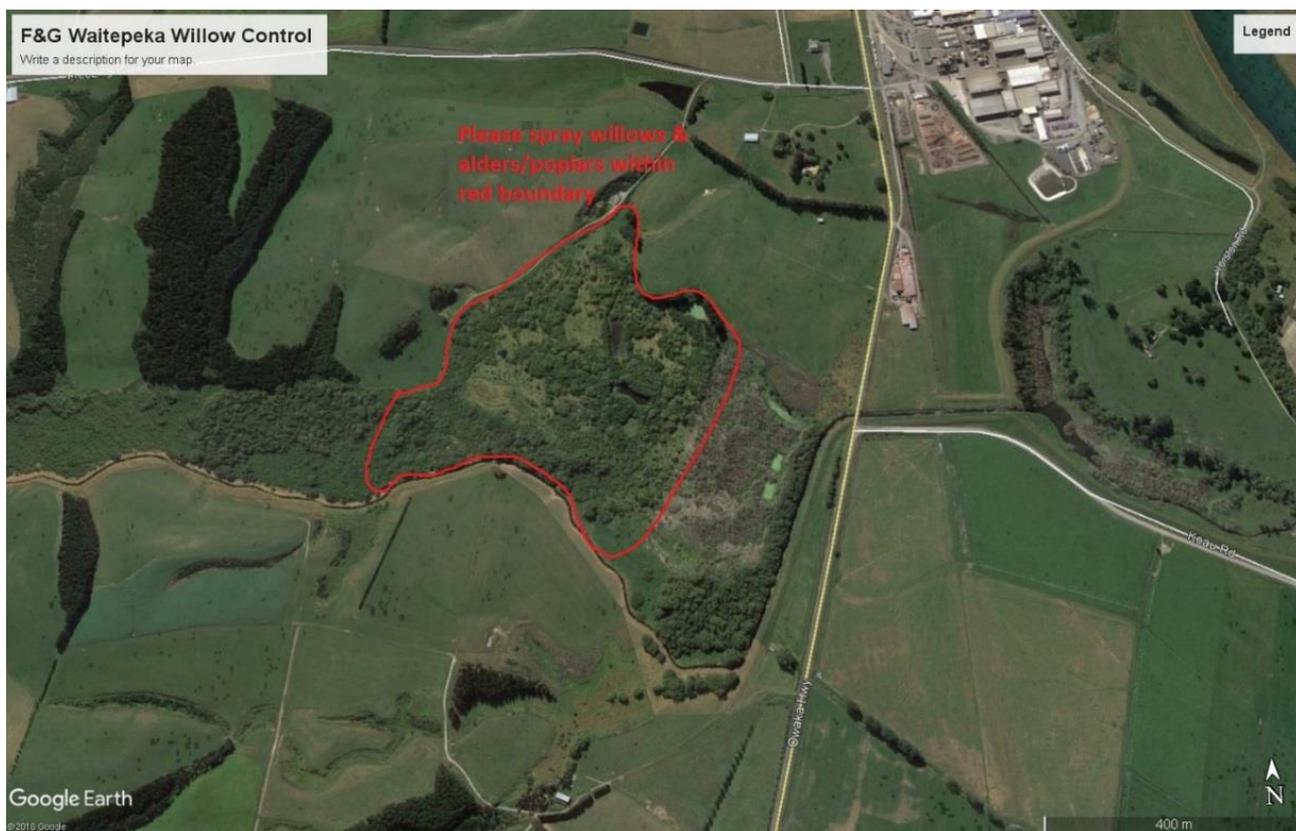


Figure 1: Approximate area of willows controlled

Assisted Habitat (1230)

See separate confidential report for recent Habitat Fund applications

River Management (1233)

Staff recently investigated construction work in a Bullock Creek tributary which impeded fish passage. The works are essentially landscaping including creation of waterfall features. There seems to be confusion about the status of some urban waterways with residents assuming they are drains and not realising that they have value for aquatic life. The matter is to be taken up with ORC and QLDC

7.4 USER PARTICIPATION

Access (1311)

Submission made in response to Walking Access Commission draft report on South Island High Country Access.

Signage (1312)

Nothing to report

Backcountry Fisheries (1321)

See separate report on the Pomahaka.

Magazine Supplements and Newsletters (1331)

Special Game issue of the magazine circulated

Reel Life/Both Barrels

Monthly contributions to online newsletters are continuing.

Newspaper Supplements (1332)

Nothing to report.

Publications (1342)

Nothing to report.

Web Site (1343)

Nothing to report

Fishing and Hunting Events (1351)

Staff have been working with the 'Casting for Recovery' group to help promote their fly fishing event which supports cancer survivors. The council has also purchased a number of flyrods which will be used there and for other Council run skill development events.

Take-a-kid-fishing (1352)

See correspondence for letter from NZ Police.

Club Liaison (1361)

Nothing to report

Commercial Use (1362)

Continuing input into support papers for the implementation of a guide licence being prepared by NZC. Ongoing liaison with Kiwi Anglers First and NZPFGA

7.5 PUBLIC INTERFACE

Liaison (1411)

An introductory meeting has been held with the ORC's new Chief Executive Sarah Gardiner and Policy and Planning Director Tanya Winter.

Staff attended the community water forum in Wanaka and the Catchments Otago Symposium at Otago University.

Media (1431)

There has been some good coverage of water issues (eg Bullock Creek stormwater) in the local media.

Advocacy (1432)

There are a number of generic issues relating to the transition from mining privileges to RMA consents, minimum and residual flows that have been or are being taken up with ORC. These include affected party decision-making; relationships between residual flows (conditions on consents) and minimum flows (rules in plans); definition of the 'existing environment' being the baseline from which effects are to be measured when considering resource consents.

Tenure Reviews (1433)

Mt Burke Station is re entering tenure review

7.6 COMPLIANCE

Ranging (1511) and Ranger Support (1521)

Early preparations are being made for opening weekend ranging. A safety briefing for all rangers is proposed to ensure full compliance with Health and Safety protocols in place.

Prosecutions (1531)

Two offenders have completed reparation in late February and no further offending has been reported by rangers. The one offender who failed to appear in the Dunedin District Court had an arrest warrant issued and is shortly due to appear in the Nelson District Court for Fishing without a licence and giving false information.

See separate confidential report on Reparation

7.7 LICENCING

Licencing System (1611)

The Eyede licencing system continues to operate well and agreement has been reached over a contract extension for 2 years.

OM to report

Agents (1612)

Gun City has recently opened a branch in Dunedin and is now acting as a licence agent on our behalf.

7.8 COUNCIL

Council (1720)

The proposed Council meeting schedule of the 2018 calendar year has been impacted by unscheduled meetings. Further consideration of venues is required:

10/11 February 2018 Planning - Cromwell
19 April 2018 - Roxburgh
21 June 2018 -
16 August 2018 -
18 October 2018 –
29 November 2018
9/10 February 2019 - Dunedin

For discussion

7.9 PLANNING AND REPORTING

Strategic Planning (1811)

See separate agenda

Annual Planning (1821)

Budgeting for the 2018/19 year is underway.

Annual Report (1831)

Nothing to report

National Liaison (1841)

Martin Taylor, NZC's new CE and Richard Cosgrove Public Awareness Advisor will be attending the meeting and time is to be set aside for Council discussions with them.

Niall Watson
Chief Executive
April 2018

8 Committee Reports

8.1 Clutha Fisheries Trust

8.2 NZC Meeting

9 Staff and Technical Reports

9.1 Strategic Planning Workshop Report and Staff Responses 2018 - N Watson

COUNCIL REPORT APRIL 2018

STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP REPORT 2018 and STAFF RESPONSES

Priority Issues identified at the planning workshop for consideration in 2018/19 Annual Plan are discussed below. Where the issue is covered by an existing project in the current plan or a minor word change is all that is required a project statement has not been provided

Species

Clutha Salmon and a Hatchery

Contact Energy have agreed to consider a salmon hatchery as part of the lower Clutha mitigation package, have identified a site and water supply, and are looking into consent requirements.

	Task	Performance Measure
1211	Reach agreement with Contact Energy over a Clutha catchment hatchery for salmon mitigation including location, funding and operational requirements.	<u>Report to Council in November 2018</u>

Increased Long Term Monitoring

Council has asked for the establishment of more routine monitoring programmes.

	Task	Performance Measure
1211	Review monitoring programmes and report on establishment of additional routine monitoring sites	<u>Report to Council in November 2018</u>

Co-ordination of SI Salmon

The South Island East Coast salmon fishery is at a low ebb. Development of a SI Salmon Management Plan in 2006 plans stalled when DOC advised a statutory plan for the South Island was not legally possible. Following the recent Salmon Symposium NZC has established a Salmon Committee to facilitate co-ordination.

There is still a lack of knowledge of the salmon fishery in Otago especially the landlocked salmon fishery.

	Task	Performance Measure
1211	Participate in NZC's plans for a Salmon Committee to co-ordinate SI salmon management	<u>Report to Council in February 2019</u>

Anglers Notice and Game Gazette

Changes in practices by anglers and hunters can be covered in existing projects 1171 and 1172 relating to regulation setting for angling and hunting respectively. Use of drones for game hunting is covered to an extent in the Game Season Regulations Schedule 1, paragraph 9 but their use for reconnaissance by anglers may need controls. Council has asked for a staff report on drone use

Interest in the release of captive reared mallards (CRM) may warrant a regulatory response if allowed. This has happened in the North Island, for example, Auckland/Waikato Council have prohibited pond feeding where CRM are released.

These sorts of issues do not need specific project statements within 1171 and 1172

Habitat

Water Quantity

The transition from mining privileges (MPs) to RMA consents represents our biggest habitat challenge. Essentially water in overallocated Central Otago catchments is going to be reallocated in a very short time period (the next five years). The legal rules for this exercise (eg existing environment against which effects are to be measured, affected party status etc) have not been set or tested in a number of areas.

Resourcing is an issue requiring decisions as the transition progresses. Access to our own financial reserves and to legal pool funding is required to ensure satisfactory outcomes. This work is covered under projects 1211 and 1212.

Water Quality

Implementation of the Rural Water Quality Plan Change (6A) and development of a matching Urban Water Quality Strategy remain high priorities. This is also covered under 1211, 1212 and 1432. Problems related to deposited silt on riverbeds have yet to be adequately addressed and there has been too much focus on landholder performance in terms of land management and not enough on overall intensity of use.

Wetlands

Overseas Investment Office activity is likely to result in large wetland areas in the upper Taieri gaining some sort of protection. There are also opportunities for large scale wetland acquisition/development elsewhere in Otago and an ongoing need to encourage active management of large wetlands and protection of small wetlands.

Changes in funding could reduce revenue for our own habitat enhancement grants for wetland development and stream restoration projects. This is covered under existing project 1232

Participation

Public Access

Public access has taken a beating over the last year with the OIO Hunter Valley decision emphasising the low priority that has been given to public access by LINZ in tenure review, and in OIO decision-making. Personnel changes within LINZ seem to be driving an internal review of processes which may improve the situation. Responses to OIO requests has been included with Tenure Reviews (Project 1433)

There is an ongoing workload with smaller access issues (eg unformed legal roads) but these have reduced since the availability of the Walking Access Mapping System. (Project 1311)

Recruitment, retention and reactivation ('R3') of Otago anglers and hunters

Discussion centered on what sort of anglers/hunters the Council wanted to recruit and where they were to recruit to in terms of fish/hunting locations, with a desire to de-market pressure sensitive areas. Family participation has been a recent focus for Otago along with skills development and the obvious priority order appears to be retention of existing anglers, reactivation of lapsed anglers and recruitment of new anglers.

	Task	Performance Measure
1	Develop a plan for R3	<u>Report to Council in February 2019</u>
3	approach to marketing activity	
5	in Otago and feed back into	
2	national initiatives.	

Tourism Pressures, Backcountry Fisheries, and Guides Licence

Presently we have 8 designated 'backcountry fisheries' – Dingle Burn, Nevis, Young, Wilkin, Hunter, Greenstone, Caples and Lochy rivers - and one controlled fishery period - Greenstone (February and March inclusive) but pressure sensitivity extends beyond backcountry waters.

Further development of management arrangements to cover pressure sensitivity and expand/improve monitoring requires a workshop approach for Otago. Sharing knowledge and resources over management initiatives particularly with Nelson/Marborough, West Coast and Southland Councils, is important.

Implementation of the guides licence and making better use of DOC concessions as a monitoring and compliance tool are both important and already covered under 1321

	Task	Performance Measure
1	Conduct workshop on regimes	<u>Report to Council April 2019</u>
3	for monitoring and	
2	management of pressure	
1	sensitive fisheries and fisheries popular with non-residents by November 2018.	

Public Interface

Changes in Government and Regional Council personnel require an emphasis to be placed on relationship building in this area. (Project 1411)

Licencing

The outsourced licencing system provided by Eyede has worked very satisfactorily in recent years, but the contract has little time to run. Fish and Game Councils are particularly vulnerable to disruptions to licences sales and as a larger sales region Otago needs to ensure it has a secure service and that any changes in service or provider are programmed well in advance.

A recent contract extension to August 2020 has taken pressure off in this area and I understand a full tender is planned next year. Ian Hadland will remain involved in the Licence Working Party (Project 1611)

Compliance

Compliance monitoring and law enforcement is running smoothly with continuing improvements in terms of training and support for volunteer rangers.

However, changes in legislation and other developments mean that our options for dealing with offences are likely to be restricted unless an instant fine system is approved by Government.

Council

Wanaka Hatchery

The Wanaka Hatchery situation has advanced considerably over the last year and momentum looks set to continue in line with agreed objectives namely:

- Protection and rehabilitation of the wetlands/springs area at the head of Bullock Creek, and provision of public access through that site.
- Support for the Freshwater Research Centre proposal by hosting a complex of buildings on part of the property.
- Retention of land and building for fish and game management purposes (as a field base and as a hatchery reserve)

Covered under project 1721

Planning

National Liaison

Priority advocacy outcomes sought from NZC are: guides licence and strengthened national RM policy on water quality and quantity. At the same time Otago staff have made significant contributions to national projects in the recent past. Projects 1841 and 1842

Niall Watson

Chief Executive

5/04/18

9.2 Anglers Notice Review 2017/18 - C Halford

COUNCIL REPORT APRIL 2018

Anglers Notice Review

Introduction

This report summarises angler feedback on seven main areas identified from a review of fishing regulations reported to this council in October 2017 (Anglers Notice Review - C. Halford October 2017) and provides final recommendations.

Changes to the Anglers Notice (AN) will apply to the 2018/2019 fishing season.

Background

Following the October 2017 meeting an Issues and Options paper was compiled for circulation (previously circulated) and it was sent by email to 6000 whole season licence holders, angling clubs and commercial interests. The email outlined the review and provided a link to the Otago page of the Fish and Game website. Monthly updates were provided for Reel Life.

In January 2018 the review was publicly notified in the Otago Daily Times informing anglers and local papers were provided media releases containing meeting dates and venues, and requests for feedback on proposed changes by 5th March 2018.

Public meetings (attendance in brackets) were held at Queenstown (15) in December 2017, and Alexandra (11), Balclutha (7), Dunedin (16) and Wanaka (18) in February 2018.

Submissions

61 public submissions were received. There was reasonable feedback on the key issues and options and additional comment on a range of topics outside of the review brief.

Submissions were received from three angling clubs and the NZ Federation of Freshwater Anglers.

1. Southern Lakes and Lake Dunstan Bag Limits

Submitters provided the greatest response to this issue. 42 (68%) submitters requested a reduction in bag limits with 8 of those not specific numbers.

13 (33%) of the respondents requested a reduction to 4 fish per day and 17 (40%) requested a lower bag of 3 and 2. The Wakatipu Anglers Club (WAC), supported by 11 individual submissions requested a daily limit of 2 fish.

Only 3 submitters requested that the daily bag remain at 6 fish per day with two of the submitters requesting a split bag for salmon and trout.

15 (25%) of submitters provided no comment on this issue.

In summary there was good support for reducing the daily bag limits without a split bag for salmon and trout.

The following options have been provided for Council consideration.

Options

- 1.1 No change to the current bag of 6 fish per day.
- 1.2 A reduction in the daily bag to 4 fish per day.
- 1.3 A reduction in the daily bag of 2 fish per day.

Preferred Option and Recommendation

1.2 is the preferred option.

This allows for a 33% reduction in the daily bag which still provides anglers with the opportunity to target and harvest salmon when they are seasonally abundant and recognises their significant contribution to the sports fishery.

There have been recent reports of low salmon numbers in lakes Wanaka and Wakatipu, but past experience has shown populations can vary significantly between seasons.

For trout a reduction in the daily bag will provide some harvest relief and allow a greater sharing of the resource.

Not having a split bag for salmon and trout alleviates the issue of species identification and related compliance issues.

Adoption of a 4 fish per day bag limit on the main lakes also provides the option of reducing the daily bag on the Kawarau River. While anglers weren't specifically asked about a lower bag for the Kawarau River during the consultation process a reduction in line with Lake Wakatipu makes sense.

There was universal support from Wakatipu anglers for a reduction in bag limits, so this shouldn't be a contentious addition.

Recommendations

The combined daily bag limit for salmon and trout in Lakes Dunstan, Hawea, Wakatipu and Wanaka be reduced to 4 fish per day for the 2018/19 fishing season.

If the recommendation above is adopted the daily bag limit for the Kawarau River is reduced to 4 fish per day for the 2018/19 fishing season.

2. Lowland River Issues and Bag Reductions

There were 36 (59%) responses to this issue requesting a reduction in bag limits with 12 (33%) of those not specifying a daily bag limit.

7 (19%) requested a bag limit of 4 fish while 16 (44%) asked for a reduction to 2 or 3 fish per day. The Wakatipu Anglers Club and 11 individual members requested a reduction to 2 fish per day.

23 (37%) of submitters provided no comment on this issue.

Options

- 2.1 No change to current bag limits
- 2.2 All lowland rivers with a current daily limit of 6 fish be reduced to 4 fish per day and lowland rivers with a current daily limit of 3 fish be reduced to 2 fish per day.
- 2.3 All lowland rivers be reduced to 2 fish per day.

Preferred Option and Recommendation

2.2 is the preferred option.

A bag limit reduction from 6 to 4 provides a 33% reduction in potential harvest, but still allows for a reasonable catch from medium sized rivers and estuarine areas. A greater reduction than this particularly on popular fishing waters could be overly restrictive.

Several lowland rivers currently have a 3 fish daily limit and a reduction to 2 fish per day shouldn't affect angling opportunity.

In most cases current bag limits are reflective of lower fish numbers and declining or poor water quality highlighting their vulnerability, therefore a reduction in the daily bag is warranted.

Recommendations

Lowland rivers with a current 6 fish daily bag be reduced to 4 fish per day. Noting that the Clutha and Pomahaka Rivers are being addressed later in this report.

Lowland rivers with current daily limits below 4 fish be reduced to 2 fish per day.

3. Lake Mahinerangi

As previously reported some anglers are concerned with the winter opening and the impacts on fish populations. Taieri Anglers Club have been vocal about this.

30 (47%) submitters responded to this issue. 3 submitters supported retaining the winter season. 8 submitters supported a winter closure including 4 in support of a reduced bag.

The Wakatipu Anglers Club and 11 individual club members supported a bag reduction to 2 fish per day with no comment on season length. A further 7 submitters requested a reduced bag.

A total of 23, (76%) of submitters requested a reduced bag.

31 submitters provided no comment.

The main issue here appears to be a perception of a low to moderate fish population and concerns about winter harvest. Anglers are concerned about the significant decline in the rainbow trout population.

Options

- 3.1 No change to the current regulations
- 3.2 Retain the open season 1 October to 30 September and reduce the bag limit to 4 fish per day
- 3.3 Close the winter season and reduce the bag limit to 4 fish per day.

Preferred Option and Recommendation

3.2 is the preferred option.

There appears to be no obvious reason to close the season through the winter when fishing pressure and harvest is likely to be low. There was strong support from submitters for a reduced bag, and a reduction from 6 to 4 fish per day still provides adequate harvest opportunity.

Recommendation

That the season length for Lake Mahinerangi remains at 1 October to 30 September and a daily bag limit of 4 fish with no change to the legal methods of Fly/Spin/Bait.

4. Pomahaka River

38 (62%) of submitters provided comments on this issue. 23 (38%) submitters made no comment.

11 (29%) submitters supported the introduction of a backcountry river designation for the upper river. Anglers were openly concerned about the decline in the Upper Pomahaka fishery and there was good support for reduced bag limits for the entire river ranging from 2-4 fish per day.

25 (65%) submitters with a range of opinions requested a reduced bag of between 2-4 fish per day.

Some anglers requested a 1 fish bag for the upper river and there was support for catch and release. 1 submitter suggested a slot limit for the upper river.

No submitter requested the status quo.

1 submitter suggested an open season of 1 October to 30 April for the entire river and 2 submitters suggested closing the river for 3-5 years to help the fishery to recover.

There are three sets of regulations for the river incorporating different season lengths and bag limits. It would be good to simplify the regulations if possible and apply a backcountry river designation for the upper river which will allow us to monitor use and get angler feedback on the fishery.

There is enough concern for the fishery that consideration should be given to closing the entire river at the end of April but in doing so a winter angling opportunity would be lost in the lower river below Swans Bridge on the Clydevale Road.

An overall reduction in the daily bag limit is well supported by submitters and would fit with our strategy to simplify and be more consistent with regulations across the region.

Refer also to the report on the Pomahaka River elsewhere in this agenda.

Options

- 4.1 No change to the current regulations for the entire river
- 4.2 Introduce a backcountry river designation to the river upstream of Park Hill Bridge (Switzers Road) with season length 1 October to 30 April, permitted methods Fly and Spin only and a 1 fish daily bag limit, and

Reduce the bag limit to 4 fish per day for the entire river downstream of Park Hill Bridge, (Switzers Road) with season lengths and methods to remain as they currently read.
- 4.3 Introduce a backcountry river designation to the river upstream of Park Hill Bridge (Switzers Road) with season length 1 October to 30 April, permitted methods Fly and Spin only and a 1 fish daily bag limit, and

reduce the bag limit to 2 fish per day for the entire river downstream of Park Hill Bridge, (Switzers Road) with a season lengths and methods to remain as they currently read.

Preferred Option and Recommendation

4.2 is the preferred option

This allows for a backcountry river designation for the upper river, a reduced bag from 3-1 fish per day and the removal of bait fishing which fits with other backcountry fishery regulations.

For the remainder of the river a reduction from 6 fish per day to 4 is consistent with lowland river bag recommendations in Point 2 above and may provide some harvest relief.

The 1 October – 30 April season between Park Hill Bridge and Swans Bridge provides some protection during the spawning period while the open season from 1 October to 30 September downstream of Swans Bridge, (Clydevale Road) allows for winter angling opportunities.

There appears to be no reason to adjust current methods of Fly/Spin/Bait for the mid and lower reaches of the river.

Recommendations.

- 1. That the Pomahaka River upstream of Park Hill Bridge be designated a Backcountry Fishery with a season length of 1 October to 30 April, legal methods Fly and Spin, and a bag of 1 fish per day.**
- 2. No change to the current season length of 1 October to 30 April and methods including Fly/Spin/Bait for the Pomahaka River downstream of Park Hill Bridge - but the bag be reduced from 6 fish to 4 fish per day.**
- 3. No Change to the current season length of 1 October to 30 September and methods including Fly/Spin/Bait for the Pomahaka River downstream of Swans Bridge - but the bag be reduced from 6 fish to 4 fish per day.**

5. Clutha River

39 (63%) submitters responded to this issue with a further 22 submitters making no comment.

6 Submitters including the Upper Clutha Angling Club and an additional 11 Wakatipu Anglers Club (WAC) members requested the status quo for season lengths and retention of the fly only area but there was some request for bag reductions.

1 submitter asked for the fly only method at Deans Bank to be relaxed.

3 submitters suggested extending Deans Bank to the Albert Town Bridge which has some merit for simplicity but will restrict spin fishing opportunity immediately upstream of the Highway Bridge.

26 (66%) submitters requested reducing the bag limit along the length of the river ranging from 4 -2 fish per day.

The Upper Clutha Angling Club suggested a reduction to 4 fish per day while the Wakatipu Anglers Club and 11 of it's members suggested a reduction to 2.

There was some support to include bait fishing downstream of the Albert Town Bridge which staff would endorse.

Options

- 5.1 No change to the current regulations
- 5.2 Leave current season lengths and methods above the Albert Town Bridge (ATB) as they stand then permit all methods downstream of the ATB to the seas with a reduction in the bag limit to 4 fish per day.
- 5.3 Leave current season lengths and methods above the Albert Town Bridge (ATB) as they stand but extend the Deans bank boundary downstream to the ATB then permit all methods downstream to the sea with a reduction in the bag limit to 4 fish per day.

Preferred option and recommendation

The preferred option is 5.2

For simplicity having one regulation above the ATB is desirable but there is good support to retain the Deans Bank Fly only area which has some regard as being very special area.

Permitting the use of bait below ATB is a sensible option, along with reducing the bag limit to 4 fish per day which has support of submitters and compliments the reduction in Lake Wanaka if that is agreed to.

Recommendation

That the season length and methods on the Clutha River above the Albert Town Bridge remain the same and from the Albert Town bridge downstream a season

length of 1 October to 30 September will apply with permitted methods of Fly, Spin and Bait.

There is a reduction in the daily bag limit from 6 fish to 4 fish per day for the Clutha River from the Lake Wanaka Outlet to the sea.

6. Upper Clutha Standardisation

19 submitters supported amending the regulations in 2.1 of the Anglers Notice to align with waters listed in 2.3.

41 submitters responded with no comment to this issue and 1 submitter felt that regulations should be set as required for specific waters.

Options

6.1 No Change to the current regulations

6.2 Amend the season length to 1 Nov – 31 May and permitted methods to Fly and spin only in Clause 2.1 for waters not listed in Clause 2.3 and restrict the permitted methods to fly and spin only.

Preferred Option and Recommendation

The preferred option is 6.2

It makes sense to standardise the regulations for clarity and simplicity

Recommendation

1. That 2.1 of the Anglers Notice is amended as follows;

All lakes, rivers and streams upstream of the Clyde dam not mentioned in clause 2.3 for this region will have an open season from 1 November to 31 May with permitted methods of fly and spin, and a daily limit bag of 1 fish.

7. Boats

There was low to moderate interest in this topic with 35 (57%) submitters providing no comment.

The main issue here appears to be presenting the regulations as clear as possible and making them easy to interpret.

Options

- 7.1 No change to the current layout in the Anglers Notice.
- 7.2 Include boating rules in 2.3 of the regulations
- 7.3 Refer format issues to staff

Preferred Option and Recommendation

7.3 is the preferred option

There are no recommended changes to boating regulations requiring council approval.

This is solely about better presentation of boating regulations and aligning them with corresponding waters for ease of interpretation.

Recommendation

Refer format issues to staff.

8. Multiple Hooks

One issue that several submitters and some of those attending the public meetings raised was the continued use of treble or multiple hooks.

Eastern Fish and Game Council is presently undertaking a review of their fishing regulations and the use of multiple hooks has been raised as an issue in a discussion document. It will be interesting to see what evolves from the review before considering the matter further.

Further Work

While the review of the Anglers Notice for the Otago Fish and Game Region has been comprehensive there are still sections of the fishing regulations that require further thought including Schedule 1 which requires agreement nationally if it is to be amended. Also the layout of the AN and the Sports Fishing Regulations Booklet should be reviewed and simplified as far as possible over the next year.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank councillors and particularly Rick Boyd for input to this review.

Cliff Halford
Fish and Game Officer
April 2018

9.3 Confidential – Release of Captive Reared Mallards – I Hadland

9.4 Confidential – Potential Land Purchase – I Hadland

9.5 Confidential – Prosecution Guidelines Review – I Hadland

9.6 Confidential – Habitat Enhancement Grants – M Trotter

**COUNCIL REPORT
APRIL 2018**

Sea-run trout and the Pomahaka River: a survey of anglers

Prepared for Otago Fish & Game Council by James Smith

Abstract

Nine experienced Pomahaka anglers and one Pomahaka runholder were interviewed to gauge their opinions regarding the quality of the Pomahaka sea-run trout fishery. Most participants agreed there had been a decline in the quality of angling due to fewer sea-run trout. However, participants disagreed over possible causes of a decline in fish numbers and changes in angling effort. Given the perceived decline in sea-run trout, most participants thought the current bag limits were too high. Anglers were naturally sensitive to activities that compromised the environment and factors that affected the enjoyment of their recreational activities.

Introduction

The Pomahaka River is recognised as a regionally significant fishery for both sea run and resident brown trout (Otago Fish and Game Council, 2015). Sea-run (anadromous) and freshwater resident (non-anadromous) types of *S. trutta* occur sympatrically in the Pomahaka River (Waite et al., 2008). Deteriorating water quality due to agricultural activities in the Pomahaka catchment (ORC, 2011) has been implicated in the decline of resident trout numbers and the fishery may be more reliant on migratory anadromous trout as a result (Young & Hayes, 1999). Reports received by Otago Fish and Game Council (Fish & Game) from anglers about declining numbers of sea-run trout in the Pomahaka River prompted this investigation.



Photo: Richard Fitzpatrick

Figure 1. A vision of the past? A school of presumably sea-run trout in the upper Pomahaka River, January 1994. Anglers are concerned that spectacles like this are no longer happening.

Methods

Ten participants, nine experienced Pomahaka anglers and one Pomahaka runholder, were interviewed at their homes during September and October 2017. Interviews took the form of informal conversations that typically lasted 45 – 60 minutes. The sessions were recorded with consent of the participants and portions transcribed afterward. Participants were asked, regarding sea-run trout in the Pomahaka River:

- To relate their angling experiences
- To describe any changes in the quality of the fishing and the causes responsible
- Whether they thought the current regulations adequately served anglers and the fishery.

Results

The anglers

All participants had a long and often close association with the Pomahaka River.

For some, it was where they learned to fish, “I started with my old man when I was about 6 or 7 years old in the Pomahaka”, and where they played as children: “That whole Kelso area there was our playground... Mum and Dad would drop you off at the first bridge and you'd fish your way through the showgrounds to the next bridge”. The river flowed through lives: “I can go back probably forty, if not fifty years” and generations: “I’m the third generation of the family... two of my sons are very confident fishers on the river, and I’ve got grandies, the fifth generation that have fished the river”.

Six of the nine anglers specifically targeted sea run trout in the upper river. For these anglers, the annual migration of fish provided them with their best fishing of the season: “That was my favourite fishing, that was what I really looked forward to was getting into one of those big fellows each year”. These anglers demonstrated a deep understanding of the seasonal migration: “The runs come with the big freshes, you have to get about 55-60 cumecs to make them run, 25-30 cumecs wouldn't do it. And every time there was a good fresh there'd be more fish, from you know December onwards” .

The fishery

Many participants described having witnessed large schools of fish in the upper river: “The bridge at the top of the Wilden... we were in that hole seven or eight year ago and I'm not joking, if there wasn't 300 fish in that hole I'll eat my hat, it was black” . “I remember looking down into a pool on Hukarere station and you almost thought you could walk across the backs of them, there was just so many of them there” (BM). Fish size was also impressive: “The majority of the fish for us sit between the 6 to 7 pound mark, that's the size you're most likely to catch, a small one, which there aren't many of, would be at the four pound mark in our books, there are bigger fish... we have caught up to 12 [pound fish] ... we think we see bigger fish at times”. The challenge and thrill of landing a large sea-run trout was described by another: “If you can land a double figure, fresh sea trout out of the Pomahaka, that is a totally different ball game to landing a double figure fish on the likes of the Oreti, there’s no comparison... they create such a tremendous challenge, they’re so muscly, they’ve got some real get up and go... I hooked one and it just really took me downstream, when you’ve really got to get into a fast jog, run, retrieve line, over those bloody great boulders and goodness knows what else and still try and hang on to a fish, it just creates a complete bloody adrenalin rush, and you won’t find that on many other rivers”. Catch rates among experienced anglers were often high: “I've had some good days. One day I caught twenty in one day. Yeah, yeah, just get on to patches of them. Another day I got four fish between 8 and 9 pounds one day. Yeah, bloody fantastic” However, fish numbers were not always uniformly high: “Some years are bloody good and some years are not so good, like in the numbers. I quite often go up fish and then [my wife and

I] go for a drive sometimes, go up after the season and just see how many fish are spawning, how many are up there at the top, but, some years there's heaps and some years there's not so many”

The sea-run trout population

Eight out of nine anglers thought the quality of sea-run trout angling in the Pomahaka had declined due to fewer migratory fish in the river. Most reported seeing fewer fish than in years gone by: “I can remember going up there perhaps when I was 25 and seeing thirty or forty in a pool up there, well gee I haven't seen, and I was up there last year and up the year before, you don't see anything like that anymore, you just don't see them”. “There's a couple of holes up there that we used to go [to] at the end of the season and there's fish that are three deep, swimming around and you chuck a lure through and it just parted like the sea, and some are swimming this way, other ones are swimming this way, like hundreds in this hole at Round Hill, unbelievable, you don't see that anymore” . One non-angler, a Pomahaka runholder who watched spawning fish and “followed them up as far as they could get in the creeks... for something to do” also reported seeing fewer fish: “There's not the fish there to look at [in the last five or ten years], there is the odd one still come up but nothing like there used to be, absolutely nothing, about 10% of what there used to be”. Yet, the extent of decline in trout numbers reported by anglers differed. Some felt that there were “just not as many” or that “the numbers have dropped back” , while others described “a complete collapse of a tremendous fishery” and were “worried that they're actually gonna survive” .

Anglers' accounts of when a decline in numbers occurred also differed. Two anglers described a decline in sea-run trout numbers witnessed over many years. One passionate ‘Pommie’ fly-fisherman stated: “The sea trout have just all but disappeared. It's been a decline I would say for, a slow decline, going back as far as fifteen maybe twenty years” . Another angler who farmed alongside the river for many years said: “You'd quite often get a lot of good sea run trout through... but I'd have to say I haven't really experienced it to that extent probably for the last twenty years... It's one I've pondered about often and wondered why the demise of the sea run. I'm not saying they've got worse in the last five - ten years, I'm talking about this has been going on for a long long time” .

Five anglers thought a more recent decline in the numbers of sea-run trout had occurred. One ‘regular Pommie fisherman’ stated: “We've had three seasons now where the sea runners basically have just fallen right off... there's a few, the odd one or two, but we've had three seasons where they just basically didn't come”. Another agreed: “There was a few in April this year but not many... the last two years in particular there's been very few”. Other anglers who felt there were fewer fish recently reported a decline occurred three to seven years ago.

Some participants suggested possible causes of decline in sea trout numbers citing changes in water quality they observed in the lower river. As one participant stated: “If I was a fish swimming up the Clutha River, and I struck where the Pommie goes into the Clutha, that's like a sewer, I wouldn't come up the Pommie” . Low flows and pollution was mentioned by another: “We probably are operating at lower levels now than we used to be... It wasn't that many years ago for the very first time I saw the Spylaw run dry... so low levels, warm water, but then the lower it gets, the higher percentage of pollution there will be in the lower reaches of the Pomahaka, and maybe the trout just can't handle the pollution”. Pollution in the form of fine sediment was also mentioned by participants; from river bank erosion: “The water's got faster, no doubt about it, the floods are gone quicker, that definitely happens, I think they're dirtier when they are there, 'cause they're honing into the banks where once upon a time the water was flowing slower so it wasn't taking so many banks out” and tussock loss: “None of that country was brought in out there... it was all tussock, plenty of blotting paper to hold the water, so the

river just goes up and down like this now, all those paddocks are worked out there now... and they work them every year for crop, and of course November when you get the thunder storms half the paddocks end up in the river” . Sedimentation and changes in invertebrate fauna was observed by another: “The Conical area from about Tapanui Gun Club down to the old saw mill is fairly silted up, if you walk across in your waders it's up to your knees, but the fish population in there is quite high, nice green sizable fish, and they're always full of snails”.

However, not all anglers thought water quality in the Pomahaka was behind a decline in sea trout numbers: “It's nothing to do with water quality, quite sure. The water quality has actually slightly improved in the Pommie over the last year or two... something happened to the adults, I don't know. I think it's down the bottom, it's nothing to do with the river, nothing to do with spawning, I think the adults when they're down the bottom, they disappeared, something got 'em. But I don't know what, I've got no idea”. Another angler wondered if trout numbers were declining elsewhere as well: “I got 154 sea run trout [one season] ... mainly on the Clutha, but fish were plentiful... [another day] it was 22 or 24 in a row one afternoon, and some of them were damn good fish, but that doesn't even happen anywhere near like it used to, I'm actually starting to wonder if it's the Clutha River” . Indeed, most anglers were perplexed as to the cause of the decline they witnessed: “They're just not coming... so are they getting caught at sea somewhere in trawl nets or something? I'd have no idea. A lot more seals around the coast now, the seals are up as far as the mouth of the Pommie at times, so that's something that is quite likely”.

A dissenting view was expressed by one angler who thought there was no decline in angling quality due to fewer sea-run trout: “There's still good runs... you know, just after Christmas and then depending on the weather patterns another run. I think there's a good, spread population of resident fish. But we may have seasons when we don't see the fish” . Adding: “I still rate it highly. If you gave me a choice to go somewhere, I'd take a friend up there... I wouldn't travel past it. You know like people are telling you it's dead and it's all the rest of it, I still fish it!” .

Angling regulations

In addition to concerns about the health of the river, some anglers expressed concern about bait fishers they felt harvested too many fish: “Our biggest problem out there now, I think, like for these big schools of sea runs, you get all these fellows come in with worms and they just sit there and drag 'em out one after the other. After about a month they get a bit hungry, you know what I mean, and there's a group of fellows from Christchurch come down every year, about seven or eight of them, and they just thrash those big holes. They spend near a month, I've sat and watched them and I'm sure they're foul hooking them, you can see them sitting there like this (makes hauling motion) you know, this is going on. I went out last year and I heard they're out there and they've got a deep freeze... they take everything, they don't release them”. Foul hooking was reported by another: “I did see somebody, a fisherman come up, 'coz it was fishing season, and they were foul hooking, dragging the hook right through the circle of fish, they got two or three”. Another angler reported an instance of illegal over-harvest: “The other one that I saw, I know who it was and I'd never complain about them, but they were sitting at that bridge just before Harry's house... there's a few times I've seen him there with his worm, dangling it over the side, and the last time I saw him he had eight fish lined up along the bridge” .

While most anglers were not above taking the occasional fish, half of participants thought the current bag limits were too high, especially given the perceived decline in trout numbers. As one spin and bait angler stated: “If you're good enough to get two or three fish you've got a bloody good feed, like I used to give all the old people round here a trout, now the old people round here are dying, but it's not starvation! Yeah but I maintain it's been over fished, you go

out and get ten trout what are you gonna do with them, now I know it's come back to six now and up there I think three, what the hell are you gonna do with them all?”. Rather than the current three fish limit, some anglers felt one fish, or even catch and release, was more appropriate for the upper river: “I think that there should be, certainly a certain section as you get up further, where it should be catch and release, perhaps, I don't know I never keep any, I think it is one up further isn't it?” *It's three*. “Oh no it's too many. And perhaps even further up you go fly only. I mean if you keep killing off your breeding stock you're never going to get any good runs are you” . Indeed, three other anglers suggested fly fishing only for the upper river, but recognised there were issues of fairness concerning this view: “Maybe I'd sooner see it just fly fishing, but I mean that's pretty tough innit on everybody” . An angler opposed to method restrictions said: “You've sort of got to be fair to everyone, yeah nah, you can't make it fly only, I mean those big holes when they did hold fish, those fish were not accessible to me [fly fishing] anyway, so somebody may as well catch one or two out the bottom if they want to” .

Regarding a backcountry fishery designation for the upper Pomahaka, only two anglers reported being in favour of the idea. They said: “It's [from Hukarere up] a wilderness, backcountry river, that's what I look at it [as]” and: “Without a doubt, I really do [think it would be a good idea]” . Another felt changing regulations would achieve little: “It wouldn't make any difference. No, the fish are gone for some reason, the sea runners. And there's only a few resident fish, a few toey ones. It just can't stand much fishing anyway. If the regulations changed it wouldn't make no difference. Not going to bring the sea runners back is it” .

Angling pressure

Anglers were divided over whether there had been a significant change in angling pressure on the river. Some were adamant pressure had increased: “There's that many people fishing it... I don't fish it over Christmas, from about mid-November, because it's thrashed. You know, what fish you see there are bead-head shy, and you've got people camping, you never used to see people camp out there... you used to go out there years ago and you'd stop and see Joe Bloggs from down the road, you know sitting in a hole with a worm, but now you know it's nothing to go out there and there's two cars there and three cars there, well there's not the number of fish, they can't sustain that, you know and the fish aren't there” . Others disagreed: “Decrease if anything. When I was younger there was probably more fishermen up there to be honest... there's a lot less now actually” . Another angler thought fish numbers would regulate angler behaviour: “I would definitely say that there's not heaps... it's not being flogged to death because there's not enough fish there, I mean you go there once and you see nothing, you may go again to see if there's any more sea runners arrived after a fresh, but you're not gonna waste too much time there, y'know if you know what it's been like” .

Commercialisation of the resource

Anglers that felt pressure had increased expressed concerns about guiding operations placing additional stress on the fishery: “The trouble is I think that overseas people [are] coming in... I mean, if they put them back that's fine, but if they're going to be taking them out then yeah.... it might get knocked back in a hurry” . One angler said ‘I get annoyed when I see them up there’ and went on to describe a negative encounter with a guide on the river: “He comes roaring up, and he's a fishing guide... he said I've got a couple of fellows coming up the river and I said that's fine, I said they've got plenty of country... [he replied] oh no they're gonna walk right up through here... I said oh you're a guide, well he said I've got friends, never said he was a guide. he said I'd like them to fish up through the gorge, I said aw look mate I only fish during the weekends you fish all week, and anyway, he spat the dummy, he really spat the dummy” . Another angler described a similar experience where a guide and client encroached on his fishing: “We had a run in with one a few year ago, we were fishing at a hole

and this guy come up, a guide ... he had this guy with him, we were sitting on the bank drowning a worm having a beer and he went to cast in the hole, I said what are you doing, [he replied] ah, I paid to use this river, [I said] good on you join the club so do I.

Riparian fencing

While many anglers were aware of the efforts of some farmers to reduce pollution, two anglers reported a detrimental consequence of riparian fencing: “It's all very well cockies fencing off waterways, like ditches....., actually they done that down the Waiwera here, they fenced it off, used to be such a pleasant walk through there, you walk five or six miles, and now it's all fenced off it's long grass and bloody blown down trees and branches and crap, I don't even go there now but, they done it for a good purpose, but yeah” (SW). “This part of the river down here, with all this dairy business going on, you can't fish the bloody river where the dairy cows are because there's broom, they've fenced all the rivers off and the brooms grown, and it's bloody horrible to fish, you've got to get in the river and walk the river” (DT).

Discussion

The anglers interviewed for this study possessed a wealth of knowledge gained from years of angling experience on the Pomahaka River. Unsurprisingly, changes in land use and the intensification of agriculture in the Pomahaka catchment, especially dairying, did not go unnoticed by anglers. Anglers also noticed altered flow regimes, declining water quality and changes to in-stream habitat of the Pomahaka river. Indeed, it is because of their long association with the river that anglers were in the ideal position to recognise its declining health, since degradation often occurs slowly over many years (Harding et al., 1999). Whilst increased dairying in the catchment has been linked to declining densities of resident brown trout and native fish in the river (Ramezani et al., 2016) it is unknown what effects, if any, this intense form of agriculture has on migratory fish.

Most anglers reported a decline in the number of sea-run trout in the Pomahaka. If this is taken as given, at least four possible scenarios emerge. One, there are plenty of sea-run trout in the lower Clutha, estuary and at sea but something is preventing them from migrating up the Pomahaka. This scenario found favour with those anglers who suspected poor water quality in the lower river was responsible for a decline in inward migration. Two, there are fewer sea-run trout in the lower Clutha, estuary or at sea and therefore fewer fish migrating up the Pomahaka. This scenario found favour with those that suggested something was wrong in the estuarine/marine phase of their life cycle – anglers suggested increased predation by a growing seal population or commercial fishing at sea. Indeed, the large spatial scale over which migratory trout are present suggests a decline in Pomahaka sea-run trout could be driven by some mechanism beyond the catchment. It would be interesting to know whether other Fish and Game Councils on the east coast of the South Island have received reports of declining sea-run trout numbers as well as Chinook Salmon. Three, there has been a change in the timing of fish migration and anglers were not on the river when most fish were moving. This scenario was suggested by one participant who repeated the view of a local runholder. If, as suggested by Young & Hayes (1999), temperature gradients down the Pomahaka are driving migration in the trout population, then changes in river water temperature due to lower flows or warmer weather could affect the timing of runs. This could also be the case if the spates that anglers said were necessary to trigger runs occurred later in the year. Four, over-harvesting is responsible for fewer numbers of fish. At first glance, this seems unlikely given the 55% decline in angler-days from 1994/95 to 2014/15 (Unwin, 2016). A fifth scenario, is that a decline in sea-trout numbers has occurred due to some combination of these factors.

Various methods have been used over the years to estimate trout abundance in the Pomahaka. A fish trap operated from 1978 to 1981 in the upper river provided an estimate of the total

number of fish moving upstream annually, 2000-2500 fish, of which 48% were migratory sea-run trout (Scott, 1981). Foot counts of spawning fish in the upper Pomahaka conducted during the early eighties and again in 1999 (Scott, 2000) yielded estimates of trout per kilometre (Figure 2). Drift dives conducted in the upper river during February, December and March of 1997 provided estimates of 3.0 fish /km at Wilden and 23.6 fish /km at Dusky Forest (Young & Hayes, 1999). Figure 2 also shows estimates obtained from aerial counts of spawning fish undertaken in 1997 and 1998 (Dungey, 1999), and from 2012 to 2016 (Otago Fish and Game Council, unpublished data).

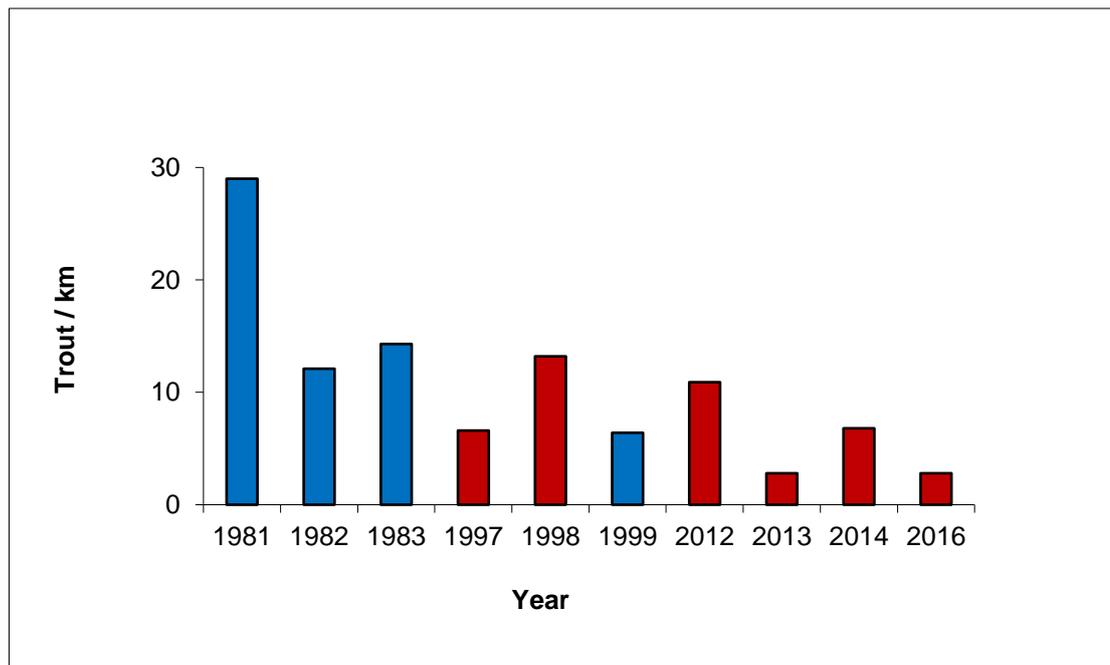


Figure 2. Estimates of trout abundance obtained from foot counts (blue) and aerial counts (red) of spawning fish in the upper Pomahaka River (Note: 2013 count conducted in December outside the spawning period).

While use of trout abundance data from different survey methods makes comparisons difficult it appears from the above data that fish numbers in the Pomahaka are seasonally variable but trending downward. The number of trout counted in the main stem above Park Hill by aerial survey in late-April 2016 was 102 (tributaries were not surveyed). Given Scott's (1981) estimate of the proportion of sea-run trout present in the river (48%), the 2016 count would equate to 49 sea-run trout, a far cry from Scott's (1981) estimate of the sea-run trout's contribution to annual migration (960-1200) and far fewer than observed by anglers in the past.

The 2012 (waypoints from other years not available) aerial count data (Figure 3) shows that spawning trout were present, often in large groups, throughout the upper river. However, these fish would not have been available to anglers at that time as the season closes on 30 April.

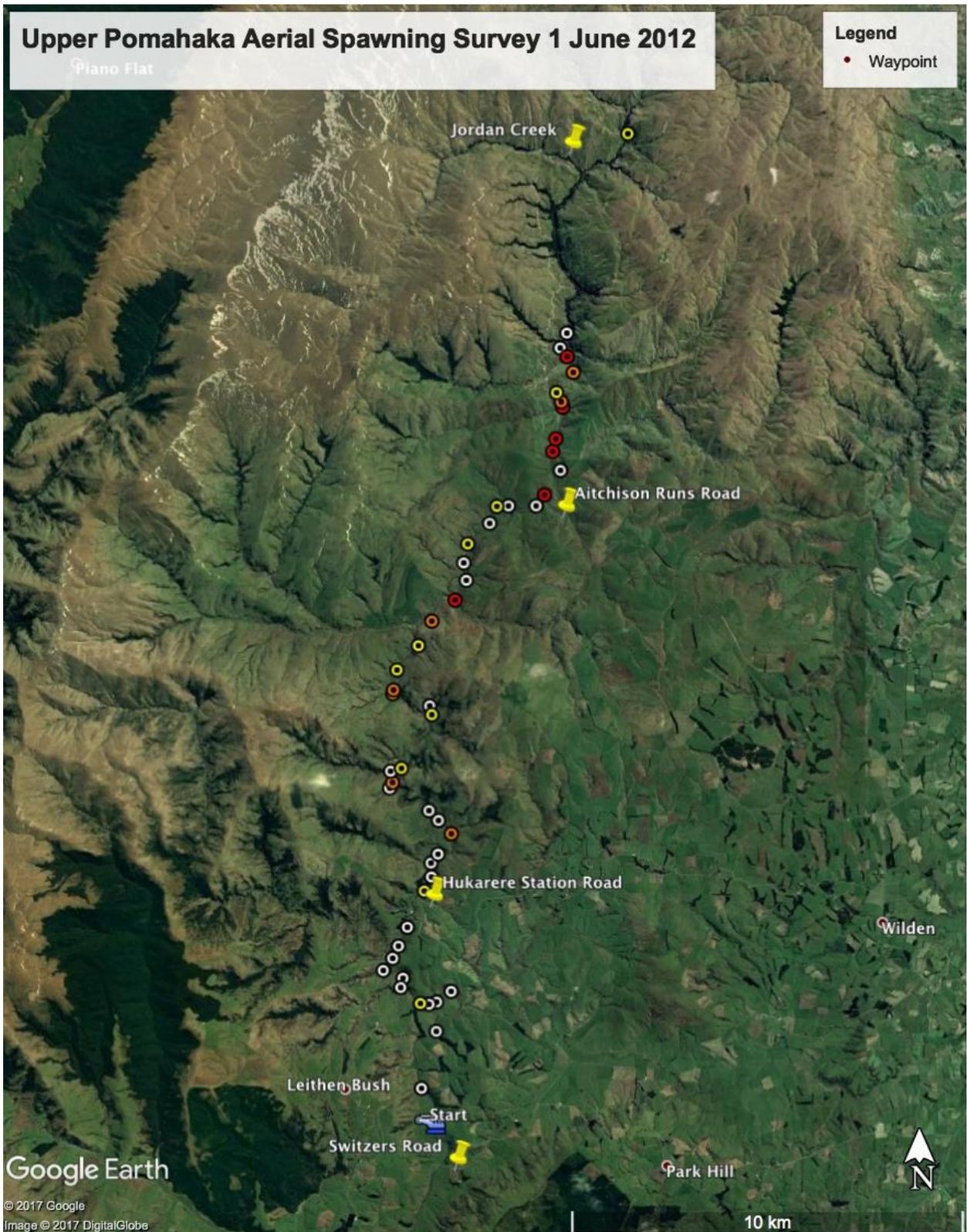


Figure 3. Locations of brown trout in the Pomahaka River counted by aerial survey in 2012. White = 1-5 fish, yellow = 6-10 fish, orange = 11-25 fish, red = 25+ fish.

Regulations must allow for angling opportunity and the maintenance of fish stocks and any information used to motivate regulation change should be soundly based. Understanding the factors driving life history patterns and migrations over large spatial scales represents a major

management challenge (Kristensen et al., 2011). Although counts of spawning fish provide an index of trout population size, they cannot determine the relative contribution of migratory and resident fish. The trapping data collected by Scott (1981) would provide useful baseline information should the trapping be repeated. A decline in the proportion of migratory individuals would indicate that sea-run trout are experiencing greater difficulties completing their life cycle.

The decline in angler-days on the Pomahaka (Unwin, 2016) is at odds with the views of anglers who stated angling pressure had increased. One likely explanation of this anomaly is that while overall effort has decreased, anglers may be concentrating their efforts on the upper river due to perceptions of poor water quality and fewer fish in the middle and lower reaches. The adoption of backcountry fishery status for the upper river would enable clarification of this matter through monitoring.

Although many anglers had established relationships with farmers ensuring their continued access, some expressed disquiet at the establishment of guiding operations. Others reported river access in some places was being impeded by riparian fences being built to mitigate farm development. Issues surrounding access and angling pressure raise questions which will continue to occupy managers' efforts to ensure all licence holders have equal opportunity to enjoy the sports fish resource.

Scott (2000) stated: "It is usually unwise to ignore comments of local anglers since they are in immediate contact with the situation". The opinions of anglers interviewed for this study supports the view there has been a downward trend in the sea-run trout migration into the Pomahaka river. Further investigation may be necessary to quantify sea-run trout numbers and inform regulation change.

James Smith

April 2018

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all participants who took time out of their day to take part in this study. Thanks also to Quintin Hazlett of Hukarere Station for providing initial contacts and Otago Fish and Game staff for discussions about the fishery. Some participants were interviewed on a confidential basis, so the record of participants and the verbatim transcripts of their interviews have not been included in this report but are held by Otago Fish and Game.

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10 Correspondence

10.1 Lake Hawea Family Fishing Classic



Ph: 027 279 1292
28b Moraine Place, Lake Hawea
RD 2 Wanaka 9382
Email: lakehaweafishing@gmail.com

To Cliff,

Once again I would like to thank you for your assistance with the 2018 Lake Hawea Family Fishing Classic.

It was a great day for many out on the water although certainly a tough year to pull in any big fish.

We truly appreciate the job that you and your team do, not just with the weigh in, but also the yearlong service you provide with regard to our local waterways and their inhabitants.

As always, we are only too willing to receive any feedback you may be able to provide us with in relation to how the competition is run. At the end of the day we just want to deliver a top day to all of our contestants.

All the best for the year ahead and look forward to the next competition. We'll be in touch as soon as we have a date in mind for 2019. It may take a bit to de-conflict with other events on in the area.

Kind regards

Lorne Capell

Secretary LHFFC.

2 - APR 2018

10.2 NZ Police- Letter of thanks for help with TAKF event Balclutha



13 March, 2018

TO: Steve Dixon, Fish and Game Otago

RE: Police and Blue Light "Take a Kid Fishing"

Balclutha Police in conjunction with Blue Light would like to extend our sincere thanks for your sponsorship towards our inaugural event in South Otago.

Thanks to your generosity we were able to hold a very successful event that would not have otherwise been possible.

78 children aged between 2 years and 16 years registered for the event.

It was fantastic to see families attend from right across our District.

The total caught for the day were 21 Perch, 8 Trout and one Eel.

Under 5 years Winners

Lexi Milne
Presley Clark

6-9 years

Jessica Waller
Clayton Sheppard

10-13 years

Reily O'Hara
Liam Bates

14-17 years

Josh Harrison
James Petitt

Overall Prize for Largest Fish – Josh Harrison

"Anonymous Donation" for First time fishers with biggest catch

Keely Shanks
Alize Hancock

Kai Point Coal Section

Bag of Perch – Lexi Milne

Bag of Brown Trout - Sheppard Family

Mixed bag – Wilson Family

Strangest Catch – Charlie Maze

Non Sporting Catch – Jeremy Chaplin

There were so many generous spot prizes that almost every child received one.

The prize giving was enjoyed by around 120-150 family members who gathered to enjoy the South Otago sunshine and the kindly donated sausage sizzle, drinks and treats.

Our thanks is extended to;

Justin Shanks that was on stand by for the day at the river with the Fire Brigade Rescue Boat

Fish and Game Otago, Steve Dixon who came down with his trailer of rods, his coaching and tips for hot fishing spots

Mike Budge Kai Fishing Club – for being our Judge and weighing the fish.

Stephen Hurring for painting the photo board

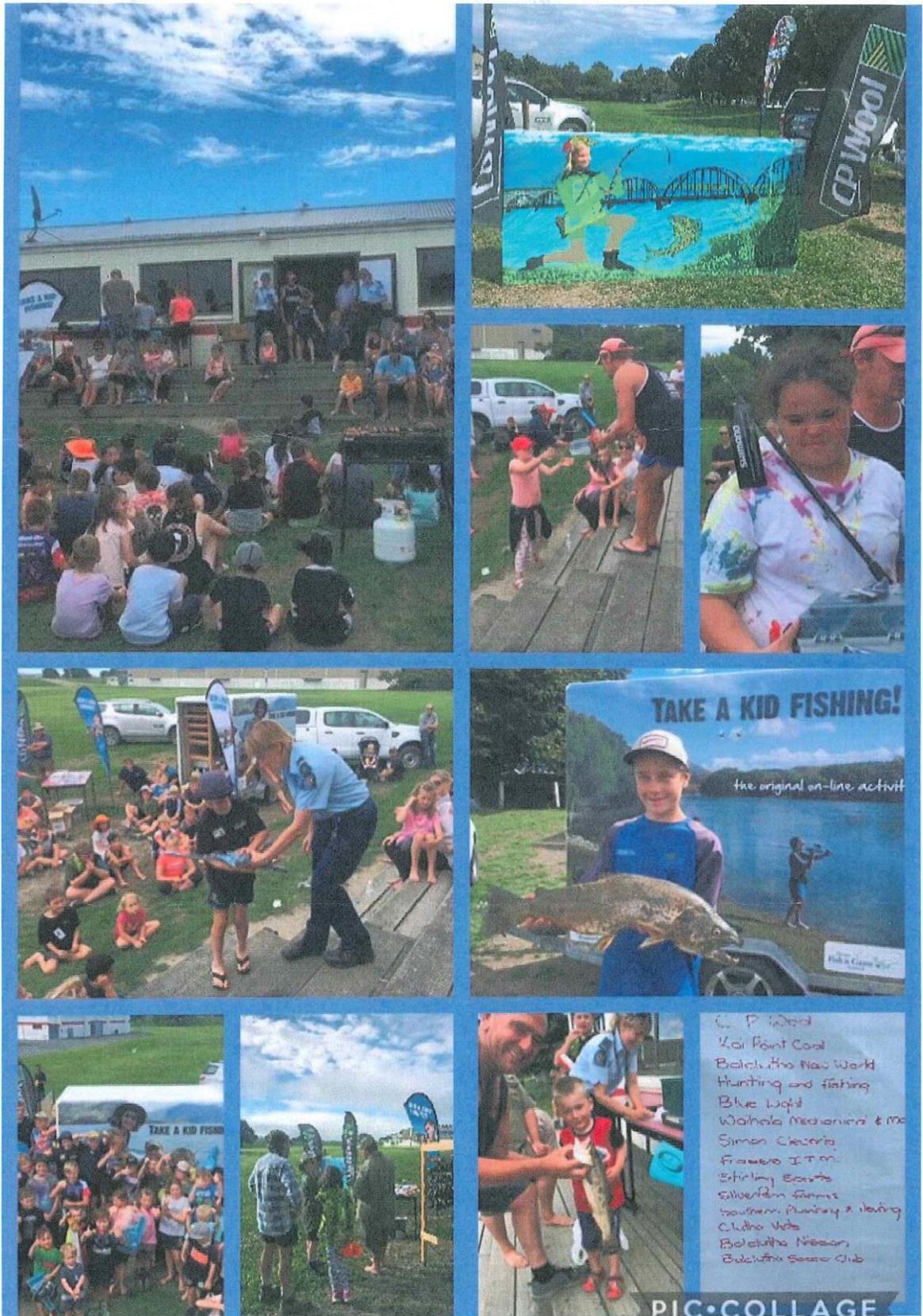
Mayor Brian Cadogan who attended the prize giving

Without this community support our event would not have been possible.

Your support is greatly appreciated.

Kindest Regards

Kate and Tanya



10.3 DOC Advice on possible boundary change – CE to report



26 February 2018

Niall Watson
Otago Fish and Game
PO Box 76
Dunedin

Dear Niall

Possible boundary change for Department of Conservation between the Southern and Eastern South Island Regions.

Recently the Department has been approached by runaka of Ngāi Tahu and the Otago Conservation Board to consider a boundary change between the two DOC regions that cover Otago. Your organisation is being asked to provide any feedback that you consider might be appropriate.

Current situation.

At present the Southern South Island region includes Queenstown, Wanaka – Alexandra, the Catlins, Invercargill, Te Anau, Stewart Island and the Subantarctic Islands. It is a complex region with a considerable number of conservation programmes across all spheres of DOC work. The Eastern South Island Region covers all of Canterbury from the Conway River south, and includes Oamaru, Dunedin, coastal Otago south to the Clutha River, inland to Lawrence and the area around and north of Dunedin. As can be seen the Otago region, from a DOC management perspective, is covered by two senior managers and their respective operational teams. The work is integrated through our planning processes and through managers regularly getting together. Both regions are of a similar size and scale of complexity.

Proposed Situation.

The Department is investigating whether a boundary realignment would be advantageous, feasible and what critical issues would need to be resolved before a boundary realignment could be undertaken. The potential re-alignment that is being considered is one that would use the Waitaki River (river / catchment or some mixture of the two). The proposal would see all of Otago coming into an enlarged Southern South Island region for DOC. I am not expecting any change in staffing as a result of this investigation although we do need to consider issues such as level of support required for a larger Southern Region and ensuring that DOC work is well managed across the Waitaki / South Canterbury zone. The Department is currently seeking the views of its staff, Conservation Boards, Papatipu runaka, TRONT and partner agencies.

Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai
Ōtautahi Christchurch Office
Private Bag 4715
Mail Centre, Christchurch 8140, New Zealand
www.doc.govt.nz

DOC-

Request.

The Department is also seeking the views of your agency as part of this process. I am writing to the following agencies: Otago Regional Council, Dunedin City Council, Waitaki District Council, Otago Fish and Game and FENZ to get their input. If possible I would like feedback from your organisation before 30 March 2018 if possible.

Yours sincerely



Andy Roberts
Director Operations
Eastern South Island

10.4 Response from Hon David Parker over mining privileges

Hon David Parker BCom, LLB

Attorney-General
Minister for Economic Development
Minister for the Environment
Minister for Trade and Export Growth

Associate Minister of Finance



23 MAR 2018

18-M-00281

Niall Watson
Chief Executive
Otago Fish and Game Council
PO Box 76
Dunedin 9054

20 MAR 2018

Dear Niall

Thank you for your letter of 7 December 2017 about the lack of national direction on environmental flow setting, and how Otago Regional Council (ORC) will deal with the 380 remaining historic mining privileges before October 2021. I apologise for the delay in responding, due to the large amount of correspondence received by the incoming Government, including by my office.

I agree that there is a one-off opportunity to reach a more sustainable outcome for Otago rivers, which have been affected by these mining privilege diversions for over 150 years. I can also see that the consenting process could create significant divisions in the affected communities, if some of the farmers feel their livelihoods will be threatened by reduced access to irrigation water.

While the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (Freshwater NPS) requires councils to set environmental flows in their regional plans, there are still over-allocated catchments around the country, including in Otago. This is one of the reasons I would like to resume discussions on the proposed national environmental standard (NES) on ecological flows and water levels. This was put on hold by the previous government in 2008.

My officials inform me that policy staff at the ORC believe that their regional plan, backed up by the direction in the Freshwater NPS, provides them with the policy framework necessary for processing and granting new resource consents for water. They acknowledge that it would have helped if an NES on flows had been in place. However, they would still have needed to set some river-specific minimum flows in key catchments if there were values not covered by an NES.

I would like to meet you locally to hear your views, and those of the ORC, on how the Government can help with transitioning the mining privileges into the sustainable management regime of the Resource Management Act 1991. My office will be in touch shortly.

Yours sincerely

Hon David Parker
Minister for the Environment

Hi Niall,

P.S. ECan have a similar view to you about the need to consider groups of consents.

+64 4 817 8710

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

d.parker@ministers.govt.nz

beehive.govt.nz



7 December 2017

The Hon David Parker
Minister for the Environment
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Dear David,

Transition from Mining Privileges to RMA consents

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister for the Environment. It is a pleasing to have a Minister and a Government committed to rolling back the adverse impacts of intensive land-use on our freshwater resources.

My Council is vitally interested in Otago's river and lake water quality and quantity, and natural character. All three elements need attention if we are to have healthy productive freshwater ecosystems supporting fisheries and recreational amenity, but the historic over-allocation of surface water is our highest priority.

As you know water in Central Otago was allocated during the gold rush era for mining and sluicing by way of 'mining privileges' but they are now used almost exclusively for irrigation. They gave privilege holders secure rights to take water from rivers and streams without regard for the environment. And as a consequence many waterways are completely diverted during summer, leaving dry river beds, or seriously depleted river flows. This results in widespread annual stranding and mortality of both trout and native fish.

The passage of the RMA in 1991 gave a 30 year lead time for the phase-out of mining privileges and the transition from MPs to RMA consents offers a one-off opportunity to restore flows, natural character, connectivity, and life supporting capacity in Central Otago rivers. Irrigators are now moving to replace their historic rights with new RMA consents both individually and in catchment groups spurred on by the October 2021 deadline [RMA s413 (3)] at which time all mining privileges expire.

Despite the 30 year lead time many irrigators are ill prepared for the transition in terms of having a recorded history of water use or adequate knowledge of the hydrology of source waterways. Poor quality supporting information for replacement consents is an issue along with confusion over the definition of the 'existing environment' against which effects are to be measured and little consideration of cumulative effects

Affected party status is an ongoing area of concern with no replacement consents having been publicly notified until the recent Lindis catchment consents, and limited notifications involving statutory stakeholders - DOC, Fish and Game and Kai Tahu - being more common but based on presence or absence of fish. Affected party decisions are not always satisfactory and sometimes have to be challenged placing a heavy burden on the three stakeholder organisations.

While replacement RMA consents have to consider environmental flows for the first time, irrigators have often established new irrigation infrastructure and so are increasing their dependence on irrigation water. Competition for available water is intense and the balance between the public share of water in the river and the private share allocated for irrigation is a growing concern.

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

Otago Fish and Game Council

Cnr Hanover & Harrow Sts, PO Box 76, Dunedin 9054, New Zealand. Telephone (03) 477 9076

Although Otago Regional Council is developing an ambitious programme of minimum flow plan changes on Central Otago rivers including the Arrow, Cardrona, Manuherikia, Upper Clutha and Lindis there is a high risk of unsatisfactory environmental outcomes from these processes and from residual flow setting as part of resource consent conditions.

The lack of national level guidance on environmental flow setting is at the heart of the issue in our opinion. You will recall that the proposed National Environmental Standards on Ecological Flows and Water Levels stalled in 2008 and even then it did not address recreational amenity values, natural character or connectivity.

A minimum flow plan change on the Lindis River is under appeal to the Environment Court and a catchment wide resource consent application on the Kye Burn is in the same boat. Otago Fish and Game is involved in both actions. If irrigators and ORC get their way environmental flows for those two rivers will be set at about 31% and 33% of their respective mean annual low flows. At these levels we consider rivers and the public are getting short measure.

Of over 400 mining privileges there still remain some 380 still to be processed and the pace of applications for replacement RMA consents is picking up. I believe it is important that the situation is closely monitored by Government to ensure that the original intent of the 1991 law change is not thwarted by poor quality decisions that fail to restore adequate environmental flows to Central Otago rivers.

I would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss this issue with you at some convenient time in the near future.

Yours sincerely



Niall Watson
Chief Executive

11 General Business
