

Agenda For The Meeting of Otago Fish & Game Council
On Saturday 24th January 2026
At Otago Fish and Game Council Office
5 Hazlett Road, North Taieri, Mosgiel
Starting 11.45am with a light lunch

Timetable	Council Meeting
11:45 am	Light lunch
12:15 pm	Councillor Only Session
12:35 pm	Meeting begins
2:00pm	Public Excluded Session
2:45 pm	Afternoon Tea
3:00 pm	Public Forum
3:15 pm	Meeting resumes
4:00 pm	Meeting Ends
4:05 pm	<i>Council workshop on proposed submission on new F&G Act</i>

Contents

1.0	Present, Apologies and Declarations of Interest	3
2.0	Election of Officers.....	4
3.0	Matters To Be Raised Not On The Agenda	5
4.0	Confirmation of Previous Minutes.....	6
5.0	Matters Arising from the Minutes	17
6.0	Health and Safety Report.....	18
7.0	Items Requiring Decisions.....	26
7.1	ORC Navigational Safety bylaws – JBA Submission	26
7.2	Game Gazette – Licence Holder Feedback.....	28
8.0	Public Excluded Items	46
8.1	Draft Public Excluded Minutes from 2 nd December 2025	46
8.2	Risk Management Report	46
8.3	Friends of Bullock Creek Agreement	46
8.4	Cromwell Office upgrade proposal.....	46

8.5	Otago Fish and Game Council Staffing.....	46
9.0	Financial Report	47
10.0	Chief Executives Report	61
11.0	RMA Planning and Consents Report.....	65
12.0	Committee & Delegate Reports.....	68
12.1	New Zealand Fish and Game Council.....	68
12.2	Clutha Mata Au Sports Fish and Habitat Trust	68
12.3	Ngai Tahu	69
12.4	Conservation Board	69
12.5	Clutha Fisheries Trust.....	69
12.6	Tiaka Maniototo.....	69
13.0	Correspondence.....	70
13.1	NZC to Otago.....	70
13.2	Otago to NZC.....	84
13.3	General Correspondence In	86
13.4	General Correspondence Out	87
14.0	Items to be Received or Noted	88
14.1	Otago Fish and Game Council Audit Completion Report	88
14.2.....	Anglers Notice Update	101
14.3	2025 Licence Holder Engagement Survey Report	107
14.4	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for the 2024/2025 Financial Year	126
15.0	General Business.....	136
15.1	Family Licences	136
15.2	NZC Lost Access Database	136

1.0 Present, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

2.0 Election of Officers

Item # and title	2.0 Election of officers
Purpose	For Decision
Executive Summary	With the exception of the new year following a council election, Council revisits the roles of Council officer holders during its annual planning weekend.
Discussion/Analysis	<p>Positions required:</p> <p>Election of Chair – Currently Adrian McIntyre</p> <p>Election of a New Zealand Fish & Game Council Appointee – Council have previously agreed that the appointment of the NZC representative is for the entire term of Council. Cr Mike Barker is the incumbent.</p> <p>Election of Executive committee – Presently Cr Barker, Cr Weatherall and the Chair. Ideally the number of executive committee members should be less than half of the entire council. The Governance manual says between three and five. Three seems an appropriate number. (Chair and two others).</p> <p>Election of Deputy Chair (optional) Currently Cr Trevathan. The role isn't specifically described in the Councils governance manual but does perform a useful function and helps clarify lines of accountability, especially if the chair becomes unwell or is absent.</p>
Links to Previous Papers/Decisions	<p>Term of office</p> <p>Council typically reconsider these roles annually at its new year planning meeting but the proposed new legislation due this year may require a revisit of these roles once established. You will note that one of the proposals in the new legislation requires that the Chair of a Regional Council be the NZC appointee.</p>
Attachments (if any)	
Recommendation	

Decision Record	<p>Moved by:</p> <p>Seconded by:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried / Lost:</p>
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3.0 Matters To Be Raised Not On The Agenda

4.0 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Minutes for the Meeting of Otago Fish & Game Council On 2nd December 2025

At Otago Fish and Game Council Office
5 Hazlett Road, North Taieri, Mosgiel

1.0 Present and Apologies

Present: Mike Barker, Adrian McIntyre (Chair), John Cruden, John Highton, Vicky May, John Preedy, Blair Trevathan, Colin Weatherall.

In attendance: Ian Hadland (CE), Jamie Ward (Operations Manager), Bruce Quirey (Communications Officer), Ray Grubb (member of the public).

Apologies: Paulette Tamati-Elliffe (Ngāi Tahu), Neil Harraway (Otago Conservation Board)

Moved: Cr May, Cr Weatherall

That apologies be accepted

Carried

The meeting started at 12.38pm.

2.0 Matters to be raised not on the agenda

Cr Highton said following a presentation at the last Council meeting, at which he was not present, by Otago Regional Council Team Leader Biodiversity Pete Ravenscroft, the removal of trout from headwaters to protect non-migratory galaxiids was a good research opportunity to see what the trout had been eating.

3.0 Declarations of Interest

Cr Highton asked if it was necessary to declare club memberships. If so, he was a member of Teviot Angling Club, Upper Clutha Angling Club, and NZDA. The CE replied they would be noted.

4.0 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Cr Highton noted an error on Page 10 of the previous minutes. It should have said there were discussions about the building opening at Mosgiel, not Cromwell.

Moved: Cr Weatherall, Cr Trevathan

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 23rd September 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Carried

5.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Cr Barker asked if the CE had followed up Cr Weatherall's question about when children could fish independently and what that meant.

The CE apologised that had not been done, and said he would do that.

6.0 Health and Safety Report – October to December 2025

The CE inducted councillors into the new building.

He said the health and safety report was to be received.

Moved: Cr Highton, Cr Trevathan

That the health and safety report for October to December be received.

Carried

7.0 Items Requiring Decisions

7.1 Minister's Reply to Otago Council Letter on Reforms

The CE said he had circulated the Minister's reply to Councillors. Several issues were only partly answered or not addressed: government accountability needed firming up; advocacy provisions and ministerial oversight were concerning; funding resource allocation needed more detail; and the hatchery question was not sufficiently answered regarding whether current provisions for hatcheries would be grandfathered.

The CE noted Cr McIntyre is on the reform group. The consultation policy with NZC needed to be robust. Big issues included financial and personnel policies.

The CE recommended overhauling the Council's response submission, keeping it brief and tight per MP Rachel Brooking's advice. Legal support might be needed as the Council was dealing with statutory provisions.

Cr Highton suggested using Otago's policies as a template for NZC. Cr McIntyre noted Otago's policies were way ahead as the Council reviewed them regularly.

Discussion covered:

- The Chair suggested both a major council submission and individual submissions, urging careful wording.
- Cr Barker noted NZC would provide critical guidance; timeframes were tight with a draft needed before the January meeting.

- Councillors needed to actively contribute, not leave it all to the CE.
- Urgent meetings may be needed when final legislation is released.
- There was a three-year transition period for developing national policy.
- Other interacting legislation would also affect the organisation significantly.

Moved: Cr Weatherall, Cr Preedy

That the Council update NZC on progress it is making and provide NZC a timeline in late January as to the important steps in its process.

Carried

7.2 Grey Teal Status Change

The CE explained the background and regional manager feedback (page 34). Council had previously asked him to test other regions about adding grey teal to the game bird schedule. Regional managers had mixed views on where it is at.

Two pathways existed: add grey teal to the schedule of gamebirds to be shot, or seek Ministerial notice to add grey teal to the schedule using the Minister's powers. If the Council decided to pursue this, NZC involvement would be the first hurdle.

Councillor views:

- Cr May: Against. Grey teal should remain protected due to disease vulnerability and high mortality rates. They are a very vulnerable species with potential major disease threats coming.
- Cr Highton: Support listing, based on observations at Lake Waihola.
- Cr Weatherall: Neutral — will leave it to other minds. Noted as a ranger for 40 years, incidence of birds being shot deliberately is much less than it used to be
- Cr Cruden: Concerned about collateral damage to brown teal, which is endemic and highly protected. Grey teal look similar to brown teal.
- Cr Preedy: Yes. *Did not elaborate.*
- Cr Trevathan: Support listing. Believes teal are pushing out shovelers. When we go to the Minister we should have data to support the request.
- Cr Barker: As a non-hunter, doesn't feel qualified to comment about teal. Abstained

The Chair noted that hunters were generally good at identifying teal.

The CE confirmed the organisation had some monitoring data – staff had been counting grey teal on shoveler courting sites for 15 years. Eastern region had monitored for 20 years but it was not a priority for some other regions. If the Council took this to NZC with majority support, NZC's process would provide a good steer for the Minister's appetite. At least this Council would have raised the issue.

Moved: Cr Highton, Cr Trevathan

That the Otago Council writes to the New Zealand Council requesting that it exercise its coordination powers to seek the declaration of an open season for grey teal through Ministerial notification.

Carried (Crs Cruden and May against; Cr Barker abstained)

7.3 2025 Anglers Notice Management Review and Issues and Options

Moved: Cr Highton, Cr Preedy

That the recommended changes in Table 1 are put to stakeholder and public consultation.

Carried

Table 1: List of staff recommended regulation changes. Council to decide which changes go out to consultation.

Topic	Staff Recommendation	Note/ Decision
Tautuku Estuary	Add the Tautuku Estuary to the schedule of listed waters and open it to year-round, boat fishing allowed, all methods allowed.	Yes
Tahakopa lower Reaches	Open year-round season (below Tahakopa Valley Rd). Allow boat fishing	Yes
Upper Leith and Lindsay	Align upper Leith and Lindsays with the lower Leith; 1 Oct – 30 Apr, FSB, 2 trout, 1 salmon, Boat fishing prohibited.	Yes
Southern Lake populations	Status Quo	Hold for further discussion on Wānaka bag limit
Diamond Creek	Close during May	Yes
Lochy River Status	Designate entire river	Yes
Greenstone Controlled fishery status	Status Quo	Yes
Waikouaiti River	Status Quo – Prioritise future work programmes.	Yes
Waipahi River	Status Quo – Prioritise future work programmes.	Yes
Note - Clutha gaffs	Ban use of gaffs	Yes
Note - Clutha floats	Remove float ban	Yes
Note - Bag limit exemption	1. Remove Note 1.4 (Cease fishing when limit reached). 2. Remove zero bag limits on the upper Lochy and Routeburn	Yes Yes – change 0 to 1 bag limit
Note – 1.2-3 -Daily bag possession	Possession rules are removed	Yes
Note – Fishing near captive fish	Remove Note 1.1	Yes
Soft bait exemption	New Note –	Yes

	“Scented artificial lures may be used where spin fishing is permitted, when actively fished so as to imitate a bait fish.”	
Lake McKellar	List in regulations with non-named upper Clutha regulations: 1 Nov – 30 Apr. FS, 1 trout, Boats prohibited. Redefine Controlled and designated section to cease at Lake McKellar.	Yes
Treble Hooks in Designated Waters	Remove hook type restriction	Yes
Lake Dispute season	Open year-round	Yes
Lake Tewa	Remove from listed waterways.	Yes
Perkins Pond	Remove from listed waterways	Yes
Lake Reid	Change name from Reid Lake.	Yes
West Eweburn	Add to listed waterways	Yes
Tautuku Estuary	Add to listed waterways	Yes

Additional Discussion:

Cr Barker proposed a 0 salmon bag limit for Lake Wānaka. After discussion, **Council agreed to consult on a 1 salmon bag limit for Wānaka.**

Cr Trevathan asked about removing fly-only from Deans Bank, although he did not support changing it. **Council agreed to leave the current regulations for Deans Bank** due to tradition.

Cr Highton said a lot of waters where salmon were mentioned, such as the Taieri River, were no longer relevant.

Cr Highton suggested **lowering the bag limit for trout in the Taieri River above Styx Bridge from 4 to 2.**

The CE noted that the Minister would ask for evidence to support any regulation changes that removed opportunity from licence holders.

Cr May said she should be able to fish in any waterway with anything she wanted.

Moved: Cr Weatherall, Cr Trevathan

That Jayde Couper's report be received, circulated for consultation, and acknowledged.

Carried

Cr Weatherall noted he did not see any reference in Mr Couper's report to the lower Taieri River, which was a popular leisure location.

Moved: Cr May, Cr Preedy

That the meeting move into public-excluded session.

Carried

8.0 Public Excluded Items

Items considered under public-excluded session:

8.1 Draft Public Excluded Minutes 23rd September 2025

8.2 Collaboration Agreement with Friends of Bullock Creek

8.3 Progress Update on Bendigo-Ophir gold Project Fast Track Application

9.0 Financial Report

The CE presented the report for noting.

Cr Highton queried discrepancies between licence income figures on different pages. The CE clarified different reporting periods.

Discussion on family licence sales: The CE said the organisation was approximately \$350,000 down in family licence sales with nearly 300 family licences lost not converting to Adult Whole Season sales. Cr Highton suggested the need for a couples' licence. The CE noted Otago's submission had requested modelling before the family licence change due to potential catastrophic revenue impact.

Moved: Cr Barker, Cr Trevathan

That the financial report be received.

Carried

The CE agreed to email responses to Cr Highton's questions.

10.0 Chief Executive's Report – November 2025

Avian influenza testing: The CE said CSI, North Canterbury and Otago had been invited to assist with HPAI monitoring with MPI. Fish & Game was already doing this in the North Island. The three South Island regions would help MPI catch 320 mallards in each area. Otago F&G was not proposing to band the ducks – Otago would need staff

qualified to do banding so some staff might have to assist in other regions and get experience.

The CE said staff would catch the ducks at the end of January – MPI would swab them looking for HPAI. Cr Barker suggested banding was a good way to measure populations.

Annual plan meeting: The CE invited councillors to let him know their availability.

Cr Trevathan had two questions on the report. He wanted an update on councillor training sessions and if the Central Otago operations manager was looking at aerial spraying at Bendigo.

Mr Ward said not at this stage. F&G was looking at the covenant and would have to be careful. Contact Energy was concerned about dead trees and debris causing problems.

Training: The CE asked Council if they felt the need for more governance training, because local trainer Jan Samuel and NZC had been in touch.

Cr Weatherall said a recent report indicated the Otago councillors had had no training, and he took umbrage. Richard Westlake had provided training.

Cr Barker said Otago had not taken up Andrew West's training. The Chair said he felt the wording was hard on Otago. Cr Highton suggested later in the year. He supported Cr Weatherall, but the Council should reconsider after the legislation was sorted. The CE suggested that councillors relook at training in June/July.

Moved: Cr Weatherall, Cr Preedy

That the CE's report be received.

Carried

Cr Weatherall said the Council should be prudent. He asked the CE to provide information on the shortfall in licence available funds not only for the Otago Council but also for the rest of NZ. It would affect other regional councils' ability to pay their levy and will take big chunks out of their reserves.

11.0 RMA Planning and Consents Report

The CE said there were a couple of things to highlight in the Environmental Officer's report. He was happy to answer questions.

Regarding Styx Basin, Cr Highton said a farmer was worried about what he saw as additional water being retained in the wetland due to a gravel bar at Styx River confluence. The CE said the impact of its removal risks draining a good portion of the lower Styx wetland complex so needed to be carefully managed.

Cr Weatherall commented on the Fast-Track Approvals Act Amendment Bill. The public was only given seven days to submit. The trait of the current government was to jam things through – the Council needed to be able to move quickly.

Cr Highton commented on a presentation at the Alpine Lakes Forum from a development running into Lake Hayes. They had phenomenal results trapping silt. It would be good to suggest to other developers to incorporate wetlands in their development. The CE said that F&G staff had helped with consent conditions for the project.

Moved: Cr May, Cr Cruden

That the RMA Planning and Consents report be received.

Carried

12.0 Committee & Delegate Reports

12.1 New Zealand Fish and Game Council

Cr Barker reported NZC had not met since the Otago Council's last meeting. A science subcommittee might be replaced by science expert group. There was an update meeting held with NZC CE on new legislation.

12.2 Clutha Mata Au Sports Fish and Habitat Trust

The Trust held a meeting last week. Topics covered included water quality monitoring; a salmon farm proposal for Lake Dunstan; Back Stream weir removal (awaiting Clutha District Council engagement); broodstock questions; lamprey breeding discussions with Hokonui runanga (iwi seeking two trustees - northern and southern representatives); Trust website going live soon.

The Chair wished to step down from Clutha Mata-Au Trust in the new year; He said he had spoken to John Preedy and he was quite keen. Cr May noted this needed to be in writing to Rick Boyd.

12.3 Ngai Tahu – Paulette Tamati-Elliffe

No report. The CE said the Ngāi Tahu delegate had indicated she would table something on cultural harvest but had not done so to date.

12.4 Conservation Board

No report provided.

12.5 Clutha Fisheries Trust

The CE said there was no update provided. Ian Cole was seeking another trustee.

12.6 Tiaki Maniototo

Cr Highton tabled a written report on the most recent Tiaki Maniototo TAG meeting.

Cr Highton said the group was interested in visiting Takitakitoa wetland in February; Taieri Catchment plan representation had been confirmed; two bitterns were recorded during monitoring in upper Taieri; Logan Burn reservoir was lower than usual, potentially affecting river flow supplementation.

Moved: Cr McIntyre, Cr Barker

That the reports be accepted.

Carried

13.0 Correspondence**13.1 NZC to Otago**

Nil

13.2 Otago to NZC

- Feedback NZC Infringement Notice Policy (awaiting response)
- Feedback NZC Consolidated Annual Reporting Policy

Moved: Cr Weatherall, Cr Preedy

That the Correspondence be received and noted.

Carried

14.0 Items to be Received or Noted**14.1 Staff Scholarship Report – Otolith Clinic**

Staff ecologist Jayde Couper reported on using the NZC staff scholarship fund for expert-led otolith training. Otago was looking forward to building an otolith bank. Cr Barker praised the initiative. The CE noted equipment could be acquired over time.

Moved: Cr May, Cr Trevathan

That this report be received and noted.

Carried

14.2 2025 Southern Reservoir Take a Kid Fishing Events & Adult Beginner Spin Fishing Classes

The CE noted TAKF feasibility depended on the hatchery and Macraes Mine. Cr Highton raised water heat concerns for hatchery systems. Cr May asked about plan B; CE confirmed no ready site found yet. Cr Weatherall suggested exploring Onslow mitigation for hatchery site. The Chair congratulated Steve Dixon, staff and volunteers on excellent feedback from participants.

Moved: Cr Highton, Cr Cruden

That this report be received and noted.

Carried

14.3 Game Gazette Update

The CE said there had not been much consultation feedback. Paradise shelduck moult trend counts in January were expected to show similar or higher numbers. The CE had issued DCC permits to disturb at Waikouaiti for effluent pond bird management. Oxygen levels would be monitored closely.

Moved: Cr Trevathan, Cr Weatherall

That this report be received and noted.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 2.45pm and resumed at 3pm.

15.0 General Business

Cr Barker commented on the Alpine Lakes Forum he attended in Wānaka with Cr Highton and staff members Mason Court, Jayde Couper and Jamie Ward.

Day one was poorly organised — small screen in large auditorium, sessions too long with no Q&A opportunity.

Day two at Edgewater was better organised. Key presentations included Mark Schallenberg on Lindavia (lake snot) and food chain changes requiring more research.

The CE noted ongoing relationship with Professor Ross Thompson of University of Otago and confirmed that staff could take a greater part in the event in future.

The Council meeting ended at 5.40pm.

5.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes

6.0 Health and Safety Report

Health and Safety Report December – January 2026

Events/Work Requiring OHS Planning – Job hazard sheets complete

- Wetland planting planning
- Drift Diving
- Summer boat ranging
- Safety induction at opening of new building

OHS Audits - Internal

Completed audits:

- Hazardous substances Mosgiel and Cromwell bases
- Office hazard audit Mosgiel
- Vehicle hazards and safety equipment
- Staff training schedule
- Boat safety audit

Next audit areas:

- Main Hazard Register – ongoing

Annual OSH audit Report

The full audit report for 2025/26 is appended as **Appendix 1**

Incidents/Accidents/Near Misses/New Hazards – discussed, including mitigation, at weekly meetings and recorded on file if needed.

- ACC for shifting/lifting shoulder injury
- Three separate near misses with holiday traffic, not on their own side of the road. Staff to be vigilant and we will look again at suitable driving courses.

Training Completed

- Ranger training for summer season, Cromwell and Mosgiel
- One staff member gained required boating hours
- One staff member had refresher first aid training

General Discussions, Actions

- Reminder to sign in all visitors and extra papers for trade contractors
- Firearms security. Police plan to come and visit our Mosgiel office
- Gas problems at Glenorchy hut. To be fixed. Not in use in the meantime.
- Water depths required for non-bottom disturbance on drift dives
- The fit of your life jacket by coast guard. Video recommended viewing.
- Discussion on working from home, ergonomic positioning and different hazards. Take care.

- The Cromwell Field Base concrete pad extension completed. Extending the pad and moving the fence has allowed shifting, storing and parking the boat easier and safer.

Health and Safety Policy

The policy document has been updated and is now ready to the Chair to sign off. This is attached as **Appendix 2**

Recommendation

1. **To receive the health and safety audit report and October to December update report.**
2. **Council to confirm and sign the OF&GC Health and Safety Policy 2026**

Sharon Milne
Administration Officer
10th January 2026

Appendix 1

H&S 1 ANNUAL HAZARD AND AUDIT TIMETABLE 2025

[Review On Annual Health and Safety Audits Saved to Sharepoint]

Task	Review Date	Review By	Achieved	Time Frame
Office Hazard Audit Cromwell/Dunedin	Jan/July	Sharon/Cole	Crom March 2025 Dn April 2025 Crom August 2025 Mos moved Dec25	6 monthly
Vehicle Hazards and Safety Equipment	January Au	Steve	May 2025 Dec 2025	6 monthly
Council Policy	February	Ian	Feb 2025	Annua
Workshops and Field equipment and PPE Hazard Audit	March	Steve/Cole	Dn May 2025 Crom March 2025	Annual
Ranger/volunteer training, support, policy	May	Mason/Jamie	June 2025	Annual
Staff Training Schedule	April / October	Bruce	June 2025 Dec 2025	6 monthly
Hazardous Substances Cromwell, Dunedin,	June/ December	Jayde Mason/Cole	Crom June 2025 Dn clean up Crom Dec 2025 Mos Dec 2025	6 monthly
Boat Safety	September	Steve/Mason	Dec 2025	Annual
Main Hazard Register Updated	September	Jamie/CSI	On going progress + major upgrade	Annual
Full Audit Checklist	December	Ian/Sharon	Report to council Jan 2026	Annual

H&S MANAGEMENT AUDIT CHECKLIST 2025

Record of Compliance with OF&G Councils OSH Systems, Policies and Procedures

Otago Fish and Game Council Meeting 24th January 2026

Action Required	Notes – Evidence of Completion
Policy and meetings	
Policies displayed or available	<i>All policy documents added to Sharepoint. Policy displayed at both Cromwell and Dunedin communal areas</i>
H&S promoted to staff	<i>H&S is part of weekly and bi monthly meeting agendas Staff involved in audits, update of hazards and mitigation of incidents</i>
Notes/minutes of H&S meetings assembled	<i>Stored on Sharepoint, summarised at bi monthly staff meeting, emailed to staff and included in council reports.</i>
Audit and Drills	
Offices, Workshops, audits complete	<i>All audits completed by Dec 2025. This included an audit of the new Mosgiel premises, discussions of safety for lifting and shifting and new hazards related to the new building, including travel to and from.</i>
Fire Extinguishers checked / building evacuation practice.	<i>Extinguishers checked and serviced annually by external contractor. Evacuation drills completed Cromwell, Dunedin and Mosgiel offices. Local Mosgiel fire department will arrange to visit new local office for inspection</i>
MSD (Material safety data) sheets current	<i>New Chemical storage shed in Mosgiel. MSD current and stored with chemical at sites. Update and checked 6 monthly Dunedin, Mosgiel and Cromwell</i>
PPE Safety Equipment and Vehicle and safety equipment audits done	<i>PEP completed May +March 2025, Vehicles and safety equipment checked May and December 2025</i>
Seaflux Boat information current	<i>Part of Seaflux - software package for commercial vessels looking to digitize and streamline their Safety Management system Two boats compliant as at Dec 2025 Member of Coast Guard for central lakes back up Boat handling refresher courses up to date, one staff is working on boat masters, two UHF Radio course completed in 2025 Three boating near misses – water cooling inlet clogged by didymo, a cracked bung from over tightening and age and damage to wheel bearing buddy – all repaired</i>
Volunteer and Staff Rangers	<i>Inductions, for those assisting at events and outings. Ranger audit completed June 2025.</i>

	<i>Rangers training for those game ranging in May and general ranging in December 2025. Refresher CERT course attended by 4 staff and 2 rangers</i>
Hazards register current and updates	<i>Updated from regular meetings. Update June 2025 and shared with staff for comment. Simplifying adjustments co ordinated with Central South Island F&G is in progress late 2025.</i>
Evidence of annual review of H&S processes and performance	<i>Constantly being reviewed at each individual audit and to mitigate new hazards, equipment, incidents and up and coming issues. NZC to confirm new policies 2025 has not progressed but we hope to see in the future.</i>
Training and Inductions	
Training/Support for H&S rep	<i>No new training. Two new H&S representatives required in 2026</i>
New Staff/Visitors/Volunteers/Contractors	<i>Completed sign in register for visitors and onsite contracted workers. New staff inductions as required. Inductions for all group field work, events and outings.</i>
Mosgiel office build	<i>Covered by the builders policy, very strict. No incidents</i>
Induction records	<i>Fulll inductions for Cole Briggs and Harsi Dhandapani, for office and field work as required.</i>
First Aid	<i>All staff up to date or have planned refresher courses. First aid kits available at all offices and in vehicles</i>

Incidents/Accidents	
Accident/Incident Register complete	<i>Up to date –9 accident/incidents/bad near miss reported. No incidents causing serious personal harm. One vehicle accident causing an insurance claim. One confidential incident dealt with through council</i>
Investigations results fed back	<i>Mitigation options discussed, implemented and noted at meetings. Hazards added to register list. Staff receive H&S minutes. Council notified at meetings from Health and Safety reports.</i>
Near-miss reports	<i>18 reported – noted and discussed at meetings</i>
Accident/Injury Prevention Initiatives	<i>Staff are all first aid trained and first aid kits filled. Discussions of near misses to prevent repeats. Encouraging – staff to lookout for one another, to exercise more, sleep well, lunch or excursions out of office to limit office muscle strains, stresses and eye strain and assist with general fitness/health and wellbeing.</i>

	<i>Written information and an 0800 number provided to those needing to discuss unsettling or irritating issues. Reminders about driver road safety/tourists drivers/changing weather. Vehicles have safety equipment and PEP gear provided.</i>
Infectious Diseases	
Avian Bird Influenza and botulism	<i>Staff have been updated and prepared for possible avian influenza or botulism outbreaks. PEP gear on hand</i>
Vaccinations	<i>All staff advised to and offered vaccinations</i>
Pandemic/other Illness	<i>Action on disease at a regional level was not required this year. The office has masks, tests, gloves and sanitiser as required. Request for those sick to remain home and work when possible.</i>

Completed by S Milne

Signed: I Hadland (CE)

Date: 13/01/2026

Reported to OF&GC: 24th January 2026

Appendix 2



HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

Introduction

The Otago Fish and Game Council (the Council) is a 'person conducting a business or undertaking' (PCBU) under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA) and the Health and Safety at Work (General Risk and Workplace Management) Regulations 2016.

The Council is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of its workers (staff, councillors, and volunteers) and other persons (visitors, hunters/anglers, and contractors) who may be put at risk from work carried out by the Council. This commitment extends to both physical and mental health (wellbeing).

Scope

This policy applies to all Otago Fish and Game Council 'workers' and any person influenced by the Council's work. This includes permanent offices, field sites, and any location where work is being conducted (including intermittent field operations).

Key Elements of the Policy

The Council will comply with the HSWA and associated regulations by:

- Providing a safe physical and psychologically safe work environment.
- Ensuring a health and safety strategy/plan is in place, with meaningful engagement and consultation with workers on safety matters.
- Providing adequate facilities, training, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required for safe work.
- Maintaining a systematic process for identifying, assessing, and eliminating or minimising risks.
- Maintaining a culture of continuous improvement and "Safety First" in all field and office operations.
- Consulting, cooperating, and coordinating with other PCBUs (e.g., landowners, contractors) where duties overlap to ensure gaps in safety management do not occur.

Liability and Officer Duties

The Council's Chief Executive (CE) and Councillors are defined as 'officers' under the Act.

- **Due Diligence:** Officers must exercise "due diligence" to ensure the Council complies with its duties. This includes keeping up-to-date knowledge of H&S matters and ensuring the Council has sufficient resources to manage risks.
- **Liability:** While the Council and the CE may be liable for failures, volunteer Councillors are protected from prosecution for a failure to comply with officer duties under Section 52 of the

HSWA. However, they must still act with due diligence to ensure the organisation is compliant.

The Chief Executive’s Responsibility

The CE has primary responsibility for operationalising this policy, including:

- Maintaining effective processes for reporting Notifiable Events (death, notifiable injury/illness, or notifiable incidents) to WorkSafe NZ immediately.
- Ensuring workers are trained and competent for the tasks they perform, particularly in high-risk field environments.
- Providing the Council with bi-monthly reports on H&S performance, including lead indicators (training completed) and lag indicators (incidents/near misses).
- Ensuring that "overlapping duties" with landowners and contractors are documented and managed.

Everyone is Responsible

All Workers (Employees, Contractors, and Volunteers) shall:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and ensure their actions do not adversely affect others.
- Follow all safe work procedures and use provided PPE.
- Report all incidents, near misses, and new hazards immediately through the Council's reporting system.
- Report any work-related pain, discomfort, or mental distress (stress/fatigue) early to allow for intervention.
- Participate in health and safety discussions and suggest improvements.

All Others (Visitors, Hunters, Anglers) shall:

- Follow all instructions and safety signage provided by Council staff.
- Notify the Chief Executive or staff of any incidents or hazards encountered while interacting with Council operations.

Adopted date: 24th January 2026

Signed:

Chair

Chief Executive

7.0 Items Requiring Decisions

	7.1 ORC Navigational Safety bylaws – JBA Submission
Author	Ian Hadland – Chief Executive
Purpose	For Decision
Executive Summary	<p>The Otago Jet Boat Association (OJBA) have met with staff to discuss their proposal for speed (5 knot) uplifts in a select number of rivers in Otago. They wish to submit their changes to the Otago Regional Council review of the Navigational Safety Bylaws, with F&G endorsement.</p> <p>Staff have considered the JBA proposals and are largely comfortable that what has been suggested. The proposals will have little or no impact on spawning or recreational angling with most simply extensions of uplifts already in place, or take place when flows are high and unsuitable for angling and spawning.</p>
Discussion/Analysis	<p>The proposed changes are:</p> <p>Manuherikia River</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current uplifting: August/September when flow at Ophir gauge is between 10–45 cumecs • Proposed: Add July to current parameters • Consider: Oct to March with a flow above 20cumecs. <p>Upper Taieri</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location: Pukerangi Road Bridge to Hyde Gravel Pit • Current uplifting: August/September, flow above 20 cumecs at Waipiata gauge • Proposed: Add October, November, and December to current uplifting period <p>Lower Taieri</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location: Confluence of Waipori River to Outram • Current: 15 July to 15 August, flow >30 cumecs at Outram gauge • Proposed: Closed April/May and September/October; open the rest of the year with flow above 20 cumecs <p>Lindis River</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current: Closed • Proposed: Open July, August, and September with a 20 cumec minimum flow that does not negatively impact the river environment or spawning.
Links to Previous Papers/Decisions	Last update to the navigational safety bylaws was in 2020. There have been no logged complaints from anglers on present uplifts and jetboat runs and events are usually well notified. Council is keen to maintain relationships with other river users.

Attachments (if any)	https://www.orc.govt.nz/your-council/plans-and-strategies/harbourmaster-plans-and-policies/#otago-regional-council-navigation-safety-bylaw
Recommendation	<i>That the Council offers no objection to the proposed amendments to be put forward by the Otago Jet Boat association as amendments to the Otago Navigational Safety Bylaws</i>

Decision Record	Moved by: Seconded by: <div style="text-align: right;">Carried / Lost:</div>
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Item	7.2 Game Gazette – Licence Holder Feedback
	Mason Court, Otago Fish and Game Officer – January 2026
Purpose	For Decision
Executive Summary	<p>Otago Fish & Game consulted Otago game bird licence holders as part of the Triennial Game Bird Regulation Review on proposed increases to Paradise Shelduck bag limits. A total of 208 licence holders completed online feedback.</p> <p>Strong support was shown for increasing the main season Paradise Shelduck bag limit from 12 to 15 birds, with 87% in favour. Many supported increased recreational harvest as an effective population management tool and expressed confidence in Fish & Game’s science-based approach.</p> <p>Support was also high for aligning the special (summer) season bag limit with the main season by increasing it from 5 to 15 birds, with 78% in favour. Licence holders considered aligned limits simpler, easier to enforce, and more effective for managing abundant populations, while improving hunting participation.</p> <p>Most respondents (61%) felt no other regulations required review. Of those suggesting changes, the most common request was to consider adding grey teal to the game bird licence. Otago Fish & Game has already begun exploring this option nationally..</p>
Discussion/Analysis	<p>This is a continuation of the Triennial Review process. Two changes are proposed. These are increasing the bag limit of paradise ducks to 15 for both the main and Special Seasons, increasing from 12 and 5 respectively.</p> <p>Council has already approved these changes for consultation and received limited response from Stakeholders.</p>
Links to Previous Papers/Decisions	<p>251121 Game Gazette Update.docx</p> <p>250915 MC Game Gazette Triennial Review 2025.docx</p>
Attachments (if any)	
Recommendation	<p>That this report be received</p> <p>The proposed changes outlined in the Draft game gazette be confirmed, and provided to Fish and Game National Council for recommendation to the Minister.</p>

Decision Record	Moved by: Seconded by: Carried / Lost:
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Triennial Game Bird Regulation Review - Licence Holder Survey Feedback

Overview of Proposed Changes

Otago Fish & Game is proposing the following changes for the 2026 gamebird season:

1. Paradise Shelduck – Main Season

Increase the bag limit from 12 to 15 birds, effective from the first weekend in May 2026.

2. Paradise Shelduck – Special Season

Increase the nine-day special season bag limit from 5 to 15 birds, effective from the first weekend in March 2027, aligning it with the main season limit.

The current exemption will remain in place should the paradise shelduck moult count fall below 16,000, in which case the summer season would be cancelled.

Note:

Any changes to Paradise Shelduck bag limits are subject to the results of the January 2026 trend count flights and will only be implemented if the population exceeds 23,000 birds.

Licence Holder Consultation

A direct email and SurveyMonkey questionnaire were sent to Otago game bird licence holders outlining the proposed changes and inviting feedback. Licence holders were given the opportunity to comment on each proposed change as well as an open question regarding all of Otago's game bird regulations. A total of **208 licence holders** completed surveys in this part of the consultation process.

Results

1. Proposed change: Paradise Shelduck – Main Season:

Increase the bag limit from 12 to 15 birds, effective from the first weekend in May 2026.

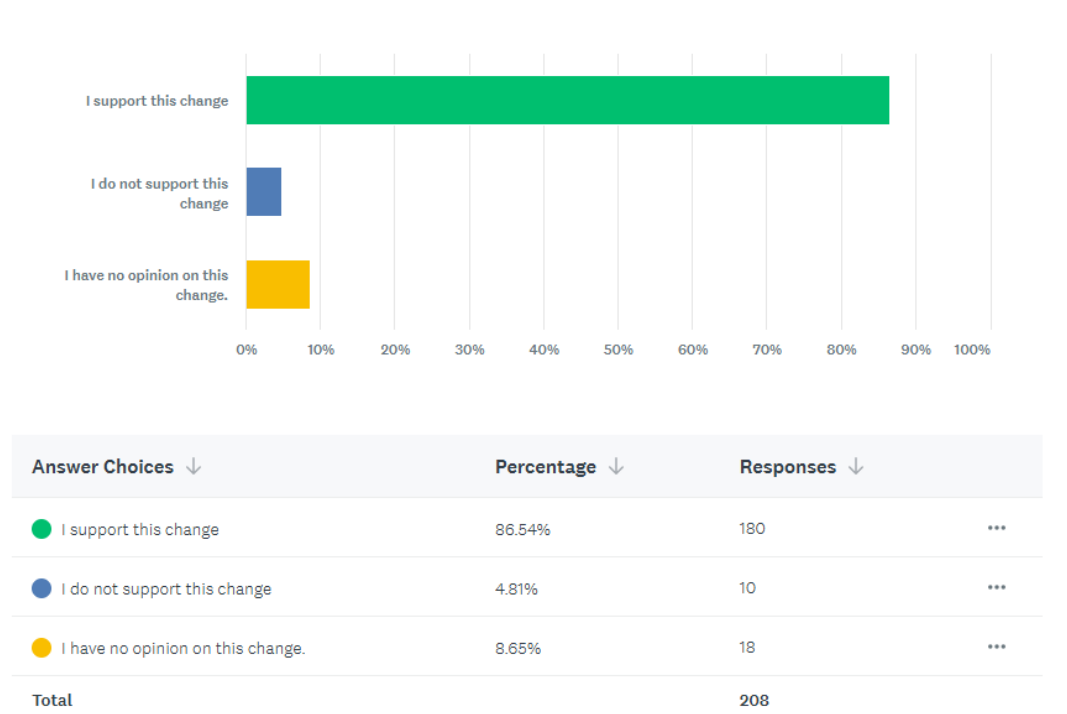


Figure 1: Responses from Otago gamebird licence holders to the proposed increase in the main season paradise shelduck bag limit from 12 to 15 birds.

Overall, there was a high level of support for increasing the main paradise shelduck season from 12 to 15 with 87% supporting the change, only 5% against the change, whilst 9% had no opinion on the matter. Licence holders were also invited to comment on why they did or did not support the change those changes are summarised below.

1.1 Summarised feedback supporting proposed change:

Licence holder feedback strongly supports increasing the paradise shelduck bag limit. Respondents consistently reported very high and increasing numbers across much of Otago, with strong breeding success and paradise shelduck now outnumbering mallards in several areas, including Central Otago, Maniototo, the Clutha Valley, Waiholā, the Taieri Plains, and Waikouaiti–Palmerston.

Territorial behaviour was a common concern, with paradise shelduck reported to displace mallards from ponds and wetlands during breeding, potentially reducing the breeding success of other waterfowl. At current densities, many respondents viewed paradise shelduck as overabundant and causing wider impacts.

Farm impacts were frequently noted, including grazing and fouling of pasture, crop damage, and large mobs congregating on paddocks. Increased irrigation and dairy farming were widely believed to be contributing to higher numbers through greater feed availability.

Many licence holders felt the current bag limit is insufficient and supported higher limits as an effective population management tool, particularly given that most harvest occurs on opening weekend. Increased recreational harvest was preferred over on-farm disturbance, which aligns with the Otago SFGMP. There was also concern that numbers could become unmanageable without proactive management.

Overall, respondents expressed strong confidence in Fish & Game's science-based approach and supported increased harvest to help manage populations, support farmers, and maintain hunting opportunity.

1.2 Summarised feedback against proposed change:

Some licence holders felt paradise duck numbers are low in certain areas, and a bag limit of 12 is sufficient, while others suggested higher limits of up to 20. Summer season hunting was generally preferred and particularly to include younger hunters. There were concerns that paradise duck breeding may be outpacing mallards, with the potential for them to become the dominant waterfowl species.

- 2. Proposed change:** Paradise Shelduck – Special Season: Increase the nine-day special season limit from 5 to 15 birds (from the first weekend in March 2027), aligning it with the main season limit

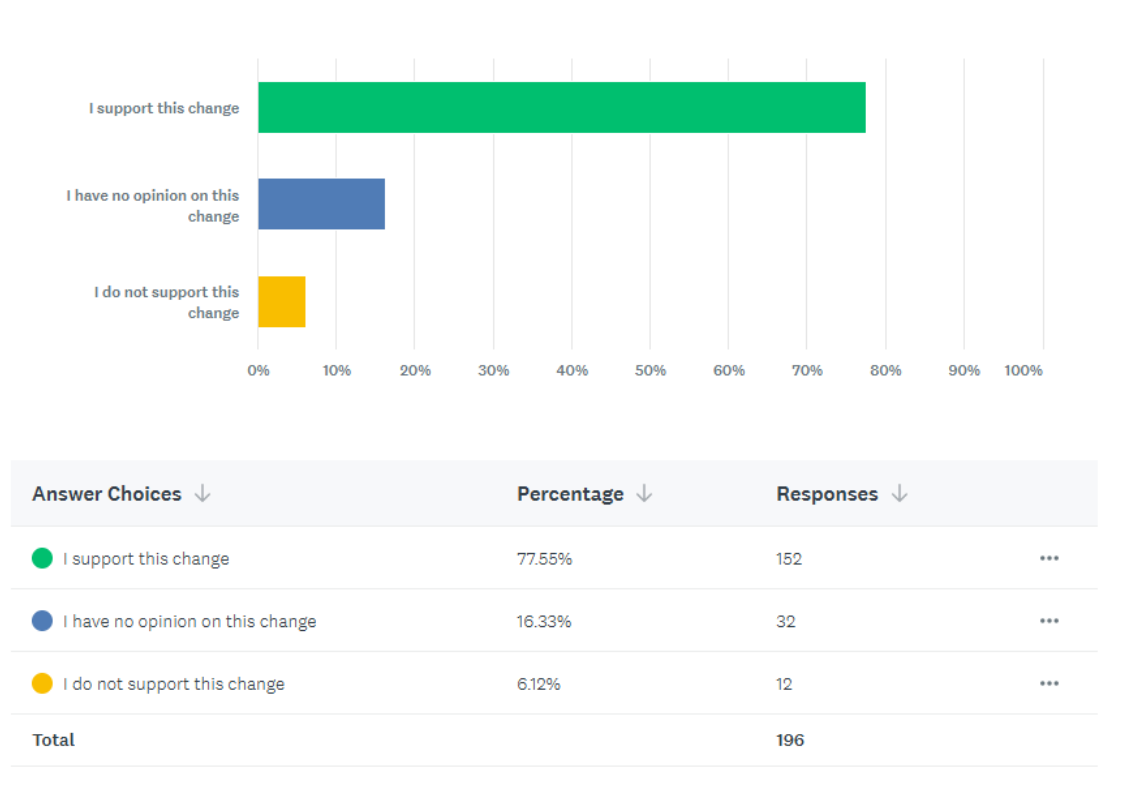


Figure 2: Responses from Otago gamebird licence holders to the proposed change to align the special season paradise shelduck bag limit with the main season bag limit.

Overall, there was a high level of support for increasing the special season paradise duck season bag limit from 5 to be in line with the main season bag limit with 78% supporting the change, only 6% against the change, whilst 16% had not opinion on the matter. Licence holders were also invited to comment on why they did or did not support the change those changes are summarised below.

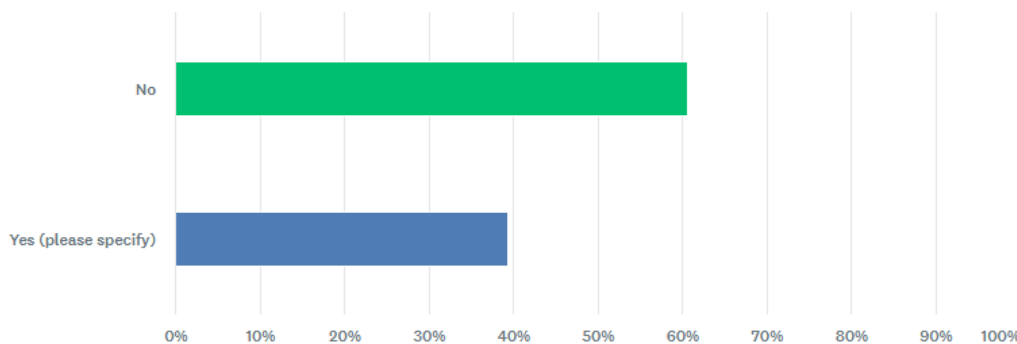
2.1 Summarised Feedback supporting proposed change:

Many respondents noted high and increasing paradise shelduck numbers, often describing them as “too many,” “everywhere,” or “plentiful.” Support for the proposed changes focused on population control, preventing shelduck from becoming pests, and reducing damage to farmland and crops, while helping hunters and farmers alike. Respondents generally trusted Otago Fish & Game’s data and science-based rationale, seeing the proposal as conservative and well-managed with safeguards if numbers change. Aligning summer and main season limits was widely considered sensible, simpler to understand, and easier to enforce. Many hunters felt current summer limits were too low to justify the effort, and higher or aligned limits would improve participation and provide a practical alternative to formal culls. At the same time, respondents emphasised maintaining a sustainable breeding population and noted additional benefits, such as better opportunities for youth hunters, guiding clients, and keeping shelduck on the game schedule rather than unmanaged.

2.2 Summarised Feedback Against proposed change:

Some respondents raised concerns about summer hunting, noting that high temperatures can cause birds to spoil quickly after being shot. There were also worries that summer shooting may disturb mallards, particularly during their breeding period. A few respondents felt that, regardless of the season structure, the bag limit could still be higher.

3. Are then any other Otago game bird regulations that you believe should be changed? Or reviewed?



Answer Choices ↓	Percentage ↓	Responses ↓
● No	60.62%	117
● Yes (please specify) Show responses	39.38%	76
Total		193

Figure 3: Responses from Otago game bird licence holders when asked whether there were any other regulations they believed should be changed or reviewed.

Of those surveyed, 61% of Otago game bird licence holders felt that no other regulations required review, while 39% indicated that there were regulations they thought should be reconsidered. Those who responded “yes” were asked to specify, and they provided feedback on a range of species and regulatory topics. Key points are summarized below.

3.1 Summary of regulations Otago game bird licence holders would like changed or reviewed.

Shoveler – Several respondents suggested increasing the bag limit back to 2 birds per person and allowing both hens and drakes to be taken. Some proposed removing shoveler from the bag entirely to make room for grey teal.

Grey Teal – Strong interest was expressed in adding grey teal to the game bird list, with suggested limits ranging from 1–2 birds per person or a small, area-specific take. Respondents noted teal populations are increasing and may impact mallard and shoveler breeding. Some cautioned about ecological risks and limited table value.

Pukeko – Many respondents noted rising pukeko numbers, suggesting adding them to the game bird list, potentially with no or a small bag limit. Observed impacts included damage to duck nests and crops.

Swans & Canada Geese – Support was noted for increasing black swan limits in areas of high density, and some respondents suggested returning Canada geese under Fish & Game management.

Season Timing & Duration – Feedback highlighted concerns that long or late seasons could interfere with breeding and result in heat-related spoilage. Suggestions included aligning seasons with other regions (e.g., CSI Fish & Game), focusing higher bag limits on opening weekends, and adjusting summer season timing for youth participation.

Licences & Participation – Licence holders suggested one-day or opening-weekend licences, reduced fees to encourage participation, and noted potential conflicts with Fish & Game acting as both regulator and licence issuer.

Shotgun & Ammunition Regulations – Some support was expressed for lead shot in small gauges (20 gauge, .410) for teaching children, citing humane concerns with steel shot for certain applications.

Bag Limits & Harvest Adjustments – Respondents proposed species-specific changes, including:

- Mallard: maintain opening weekend limit (25), reduce post-opening to 10–15.
- Shoveler: restore low limits.
- Teal: 1–2 birds per person in select areas.
- Paradise duck: maintain or increase limits to manage populations.
- Quail: current limit (10) considered low.

General Observations – Hunters reported increasing populations of teal, pukeko, paradise ducks, and swans, with associated impacts on habitats, crops, and other species' breeding. There was broad support for using bag limits as a preferred approach to population management.

Staff response to feedback:

Adding grey teal to the game bird licence was the most frequently mentioned regulation change Otago licence holders would like reviewed, with 29 of the 76 respondents raising teal. Otago Fish and Game Council has already approached other regions and is currently gauging NZC interest in adding grey teal to the licence (Hadland 2025), due to the complexity of the process it is not viable to add grey teal during this review instead targeting 2027 game bird season is a better option.

The introduction of a small pūkeko bag limit was also mentioned; however, current monitoring does not show a sufficient population increase to support this change, and it is not considered viable at this time.

There was limited mention of increasing the shoveler limit back to two birds of either sex, as well as comments relating to black swan numbers in Area A (Clutha Catchment above Clyde). Both species will continue to be monitored, and if populations reach levels that the Council believes can support harvest, changes to bag limits are likely to be considered, but are not being considered at this time.

Mason Court
Otago Fish and Game Officer
12/01/2026

Appendix 1: *Otago game bird licence holder comments supporting increasing main season paradise shelduck bag limit from 12 to 15*

Optional: Why do you support increasing the main season paradise shelduck limit from 12 to 15?
Because we shoot more paradise ducks then other waterfowl species
Most duck hunters shoot the opening weekend, would keep the numbers down if bag limit is increased
Damage to farms
Have noticed increased numbers in comparison to mallards
should be unlimited as parries are a pest to other bird life, keeping mallards off ponds at breeding times
There's plenty about. With increased dairy there's more grass for them
They drive away the Mallards from ponds during the nesting season. We only shoot the pond during open season but see very few paries as they tend to stick to the crop paddocks.
The increase in numbers
A lot of birds about.
Number are high
In the Waikouaiti - Palmerston area there appears to be more Paridishelduck than Mallard (even allowing for last years botulism/flue) Twice in the last 5 seasons we have been asked by local farmers to shoot up mobs feeding in their paddocks or attacking new crops of lucerne.
Has been an obvious increase in parry numbers over recent years
There's heaps of them around
Don't know
Too control numbers within the required band

They are grazers, which can get through a lot of farmers grass and also foul the paddocks while grazing.
High Population
To keep the number at a sustainable level and so that they don't they don't become a pest.
There seems a lot around as the counts reveal.
Keep no down
I am happy to trust the statistics.
They are everywhere. To many of them
Overpopulation Great shooting for the Summer shooters for learners in March
Number management
Their numbers are increasing
theres plenty around here
They may breed up like the geese
Agree with Rationale provided by Otago F & G Council.
They are in ever increasing numbers
Bigger mobs do more damage
Because they're building up in big numbers
There seems to be large numbers of them.
with more feed about in tis area there are plenty of birds
The change follows evidence and increases hunting opportunity
Numbers appear good
The game bird managers will obtain more information on the impact of increasing tag limits as a tool for population control of Shelduck
seems a heap around in my area
it makes more sense to let the licence holders shoot more paradise ducks rather than farmers eliminating them with rifles.
There are more around so more to harvest
There seems to an abundance of them about
Population control
Observed increase population on farm, most pairs successfully raising a brood
year on year population increases require a greater bag limit to control numbers.
To control population growth
population is robust enough to take extra
The numbers need to decrease in Central Otago. I have also witnessed them being aggressive and chasing mallards off our pond.
In many areas the population is high and could easily withstand a higher harvest. Would appeal to farmers in areas where there are lots of parries.
I shoot in the Maniototo area, as irrigation has increased so have the number or Paradise ducks. The limit in this area could be higher than 15
to keep numbers under good management
Parry's are predominant on the waters I shoot so I would like to have a larger bag limit to help justify the expense when numbers are high.
There are way too many around
I have noticed significant increase in numbers

With higher numbers it is important to not let the Shelduck get out of control, as we have seen with Canada goose numbers. Although these are native birds they still need to be managed. Unmanaged game birds (Canada geese) can cause many challenges for society.
No's are increasing rapidly. Grazing land pollution Call compromises deer hunting
They are a pest
Shitloads everywhere
To keep numbers of a pest lower
Pest
Keep numbes down
They are a pain in the arse, increase it to no limit
As the statistics show there has been an increase in shield duck numbers, plus there a pain in the ass when deer hunting. Lol
Because there are far to many and are doing damage on farm crops
I believe the population can stand an increased harvest.
Numbers of birds support this
Numbers are well up on previous years
I trust your survey and advice
They are overpopulated
There's to many on farms doing damage they are a pest around here
The area I shoot is mainly paradise
Too many birds that are too territorial and they're driving Mallards out of the habitat
Too many around. We need to control the amount that are able to multiply
Noticed more parties in our area over past few years
The numbers should be reduced as there is a rapid growing number
Too many paradise ducks around
There is an increasing population of them and farmers are having to deal with these numbers particularly eating Autumn pasture and also during crop establishment
They are a pest
They are a pest in my mind and numbers need to be reduced.
help out farmers
Numbers are supported by observations and crop damage on farm
Numbers are steadily increasing and they cause a lot of damage to crops
This years opening day I could of shot 100 parries before 8am. like you say there are plenty of them around.
In the areas I hunt the paradise duck numbers are abundant. There territorial dominance of ponds while breeding could be affecting the ability of other duck species to breed if the paradise numbers are too high during a dry breeding season.
Because of the large number of paradise shelducks present
Lots of parties where we shoot. Will help to reduce these birds. Science seems sound. Happy to reduce again if the numbers change
15 is not enough when hundreds congregate on a young grass paddock
Without your counts I could see the local population had increased a lot and i believe they push mallards out so a reduction in numbers is very appropriate. Actually I feel an extended or second season would be more effective.
Clear scientific data supports population control pressure being increased

There are far too many birds about
They're very territorial and are taking over the water ways in the Maniototo
Heaps of them Otago
They need kept in check as they are not a high demand bird and some shooters don't bother shooting them ,they are more of a nuisance
Reduce their numbers before DOC steps in
Very high numbers in the clutha valley area
There seem to be a lot around and they don't get shot as much on opening as the head to the big water
Because they are becoming a pest on farms with ruining crops and grass paddocks
Plenty of parries
For population control
There numbers seem to be on the increase. If the limit is high and more are harvested it would make more sense to do it early and keep on top rather than chase to reduce numbers latter. If there is a bird fly a lower populatin would reduce risk of spreading also. Wouldnt it ?
Wait see how numbers stack up next year
There are huge numbers where I shoot. On an opening morning shoot we probably see 800 or something crazy.
overe supply of shelduck
There are to many
Many farmers need parries controlled and a more liberal bag limit means hunters may be more likely to organize hunts
There's lot around
To control numbers and not let them end up off the schedule.
Pests
The numbers are increasing
To many off them around now
Because there is way to Many of them
Because there are to many parties around
I see very high numbers throughout various places and believe this number should be 20 so I fully support this
Shelducks make up the bulk of gamebirds in central otago, and most definitely need a limit increase to keep numbers under control
Numbers are building fast around the Waihola area
To help keep paradise ducks under control to stop getting to pest levels
Meat in the freezer
Huge numbers
The numbers of paradise ducks has increased a lot in my opinion
If counts are high I support an increase as they can cause problems with farmers especially young birds mobbed up
Appears to be a large number of these birds around and increasing the limit will improve the hunting experience
There are areas of very high numbers that cause headaches to farmers and we should be more supportive and allow proper control of high populated areas
Population has very visually obviously increased.

There's plenty around
If numbers are high, increasing bag limit will enable shooters to conduct better conservation work by removing greater numbers from the area
To many of those squawking bloody things
Need to reduce numbers overall.
Too many birds
Because they are taking over the lakes, rivers, and water troughs
Could go higher seems to be a lot around
Too many paradise ducks around
Too many ducks can have adverse effects especially on water quality and crops
I fill my parry bag every opening day multiple years I've also filled it by choosing females only
Breeding numbers
More paradise than mallards around in east Otago area from my experience hunting regularly in that area
There seem to be a lot of parries breeding around the Maniototo where I shoot.
There is a lot more around than in the last few seasons
Limited hunted bird compared to Mallards, the option to harvest more birds on the day makes up for those whom refuse to shoot them as they don't harvest the meat which leads to more pairs of birds.
Simply due to the sheer numbers. It's clear an increase would not harm future populations.
We have 100 often on our paddocks
Gives more food options for the other mallards
I personally have seen the number increase around the taieri plains area . I'd like to see it increased more if I'm honest as I'm always hearing about farmers having issues with them year round !
The bird nos are increasing year in year for this species and need to be controlled more. I work in the ag sector and see first hand the damage they can cause. Most bird hunters only hunt opening weekend and the amount harvested need to be more.
Plenty of Paradise ducks around and it would help With Mallard numbers if the paradise ducks were reduced
Numbers have increased
It is obvious that numbers are increasing and are an issue to farmers

Appendix 2: Otago game bird licence holder comments against increasing main season paradise shelduck bag limits from 12 to 15.

Optional: Why do you not support increasing the main season paradise shelduck limit from 12 to 15?
in my area not a lot paradise ducks
12 paradise ducks is plenty
I think utilizing the summer season is a better option. In my experience, it is a good time to introduce young ones into it. This would work better if Fish & Game got there dates right so it was two weekends as well.

The paradise duck breeding trend is starting to outpace mallards. It would be ashamed to find the paradise bred have become the dominant population. They are great to hunt but they don't taste any good.

It should be 20

It should be higher, possibly up to 20.

Because they are a pest in big numbers worse than Canada geese

Appendix 3: Otago game bird licence holder comments supporting increasing special season paradise shelduck bag limits

Optional: Why do you support increasing the special season paradise shelduck limit to align with the main season limit of 12 or 15.

Because there are heaps of young ducks around that do a lot of damage to farmland

For the reasons outlined in your presentation

To help control numbers

some areas have greater numbers than my area

Well it seems good

I'm not even aware of the special season rules as they stand now

Hunting the summer season with the low limit in place now is not worth the effort to hunt

As stated it makes administration and compliance easier

A lot of birds about.

It stops confusing with different limits at different times of year.

Too many around

More birds to shoot.

To keep numbers at a sustainable number and that they don't become a pest

Again, happy to trust the statistics.

Plenty of them.

Simplifying seasonal limits is a sensible idea

Agree with Rationale provided by Otago F & G Council.

Same as previous Question

Good way of controlling more birds

Because it gives shooters a better opportunity to control numbers rather than a cull

Because of the increase in bird population

I don't believe the summer season is widely used

Follows evidence and increases hunting opportunities

It makes sense

The information gained from the change in limits and the seasonal structure will be very helpful in managing shelduck going forward.

good conservative approach

simplifies regulations, makes it more worthwhile to get out for a summer season shoot

to control population

Gives a measured option to apply some pressure to birds if they are causing agricultural damage, without requiring a permit

same reasons Parry's are predominant on the waters I shoot so I would like to have a larger bag limit to help justify the expense when numbers are high.

To controll numbers
I can see myself the amount of shelduck increasing
I did port the removal of the summer season for the same reason I support the daily bag increase - if the numbers drop to far the shelduck could loose minimum breeding population and disappear. This is especially true when they will compete for territory with the introduced Canada goose and Mallard ducks
Go back to reasons given before
Far too many of these ducks
As above
If people are out hunting for mallards Then they should be able to shoot more Paris.
Proposal makes sense
Just told you
Too many birds and less mallards
Increase the same as others
Keeps population at sustainable number
It helps maintain a sustainable population of duck breeds
The numbers need to come down
The number seen around is growing and I believe they need to be lowered, when hunting you could easily shoot more than the bag limit but are unable to
Birds causing damage to farmland
help out farmers
Keep it the same as proven with numbers
Far to many birds
It is a common sense approach
Supported by science with a built in backstop of things change.
another oppportunity to cull big numbers congregating on a young grass paddock
As per my last answer
To eliminate them as pests
To many
Plenty of birds around
Reduce their numbers before DOC steps in
Same reason
I agreed with the statment you made to it.
There's too many around
makes sense to align
To control the numbers
Same reason.Control of what has become a thorn in some farmers operations
Easier to remember limits if special and main seasons are same
To control population and keep them on the game schedule
Agreed
Increase in numbers
Having a summer season Makes other ducks more wary come proper season
I believe to reasoning behind it to be sound
It makes sense to keep it in line with the regular season
They numbers need to be kept in check

I'm all for maintaining a stable population but it's more supporting farmers that have huge numbers and allow them to hit these areas harder. No point having 16000 limit and all in one place
Because of the population, because of the opportunity it creates for license holders
Making these bag limits the same helps to remove confusion among shooters as it doesn't matter when they hunt, it's the same bag limit. Higher limit enables shooters the better ability to do conservation work by removing greater numbers while imposing the bottom number threshold helps to prevent numbers being dropped too low.
As in previous answer ,they are everywhere
Same reason
Pest control for farmers
More birds need to be culled the five bird limit in summer is a joke takes longer to set up than to get the five
Numbers are numbers. If the number of birds will support an short season for youth it should be supported.
We have hunting clients who are interested in hunting these paradise often they have pin feathers so some times we need a few to day a good one for montig
Don't shoot summer season in otago as its not worth setting up for. So bigger limits in main season suits
Around the time we have this special season they are plentiful on the crop paddocks
Same reason as I mentioned before
Numbers have increased

Appendix 4: Comments against increasing special season paradise duck limits

Optional: Why do you not support increasing the special season paradise shelduck limit to align with the main season limit of 12 or 15.
for same reason
the special season in my view is not ideal mainly because the heat at that time of year is to severe and any birds shot will not last long before they go off.
Gives us more chances to get out hunting with the longer season
I have never and never will support a special season to shoot Parries.It disturbs the Mallards.
See previous answer, could be higher
I do support it
Because birds go off alot easier in the summer

Appendix 5: Feedback received when asked if there were any Otago regulations licence holders would like reviewed or changed (grouped for ease of reading)

Paradise Shelduck
The season for Paris should align with CSI Fish and Game east of the main highway.
as mentioned i feel the bag limit should be 20
Mallard

Reduce bsg to 20
Should bring in limits that reflect the birds sex I.e a bag limit of 15 green heads but only 5 hens would be a sensible approach to maintain or increase mallard numbers.
Stop the mallard season mid July and the quail season in mid August and both species appear the be pairing up for mating before the end of each season
Increase in daily bag number for opening weekend only. Maybe 10 more birds per person.
Mallard bag limit should be changed also . Opening weekend limit to stay the same 25 birds per person after opening weekend I'd like to see it drop to 15 or even 10
Shoveller
Change the spoonie limit back to 2 per person and both hens and drakes instead of drakes only
Spoonie limit should be changed to one pair rather than one drake.
I would like to see hen shoveler back on the list. Possibly a one bird season limit. Likewise, a low pukeko bag would be good . I woldn't think many would be harvested but it would be another opportunity.
Protect spoonbills & shovellers, but put teal on the list. I frequently see mobs of 30 or more teal but rarely see spoonies or shovellers.
Spoonbill needs taken off the game bird bag . And replace them with teal
Look after the spoonies coolest duck out
Grey Teal
Teal myself and many others all believe and get inundated by them every year which I feel it affects the real ducks dropping in
Do not add scaup or teal to the bag limit.
Could teal be added ?
possibly look at the teal situation
Introduce Grey Teal onto the licence
Is it time to add teal to the harvest? Maybe a small number?
grey teal not on liscence BUT should be allowed by catch
look into a limited take of Teal
The teal duck nos are increasing
There should be a limit on teal.
A small limit for the plentiful teal
teal. allow some
Allow 2 grey teal.
Pukeho and teal
Protect spoonbills & shovellers, but put teal on the list. I frequently see mobs of 30 or more teal but rarely see spoonies or shovellers.
Allow some harvesting of grey teal where populations are robust
Teal season seems to be a lot around
Grey teal there numbers in central Otago have significantly increased over the years I think a bag limit of 2 birds is reasonable
If population numbers are sufficient - allow a limited number of Teal to be taken
Only the brown teal addition in Maniototo (have read all the requirements needed so unlikely to happen)

Spoonbill needs taken off the game bird bag . And replace them with teal
Teal on game list
grey teal included
Teal need to be added they are taking over shoveler breeding grounds
Teal there's heaps
Remove teal as a gamebird: They are very small eating-wise, and I see little point in shooting them just for target practice. There'll always be a few mistakenly shot which will keep numbers down if needed, BUT there is a big risk of killing brown teal in the few areas where they are surviving.
There seem to be a lot of Teal around ... Open a season on them
Pukekho and teal should be on the game bird list
Black Swan
Swan limit. Certain big water areas have large numbers of swans
Add a black swan bag to area a
Possibly Black swan
Swan back on the game list
more swans
Scaup
Scaup
New Zealand scaup to the Otago game bird regulations.
Pukeko
Pukekoes are ever increasing
Pukeko should also be no limit
Pukeko should be on the bird license as I've found more and more turning up and have found they are smashing duck nests
Pukeho and teal
Pukekho
Pukekho and teal should be on the game bird list
Pukeko numbers to go up to
Upland Game
pheasant shoot as we used to have
Stop the mallard season mid July and the quail season in mid August and both species appear the be pairing up for mating before the end of each season
Hunting in doc land for chukar should be free to access
Quail limit of 10 per day is hopeless as well. It's a bit in organising a hunt and expense getting a team together all for only 10 birds. I feel with low limits you are only encouraging more people to remain at home. Need to have a serious look at 'limits' especially areas where bird numbers are so high. With cost of living getting to stupid levels I've already seen far fewer people out there doing it. You will get good numbers on opening weekend for sure but then very few throughout the season.
Canada geese
Do whatever is possible to reduce the goose population
Canada geese on the increase

Canada goose should be back under fish and game
Licensing
Special opening weeked license for us that travel far and only shoot that weekend
License fee
One day licence
Reduce the cost of the license , people are giving up because it is so dear
sub guage
lead shot for sub gauge shot guns to teach kids hunting
Steel shot in sub grade shotguns. Not being able to introduce children to shooting via a 20 gauge or .410 is stupid. Using steel in these guns is not humane.
Other
Southland
I shot in southland but buy licence vir otago
I do not beleive that the fish and game council should be in charge of licencing, you can either be a lobby group or a licence issuer, not both.
Bird numbers on the Maniototo have dropped over the last three openings, environment has changed and weather pattern also effecting opening day.
Used to be able to use mother's on boats to navigate but not pursue birds. This made it safe and viable to shot the Clutha river.

8.0 Public Excluded Items

8.1 Draft Public Excluded Minutes from 2nd December 2025

8.2 Risk Management Report

8.3 Friends of Bullock Creek Agreement

8.4 Cromwell Office upgrade proposal

8.5 Otago Fish and Game Council Staffing

9.0 Financial Report

Finance and Licence Sales to 31st December 2025

9.1 Finance Reports

The financial Profit and Loss report and Balance Sheet for the period from 1st September 2025 to 31st December 2025 for the 2025/26 financial year are below.

Profit and Loss

Income

Licence Income

Fish licence revenue from the profit and loss statement 31st December 2025 totals \$1,738,561 (Fish sales \$1,720,257 + Designated Water licence \$18,304. The budget for fish licence sales is \$2,099,760 for the full year.

Central South Island Fish and Game and North Canterbury Fish and Game's Councils have a sea run Salmon Endorsement Project. We have sold 296 Sea Run Salmon endorsements with a value of \$1,287 (GST excl). These funds will be returned to them at years end.

All designated water funds from other regions \$2,135 (GST excl) sold by Otago region will be distributed to regions and ours returned at the end of the season.

Other Income

Total other income to 31st December 2025 is \$12,409.

Areas of interest are:

- Interest – Accrual interest from our end of year has been removed and will be applied at the time it is paid out.
- Rent Received is from yard lease in Cromwell
- Donations are shown below.
- Diversion – Is income from compliance

Donations and Grants (not in budget)

Donation/Grant from	For	Amount GST excl
Otago Community Trust	Take A Kid Fishing	\$2,362
Total		\$2,362

Expenses

Expenditure at the 31st December for the 2025/26 financial year is \$978,528 against a year-to-date budget of \$936,433.

The main reasons for any variances against budget are:

- Species Management – Hatchery expenses had a large food fish order.
- Participation – Our events for TAKF and soft bait fishing classes look over spent but we received a donation from Otago Community Trust grant of \$2,362 towards Take A Kid Fishing costs.
- Public Interface – Communications Strategy comes from a reserve.
- Licencing – Commission is made up from 5% agent sales commission and bank fees associated with online sales.
- Planning and Reporting – Accountancy assistance and the audit, slightly over budget and extra costs being contested.
- Over Heads/Administration - Salaries include accrued holiday pay.
Office premises – Includes two months office expenses in Dunedin and rental of Dunedin storage area, insurances, power, rates and general office maintenance.
General Expenses – includes bank charges, risk insurance, subscriptions and general legal advice on FOBC.
- Approved Reserves Expenses - \$44,990. This is expenditure approved by the council from the Bendigo, and Otago Property Reserves. Council agreed \$44,000 on fitout of the new Mosgiel building from Otago Property Reserves.
- Depreciation – Depreciation year to date is \$19,235
- Levies to NZC – paid monthly to NZC as per budget. \$94,951 (gst excl) monthly.

The profit and loss for the 4 months ended 31st December 2025 shows a surplus of \$722,606.

Balance Sheet

Bank Funds Position at 31st December 2025

Bank	Value
ANZ 00 Account	\$131,288.95
ANZ 70 Account	\$836,306.30
ASB Account	\$35.57
Cash On Hand	\$50.00
Total	\$967,680.82.

Term Investments as at 31st December 2025

Investment Bank	Amount	Rate	Maturity
ANZ 1002/1006	\$416,890.98	3.75%	22 th Sept 2026
ANZ 1005	\$504,978.08	3.95%	9 th February 2026
ASB 81	\$217,369.77	4.00%	2 nd February 2026
ASB 82	\$527,551.67	3.90%	10 th March 2026
Total	\$1,666,790.50		

Fixed Assets and Capital Expenditure

\$5,403.83 remained from the previous year asset replacement fund, \$27,553 extra was budgeted for 2025/26. All asset expenses this year have been from the Otago Reserve associated with the building and set up of the new office. So the asset replacement fund total at 31st December 2025 is \$32,956.83

Note: Land and building transactions are not part of the asset replacement fund.

Liabilities

Total Liabilities at 31st December are \$203,580.

- Accounts payable is generally expenses.
- Other payables include visa card spending, income in advance reversals.
- Employee Entitlements includes \$69,434 of outstanding leave.

Debtors

No doubtful debts from agents.

No doubtful debts in the general accounts

Equity

Otago Fish and Game Reserves 31st December 2025

Otago Reserves Movements	Balance 1 st September 2025	Income (To) Reserve	Note	Outgoing (From) Reserve	Balance 31 st December 2025
Non-resident DW Levy	\$342,084	\$18,304	1	\$11,553	\$348,835
Habitat Enhancement & Research	\$23,522	\$1,650	2	\$0.0	\$25,172
Bullock Creek Reserve Restricted Reserve	\$26	\$0	3	\$15	\$11
Bendigo Reserve Restricted Reserve	\$32,812	\$0	8	\$3,813	\$28,999
Priority Consents Reserve	\$34,190	\$0	7	\$0	\$34,190
Otago Property Reserves	\$1,759,690	\$0	4	\$225,167	\$1,534,523
Priority Plan Changes	\$19,080	\$0	6	\$0.0	\$19,080
Communications Strategy	\$68,887	\$0.0	5	\$443	\$68,444
Total	\$2,280,291	\$19,954		\$240,991	\$2,059,254

Note 1 Income is from designated water licence sales. \$5000 a year for five years for the Dr Donald Scott University Fund. Agreed by Council September 2025 2025/26 is the first payment. 2025/26 Budget allows for \$18,000 for designated waters monitoring and drift dives.

Note 2 Balance is \$25,172. Less committed but not yet paid out of \$4,000 so balance of \$21,172 available for dispersal by way of grants.

Note 3 Bullock Creek Reserve fund is now largely expended and will be closed

Note 4 Otago Property Reserve – Funds from historical and recent property sales, dedicated to acquiring and maintaining land and building assets in Otago. Recent increase from sale of Wanaka section. Approved Council spending on finishing build and fitout of new Mosgiel office and final 3 months rent for the old office.

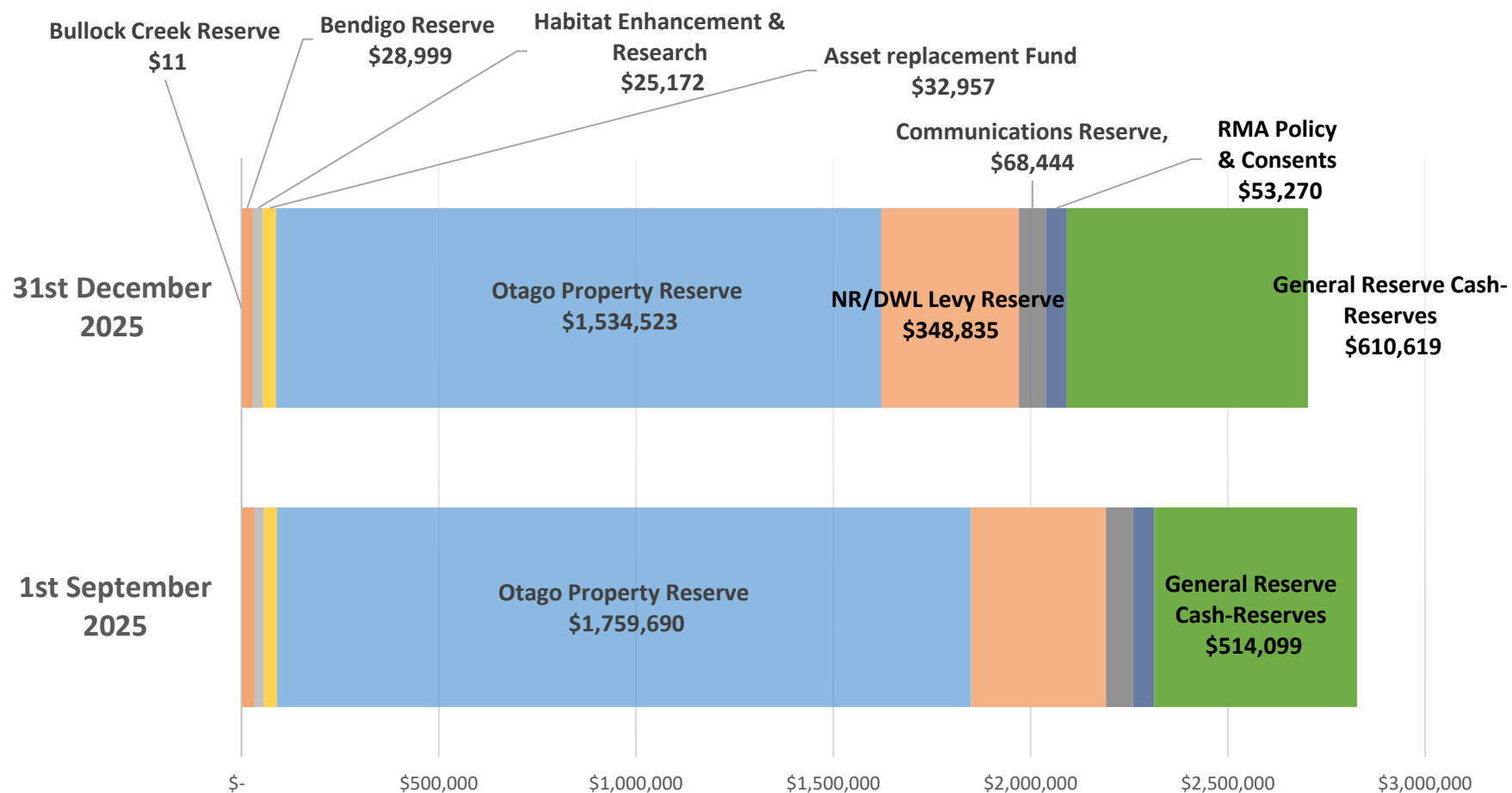
Note 5 Communications Strategy - Council approved September 2024.

Note 6 OF&GC agreed to \$120,000. This reserve is not required now and has been agreed by council (May 2024) to be used by Regional Policy Statement.

Note 7 OF&GC agreed to \$60,000 May 2020. This reserve is not required now and has been agreed by council (May 2024) to be used on Regional Policy Statement work.

Note 8 Bendigo Reserve: May 2022 start by Council to support restoration work in the Bendigo Wetland

MOVEMENT IN RESERVES FROM 1ST SEPTEMBER 2025 TO 31ST DECEMBER 2025



Profit and Loss

Otago Fish and Game Council For the 2 months ended 31 December 2025

	NOV 2025	DEC 2025	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	VARIANCE	% OF YTD BUDGET	ANNUAL BUDGET	LAST YEAR
Income								
Licence Sales								
Fish Licence Sales	297,677	370,970	1,720,257	1,532,127	188,130	112%	2,099,760	2,114,618
Designated Water Licence Sales	4,717	5,878	18,304	-	18,304	-	-	44,972
Game Licence Sales	9	38	163	-	163	-	378,655	414,537
Total Licence Sales	302,403	376,886	1,738,724	1,532,127	206,597	113%	2,478,415	2,574,126
Other Income								
Wages Reimbursement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,691
Clutha Mata-Au Trust	-	-	-	-	-	-	30,000	93,296
Interest Income	5,242	321	5,462	8,436	(2,974)	65%	25,308	67,612
Interest Income Building	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,527
Fines - Fishing & Game Offences	-	-	-	164	(164)	-	500	-
Rent Received	500	500	2,000	2,500	(500)	80%	7,508	7,311
Fishing Competitions	224	-	224	-	224	-	-	1,287
Depreciation Recovered on Sale of Fixed Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22,751
Donations ,bequests and other Fundraising	-	-	2,362	-	2,362	-	-	18,938
RMA Costs Reimbursed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,537
Sundry Income	282	256	711	-	711	-	-	1,235
Diversion - Habitat Enhancement and Research Fund	-	-	1,650	-	1,650	-	-	3,830
Total Other Income	6,248	1,077	12,409	11,100	1,309	112%	63,316	262,016
Capital Gains on Sale of Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,390,784
Total Income	308,651	377,963	1,751,134	1,543,227	207,907	113%	2,541,731	4,226,927

	NOV 2025	DEC 2025	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	VARIANCE	% OF YTD BUDGET	ANNUAL BUDGET	LAST YEAR
Gross Profit	308,651	377,963	1,751,134	1,543,227	207,907	113%	2,541,731	4,226,927
Expenses								
Species Management								
Population Monitoring								
Waterfowl Monitoring	-	-	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	10,000	7,719
Spawning Surveys	-	-	-	1,250	(1,250)	-	2,500	-
Fisheries Monitoring	-	-	-	3,000	(3,000)	-	6,000	4,517
Drift Diving	-	3,663	3,663	4,125	(462)	89%	5,500	-
Total Population Monitoring	-	3,663	3,663	10,875	(7,212)	34%	24,000	12,236
Monitor key fisheries/Research Liaison	-	-	-	250	(250)	-	1,000	-
Harvest Assessment	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,000	-
Hatchery Operations	3,779	120	3,943	3,332	611	118%	10,000	1,462
Species Interaction	-	-	-	1,680	(1,680)	-	5,000	-
Releases	405	-	565	664	(99)	85%	1,000	870
Game Bird Control compliants	-	-	-	250	(250)	-	1,000	68
Total Species Management	4,184	3,784	8,172	17,051	(8,879)	48%	43,000	14,636
Habitat Protection & Mngt								
Clutha Mata-Au Trust expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,113
Resource Mngt Act	-	-	-	332	(332)	-	1,000	21,718
Works & Management	495	1,155	1,650	3,332	(1,682)	50%	10,000	7,271
Wetland Training Event	-	-	-	332	(332)	-	1,000	-
Assisted Habitat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	170
Habitat Enhancement Research Fund Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,870
Total Habitat Protection & Mngt	495	1,155	1,650	3,996	(2,346)	41%	12,000	80,142
Participation								

	NOV 2025	DEC 2025	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	VARIANCE	% OF YTD BUDGET	ANNUAL BUDGET	LAST YEAR
Access and Signage	398	186	585	1,328	(743)	44%	4,000	2,416
Back Country Surveys/Monitoring	2,890	-	2,890	3,332	(442)	87%	10,000	12,801
Promotion Articles and Advertising	-	-	-	1,200	(1,200)	-	6,000	-
Publications and Web Site	-	624	624	-	624	-	-	120
OF&G Training Events	811	87	2,969	1,600	1,369	186%	2,000	2,796
Club Relations and Grants	-	-	-	332	(332)	-	1,000	1,975
Wetland Reserve Ballots	-	45	45	-	45	-	-	-
Fish and Game Huts	43	40	83	400	(317)	21%	2,000	-
Total Participation	4,143	982	7,197	8,192	(995)	88%	25,000	20,108
PUBLIC INTERFACE								
Liaison								
Liaison DoC Unin Govt CFT IWI	-	-	-	332	(332)	-	1,000	63
Total Liaison	-	-	-	332	(332)	-	1,000	63
Communication								
World Wetlands	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	164
Total Communication	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	164
Media Releases								
Advocacy Statutory	-	-	-	164	(164)	-	500	-
Weekly Fishing Reports/ social media	560	420	1,995	2,332	(337)	86%	7,000	5,460
Communications Strategy	15	600	833	-	833	-	-	2,415
Total Media Releases	575	1,020	2,828	2,496	332	113%	7,500	7,875
Total PUBLIC INTERFACE	575	1,020	2,828	2,828	-	100%	8,700	8,101
COMPLIANCE								
Ranger Training and Expenses	91	283	473	3,500	(3,027)	14%	5,500	2,282

	NOV 2025	DEC 2025	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	VARIANCE	% OF YTD BUDGET	ANNUAL BUDGET	LAST YEAR
Compliance	-	-	-	500	(500)	-	10,000	-
Total COMPLIANCE	91	283	473	4,000	(3,527)	12%	15,500	2,282
LICENCING								
Agent Servicing	21	-	122	164	(42)	74%	500	137
Commission/Fees	9,673	11,945	55,709	49,566	6,143	112%	99,132	89,227
Total LICENCING	9,694	11,945	55,831	49,730	6,101	112%	99,632	89,363
COUNCIL								
Council Meetings and Agendas	36	4,447	5,758	5,666	92	102%	17,000	18,511
Total COUNCIL	36	4,447	5,758	5,666	92	102%	17,000	18,511
PLANNING & REPORTING								
Reporting/Audit	13,928	-	20,260	19,650	610	103%	19,650	22,546
National Liason	-	-	-	164	(164)	-	500	286
Total PLANNING & REPORTING	13,928	-	20,260	19,814	446	102%	20,150	22,832
ADMINISTRATION								
Salaries	80,214	80,802	333,273	328,152	5,121	102%	984,469	913,870
Staff Expenses								
ACC Levy	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,500	2,763
Fringe Benefit Tax	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,000	10,126
Staff Training	1,723	117	1,957	3,332	(1,375)	59%	10,000	8,367
Staff Clothing Branded	-	160	160	332	(172)	48%	1,000	1,581
Staff Expenses	368	1,166	2,797	3,150	(353)	89%	9,000	7,404
Staff Employment Expenses	-	-	-	664	(664)	-	2,000	7,458
Total Staff Expenses	2,091	1,443	4,914	7,478	(2,564)	66%	32,500	37,698
Office Premices	15,098	1,159	53,073	71,410	(18,337)	74%	100,791	187,871
Office Equipemnt	113	45	485	996	(511)	49%	3,000	2,877
Communications	1,453	1,806	6,319	7,096	(777)	89%	21,300	18,007

	NOV 2025	DEC 2025	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	VARIANCE	% OF YTD BUDGET	ANNUAL BUDGET	LAST YEAR
General Exp (incl Insurance)	82	32	4,013	2,796	1,217	144%	6,600	10,547
General Field Equipment	217	-	682	1,764	(1,082)	39%	5,300	2,091
Vehicles	3,290	1,500	24,571	25,664	(1,093)	96%	55,000	46,588
Total ADMINISTRATION	102,557	86,788	427,331	445,356	(18,025)	96%	1,208,960	1,219,549
Approved Reserve Expense	5,618	8,778	44,990	-	44,990	-	-	47,113
Depreciation	4,606	4,606	19,235	-	19,235	-	-	55,531
Loss on Disposal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37,342
NZ Fish & Game Levies	94,951	94,951	379,803	379,800	3	100%	1,139,410	1,205,887
University of Otago Research Grant	-	-	5,000	-	5,000	-	-	5,000
Total Expenses	240,878	218,739	978,528	936,433	42,095	104%	2,589,352	2,826,398
Net Profit	67,773	159,224	772,606	606,794	165,812	127%	(47,621)	1,400,528

Balance Sheet

Otago Fish and Game Council As at 31 December 2025

	31 DEC 2025	31 AUG 2025
Assets		
Current Assets		
Bank	967,681	1,314,597
Receivables		
Accounts Receivable	548,138	27,486
Total Receivables	548,138	27,486
GST	-	89,070
Investments	1,666,791	1,443,988
Inventory	33,565	33,565
Accrued Interest	-	18,690
Total Current Assets	3,216,174	2,927,396
Fixed Assets		
Property Plant & Equipment	3,158,823	3,019,921
Total Fixed Assets	3,158,823	3,019,921
Total Assets	6,374,998	5,947,318
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	13,736	241,375
Other Payables	26,670	182,509
Employee Entitlements	69,514	74,687
Salmon Endorsement	1,287	-
Designated Waters other regions	2,135	-
GST	40,305	-
Total Current Liabilities	153,646	498,572
Total Liabilities	153,646	498,572
Net Assets	6,221,351	5,448,746
Equity		
Accumulated Funds		
Accumulated Funds	4,605,109	3,204,580
Current Year Earnings	772,606	1,400,528
Transfer (To)/From Reserves	(1,248,573)	(1,442,057)
Total Accumulated Funds	4,129,141	3,163,052
Dedicated Reserves		
Non Resident Levy Reserve	348,835	342,084
Habitat Enhancement & Research	25,172	23,522
Priority Plan Changes Reserve	19,080	19,080
Priority Consents Reserve	34,190	34,190
Otago Property Reserve (was Historical Property Reserve)	1,534,523	1,759,690

Balance Sheet

	31 DEC 2025	31 AUG 2025
Communications Strategy Reserve	68,444	68,887
Asset Replacement Funding	32,957	5,404
Total Dedicated Reserves	2,063,199	2,252,855
Restricted Reserves		
Bullock Creek Reserve	11	26
Bendigo Reserve	28,999	32,812
Total Restricted Reserves	29,011	32,839
Total Equity	6,221,351	5,448,746

9.2 Licence Sales

Fish Licence Sales 2025/26 Season to 31st December 2025

See table following for fish licence sales numbers and categories for the 2025/26 and 2024/25 season sales to the 31st December of the season.

Fish licence sales began on the 1st of September 2025 for both online and in agencies. This was much later than in previous year. Prices did not increase.

In summary, 2025/26 fishing licence sales, in whole season licence equivalents (LEQs), 11,441, LEQs this season compared with 11,601 LEQs for last season, to the 31st of December - 160 LEQs behind last season.

Resident family fishing license numbers have decreased, 380 less family licences, likely due to NZC changes in criteria of family licence participants. Other full season licence numbers for adult, loyal senior and local area licences have increased. Full season non resident licences categories are similar to last season.

Recommendations

- 1. That this report be received be received.**

Sharon Milne

Administration Officer

13/01/2026

Otago Region Fish Licence Sales to the 31st of December of the Season

2025/26

Sales	FWFA	FWA	FWNA	FSLA	FLAA	FLBA	FSBA	FDA	FDNA	FWJ	FWNJ	FDJ	FDNJ	FWNC	FDNC	SRSE	DWLR	DWLN	fishTotal	Fish LEQ
Public	1406	2226	314	405	320	33	196	1007	1078	628	36	129	85	19	54	0	1282	280	9498	5,886
Agency	1516	2412	94	824	134	7	43	136	303	337	16	9	31	0	31	296	1171	64	7424	5,555
Total	2922	4638	408	1229	454	40	239	1143	1381	965	52	138	116	19	85	296	2453	344	16922	11,441

2024/25

Sales	FWFA	FWA	FWNA	FSLA	FLAA	FLBA	FSBA	FDA	FDNA	FWJ	FWNJ	FDJ	FDNJ	FWNC	FDNC	SRSE	DWLR	DWLN	fishTotal	Fish LEQ
Public	1665	2094	328	348	298	23	198	992	926	585	37	145	69	19	44	0	1353	195	9319	5,992
Agency	1637	2359	83	784	128	10	65	182	248	366	12	25	24	5	12	355	1113	66	7474	5,608
Total	3302	4453	411	1132	426	33	263	1174	1174	951	49	170	93	24	56	355	2466	261	16793	11,601

FWFA (Family), FWA (Adult season), FWNA (Non Resident season), FSLA (Senior Loyal), FLAA (Local Area), FWIA Winter, FLBA (long Break), FSBA (Short Break), FDA (Adult Day), FDNA (Non Resident Adult Day), FWJ (Junior Season) FWNJ (Junior non resident season), FDJ (Junior Day), FDNJ (Non Resident Junior Day), FWNC (non Resident Child season) FDNC(Non Resident child Day),SRSE(Salmon Endorsement),DWLR(Designated Waters Resident),DWLN(Designated Waters Non Res) Some of the DWLs sold are for other regions, and other regions have some of ours

10.0 Chief Executives Report

10.1 SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Paradise shelduck and black swan monitoring

By the time of the meeting the gamebird monitoring flights will have been completed. If the Paradise shelduck numbers are within the bounds confirmed by Council then the changes agreed at the October meeting will be recommended. (See separate report in this agenda).

Councillors have raised gamebird monitoring a number of times and this has been on hold pending guidance from NZC. An external review of national monitoring methods is now complete and there is a proposal for a standard operating procedure to be developed by NZC. I note that this action was proposed this time last year. It is unfortunate it is not further advanced as this, if adopted, could be implemented in next years operational workplan.

Angler surveys

Interviews of lakes anglers continue to be undertaken, particularly at Lake Dunstan as planned. Angler numbers have been good over the summer break especially at the southern lakes. Staff (including myself) have been undertaking peak use surveys and recording catches and effort information. *[Photo: F&G Officer Biggs checks Lake Dunstan anglers]*



Regulations

The final drafts of Gazette Notice needs to be with NZC by the 31st January 2026 which is a tight timeframe after the flight counts. Fortunately, the Council is well placed with the regulations already agreed (October meeting) unless the monitoring counts fall wildly out of the normal range.

Bird Flu monitoring

The Ministry of Primary Industry contract to capture wild mallards for HPAI testing is underway with some sites secured for trapping and feeding to get underway shortly. The swabbing day has yet to be determined but is looking like the first full week in February.

Botulism

The large scale deaths of gamebirds at north Otago sewage treatment ponds from Botulism seems to have been avoided this year. The City Council have been monitoring the situation carefully and their bird disturbance devices are keeping the numbers down.

10.2 HABITAT PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

RMA update

[See separate report under 11.0]

Clutha Trusts

Staff continue to work alongside the two Clutha Trusts. There will be meetings next month to discuss projects and potential collaborations. (See committee reports)

Wheelchair maimai

Planning is well underway for a wheelchair maimai to be installed at the Inch Clutha wetland. Various donors are working with F&G staff to get this up well before the gamebird season. There will be strong media interest in the unveiling.

OF&GC Greenhouse Gas emissions report

Staff have contributed to the environmental officers report on our emissions. The full report is under items to be received. The organisation seems to be tracking in the right direction and next year we should see further improvements by being in a new building.

10.3 USER PARTICIPATION

Access

The online portal for access has been updated during the period. Staff have also contributed to the NZC database on 'lost access'. Overall, Otago is doing very well with a lot of new access points being added in the last few years, thanks to cycleways and better identification of public roads.

CE to update

The Operations Manager has negotiated an access arrangement to a piece of LINZ land on the shore of Lake Dunstan. There will be a need for an agreement to maintain the site but it does have good access to the Bendigo Reserve and the upper lake area.

OM to update

Publications

Articles for the gamebird edition the F&G magazine are presently being written. Weekly river reports and monthly ezines for angling are being distributed with the former becoming very popular.

10.4 PUBLIC INTERFACE

Advocacy

Media releases continue to flow and Otago coverage has been very positive over the summer break. This included some larger articles in the ODT Summer Times.

Catchment Groups

Staff are still attending various catchment group meetings. The CE attended the inaugural meeting of the Taieri Catchment Action Plan. It covers the entire Taieri so it will be a big and complex plan for sure.

Engagement Survey

The Communications Officer has completed the report following the annual licenceholder engagement survey. It seems we are tracking in a positive direction but there is clearly still work to do. Councillors are encouraged to give some thought to the specific higher level outcomes they would wish to see and bring those ideas top the planning meeting.

10.5 COMPLIANCE

Ranging and Prosecutions

Compliance has been good over the summer break so the prosecution workload is presently steady. Several two rod offences were detected this summer which resulted in a media article. Staff and rangers continue to be active in the field and now the weather is settling we should see a bit more activity from anglers.



10.6 LICENCING

Licence sales are recovering from a slow start across the South Island and are now only marginally behind, including in Otago. (see finance report). The wet spring and high rivers is one contributing factor but changes to the family licence coupled with reduced recreational spending overall is also a likely cause.

10.7 COUNCIL

Staffing

As you know, our long-serving Administration Officer has resigned and will finish at the end of February. Her departure will result in a substantial loss of institutional knowledge and the

organisation's key first point of contact. This is a critical role, and while staffing is the CE's CE's delegated role, timely direction from Council on the general staffing approach is required to avoid disruption to business operations.

Property Update

Now the office build is complete staff have been turning their attention to other assets. The boundary fencing at Wanaka is now complete and there is proposal for an upgrade to the Cromwell office which is covered in Public Excluded.

10.8 PLANNING AND REPORTING

Audit Management Report

This is attached. Relatively clean audit report with no major faults noted so that is comforting.

It seems other regions also propose to complain about their auditors and additional fees and regions are all hoping the NZC uses its coordination function and takes the lead by engaging with the auditor generals office on the Councils' behalf.

Annual Plan Development

There is a separate Planning Meeting Agenda attached with some background papers to digest ahead of the Sunday planning session. Good governance suggests that councillors should be thinking high level about outcomes for the 26/27 year rather than individual workplan projects. With the 2023-2026 strategic direction being set, this shouldn't be a major exercise but will leave this to you governors.

Next Council Meeting

The next Council meeting is in Cromwell on the 17th March 2026. This will be the Councils opportunity to see the draft operational workplan and budget for 26/27 financial year. That will be submitted to NZC to go into the licence fee calculations.

Recommendation

That this report be received

**Ian Hadland
Chief Executive
January 2026**

11.0 RMA Planning and Consents Report

Paper Title	Planning and Consenting Report
Author	Nigel Paragreen, Environmental Officer January 2026
Purpose	For Information
Executive Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ORPS mediation sessions concluded; remaining work involves sorting paperwork for Court • Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project Fast Track process timeline established; Council should prepare to meet at short notice within coming weeks • Homestead Bay Fast Track draft decision released; staff reviewing proposed conditions to achieve submission outcomes
Discussion/Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission lodged on ORC Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy addressing institutional arrangements, F&G recognition, and policy clarity • One written approval provided during period (Foothills Gold Mining – Nevis River alluvial gold mining)
Links to Previous Papers/Decisions	N/A
Attachments (if any)	N/A
Recommendation	That this report is received

Decision Record	<p>Moved by:</p> <p>Seconded by:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried / Lost:</p>
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Planning and Consenting Report
21 November 2025 – 14 January 2026

Current Legislation, Policy and Planning Processes

Otago Regional Policy Statement (ORPS)

An update can be provided in the public excluded section of the meeting if required, as RPS processes are being mediated. However, I can relay that the mediation sessions have wrapped up and the remaining mediation work is in sorting paperwork to go to the Court.

Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project

Since the last Council meeting, a timeline has emerged for this Fast Track process. A Convener conference is to be held on 15 January and it is expected that a panel will be formed very soon afterwards. Once that is done, invitations for comments will be sent out within 10 days and commenters will have 20 working days to provide feedback.

There are now several Fast Track processes which we can gain experience from, and staff have been discussing with colleagues how those processes went. From those discussions, and our experience with Homestead Bay, it seems unlikely that the mine will be denied consent. In this context, the most effective use of licence holder resources is likely to present ways to ensure that the interests of anglers and hunters are protected as best as possible.

Staff are continuing to review the application, put together a case strategy and line up potential experts for assistance. As previously discussed, none of the preparations will be progressed until F&G is confirmed as being invited for comment. The Council should prepare to meet at short notice within the next weeks to month, in the event that the invitations for comment are announced.

Homestead Bay Fast Track Approvals Act Application

Fish & Game lodged a submission on 28 October 2025 on the Homestead Bay development, a fast-track consent application for approximately 750 residential lots on Lake Wakatipu. The submission provides conditional support, recognising housing needs while seeking protections for the fishery and wetland habitat.

The panel has released a draft decision and F&G has been invited to review the proposed conditions. Staff from Otago and NZC will undertake this work with the aim of trying to achieve the results sought in the submission.

Otago Regional Council (ORC) Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy

The ORC has reviewed its biodiversity strategy and has put it out for comment. Staff have contributed to the review; however, some of this feedback was not picked up. Staff have submitted feedback via the official process to:

1. Support and strengthen the institutional arrangements for protecting indigenous biodiversity;
2. Ensure that F&G is recognised as a statutory manager of indigenous species; and
3. Remove vague wording in outcomes and policies of the strategy.

Current Notification Processes

Applicant	Activity	Outcome
Otago Regional Council notifications		
Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Limited	For the site-wide expansion of mining activities at Macraes Gold Mine, including the discharge of contaminants to the Taieri, Shag and Waikouaiti catchments.	A neutral submission was written by staff which provides helpful information to help inform a decision maker. Key points involved dealing with uncertainty, properly considering cumulative effects and managing the extremely long timeframe for adverse effects (200+ years). Staff made contact with Oceana Gold prior to the submission being made so it was not a surprise. The hearing process remains on hold indefinitely.
Waste Management NZ Ltd	To discharge contaminants from, and undertake activities associated with, the Fairfield Closed Landfill.	F&G submitted in a neutral capacity, seeking improvements to ensure that potential leachate discharges are appropriately managed to protect the health and recreational values of the Kaikorai estuary.

Written approval provided during the period

Applicant	Activity	Outcome
Otago Regional Council applications		
Foothills Gold Mining	To undertake medium scale alluvial gold mining activity adjacent to the Nevis River.	Staff reviewed the application and provided written approval.

No written approvals were provided during the period for consents from the following bodies:

- Queenstown Lakes District Council
- Central Otago District Council
- Dunedin City Council
- Clutha District Council
- Waitaki District Council

12.0 Committee & Delegate Reports

12.1 New Zealand Fish and Game Council

NZC summary report from last meeting circulated by NZC Chair Barry Barnes. CR Barker to update.

12.2 Clutha Mata Au Sports Fish and Habitat Trust

Clutha/Mata-Au Sportsfish and Habitat Trust

Report from the Chair to Otago Fish and Game for its upcoming Council meeting.

There have been no Trust meetings since the last meeting on 25 November and there is little progress with projects since then to report.

I previously advised Trustees that I will step down as Chair at the end of February and advised Trustees that I will talk to each of them individually before then to seek their views on a replacement going forward.

In advance of stepping down, I am currently preparing a report for Trustees, Contact Energy and Otago Fish and Game covering a range of matters including:

- Progress with Trust projects.
- Issues facing the Trust, both currently and going forward.
- Recommendations.

The report will be completed and sent to Trustees at the end of the month. I anticipate that the recommendations in my report will become agenda items for the next meeting of the Trust scheduled for 3 March.

In early December I had a meeting with Aquaculture Direct to discuss the water source for the proposed hatchery. Andy had earlier advised Trustees that the very high flows from the Roxburgh Dam posed a risk to a water intake infrastructure adjacent to the proposed hatchery site on Contact land, so an alternative source or site may be necessary. As an alternative, Andy, Mike and I discussed whether the hatchery water could come from a bore and the purpose of my meeting with Aquaculture Direct was primarily to discuss this. Mark Gillard's view is that a bore is unlikely to be able to supply the volume required. Trustees need to determine how to proceed as it is uncertain whether is a suitable water supply available on the Contact land below the Roxburgh Dam and it is also uncertain whether Clutha River water will meet the water quality requirement for the hatchery. Silt is a particular problem.

I had a recent call from Stephen Jack, the Vice Chair of the Balmoral Tuapeka Water Scheme. He advised that there is a water intake and pump house on the Waitahuna River that might be possible as a hatchery site. I indicated I would advise Trustees and we could assess its potential.

Rick Boyd, Chair
14 January 2026

12.3 Ngai Tahu

12.4 Conservation Board

12.5 Clutha Fisheries Trust

12.6 Tiaka Maniototo

13.0 Correspondence

13.1 NZC to Otago

Item Number 13.1.1	NZC Crop Depredation Policy Feedback
Author	Ian Hadland, Chief Executive
Purpose	For Decision
Executive Summary	<p>The NZC has provided the following policy draft and background information and now seek regional council feedback.</p> <p>The policy requires significant restructuring to clearly separate policy from operational guidance, tighten statutory and governance settings, and reduce legal and operational risk. Staff recommend the policy be revised to a shorter, principle-based document, supported by separate procedural and guidance material developed with direct operational input.</p>
Discussion/Analysis	<p>Proposed feedback on the policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the need for a consistent approach. • Explain that the policy would have benefitted by going to operations staff in the first instance. (written in isolation of practitioners) • The document is overwritten for a policy, and reads largely as operational guidance. It does not provide the clear, high-level “hard rails” expected of a policy, particularly around authority, limits, and decision thresholds. • There is confusion between policy, procedures, background information, and methods, resulting in a lack of clarity about what is mandatory versus advisory. • The policy does not establish a clear two-stage response framework as used in Otago, whereby non-lethal disturbance is required first, with permits to kill only considered where disturbance has demonstrably failed. • Non-game species (Geese etc) causing damage are not addressed, despite being referenced in places, creating uncertainty around scope and applicability. • There is no conflict resolution or escalation pathway for situations where landowners, neighbouring landowners,

	<p>hunters, or Fish & Game staff disagree on the appropriate response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The permit system is undeveloped, with no standard permit template proposed, no standard conditions, no clear reporting framework. • There is no provision for desktop processing in known or recurring problem areas. • The extensive methods section goes beyond what is appropriate for a policy, includes operational detail that would be better placed in guidance or SOPs, and lacks a clear hierarchy favouring non-lethal options. • Needs to mention animal ethics. • Compliance, monitoring, and enforcement provisions are weakly defined, with no clear audit, review, or feedback mechanisms. <p><i>*Any additional feedback provided by councillors can be added to the list</i></p>
Links to Previous Papers/Decisions	
Attachments	To follow are the papers presented to NZC including the draft policy.
Recommendation	That the CE write to the NZC with the feedback described above.

Decision Record	<p>Moved by:</p> <p>Seconded by:</p> <p>Carried / Lost:</p>
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DRAFT NEW ZEALAND FISH AND GAME POLICY FOR ADDRESSING CROP DEPREDATION ¹

INTRODUCTION

Fish and Game Councils are responsible for managing, maintaining and enhancing the game bird resource in the recreational interests of hunters.

We anticipate that a new authorization from the Director General will be provided to cover damage to crops under Section 53, 54 and 56 of the Wildlife 1953. The template provided by DOC enables our existing authorization from DOC (2018) to work in the mean time so that the relevant regional council to respond to farmers experiencing crop depredation.

It has been and will continue to be a significant challenge for Fish and Game to provide recreational opportunities that hunters demand while simultaneously managing game bird conflicts with people. Game bird species that Fish and Game manage provide recreational, ecological, and aesthetic benefits to the New Zealand public; balancing and prioritising the often conflicting needs of everyone will continue to be difficult. The following definition comes from the Wildlife Act 1953 relating to hunt or kill:

hunt or kill, in relation to any wildlife, includes the hunting, killing, taking, trapping, or capturing of any wildlife by any means; and also includes pursuing, disturbing, or molesting any wildlife, taking or using a firearm, dog, or like method to hunt or kill wildlife, whether this results in killing or capturing or not; and also includes every attempt to hunt or kill wildlife and every act of assistance of any other person to hunt or kill wildlife

Activity that requires a permit from Fish and Game

Any activity that results in the handling or harming of birds, or requires the use of firearms needs a permit from Fish and Game. Actions that harm birds or their nests without express authority to do so could be subject to legal action by Fish and Game.

The Regional Fish & Game Council will liaise closely with the farming community to provide sufficient advice to assist farmers in dispersing game birds from crops. Regions may be able to loan gas guns, however the dispersal of game birds in perpetuity is the farmer's responsibility.

PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING CROP DEPREDATION

To maintain adequate game bird populations Fish and Game New Zealand depends a great deal on landowners. As natural habitat decreases, it is becoming increasingly crucial that farms are managed with consideration for the requirements of birds. Fortunately, many farmers appreciate that game birds provide added interest and sporting opportunities.

¹ Updated and based on the 2003 NZC Crop Depredation Policy

Some farmers take active steps to encourage the use of their land by game birds. There are times, however, when game birds can cause damage to certain crops or pasture. This need not be a serious problem if the correct action is taken quickly.

Fish & Game Councils are Crown Entities ultimately responsible to the Minister for Hunting and Fishing for managing sports fish and game birds in New Zealand. That responsibility is carried out on behalf of all New Zealanders, but the management costs are borne almost entirely by the purchasers of hunting and fishing licences. The fees for those licences are spent on restoring and creating wetlands, maintaining and enhancing water quality, and retaining and improving public access to water bodies.

As managers of game bird populations, Fish and Game has some responsibility to also manage their impacts on the farming community. Whilst we have a responsibility to game bird hunters to have as many ducks as possible flying on the first weekend in May, we cannot do this to the detriment of the farming community. Therefore, we have a working relationship with farmers, assisting those who contact us when they have a problem with game bird impacts on crops.

SPECIES

Mallards – Mallards are a short-lived species and can rear many young when conditions are suitable. The mallard population does not continually increase but fluctuates depending on conditions encountered during the breeding season. Generally, if we have a wet spring, we have lots of ducks, but a dry spring does not have so many. Wet spring conditions provide plenty of surface water, allowing young ducks to satisfy their high protein demands with plenty of worms, grass grubs, and porina grubs so more of them survive.

Paradise Shelduck – The “Parrie” is one of our native game birds and is longer lived than the mallard. Whilst they can also produce significant numbers of young, they do not start breeding until they are at least two years old. Like all native game birds, they lack some of the guile and cunning of their mallard counterparts. This makes them easier to manage with hunter harvest. Parries eat grass and are often attracted to grain being fed out in the winter.

Black Swan – Is another native game bird. They are longer lived, and do not start breeding until they are at least two years old. Swans typically feed on submerged aquatic vegetation but, at times, can graze on grasses around lake shores causing property owners to complain.

Pukeko and pheasant are two other species that can damage pasture and crops.

SUSCEPTIBLE CROPS

Both Mallards and Paradise Shelduck prefer peas, barley, oats, and wheat. However, with the introduction of highly palatable brassicas and other crops such as chicory,

mallards have found a ready food source to fill in the period between nesting and harvest season. The problem has been exacerbated by “chemical ploughing” and direct drilling. Ducks are attracted to the yellowing grass that yields a ready diet of insects and then stay on to graze the young brassica leaves as they pop out of the ground. Paradise Shelduck can be a problem on peas, but mainly become a nuisance on young grass paddocks.

Some regions have issues with game birds feeding on market garden crops for example Pukeko damaging pumpkins and feeding on or pulling out planted seedlings.

SOLUTIONS

Vigilance

The key to minimising damage to crops is vigilance. Game birds usually take some time to establish a new feeding site, so it is important to spot the potential problem when the first 20 or 30 start into a crop. These initial ducks are relatively easy to move on, whereas big mobs are not. A regular look around the farm at dusk or dawn during the cropping season will detect where ducks are feeding. Ducks do not like to land directly into a standing crop. Therefore, they prefer to have a low spot from which to attack a crop. If an area of the crop has become too wet, resulting in stunted growth, mallards will generally start landing in this area and walk through the crop from this point on. As they themselves knock more of the crop down they will change their initial landing zone. They will also start to attack crops from a grass paddock next door. Crops near ponds and wetlands supporting large numbers of game are likely to be attacked. Crop protection in these situations requires extra vigilance and effort.

Act immediately

Farmers who experience game bird crop-feeding damage should apply immediately to their Regional Fish and Game Council office for assistance. If acted upon early enough, dispersal can generally be achieved without killing birds. In isolated cases, usually involving persistent species such as pukeko, it may be necessary to capture or kill the birds.

Permits

Under section 54 of the Wildlife Act 1953, there is a provision to issue permits for farmers to hunt or kill game birds that are damaging crops. A permit is needed when a firearm is used to disperse or kill birds or where they are trapped for removal.

Permits are intended to assist land owners to disperse game birds who are preying on crops. Permits are not intended for providing hunting opportunities outside the hunting season (dates of season vary by region and species).

Land owners shall report to Fish and Game on the number of birds killed. Fish and Game will be able to report to Director General number of permits issues and number of birds killed in relation to this policy.

METHODS FOR DISPERSING GAME BIRDS

1. Propane-powered bird scarer

Gas-operated scare guns can be purchased from several retailers across the country. Occasionally, arrangements can be made to hire a gun through the local Fish and Game Council. The scarer is particularly valuable to farmers in areas where game birds consistently cause damage or show a tendency to return to paddocks from which they have been scared. If you are likely to have annual problems with game birds, it may be advisable to purchase a gas gun.

2. Firing over birds

Firing loaded or blank cartridges near the birds can be effective. Firing shots, running of dogs, and extensive human activity are helpful preliminary tactics to the installation of static scaring devices. Shooting ducks/swans is less effective than dispersing them via nonlethal methods. It is far better to have 'scared ducks/swans' than 'dead ducks/swans'. When landowners are given permission to disturb ducks/swans, Fish & Game recommend that they purchase ammunition of small shot size, #8s or so. The smaller the shot, the more pellets you actually fire at birds; therefore, the more birds you are likely to hit in a distant mob. The use of smaller shot also prevents wounding birds as the pellets won't penetrate unless ducks are very close.

3. Flashing lights, scarecrows and flags

Flashing lights, spotlights, and scarecrows may be used in conjunction with other scarers to increase effectiveness. A sheet, or piece of unbleached calico, suspended between two 2-metre posts and allowed to flap in the wind, makes a successful scarer, especially if erected before a crop is vulnerable. This method is even more effective if used with flashing lights. Flags 1m x 2m in size can be made of colourful plastic sacks or polythene sheeting. When they are attached to poles 2 or 3 metres high and spaced 200 metres apart about the field, wind causes them to flap and crackle loudly, making them a very useful and cheap scaring method.

4. Flames and smoke

Small oil drums filled with sacking and waste oil may be placed around the crop. When the contents of the drums are set alight, the flames and smoke will scare birds. "Burning off" the stubble in adjacent fields has a similar effect, taking note of any local fire bans.

5. Chemical repellents

A chemical repellent is available through some seed merchants. The active ingredient of the chemical is methiocarb, which has insecticidal, molluscidal and bird repellent properties. The compound is mixed with the seed at planting or is sprayed onto the foliage. It is used to protect grapes, seedling cereals and vegetables. Methiocarb has a nauseating effect on birds attempting to eat the treated crop, which they soon learn to avoid. The chemical has

been successfully used to protect sprouting maize from pukekos. It is illegal in all circumstances for a landowner to use poison or narcotics such as alpha-chlorolase on game birds.

6. Human activity – essential

All scare devices lose their effectiveness if left in one position for days. They should be shifted before this value is lost. Human disturbance, where it can be maintained, is always best and will significantly reinforce the effect of static devices.

7. Lasers

Lasers have been recently developed with exceptional results in dispersing game birds. These powerful lasers can be programmed to run during specific times of the day, and to cover specific areas. They can run on a 360-degree rotation, with the speed of turn determined by the user. They are an effective passive tool. They are charged with solar or plugged in.

8. Trapping and removing

This method of counteracting damage can be used on the written authority of the Regional Fish and Game Council. It has proved effective with some species, such as pukeko. Most game birds have a strong “homing instinct” and must be moved many miles away from the trapping site. Consequently, this method becomes impractical in many cases. When transferring pukekos and ducks, it is necessary to clip the primary feathers on one wing. The new habitat, therefore, must be a suitable one with plenty of natural food available, and the birds should not be released where they can cause further damage.

9. Electric fencing

A hot wire about 40cm above the ground and operating at normal voltages will deter swan or geese from walking onto lakeside pastures. It may be useful against ducks in similar situations if set near the ground.

10. Diversionsary feeding areas

Feeding areas have been used in North America for many years as a significant and most successful means of damage prevention and control. A *lure crop* is a field set aside to provide a feeding area for ducks or geese in order to keep them off surrounding fields. A *feeding station* is designed to keep ducks on a lake by spreading grain along the shoreline until the harvest on farmlands is completed. Feeding stations may be operated by placing grain in fields, as well as stubble paddocks.

The advantage of diversionsary feeding areas is in concentrating large numbers of waterfowl in a small area and troubling fewer farmers and ducks. Ducks can be fed on much less grain than they might destroy through wide-ranging field feeding, trampling and fouling. Feeding areas are most effective when operated in conjunction with a scaring programme on the susceptible crops. It is vital that lure crops and feeding stations be left undisturbed. Diversionsary feeding areas are little used in New Zealand. However, the technique is briefly described should an opportunity for use arise.

SUMMARY

To protect your crop from damage by game birds, you should:

1. Be prepared by checking crops regularly for any sign of trouble.
2. Act as soon as there is any indication that birds are being attracted.
3. Apply to your Regional Fish and Game Council for advice and assistance.
4. Apply for a permit if you intend to use a firearm to disperse birds.

Further advice on specific problems relating to crop damage by game birds can be obtained by contacting your Regional Fish and Game Council.

FISH AND GAME RESPONSE TO GAME BIRDS CAUSING DAMAGE

Fish and Game Staff will, upon receiving a complaint of game birds causing damage, respond in the following way:

1. An application will be provided to a landholder seeking assistance to disturb game birds that are causing damage to crops. Such application may only be made by the landholder or leaseholder of the property concerned.
2. Staff will investigate the complaint to confirm that it is valid and, respond to the affected landholder and provide advice on the best course of action to mitigate the problem, including authorizing disturbance, at the Regional Manager's discretion.
3. We will telephone the land owner and discuss the case and ask the following information for our investigation: This will include the location of the property affected, the number and species of gamebirds causing the damage, the crop or property being damaged, the name of the landholder or leaseholder, and the name(s) of the people to be authorized by either the permit holder or Fish and Game staff to undertake disturbance.
4. The completed assessment and the terms and conditions of the draft permit will be provided to the applicant for verification and signature to confirm agreement. On receipt of the signed assessment and agreement to the terms and conditions

of the draft permit from the applicant, Fish and Game will issue the permit in a timely manner.

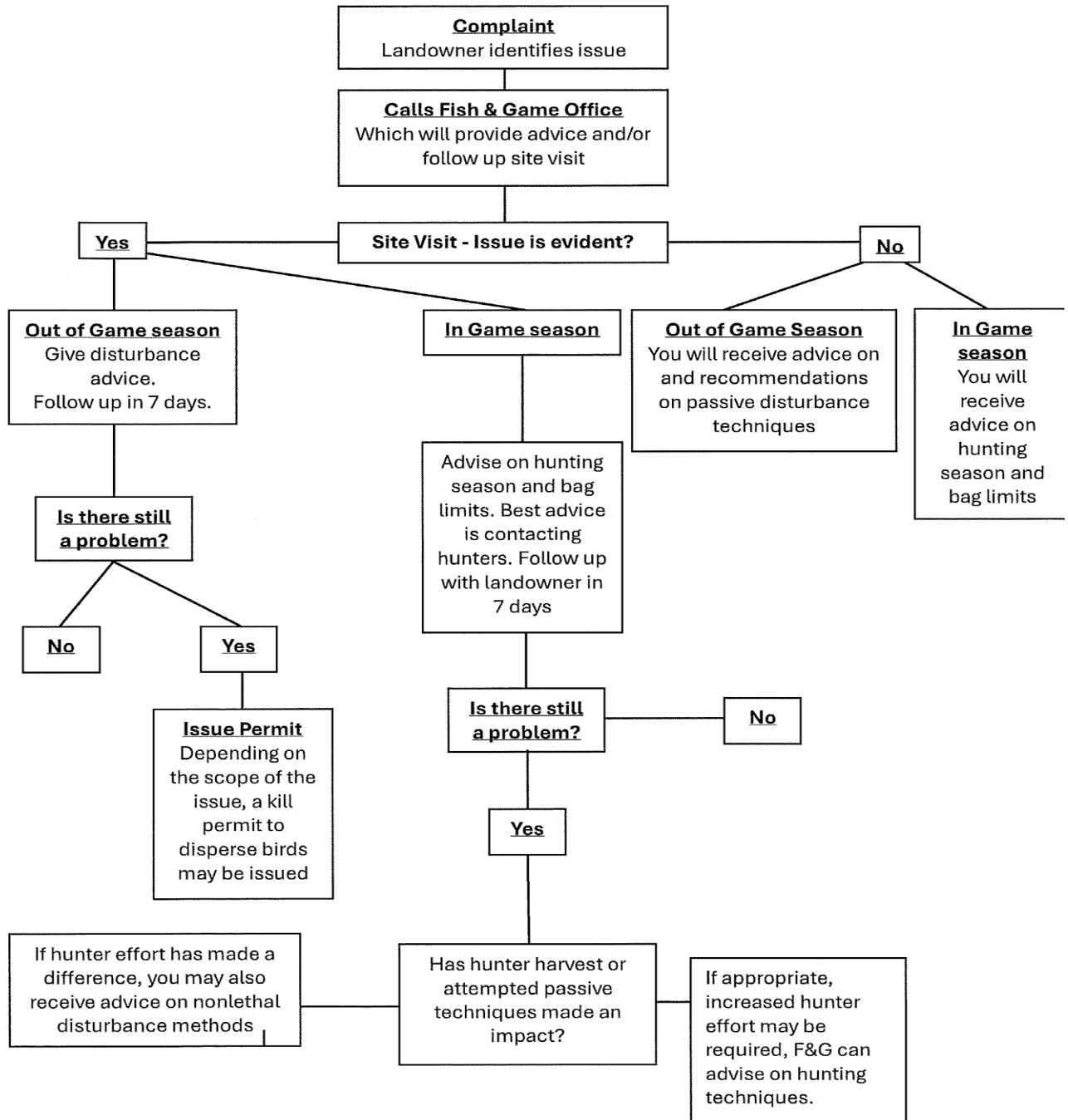
5. All permits must be issued under s53, 54 and 56 as relevant. If the main activity is disturbance, the number of days that the permit is valid and when relevant the number of birds of each species that can be killed.
6. The Council will maintain devices to disperse game birds and mitigate the effects of crop damage. These will be available for loan or rental to properties affected by game birds.
7. Property owners experiencing their first case of crop depredation by game birds will be instructed in methods to mitigate the adverse effects on their crops. A demonstration of techniques, including the loan of a scaring device, if available, will be given.
8. All property owners who are affected by crop depredation will be encouraged to purchase devices as appropriate to mitigate damage in the future. The principle of self-determination will be encouraged for landholders seeking assistance following the initial demonstration and advice.
9. Permits to disturb will be issued pursuant to 54 of the Wildlife Act (1953) and under the limitations of this Policy.
 - When Staff have verified that game birds are causing damage, they will decide on a course of action from within the disturbance only methods and advise the landholder.
 - Staff will undertake or directly oversee the disturbance only exercises.
10. Permits to disturb and, where the Regional Manager considers necessary, kill game birds causing damage will be issued pursuant to relevant Sections 53, 54 & 56 of the Wildlife Act (1953) under the limitations of such delegations as may be made by the Minister of Conservation or the Director General and this Policy. Permits will detail when the permit can be used (and when it cannot), devices to be used and where, and expiry of permit, and maximum number of game birds by species that can be killed (if appropriate to situation).

- When it is deemed necessary to kill game birds for the disturbance to be effective, the killing shall be carried out by the landowner or delegated person at the discretion of the landowner.
- Staff may oversee the disturbance exercise but must advise the property owner accordingly.
- Staff will conduct compliance inspections randomly or where some irregularity under the permit is suspected.

11. Property owners are required to provide a written report confirming the number of birds killed (if allowed in their permit).

12. Council staff will check compliance with permit conditions. Failure to provide correct information within the report may result in future permit applications being declined or a prosecution taken at the discretion of the Regional Manager.

GAME BIRDS DAMAGE COMPLAINT PROCESS



Draft NZC Crop Depredation Policy

New Zealand Fish and Game Council Meeting 178 – 5 & 6 December 2025

Prepared by: Helen Brosnan, Senior Policy Advisor, NZ Fish and Game Council

Kōrero taunaki - Summary of considerations

Purpose

1. We have updated NZC at meeting 175 regarding wildlife authorisations. Previously, permits were issued under s54 of the Wildlife Act. DOC has provided a new template letter, but we await the replacement authorisation from the Director General to cover sections 53, 54 & 56. We anticipate that this will be available around the time that the Fish and Game Bill is made public.
2. In association with Wildlife Authorisations, NZC would like to adopt a Crop Depredation policy for regions to use in relation to these authorisations. We have based this policy on the 2003 NZC Crop Depredation policy, which has also been used by CSI and North Canterbury. The amended draft NZC Crop Depredation Policy is attached in Appendix 1.

Financial considerations

- Nil
 Budgetary provision
 Unbudgeted

Risk

- Low
 Medium
 High
 Extreme

Ngā taunaki - Staff Recommendations

3. That NZC:
 - a. **Receives** this update on the authorisation under the Wildlife Act.
 - b. **Notes** a new template from DOC has been received that enables Regions to disturb/kill game birds under s53 of the Wildlife Act.
 - c. **Approves** the draft NZC Crop Depredation Policy to go to the regions for consultation.

Kōrerorero – Discussion

Wildlife Authorisations Issued by Fish and Game

4. Fish & Game has an authority dated 21 December 2018. This authority provides for catching alive or killing game causing damage and or causing nuisance. New case law has now confirmed that section 53 can only provide for the protection of wildlife, not for the killing of wildlife. Therefore, we have a number of permits that are issued in accordance with this authority from DOC.
5. The bill focuses solely on the authorisation of incidental killing and does not affect other types of authorisations that may be provided under section 53. The application of section 53 was considered by the High Court in *Environmental Law Initiative v The Director General of the Department of Conservation and others* [2025] HCNZ 391. The Court determined that there must be a direct connection between each act of killing wildlife and the protection of wildlife. The court therefore ruled that it had been unlawful for DOC to authorise the incidental killing of protected wildlife.
6. A new section 53A¹ has been passed to allow the Director General to authorise the incidental killing of wildlife that occurs as a consequence of an otherwise lawful activity.
7. A new section 53C² ensures the Director General is able to impose conditions on an authorisation to address potential adverse effects of the activity on the affected populations of wildlife, the species and the individual animals.

53	Director-General may authorise taking or killing of wildlife for certain purposes
53A	Authority may be granted under section 53 to kill wildlife incidentally
53B	Authority under section 53 to kill wildlife incidentally: consistency with protection of wildlife
53C	Conditions that may be imposed on authority under section 53 to kill wildlife incidentally
54	Director-General may authorise hunting or killing of wildlife causing damage
55	Keeping of specimens in museums
56	Restrictions on liberation or export of animals, birds, etc
56A	Application of Customs and Excise Act 2018
57	Ownership of animals

8. The amendment will also ensure that authorities granted under section 53 of the Wildlife Act before the date of the judgement are not unlawful merely because consent is required under s71 of the Act, rather than an authority under section 53 – this applies more to NZ Transport Agency for projects under section 53, that should have been given consent under section 71.

Draft Crop Depredation Policy

¹ Section 53A: inserted, on 14 May 2025, by section 4 of the Wildlife (Authorisations) Amendment Act 2025 (2025 No 22).

² Section 53C: inserted, on 14 May 2025, by section 4 of the Wildlife (Authorisations) Amendment Act 2025 (2025 No 22).

9. The attached Draft NZC Crop Depredation Policy is an amendment of the 2003 NZC policy. Staff recommend that NZC adopts this draft for consultation with the regions. This draft policy is attached in Appendix 1.
10. The policy covers what can be done without a permit and what activity requires a permit (eg handling or harming of birds, use of firearms). The policy includes an overview of species to which the policy relates, susceptible crops, how to be vigilant and to act immediately to scare off birds. There is a section on methods of dispersing birds and a summary and an overview of response to game birds causing damage.

Whai whakaaro ki ngā whakataunga - Considerations for decision-making

Financial Implications

11. There is currently no budget required or requested for this work.

Legislative Implications

12. There are no legislative implications currently regarding this proposal, but there is scope for legislative improvements regarding these permits.
13. This policy may be relevant to the evidence that we provide for the Fish and Game Bill, particularly how we operate in relation to others users of habitat (item 53).

Section 4 Treaty Responsibilities

14. There are no Section 4 responsibilities related to this proposal.

Policy Implications

15. Our internal policy and any regions with policy or SOP relating to this issue will need to be reviewed and updated.

Risks and mitigations

16. The risk for Fish and Game is that our processes and any outdated policy may need modifying to align with the latest case law.

Consultation

17. Once the draft policy is adopted the policy can go to the regions for comment.

Ngā mahinga e whai ake nei - Next actions

18. Await universal authority from the Director General and consult or adopt draft NZC Crop Depredation Policy (and amend this as required).
19. Formally consult the regions on the draft crop depredation policy and report back with their comments to the Feb meeting 2026.

Appendix 1 – Draft NZC Crop Depredation Policy for consultation

Appendix 2 – Template Authority to Control Game Birds for information,

13.2 Otago to NZC

13.2.1 Open Season for Grey Teal



29 December 2025

Chairperson, New Zealand Fish & Game Council

Via email

Subject: Request for National Coordination Regarding the Declaration of an Open Season for Grey Teal (*Anas gracilis*)

Dear Chair,

On behalf of the Otago Fish & Game Council, I am writing to formally request that the New Zealand Council exercise its coordination powers to seek declaration of an open season for Grey Teal through Ministerial notification. (s6(1) Wildlife Act)

There is a clear strategic opportunity to utilise the species which monitoring shows to be at levels which would be sustainable for hunting. Hunting grey teal would enhance hunter opportunity and F&G can maintain robust conservation safeguards for them, and other species.

Background and Regulatory Context

Since 2010, Grey Teal have been listed under **Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act**. This classification identifies them as wildlife that may be hunted or killed subject to the Minister's notification. While this change was initially intended to reduce penalties for accidental harvest (due to their similar flight patterns to Mallard ducks), it established a significant legal precedent.

Unlike species requiring a full transfer to gamebird Schedule 1, the path to a regulated harvest for Grey Teal is already paved within the existing framework of Schedule 3. We believe the time is right to move beyond "accidental protection" toward a proactive, regulated hunting and management model.

Regional Support and Perspectives

Our internal review of regional sentiment indicates a broad spectrum of interest and support that warrants a unified national approach:

- **Proactive Support:** Regions such as Eastern have been monitoring populations for over 20 years, and Taranaki has explicitly expressed a desire to seek Ministerial notification.
- **Constructive Considerations:** Nelson/Marlborough has suggested sub-region specific seasons to safeguard other protected species (such as the Brown Teal), while other regions remain open to the discussion provided misidentification risks are managed.

- **National Coordination:** Given the migratory nature of the species and the statutory requirements involved, this initiative requires the coordination of the New Zealand Council to be successful.

Requirements for a Sustainable Harvest

To secure a favorable decision from the Minister for Hunting and Fishing, we acknowledge that a robust evidence base must be presented. We propose that the New Zealand Council coordinates the following:

- **Biological Data:** Consolidating peer-reviewed data on national population trends to prove harvest sustainability.
- **Risk Management:** Developing a harvest model that includes regional bag limits and specific rules to mitigate the risk to non-target species (e.g., Brown Teal).
- **Treaty Partnership:** Leading early engagement with iwi/tāngata whenua to address customary rights and cultural values.
- **Stakeholder Consultation:** Managing the dialogue with the Department of Conservation (DOC) and conservation NGOs.

Proposed Timeline

Recognising the complexity of statutory change and the necessity for thorough consultation, we do not believe this is feasible for the 2026 season. Instead, we recommend that the New Zealand Council directs this proposal toward the 2027 gamebird hunting season.

Recommendation

The Otago Council recommends that the New Zealand Council:

Formally engage with the Minister for Hunting and Fishing to exercise his powers to notify a Grey Teal hunting season, and in the event of a decline, seek clarity on the specific data or consultation required to bridge the gap for a future favorable decision.

We look forward to discussing how we can support the New Zealand Council in gathering the necessary data and regional consensus to move this forward.

Yours sincerely,



Adrian McIntyre
Chairman, Otago Fish & Game Council

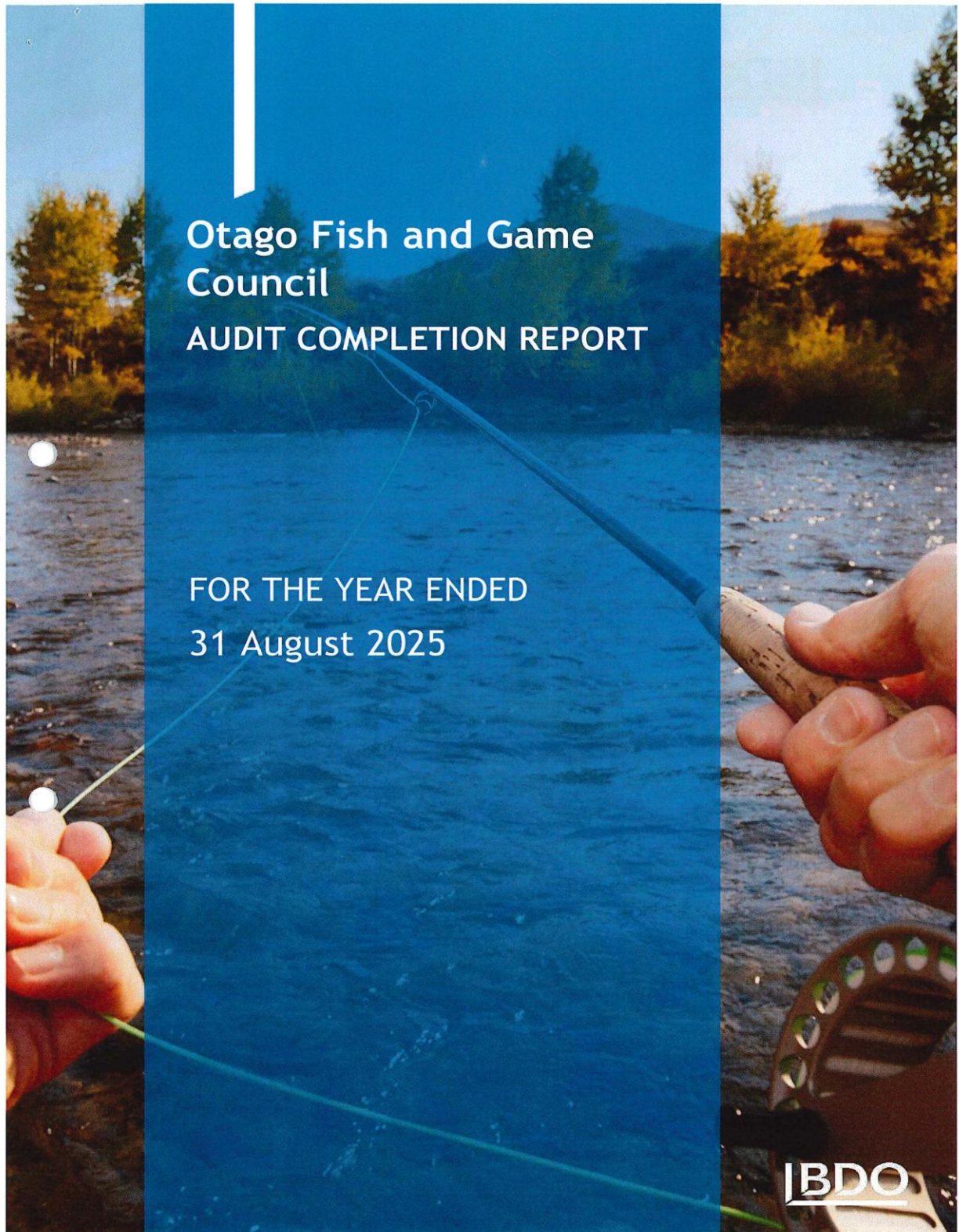
**13.3 General Correspondence In
Nil**

13.4 General Correspondence Out

Nil

14.0 Items to be Received or Noted

14.1 Otago Fish and Game Council Audit Completion Report





1 December 2025

The Councillors
Otago Fish and Game Council
PO Box 76
DUNEDIN 9054

Dear Councillors

We are pleased to present our Audit Completion Report for our audit of Otago Fish and Game Council's financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025.

The report is intended solely for the use of the Councillors of Otago Fish and Game Council and presents a summary of the more significant matters arising from our audit procedures in forming an audit opinion over the financial statements. It also includes reporting by us on matters we are required to under International Standards on Auditing.

We would like to emphasise that our audit work involves the review of only those systems and controls in your Council upon which we rely on for audit purposes. Our examination may not have identified, and should not be relied upon to identify, all control weaknesses that may exist.

We take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the assistance and co-operation provided by Ian and Sharon during the audit.

Yours faithfully,
BDO Invercargill

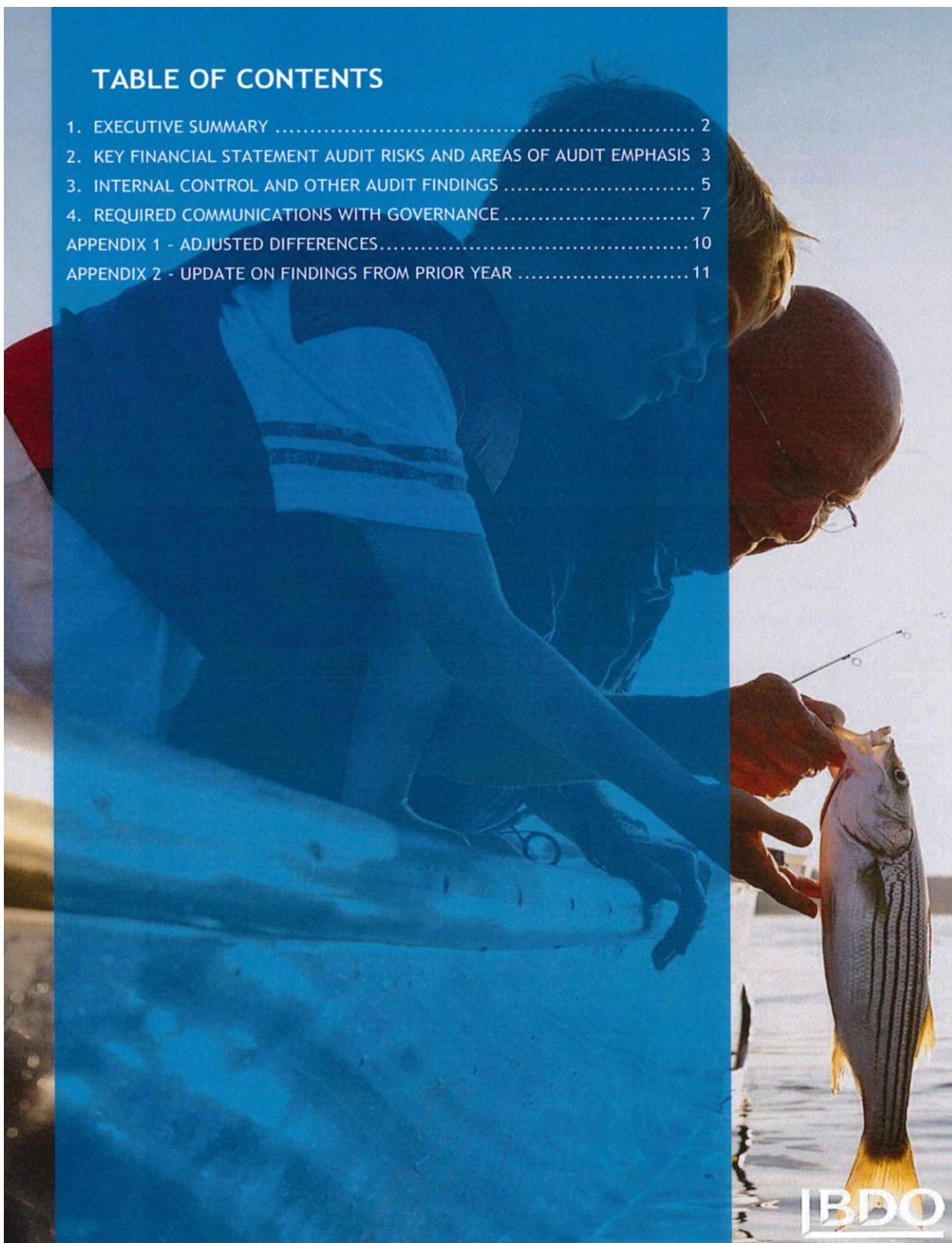
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'AR Higham'.

Aaron Higham
Partner
Audit & Assurance Services

DDI: 03 218 5017
Email: aaron.higham@bdo.co.nz

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
2. KEY FINANCIAL STATEMENT AUDIT RISKS AND AREAS OF AUDIT EMPHASIS	3
3. INTERNAL CONTROL AND OTHER AUDIT FINDINGS	5
4. REQUIRED COMMUNICATIONS WITH GOVERNANCE	7
APPENDIX 1 - ADJUSTED DIFFERENCES.....	10
APPENDIX 2 - UPDATE ON FINDINGS FROM PRIOR YEAR	11





1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STATUS OF THE AUDIT AND THE AUDIT OPINION

Our audit of Otago Fish and Game Council's (the "Council") financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025 is complete.

We have issued an unqualified audit opinion.

We welcome your feedback on the effectiveness of the audit process and are available to discuss our performance.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT RISK AND AUDIT EMPHASIS

Our audit approach considered the inherent risks in your business, their potential impact on the financial statements and the associated risk mitigations and controls in place. The significant matters arising from our audit work are:

- Revenue Recognition
- Management Override

We were able to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence in respect to these items and have no significant findings to bring to your attention. Refer to Section 2 for our comments in respect to each significant risk and area of audit emphasis.

SUMMARY OF UNCORRECTED MISSTATEMENTS

There were no errors left uncorrected at the conclusion of our audit.

INTERNAL CONTROLS

Our audit approach requires us to obtain an understanding of an entity's internal controls in order to identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to fraud or error but is not designed to provide assurance over the overall effectiveness of controls operating within the Council.

We have included in Section 3 of this report, a summary of our findings and recommendations arising as a result of our audit procedures.

We have received full and frank cooperation from management and staff in respect to our audit. There is nothing we wish to raise solely with the Councillors.



2. KEY FINANCIAL STATEMENT AUDIT RISKS AND AREAS OF AUDIT EMPHASIS

Our audit procedures were focused on those areas of the Council's activities that are considered to represent the key audit risks identified during the risk assessment process undertaken and communicated with you through the planning phase of the audit. Below we present a summary of the identified key areas of risk and audit emphasis and our conclusions in relation to each matter. We are satisfied that these areas have been satisfactorily addressed through our audit processes.

REVENUE RECOGNITION

Area of Audit Emphasis

The significant revenue streams for the Council include Licence Sales, Grants and Donation and Other Income (including Rental Amounts Received). For the year ended 31 August 2025 there was significant other income arising from gains on the sale of land and buildings.

Under the auditing standards there is a presumption of a significant risk of material misstatement due to fraud related to revenue recognition.

Conclusion/Response

We implemented a substantive approach to testing during our Audit.

Our testing procedures included:

- Substantive analytic procedure via comparison of current and prior year revenues;
- review of reconciliation of revenue per sales tax returns to revenue per the financial statements;
- performed a review of Revenue Recognition policies;
- cut-off testing including verification of a sample of receivables;
- Deferred Revenue testing;
- reviewed a sample of Grants and Donations received and checked for any attached conditions;
- performed a reconciliation of Eyede Income and agreed to the Type 2 Report received from Grant Thornton;
- reviewed a sample of Other Revenue and agreed this to supporting documentation; and
- Verified a sample of property, plant and equipment disposals.

From our audit work performed, no issues were noted with revenue recognition.



MANAGEMENT OVERRIDE

Area of Audit Emphasis

There is a rebuttable presumption under the International Auditing Standards that there is a risk of management override.

There is a risk that Management can override controls put in place by the Trustees to misappropriate assets or manipulate the financial results for their benefit.

Conclusion/Response

We have assessed the segregation of duties and risk of management override as part of our planning process and concluded that the risk of fraud from management override of controls is primarily through the processing of manual journals. We have used a risk-based approach to testing manual journals and focused on any areas where a risk of judgement, estimation or cut-off risk exists with management override in mind. No issues were noted with management override.



3. INTERNAL CONTROL AND OTHER AUDIT FINDINGS

This section of the report sets out the key internal control findings we have identified during the course of the audit and highlights control deficiencies requiring management attention. Our work has been limited to those controls relevant to the audit of your statutory financial statements. The purpose of our audit work on controls is not to provide assurance in its own right on the internal controls and therefore we may not necessarily disclose all matters that might be significant deficiencies or deficiencies that heighten the risk of a fraud being perpetrated.

The findings and recommendations are noted below:

GST ON VOUCHERS

Finding

During the review of GST treatment on gift vouchers, it was identified that GST was being claimed both at the time of purchasing the vouchers and again when the vouchers were redeemed. This practice results in double claiming of GST, which is not compliant with GST legislation and could lead to inaccurate GST returns. Such errors may expose the entity to penalties and interest from Inland Revenue and cause misstatements in financial records.

Conclusion/Response

Management should ensure that GST is not claimed when purchasing gift vouchers, as these are considered a payment instrument rather than a supply of goods or services. GST should only be accounted for when the voucher is redeemed for goods or services. To address this, management should implement appropriate controls, including reviewing GST coding for voucher transactions, providing staff training on correct GST treatment, and performing periodic reconciliations to confirm compliance.

XERO SUBSCRIPTION

Finding

During the review of system subscriptions, it was noted that the Xero subscription is currently held under Carmel Veitch, a former National F&G employee. Retaining the subscription under an ex-employee poses risks related to access control, accountability, and continuity of service. This arrangement may lead to difficulties in managing user permissions and could create security vulnerabilities.

Conclusion/Response

It is recommended that the Xero subscription be transferred either to your Accountant or brought under internal management to ensure proper ownership and control. Implementing this change will help maintain clear accountability, reduce security risks, and align with best practices for system administration.



SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

Finding

The global shift toward net-zero emissions is not only an environmental imperative but also a growing expectation for public and community organizations. Entities that actively reduce their carbon footprint often experience benefits such as enhanced credibility, stronger stakeholder trust, and alignment with national conservation and climate goals. Otago Fish & Game Council already demonstrates leadership through its advocacy for freshwater ecosystems, biodiversity protection, and sustainable recreational practices.

While the Council's core mission focuses on environmental stewardship, its office and operational footprint could present an opportunity to model sustainability internally. Initiatives such as reducing energy consumption in offices, transitioning to renewable energy sources, minimizing waste, and adopting sustainable procurement practices could complement its external conservation efforts and reinforce its credibility as a sustainability leader.

Conclusion/Response

As part of BDO's commitment to supporting sustainability leadership, we commend Otago Fish & Game Council for its enduring dedication to environmental protection and community engagement. We recommend embedding climate-conscious strategies within office operations, such as energy-efficient lighting and heating, digital-first approaches to reduce paper use, waste reduction programs, eco-friendly supplies, and exploring options like EV fleet transition or solar panels where feasible. These steps would complement existing conservation initiatives and demonstrate consistency between advocacy and internal practice.

Given the Council's strong foundation in environmental values and its regional presence, this represents a natural progression that could enhance its reputation, attract partnerships and funding, and align with national emissions reduction targets. By continuing to build on its sustainability journey (both in the field and within its offices) Otago Fish & Game Council can further differentiate itself as a leader in future-focused environmental governance.



4. REQUIRED COMMUNICATIONS WITH GOVERNANCE

Matter	How the matter was addressed
Auditor's responsibility under generally accepted auditing standards	We are responsible for completing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in New Zealand. The detailed terms of which are set out in our audit engagement letter.
Confirmation of Audit Independence	<p>In conducting our audit, we are required to comply with the independence requirements of PES-1 Code of Ethics for Assurance Practitioners issued by the External Reporting Board.</p> <p>Our own internal policies and procedures are put in place to identify any threats to our independence, and to appropriately deal with and, if relevant, mitigate those risks.</p> <p>For the comfort of the Councillors, we note that the following processes assist in maintaining our independence:</p> <p>No other work is permitted to be undertaken by any BDO office without the express approval of the audit engagement partner.</p> <p>All services performed by any national BDO office will be reported to the governing body.</p> <p>Audit fees billed for the 2025 audit were \$13,050 exclusive of GST, the \$664 OAG overhead charge and disbursements.</p> <p>There were no other services provided by our firm for the 2025 financial year.</p>
Management Judgements and Estimates	Under International Standards on Auditing (NZ), we have a responsibility to ensure that you have been informed about the process used by the Council in formulating particularly sensitive accounting estimates, assumptions or valuation judgements. Overall, we noted no judgements and estimates for the year ended 31 August 2025. Key matters impacting on our audit have been raised in sections 2 and 3 of this report if applicable.
Matters requiring Councillors' input	<p>We have placed reliance on the Councillors' review and approval of the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of the Council's meetings; • Implementation of such controls as is needed to ensure that financial statements are presented fairly; • Review and approval of management accounts; • Review and approval of annual budget; • Notification of fraud; and • Review and approval of the financial statements.



Matter	How the matter was addressed
Accounting policies	<p>There were no changes in accounting policies or interpretations of accounting policies that impacted on your financial statements in the current year.</p> <p>Auditing standards require us to discuss with you the qualitative aspects of the Council's accounting practices and financial reporting. There were no new accounting standards that had a significant effect on the Council's financial statements for the year ending 31 August 2025.</p>
Materiality and adjusted/ unadjusted differences	<p>Materiality means, in the context of an audit or review, if financial information is omitted, misstated or not disclosed it has the potential to affect the decisions of users of the financial statements. Materiality is used by auditors in making judgements on the amount of work to be performed, which balances require work and for evaluating the financial report. Materiality is initially calculated at the planning stage and has an influence on the amount of work we do, as well as where we direct our audit efforts. Materiality is not only based on a numeric quantification but is assessed qualitatively for some balances and disclosures.</p> <p>There were no errors left uncorrected at the conclusion of the audit.</p> <p>During the course of our audit, we identified misstatements which have been corrected in the financial statements these have been detailed in Appendix 1 of this report.</p> <p>It should be noted that the auditing standards do not require us to communicate misstatements that are considered "clearly trivial" and as such, if we identify such misstatements we will not communicate these to you. We consider "clearly trivial" to be 5% or less of our planned materiality.</p>
Going concern	<p>We have undertaken a review of management and those charged with governance' assessment of the ability of the Council to continue as a going concern for 12 months from the date of signing the audit report and therefore whether the going concern basis for the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.</p> <p>We identified no issues or concerns that lead us to conclude the going concern assumption cannot be relied upon.</p>



Matter	How the matter was addressed
Fraud	During the audit, no matters relating to fraud, concerning either employees or management, have come to our attention. It should be noted that our audit is not designed to detect fraud, however, should instances of fraud come to our attention, we will report them to you.
Compliance with laws and regulations	We have made enquiries in relation to compliance with laws and regulations during the course of our audit. We have not become aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations which has materially impacted the financial position or performance of the Council.
Significant findings from the audit	Other than those documented in the executive summary and sections 2 and 3 of this report, there were no significant matters arising from the audit.
Disagreements with management	There have been no disagreements with management over matters of significance to the audit.
Difficulties encountered during the audit	There have been no significant difficulties encountered during the audit.
Consultations with other accountants and consultants	We have considered the need for other accounting specialists during our work and determined, due to the nature of the engagement and experience and knowledge of the engagement team, that no specialists were necessary for the current period.
Management representation letter	We have not requested specific representation from management in addition to those areas normally covered by our standard representation letter.



APPENDIX 1 - ADJUSTED DIFFERENCES

AUDIT ADJUSTMENTS

There was no misstatement has been identified during the course of our audit.

There were, however, several Presentation and Disclosure Amendments that were marked up on your draft financial statements and provided to your Office Manager to ensure full compliance with the Tier 3 NFP Standard. These have been corrected in the final financial statements.

UNADJUSTED DIFFERENCES

There were no unadjusted differences.



APPENDIX 2 - UPDATE ON FINDINGS FROM PRIOR YEAR

Taxable Benefits

Finding

During our audit work of sensitive expenditure we identified Ian is being provided with gym membership at the Council's expense and no Fringe Benefit Tax was being returned to Inland Revenue.

Update

We noted that Ian's gym membership included in the remuneration package was returned in the FBT return to Inland Revenue.
Point resolved.

Review of Journals

Finding

We noted during our enquiries with management that there is no set process of the review of manual journals. Manual journals present the risk of management override and controls around manual journals are necessary to mitigate this risk.

Update

Manual journals are being reviewed regularly by Ian.
Point resolved.

Item Number	14.2 Anglers Notice Update
Author	Ian Hadland, Chief Executive
Purpose	For Information and Discussion
Executive Summary	<p>The Chair has asked that this be brought onto the agenda following some email discussion between Councilors.</p> <p>The CE has outlined the present position and included reference material such as the 2024 adopted Regulation setting policy and procedures for regulations reviews.</p>
Discussion/Analysis	<p>The discussion centres on two themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the Council doing enough to consult with licence holders over the proposed Anglers Notice changes 2. Use of the licence database for distribution of information and seeking feedback on proposed changes, in particular for those that have opted out of communications with F&G. .
Links to Previous Papers/Decisions	<p>Last Council agenda has the summary report of proposed changes and the timeline for consultation</p> <p>Minutes from previous Council meeting record the Councils decision on proposed amendments to seek feedback on.</p>
Attachments (if any)	<p>Appendix 1 contains a summary of action to date and a timeline up to submission to NZC.</p> <p>Appendix 2 contains the approved AN policy and procedure</p>
Recommendation	Record any action required.

Decision Record	<p>Moved by:</p> <p>Seconded by:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried / Lost:</p>
-----------------	--

Appendix 1

Process So Far

- June:
 - Initial Engagement letters sent to Otago Runaka and TRONT. (No response received).
 - Worked on the Rangatahi Tumeke queries.
- December:
 - Management Review and Issues and Options papers prepared and presented to Council.
 - *Note:* Delayed due to end-of-financial-year priorities, an office move, and extra workload under the new policy.
 - All recommendations were approved. Council added a 1 bag limit on the upper Taieri and Wanaka Salmon.
 - Initial email sendout (Dec 23rd to target people with spare time while on leave): Sent to 6,147 Loyal Senior, Local Area, Adult Whole Season, Family, and Adult Non-resident Otago licence holders.
 - Sent forms directly to 19 angling clubs and 14 other stakeholders.

Next Steps

- January:
 - Notice in the appropriate newspapers (Bruce to advise)
 - Follow up letter to stakeholders with options to use a submission form or paper submission.
 - Email sent to licence holder group listed above with a late-February cutoff.
 - Reminder to be sent late January/ Early Feb.
- March Meeting:
 - Report to Council on submissions; Council to decide on final changes.
- May Meeting:
 - Council provided marked-up Anglers Notice for approval and submission to NZC.

Appendix 2

Otago Fish & Game Regulation Setting Policy July 2024

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and transparent framework that enables the Otago Fish and Game Council and its staff to effectively review and update regulations. This will help maintain the sports fish and gamebird resources and support the recreational and health-sustaining activities that depend on them.

The other core purpose of this policy is to ensure the Council meets its statutory obligations. As a Crown Entity and willing Treaty Partner, the Otago Fish and Game Council has statutory responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998, the Conservation Act 1987 and the Wildlife Act 1953.

Timeframes

This policy should be reviewed at least once during each Council term to ensure it remains aligned with the provisions of the Sports Fish and Game Management Plan and meets the strategic objectives of the Council. If significant changes in legislation occur, an earlier review of this policy may be necessary.

Review Schedule

Full reviews of the hunting regulations through the Gamebird Gazette Notice are also to be conducted on a triennial basis, taking place in the first year of the Otago Fish and Game Council's election cycle. The review process for these regulations is to follow an Otago Fish & Game - Gamebird Gazette Review Procedure (Appendix 1).

Full review of the fishing regulations through the Anglers Notice and Sports Fish Licences, Fees, and Forms Notice are to be conducted on triennial basis, occurring in the second year of the Otago Fish and Game Council's three-year election cycle. The review is to follow the Otago Fish & Game - Anglers Notice Review procedure (Appendix 2).

Outside of the triennial reviews, only changes that require urgency or provide an increase in opportunity with minimal risk should be made. Changes enacted under an adaptive management regime, such as increasing a bag limit when the population is high, which were approved at a triennial review, should be permitted.

Regulation Principles

Regulations are to be set according to the following principles:

- Regulations are consistent with the current Otago Sports Fish and Game Management Plan (Relevant sections outlined in Appendix 3).
- Regulations align with the strategic priorities of the Otago Fish and Game Council.

- Regulations, and consultation on them, are consistent with statutory obligations.
- Regulations aim to optimize the satisfaction of licence holders.
- Regulations look to maximise participation and opportunity to sustainable limits.
- Regulations are based on the most up-to-date and sound scientific information.
- Regulations acknowledge the diverse abilities and interests of licence holders and aim to distribute restrictions fairly.
- Regulations recognise the importance of sustainably harvesting wild food.
- Regulations are enforceable in court.
- Regulations are consistent with the ethics of Fish and Game New Zealand outlined in Appendices 4 and 5.

Consultation

The regulation review process will begin with consultations with Mana Whenua to enable their contributions to the direction of the process, identify concerns early, and seek shared goals and aspirations. The following organisations will be approached:

- Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRONT)
- Rūnaka recognised in the SPGMP
 - Te Rūnanga o Otakou
 - Te Rūnanga o Hukanui
 - South Otago Rūnanga
 - Kati Huirapa Rūnanga Ki Puketeraki
 - Te Whanau o Otokia
 - Moturata Taieri Whanau
 - Te Rūnanga o Moeraki.
 - Kāi Tahu ki Otago

Staff will also consult with key stakeholder groups on any major changes to regulations. Key stakeholders being:

- Department of Conservation (DoC)
- Ministry for Tourism
- Land information New Zealand (LINZ)
- Game Animal Council (GAC)
- Federation of Freshwater Anglers
- NZ Professional Guides association
- Currently active freshwater angling and gamebird hunting clubs based in Otago and Northern Southland.
- Neighbouring Fish & Game Regions.
- Otago licence holders
- General public, via a notice in the relevant newspapers.

Council will be provided a summary document of the consultation process. Council will take the feedback from the consultation and give it careful consideration when making their decisions.

Notification

Final Council decisions will be communicated back to submitters and key stakeholders to ensure transparency and evidence of a thorough and open public process.

1. Initial Notification and Consultation

Starts early year 1

- Staff will consult with Iwi to:
 - Allow their input on direction of the process
 - Share their concerns
 - Identify common ground and aspirations

2. Management Review

Completed October year 1

- Staff will review the status of the Otago fishery incorporating up to date data on:
 - Habitat issues including water quality and quantity
 - Species assessments - species populations and sustainability
 - Angling trends - Angler surveys of activity, harvest and satisfaction
 - Compliance and clarity issues

3. Issues and Options Paper

Completed October year 1

- Staff will prepare a draft report detailing issues and options informed by the Management review for Council approval.
- Council will provide indications of their intent, to guide the consultation process.

4. Final Consultation

Completed March year 2

- A letter will be sent to key stakeholders inviting them to comment.
- Direct emails will be sent to licence holders, including an online form for their responses
- Feedback will be summarised and reported to Council.

5. Final Recommendations

Completed April year 2

- Staff will compile and provide the Council with a summary of feedback received during the consultation process.
- Based on this feedback, the Council will make final decisions on changes to the regulations.

6. Anglers Notice approval

Completed May year 2

- Staff will provide a copy of the Anglers Notice with amendments marked up.
- Council will approve the Anglers Notice.
- Staff will provide the amended Anglers Notice to the Minister via the National Fish and Game Council.

7. Notification

Complete June year 2

- Staff will provide summary of Council decisions to stakeholders, submitters and licence holders.

Paper Title	14.3 2025 Licence Holder Engagement Survey Report
Author	B. Quirey
Purpose	For Information
Executive Summary	The 2025 engagement survey shows encouraging trends: game bird hunter value-for-money ratings reached a seven-year high, while anglers perceptions remain stable and positive. These outcomes are consistent with the Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan rolled out over the past 18 months. A “paradox” exists where higher organisational understanding does not always yield higher perceived value, particularly among hunters. Findings suggest a focus on visible outcomes is key to satisfaction. Governance results provide a clear mandate for the Council’s reform submissions, with 77.5% supporting local decision-making and 72% valuing regional advocacy. Findings suggest a focus on visible outcomes is key to satisfaction.
Discussion/Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The results suggest communications activity is arresting declining value perceptions rather than just lifting satisfaction. • The mismatch between understanding and value suggests licence holders prioritise visible outcomes over organisational awareness. • However, increased understanding correlates with a value increase, justifying continued engagement efforts. • Game-only have the lowest value perceptions, potentially due to recent duck “pest” controversy and only hunting Opening Weekend. • Strong support for local autonomy reinforces the need for regionally distinctive advocacy and delivery.
Links to Previous Papers/Decisions	2024 Engagement Surveys Report
Attachments (if any)	Nil
Recommendation	That this report be received.

Decision Record	Moved by: Seconded by: Carried / Lost:
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2025 Licence Holder Engagement Survey Report

B Quirey

January 14, 2026

Strategic Priority: *Increased knowledge of Otago F&G role and activity by licence holders results in improved perceptions of value for money in a licence.*

Executive Summary

The 2025 engagement survey suggests an encouraging trend: we have **turned a positive corner with game bird hunters** and are **holding the line with anglers**.

Otago Fish and Game Council Meeting 24th January 2026

Game bird hunters' value-for-money ratings have climbed steadily from a 2021 low of 4.73 on a 9-point scale to reach 5.20 in 2025 — the highest rating this group has given in the seven years we've been conducting these surveys.

Anglers continue to rate their licences positively, maintaining a stable and moderate value perception of 5.81. This stability is significant given the various pressures on the sport and ongoing discussions about licence fees.

These results reflect the Council's deliberate Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan executed over the past 18 months.

The survey also reveals a paradox: the licence holders who understand our work best don't necessarily perceive the highest value, and vice versa. Understanding this disconnect will be useful as we refine our communication strategies moving forward.

On governance matters, more than three-quarters of respondents (77.5%) support Otago retaining autonomy over local decisions, and nearly three-quarters (72%) consider our advocacy work important or very important. These findings provide clear direction for the Council's submission on the proposed Fish & Game reforms.

Insights

- **Game bird hunters** show the lowest value perception (5.10 for game-only holders) but demonstrate steady improvement since 2021
- **Anglers** maintain the highest and most stable value perception (5.81) despite having the lowest understanding of our role
- **Dual licence holders** have the highest understanding (3.48/5) but moderate value perceptions (5.25-5.46)
- **Strong mandate for local autonomy:** 77.5% support Otago retaining decision-making power
- **Understanding drives value:** Each 1-point increase in understanding correlates with a 0.67-point increase in perceived value

Survey Methodology

Survey Design

This year we changed how we categorise respondents. Previously, we separated anglers from game bird hunters, but the hunting group included people who also held fishing licences. This made it difficult to understand whether dual licence holders — people who both fish and hunt — perceive value differently from those who focus on just one activity.

For 2025, we created three groups:

- Licence holders who only fish
- Licence holders who only hunt
- Dual licence holders (both fish and hunt)

This refinement allows us to look at whether engagement in both activities influences perceptions, and the results suggest it does.

Please note, to keep continuity across the surveys, dual licence holders fish values have been removed from long-term charts as they weren't previously surveyed.

Survey Distribution and Response

Dates: November 18-December 1, 2025

Recipients: Whole-season licence holders who opted to receive F&G information

Reminders: November 21 and 25

The response rate varied considerably by licence type, with Senior Loyal licence holders responding at the highest rate (23%). Family licence holders had the lowest rate (8%). Overall, 996 people completed the survey from an eligible pool of 6,840, giving us a 15% response rate. The margin of error was $\pm 3\%$ overall at the 95% confidence level, and $\pm 4\%$ for the game-only and fish-only groups.

Nearly 80% of those who began the survey completed it.

Response Rates

Licence Type	Responses	Eligible	Response Rate
Adult - Whole Season	260	2,345	11%
Family	152	1,847	8%
Loyal Senior	127	548	23%
Adult - Local Area	34	233	15%
Game Whole Season	423	1,867	23%
Total	996	6,840	15%

Key Findings

1. Value for Money Trends (Scale: 1-9, where 1=Poor, 9=Outstanding)

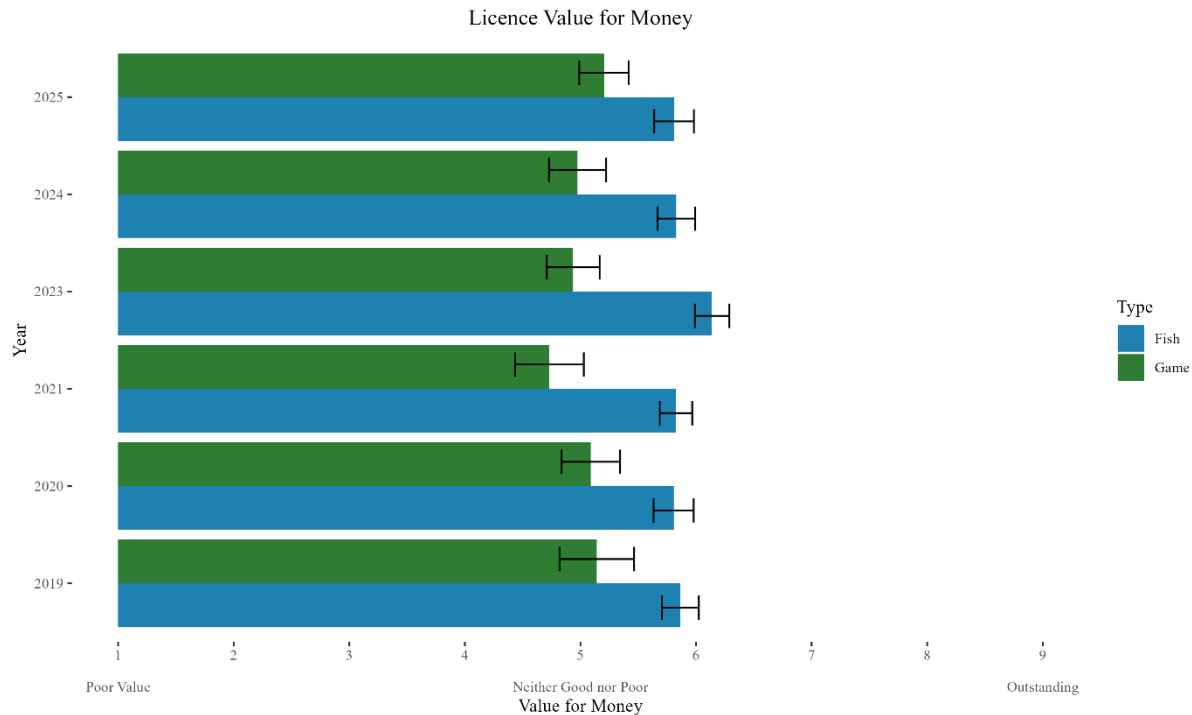


Figure 1: Game bird value shows steady improvement while angling remains steady.

We ask licence holders to rate their licence value on a scale from 1 (Poor value) to 9 (Outstanding value). The midpoint —5— represents "neither good nor poor value". Over the years, we've tracked how these perceptions shift in response to our work, external factors, and changing expectations.

Licence Type	Activity Rated	Rating	Status
Fish only	Fishing	5.81	Highest value
Dual licence	Fishing	5.46	Moderate
Dual licence	Game hunting	5.25	Moderate
Game only	Game hunting	5.10	Lowest value

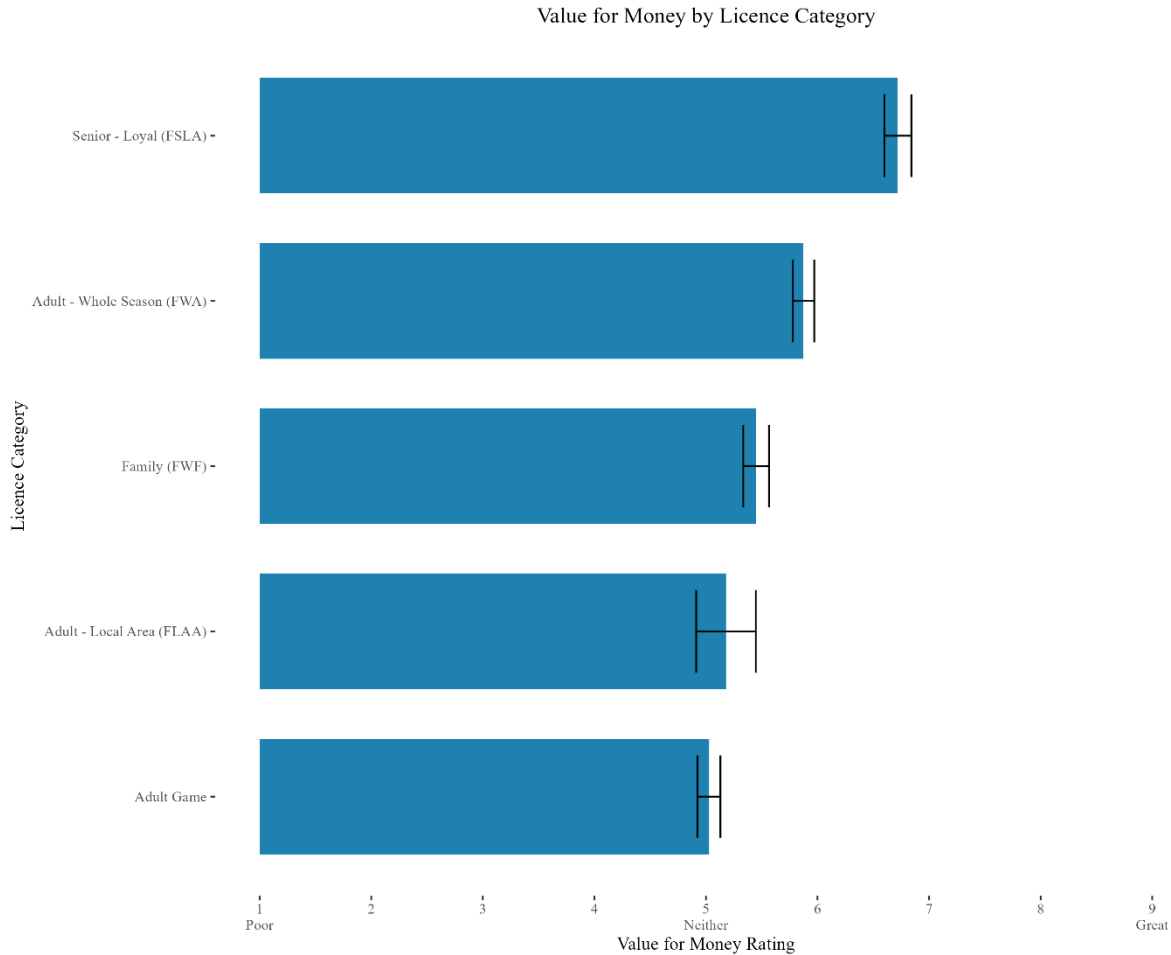


Figure 2: Senior Loyal holders are our most satisfied licence holders.

Angling Licence Holders

Fishing licence holders have consistently rated their licences between 5.81 and 6.14 over the past seven years. The current rating of 5.81 is slightly below the 2023 peak of 6.14, but well within the normal range of variation. This stability is good news. Despite ongoing debates about water quality, access restrictions, and licence costs, anglers continue to see positive value in what we provide.

Looking at the data by licence type reveals nuances. Senior Loyal holders are our most satisfied licence holders, with 41% rating their licence as "outstanding value" and only 7.7% considering it poor value. At the other end of the fishing spectrum, Adult Local Area licence holders show the least satisfaction — only 13.3% rate their licence as outstanding value, while 26.7% consider it poor value. This suggests the geographic restriction of the Local Area licence may not provide sufficient benefit to offset a perception of limited value.

Game Bird Hunting Licence Holders

The game bird hunting results are more encouraging. After bottoming out at 4.73 in 2021 — our lowest recorded value rating — hunters have steadily increased their satisfaction. The 2025 rating of 5.20 represents but a new high for this group.

This improvement reflects the Council's deliberate Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan put into action over the past 18 months. We introduced "Game Call," a fortnightly regional hunting report that keeps hunters informed throughout the season. We've grown our social media presence to reach hunters where they already spend time online. We've refocused our media releases to highlight work that matters to the hunting community. We've refined our Electronic Direct Mail marketing. We've improved our regional hunting website. We've showcased our wetland habitat work that directly benefit game bird populations. And we've worked with rural communities, supporting catchment groups with technical and governance advice, and increasing engagement with key stakeholders.

However, game-only licence holders still rate value lower (5.10) than any other group. This may relate recent controversy in another region. They may be influenced by certain stakeholder lobbying and media reporting that ducks are "pests". Another probable factor is usage patterns. Many hunters primarily focus on Opening Weekend and don't take advantage of the full season licence. If you're only hunting one or two days per year, even a modest licence fee can feel expensive. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity — we need to either help hunters see value in the full season or consider different licence structures.

Hunters show **improving value perception** after hitting bottom in 2021.

- **2025 rating:** 5.20 (period high)
- **2021 low:** 4.73
- **Trend:** Steady upward trajectory since 2021

2025 Value Perception: Dual vs Single Licence Holders

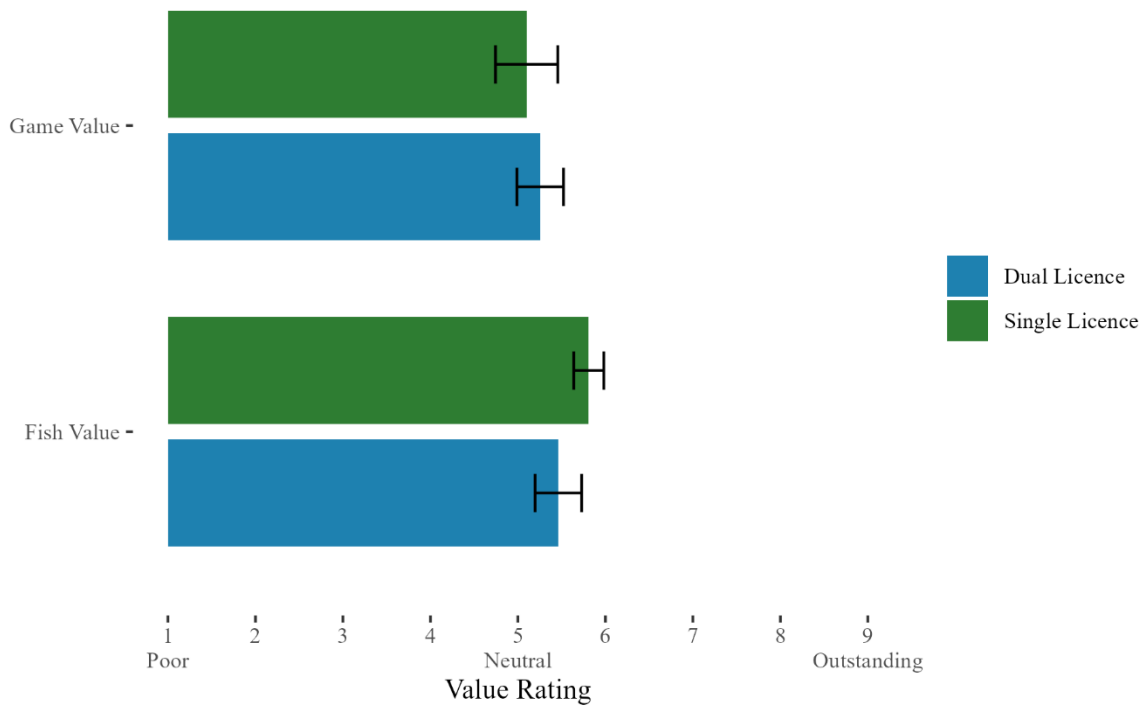


Figure 3: Game bird hunters who also fish rate their game bird licence better value than game bird hunters who do not fish. Whereas anglers who also hunt rate their fishing licence lower than people who only fish.

Dual Licence Holders

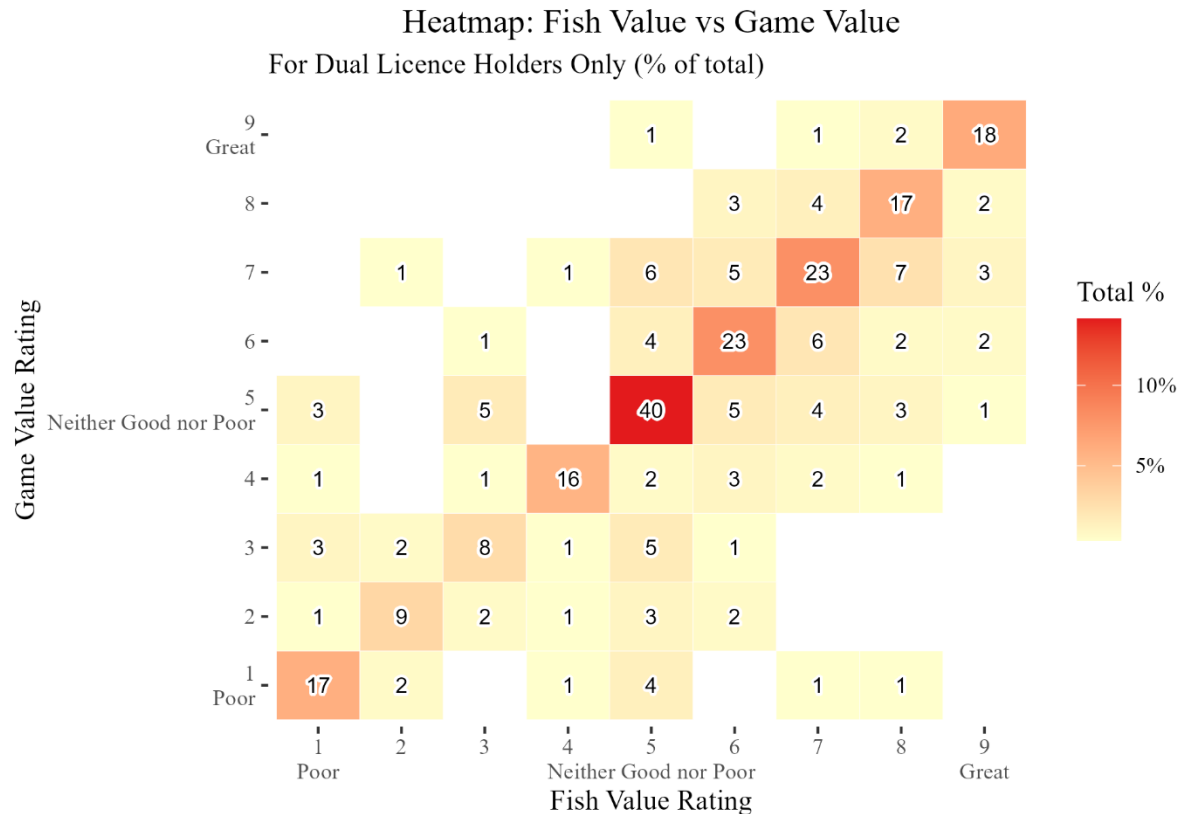


Figure 4: This heatmap shows how dual licence holders rate the value of their fishing licence (x-axis) compared to their game bird hunting licence (y-axis). Each cell represents the percentage of dual licence holders with that rating combination. The darkest red cell (40%) shows the largest group rates both licences at 5 (Neither Good nor Poor). Notable patterns include: 18% rate fish as "Great" (9) while rating game at 9, and 17% rate fish as "Poor" (1) while rating game only slightly better. The concentration of responses around the centre and upper-right quadrant indicates dual holders generally rate their fishing licence more favourably than their game licence, with most ratings clustering in the 5-7 range for both activities.

Dual licence holders — people who both fish and hunt — present the middle ground for value. When rating their fishing licence, they score it at 5.46, lower than fish-only holders. When rating their game licence, they score it at 5.25, higher than game-only holders.

These licence holders are our most engaged participants, receiving communications about both activities and likely aware of the full scope of our work.

Their fishing rating (5.46) falls between the high rating of fish-only holders (5.81) and the lower rating of game-only holders (5.10), while their game rating (5.25) similarly sits in the middle range.

This may relate to cost perception. Some dual licence holders have expressed interest in a combined licence or discount for holding both. Without such an option, they may feel they're paying twice for one organisation's work, which could dampen their value perception despite high engagement.

Game bird hunters who also fish rate their game bird licence better value than game bird hunters who do not fish. Whereas anglers who also hunt rate their fishing licence lower than pure anglers.

2. Understanding of Council Role (Scale: 1-5, where 1=None, 5=Excellent)

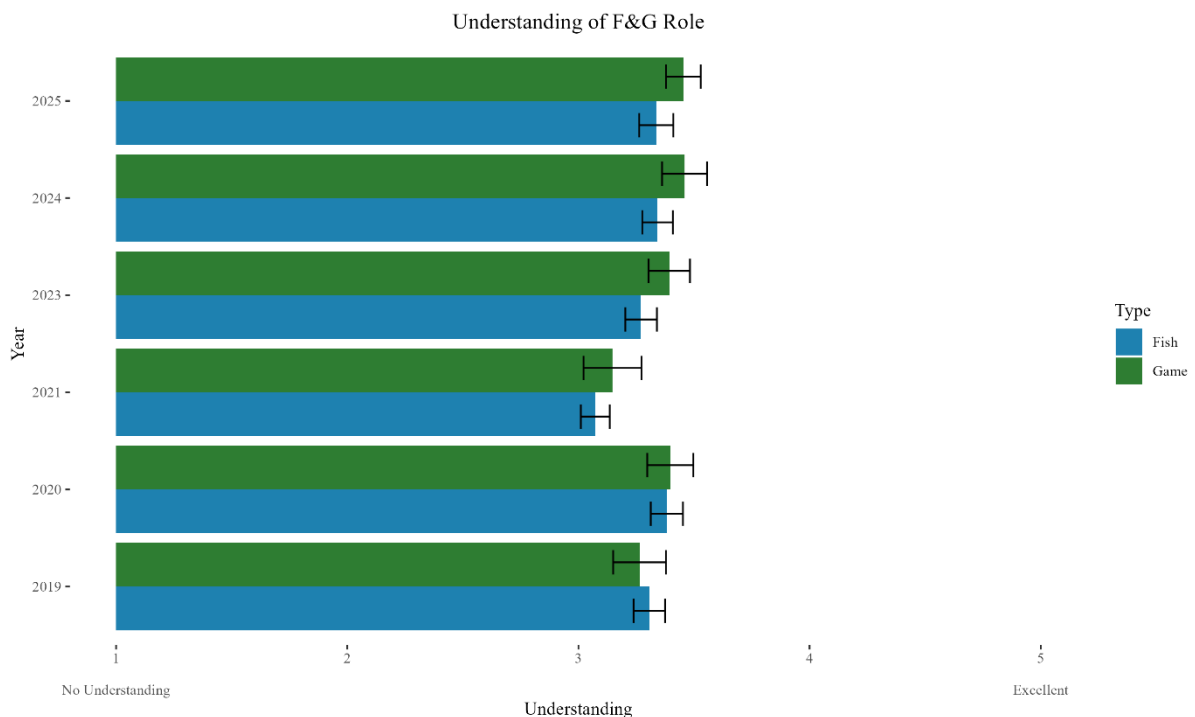


Figure 5: Anglers and hunters have maintained relatively moderate understanding scores since 2019, with a dip in 2021 followed by recovery.

We measure understanding on a five-point scale, where 1 indicates no understanding and 5 indicates excellent understanding. The relationship between understanding and value proves more complex than we initially anticipated.

2025 Understanding of F&G Role

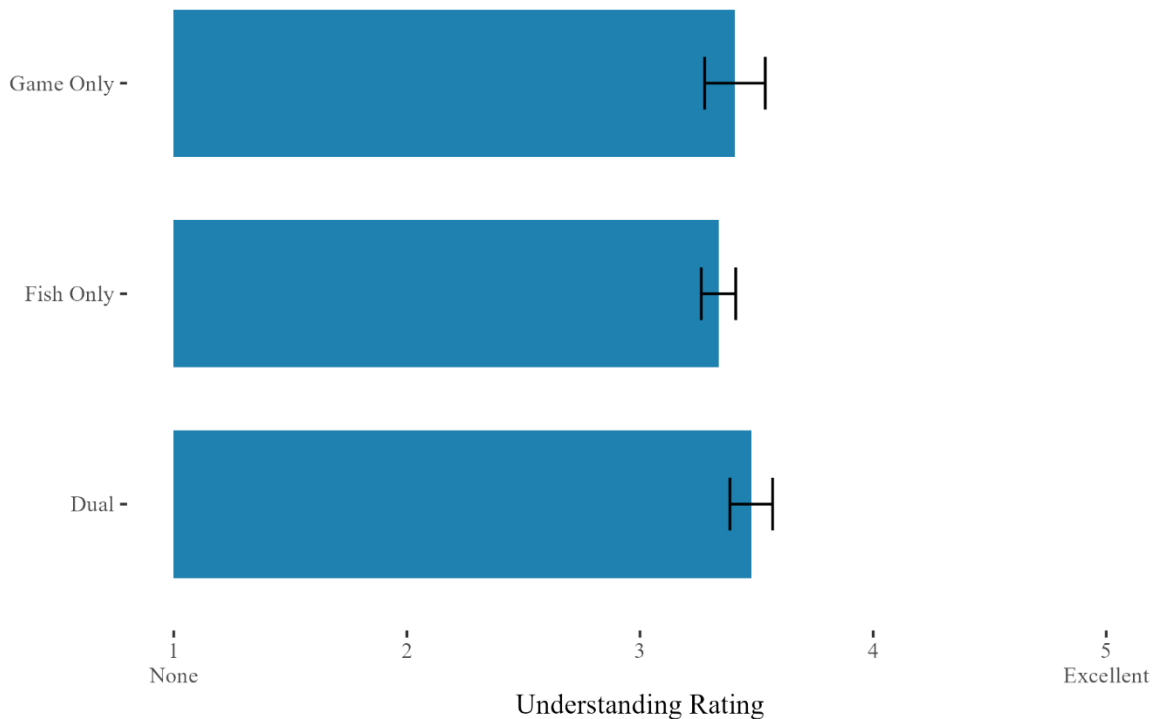


Figure 6: Higher engagement by dual licence holders translates into higher understanding.

Dual licence holders report the highest understanding of our role at 3.48 out of 5. This makes sense — they are engaged in both fishing and hunting and receive twice as much communication.

Game-only hunters sit in the middle at 3.41, while fish-only licence holders report the lowest understanding at 3.34. All three groups cluster around the "moderate understanding" level, which represents both progress from earlier years and room for improvement.

Looking at historical trends, both groups have maintained relatively stable understanding scores since 2019, with a dip in 2021 (coinciding with the value rating dip) followed by recovery. Hunters have shown stronger recovery, reaching their highest understanding levels in 2024-2025.

2025 Ratings by Group

Historical Trends

Anglers: Moderate and stable understanding (range: 3.07-3.38 from 2019-2025)

- Dipped to 3.07 in 2021
- Recovered to 3.34 in 2024-2025

Game bird hunters: Resilient with slight improvement

- Peak: 3.46 (2024)
- Current: 3.45 (2025)
- Consistent above 3.4 since 2023

Group	Understanding Rating	Trend
Dual licence	3.48	Highest
Game only	3.41	Stable/improving
Fish only	3.34	Stable

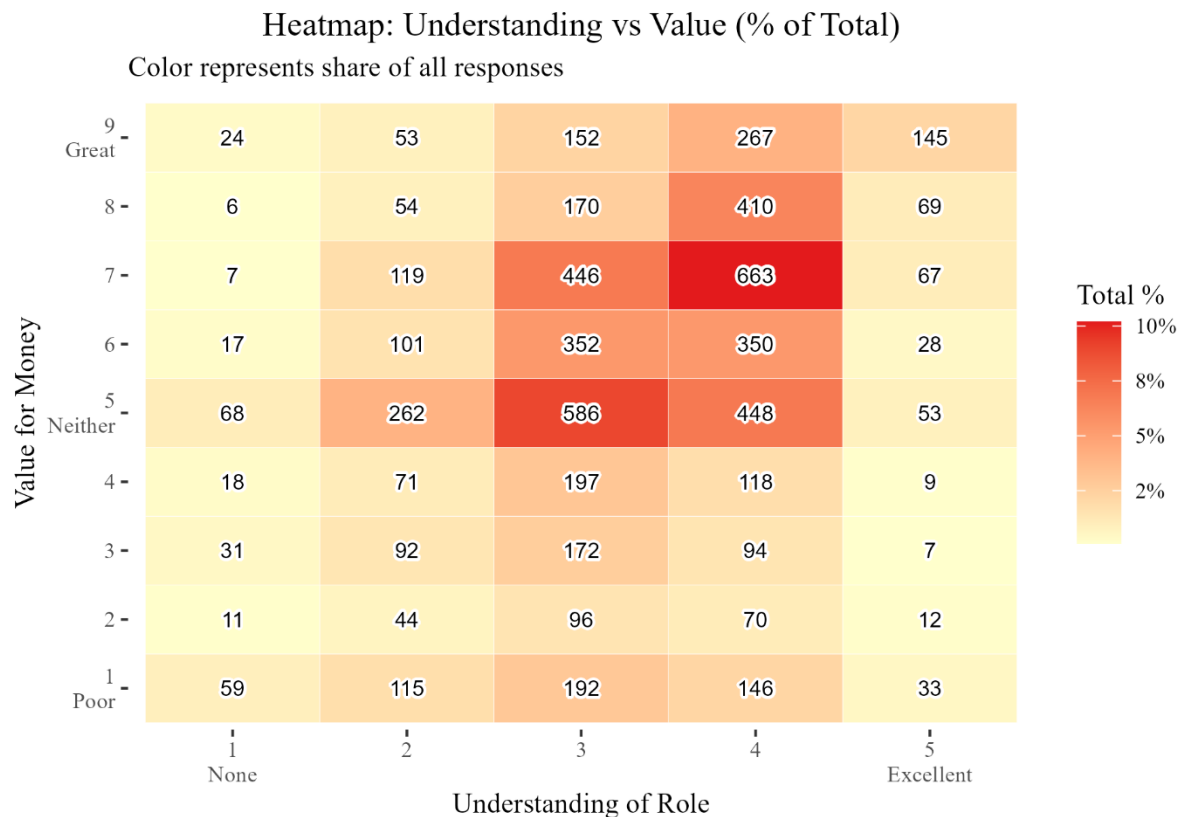


Figure 7: Where most of our licence holders sit. The whole chart adds up to 100 percent. For example, about 10% of all licence holders scored 4 for understanding and 7 for value.

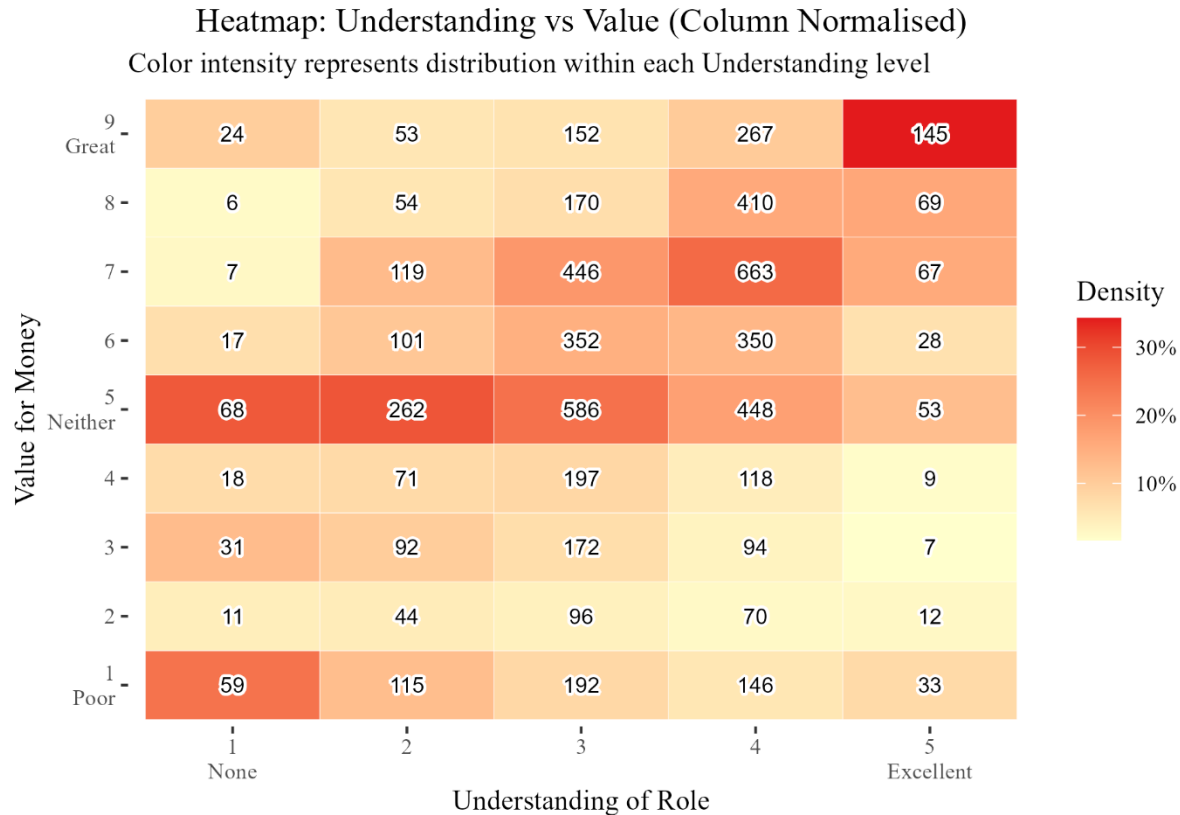


Figure 8: A person's likely values outcomes, assuming their given understanding of Otago Fish & Game Council's role. The colour is based on the percent of each column – each column adds to 100%. For example, about 30% of people with excellent understanding rated their value at a 9.

The Paradox: Why Don't Knowledge and Satisfaction Align?

This is where the survey reveals something unexpected. Anglers — who have the lowest understanding of our role — perceive the highest value. Meanwhile, hunters who understand more about our organisational work perceive lower value.

The “Angler’s Paradox” — for fishing licence holders, satisfaction appears driven primarily by the on-water experience: good fishing, clear information on where to go, and educational and stocking programmes. They don't necessarily need to understand Council governance structures, advocacy strategies, or habitat management complexities to feel satisfied. They judge value based on whether they catch fish and enjoy the experience.

Hunters — “the Informed Skeptics” — present an opposite pattern. Greater organisational knowledge doesn't translate to higher satisfaction. In fact, understanding more about our challenges, limitations, and the complex political environment we navigate may create a more critical perspective. Hunters who understand that we're constrained by regulations, funding, and access limitations may feel frustrated by what they perceive as inadequate results.

Dual licence holders — the "Engaged Participants" — show the highest understanding but land in the middle for value. Their broad engagement and organisational knowledge help explain both hunting and fishing contexts, which may moderate their expectations in both directions.

The Value of Understanding

Despite the paradox, understanding still matters. When we analyse the relationship statistically, we find that across all respondents and all years, **each 1-point increase in understanding correlates with a 0.67-point increase in perceived licence value**. Understanding doesn't drive everything, but communication efforts are important, even if the relationship between knowledge and satisfaction isn't perfectly linear. The goal isn't to turn every licence holder into an expert on Fish & Game governance, but rather to help them understand enough about our work to appreciate the value they receive.

3. Awareness of Council Work

We asked an open-ended question: "What have you heard about the work of Otago Fish & Game Council?" The responses reveal different levels of awareness across our three licence holder groups.

Fish-Only Licence Holders: Selective Awareness

Anglers demonstrate strong awareness of specific, tangible programmes that directly affect their fishing experience. Fish stocking tops the list — nearly everyone who provided a substantive answer mentioned stocking. "Take a Kid Fishing" events also received frequent mentions, as did soft bait clinics, weekly fishing reports, and hatchery operations.

This selective awareness aligns with the "Angler's Paradox" we identified earlier. Anglers know about the things that directly impact their time on the water, but many freely admitted they'd heard "nothing," "not much," or "very little" about our broader organisational work. They're satisfied customers who don't necessarily follow everything we do.

The concerns anglers raised focused on tangible, local issues: licence fee increases, perceived conflicts with farmers (particularly in Southland), and habitat degradation.

Game-Only Licence Holders: A Critical Gap

The most challenging finding from the survey comments is the lack of awareness among game-only licence holders — this is despite hunters self-reporting the highest understanding. The vast majority indicated they had heard "nothing," "not much," or "not a lot" about our work. This reflects an informed assumption that hunters are the least engaged of licence holders with Fish & Game.

Among the small number who could cite specific work, mentions included habitat management, wetland improvements, and water quality advocacy. But these were exceptions. Most game-only hunters say they don't know what we do.

This gap helps explain the lower value perceptions among hunters. If you don't know about the wetland restoration work, the access negotiations with landowners, the compliance activities, or the advocacy protecting hunting habitat, how can you appreciate the value of your licence? You're essentially paying for services you don't know exist.

The few critical comments we received from hunters offer other perspectives. One detailed response about the Manuherikia River controversy opposed our advocacy for more water flow to support trout, arguing it threatened the valley's economy and community to benefit "the few" who fish. This suggests that when hunters do hear about our work, it may be through advocacy issues that they don't agree with, rather than through positive messaging about programmes they care about.

Dual Licence Holders: Our Best-Informed Advocates

As expected, dual licence holders demonstrated the broadest and deepest awareness of our work. They could cite specific programmes across both fishing and hunting domains: stocking, Take A Kid Fishing, hatchery operations, wetland projects such as Takitakitoa, access negotiations, infrastructure improvements, advocacy work, and compliance activities.

These respondents primarily get their information through Facebook, newsletters and emails, weekly reports, and the Fish & Game magazine. They're engaged, attentive, and generally appreciative of the scope of our work.

However, even this well-informed group raised concerns worth noting: perceptions of conflict with farmers, family licence costs (one mentioned \$800), concerns about "mission creep" beyond core responsibilities, and questions about administrative spending versus field work. Some also mentioned issues with the online licensing system and customer service responsiveness.

4. Support for Advocacy and Local Autonomy: A Clear Mandate

The survey included several questions designed to inform the Council's submission on the Government's proposed Fish & Game reforms. The results provide clear direction.

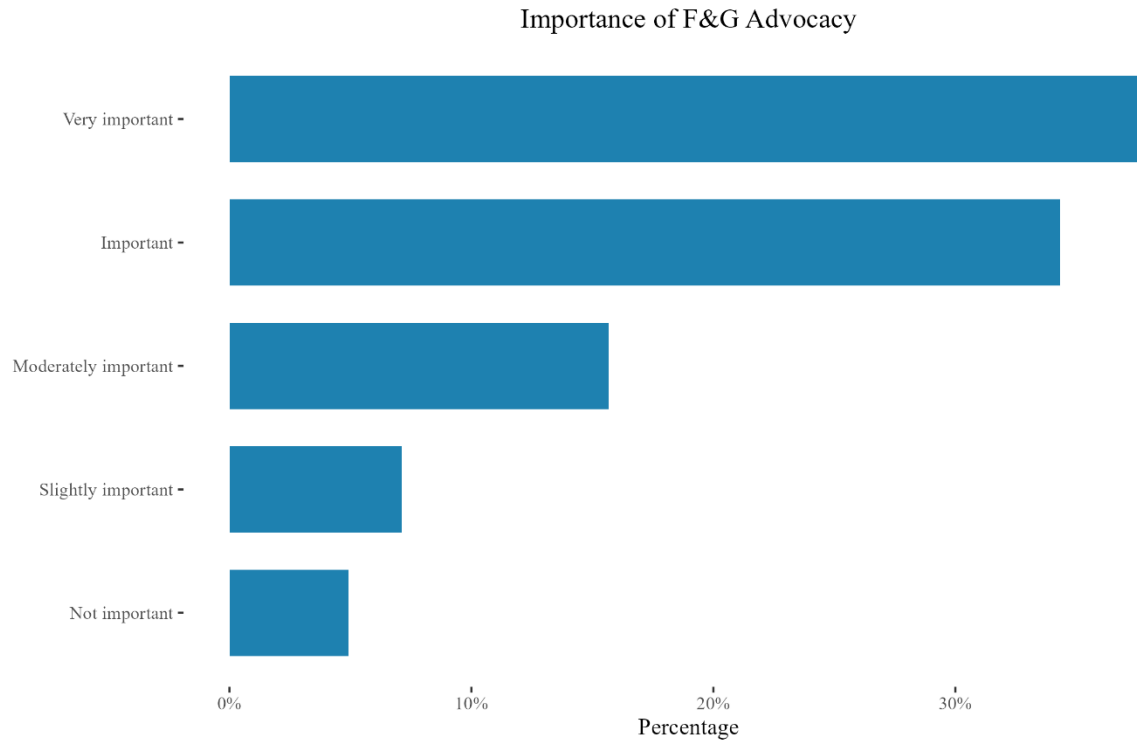


Figure 9: A strong mandate for advocacy on local environmental and access issues.

The Value of Advocacy

When asked how important it is that Fish & Game undertake advocacy on local environmental and access issues within Otago, licence holders responded with strong support. More than 72% consider this work either "Important" (34%) or "Very important" (38%). Only 5% consider it "Not important."

This support is particularly strong among Senior Loyal, Adult Whole Season, and Family licence holders, especially those aged 55 and over. This demographic represents our core constituency and their clear mandate for advocacy work validates the Council's strategic position.

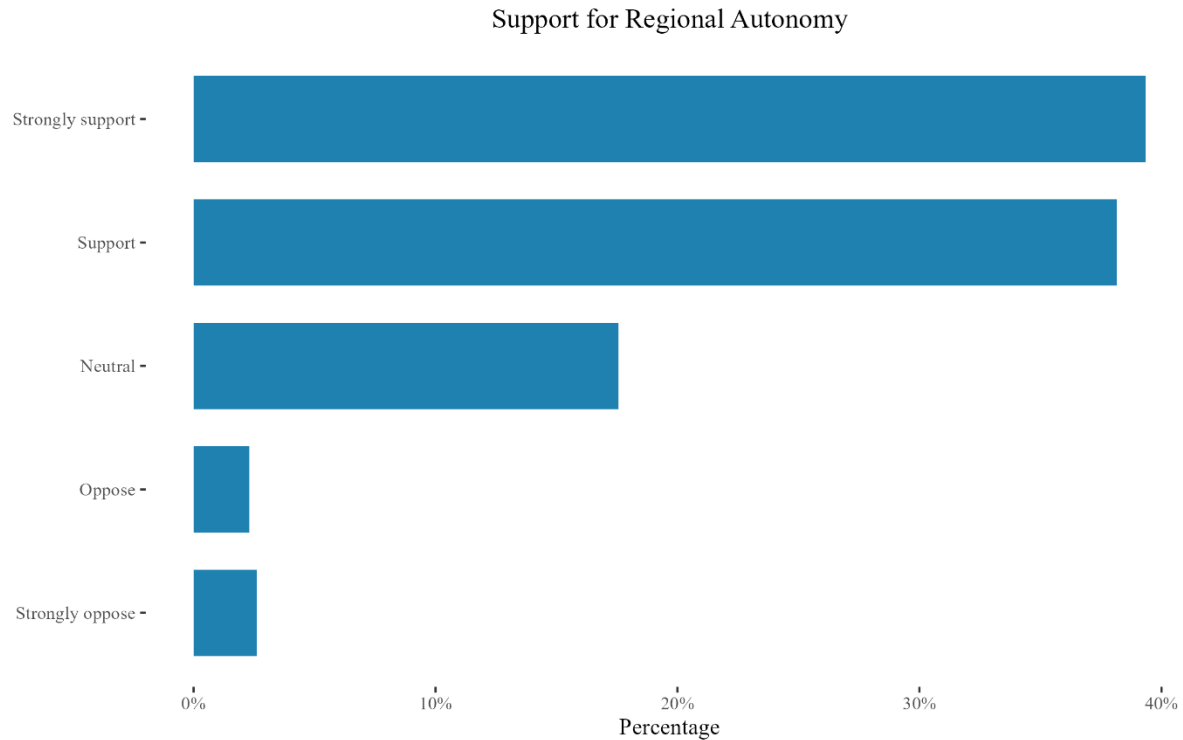


Figure 10: Overwhelming support for local autonomy.

Support for Local Autonomy

We asked whether respondents support Otago retaining autonomy to make decisions on advocacy, habitat management, and compliance activities that directly affect local hunting and fishing experiences. The response was emphatic: 77.5% either support (38%) or strongly support (39%) local autonomy.

Opposition was minimal, with only 4.9% opposing or strongly opposing. The largest single category was "Strongly support" at 39%, indicating this is a high-priority issue for a substantial portion of our licence holders.

Again, support was strongest among older respondents and those with Whole Season, Family, and Senior Loyal licences. These are the people who have the deepest engagement with Otago's fisheries and game bird habitats over time.

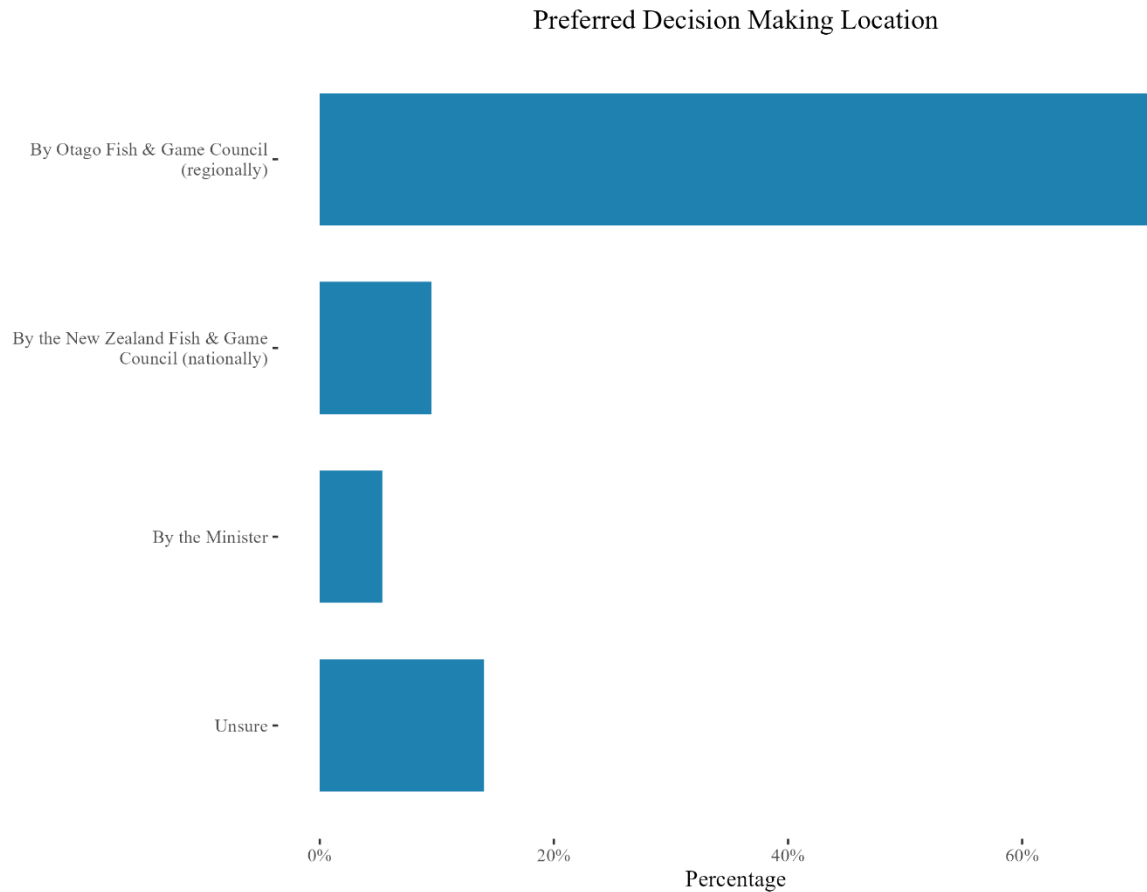


Figure 11: The preference for regional decision-making was the clear majority.

Decision-Making Preferences

To understand what form of governance licence holders prefer, we asked who should make decisions about advocacy and environmental issues affecting Otago's fisheries and game bird habitats. The options were: Otago Fish & Game Council (regionally), New Zealand Fish & Game Council (nationally), the Minister, or Unsure.

Regional decision-making was the clear majority at 72%. National-level decision-making received only 10% support, ministerial decision-making just 4%, and 14% were unsure. This pattern held consistent across all age groups and licence types, though it was strongest among older respondents and long-term licence holders.

The message is clear: licence holders trust local decision-making and want the Council to retain the autonomy to respond to Otago-specific issues with Otago-specific solutions.

Demographics: Who Responded?

Both fishing and game bird licence holders who responded demonstrate strong, long-term loyalty to their sports. Many reported holding licences for more than 20 seasons, and there's strong representation across all experience levels from newcomers to veterans.

The people who responded to this survey are committed anglers and hunters who have invested years in their pursuits. Their feedback comes from sustained engagement and provides a reliable foundation for understanding broader trends.

Age Distribution Changes

One unusual finding this year was a shift in age distribution. The average age of respondents increased compared to previous surveys, with participation by respondents aged 65 and over increasing while all other age groups decreased.

Engagement surveys are typically conducted in mid-November or early December. In 2024 the survey was later (December 16-January 6), and we hypothesised that this pre-Christmas and holiday timing likely affected younger respondents who were either too busy with family commitments or traveling and less inclined to complete an online survey.

This year we shifted the survey back to November 18-December 1. However, Family licence holders still responded at the lowest rate (8%) compared with 15% overall. This suggests timing may not fully explain the age distribution shift, and that younger licence holders and families may require different engagement approaches to encourage survey participation.

While the older demographic provides valuable insights — these are often our most loyal and engaged licence holders — we want to ensure we're also capturing perspectives from younger participants who represent the future of these activities.

Conclusion

The 2025 survey demonstrates meaningful progress. Game bird hunters' value perceptions have improved since 2021, while anglers maintain stable, high satisfaction.

The strong mandate for local autonomy (77.5% support) and advocacy (72% consider it important) provides clear direction for the Council's feedback about organisational reforms.

The challenge ahead is closing the communication gap with game-only licence holders while maintaining the positive trajectory with hunters and stable satisfaction among anglers.

Acknowledgement: Thank you to the nearly 1,000 licence holders who took part this survey and to Jayde Couper for processing the data and creating the charts.

Recommendation: That this report be received.

Bruce Quirey
Communications Officer
Otago Fish & Game

Paper Title	14.4 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for the 2024/2025 Financial Year
Author	Nigel Paragreen
Purpose	For Information
Executive Summary	The Otago Fish and Game Council's 2024/2025 greenhouse gas inventory shows total emissions of 82,620 kg CO ₂ -e, representing a 19.9% decrease from the 2022/2023 baseline year. The reduction was primarily driven by: reductions in fossil fuel vehicles, the replacement of old fridges and freezers, and staff carpooling from Wanaka. Five emission sources continue to dominate the organization's carbon footprint, accounting for 89.56% of total emissions: F&G vehicle fossil fuel use, staff commuting, refrigerants, hatchery pump electricity and aircraft charters. The most notable improvement was in refrigerant emissions from fridges and freezers, which decreased by 75% due to equipment replacement, demonstrating the effectiveness of targeted infrastructure upgrades.
Discussion/Analysis	The 2024/2025 inventory shows reduced emissions. The three targeted interventions—electric vehicle use, refrigeration equipment replacement, and staff carpooling all delivered measurable results. However, challenges remain: hatchery pump electricity increased, air conditioner refrigerants (16,093 kg CO ₂ -e) show minimal improvement despite representing 20% of total emissions, and staff commuting remains steady at 15.3%. Future reduction efforts should prioritize fleet electrification, travel optimization and flexible commutes. There are potential and expected emission reductions which could be realized from the new Mosgiel office which is yet to be taken into account.
Links to Previous Papers/Decisions	Please refer to reports on the GHG inventories for the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 years.
Attachments (if any)	
Recommendation	That this report is received.

Decision Record	Moved by: Seconded by: Carried / Lost:
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Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for the 2024-2025 Financial Year

Inventory Context, Methodology and Council Decisions

This report is the third in the series of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory (**GHG Inventory or the inventory**) which the Council has directed so as to understand the emissions of the organization and inform actions to reduce them. The Council has previously agreed to an emissions reduction target of 30% on the 2022/2023 financial year's emissions by 2030. This constitutes a 6% emissions reduction per year from the latter half of the 2020s.

The methodology, including conceptual explainers, definitions of organizational boundaries, principles of the inventory, analysis of weaknesses and exclusions can all be found in detail in the previous reports in this series. Nothing in this area has changed from the previous years.

This report will focus on reporting the results of the 2024/2025 inventory.

Emissions Reduction Action Taken in 2024/2025

The three main emissions reduction actions for the inventory year were:

1. Preferentially using the electric vehicle for work travel where a 4wd is not needed.
2. Continue replacing old fridges and freezers.
3. Carpooling for Cromwell staff.

The reductions in emissions from these activities can be seen clearly in the results of the inventory, as will be discussed below.

Inventory Results

Figure 1 in Appendix 1 shows the total emissions for the year, at 82,620.03kg of CO₂-e. Like in previous years, the vast majority of emissions for the organization are coming from a small number of sources. The table immediately below shows these sources, which account for 89.56% of the total emissions in this inventory year. The most meaningful reductions will come from reducing these emissions.

F&G vehicles & equipment - fossil fuel	Everyday use of F&G vehicles for work purposes	29.70%
Staff commute w/o F&G vehicle	Staff commutes to the office in private vehicles	15.30%
Aircraft charters	Survey flights	9.29%
Electricity - hatchery pump 610	The pump that supplies water to the hatchery	11.69%
Refrigerants & other gases	Refrigerants that leak from heat pumps/air conditioners, fridges and freezers	23.58%

Figure 2 shows a breakdown of the organization's emissions by scope, with scope 1 being emissions generated as a direct result of the activities of the organization, scope 2 being purchased electricity and scope 3 being emissions that are embedded in the organization's supply

chain. In F&G's case 3 of the main emission sources sit within the supply chain – staff commuting, aircraft charters and hatchery pump 610. A full list of scope three emissions sources is provided in Figure 3.

Finally, Figure 4 shows the organization's emission broken down into smaller categories. From this, we can see that nearly half of F&G's emissions come from private and F&G owned car and boat use. If F&G can reduce these emissions meaningfully, it will have a significant difference on the total emission of the organization. In addition, Figure 4 shows that emissions from Chargenet, which staff use to charge the electric vehicle, is very low. This likely reflects the preference of staff to charge electric vehicles at the office rather than on the road. Travel for work is also very low this year, with only two staff members reporting travel in vehicles not owned by F&G for work purposes.

Should the inventory include scope 3 emissions?

Over the course of the GHG inventories, the question of why scope 3 emissions are present has been raised multiple times. On the outset, it seems counter-intuitive to include the emission of our suppliers when they may already be accounted for in their own emissions reduction initiatives.

The reason why they are considered is simply that it gives the organization information on which to base their decision making. With scope 3 emission information readily available, many companies will be able to factor emission into their supply chain decision making. For example, by choosing locally manufactured goods which have lower carbon miles. In addition to this, recognizing scope three emissions within a company's inventory avoids the temptation to export emissions onto suppliers and other 3rd parties. For example, without scope 3 emissions being included, F&G could reduce emissions by up to 10% simply by contracting a 3rd party to undertake monitoring flights. In this scenario, F&G's emissions wouldn't have actually been reduced, just shifted elsewhere.

The methodology used in this inventory advises a practical application of emissions reductions. The inclusion of scope 3 emissions in F&G's GHG inventory is one way to help ensure this happens.

Looking at the list of scope 3 emissions sources in Figure 3, there are a number of places where F&G can make similar choices. In order to be meaningful, they will likely need to come from one of the three major emissions sources. Examples for how each might be achieved could be:

1. Choosing less emission intensive aircraft charters, where those options are available.
2. Encouraging Oceana Gold to be more efficient with electricity by switching off the pump supplying the hatchery when it is not needed.
3. Encouraging smaller staff commutes through work from home policies; providing incentives to use public or active transport; and – in the long term – locating offices close to where future staff are likely to be drawn from.

Trends against previous years' results

Appendix 2 shows the results of this year's inventory against that of previous years. Over the years, the total emissions for the organization have gone up and then down dramatically from the baseline.

In the 2023/2024 year, the increase in total emissions was very likely due staff travel. The staff conference added ~3% to F&G emissions and sending two staff members overseas added more than double that figure. In this most recent year, staff travel has dropped to almost nothing, representing significant reductions in aircraft generated emissions. However, aircraft related emissions are still up from the baseline inventory, likely due to an increase in air-based monitoring.

One trend that has remained consistent is the reduction in fossil fuel use for F&G vehicles. Emissions in this category dropped ~20% from 2022/2023 to 2023/2024 and then another ~30% in 2024/2025. This represents a meaningful reduction in emissions. It likely forms the bulk of emissions reductions for this year and served to temper an increase in travel related emissions in the previous year.

Related to this, the Cromwell office had some significant employee turnover with two new staff joining the team. All 3 Cromwell staff now live outside of Cromwell and have decided to carpool regularly. Being more rural in nature, commutes in Central Otago can be very long, so this decision has avoided a sharp rise in emissions for this year.

Finally, the effort to replace old fridges and freezers is now complete and the worst of the units have been moved on. This has resulted in a massive ~75% reduction in emissions generated by the organizations fridges and freezers. I understand that the old Cromwell fridge and freezer unit is sitting in the Cromwell garage, waiting to see if it will be needed for a future re-build of the Wanaka hut. Because refrigerant leakage occurs regardless of the unit being powered, it is still contributing to emissions. Although, it is not as bad as the older units.

Options for future emissions reductions

With an overarching goal of a 6% emissions reduction year on year, the challenge for F&G in this next year will be to hold onto the gains that it has made so far. From the data we have to date, the best ways to achieve this are to:

1. Continue preferentially using the electric vehicle whenever possible and continue switching out fossil fuel vehicles for electric ones as fleet vehicles are cycled.
2. Find ways to avoid frequent or far-reaching airplane travel for work.
3. Continue to encourage staff to carpool.

In addition to this, there are options to further reduce emissions in the immediate:

1. Investigate the potential to use less emission intensive aircraft for monitoring activities.
2. Encourage Oceana Gold to be more efficient with the hatchery pump.

Finally, with the new Mosgiel office, being now open there are some opportunities for emission reduction. Firstly, the residences of the current staff in the Mosgiel office are unusually biased towards Mosgiel and its surrounding towns/suburbs. Unless potential staff from Dunedin self-select out of job applications with F&G in future, this is a statistically unlikely outcome but one which allows for emission reductions in the immediate. Were Mosgiel staff close to the office to adopt regular use of active transport, organization emissions could be cut by up to ~7% on the current year's results. In addition to this, F&G should expect to see a reduction in refrigerant losses from air conditioners, as the Mosgiel office uses more modern and less emission intensive refrigerant in its units.

Exclusions

There are some key exclusions which need to be highlighted for this inventory. methodology allows *de minimis* sources of emissions to be excluded. These are sources of emissions which are expected to be small, totalling no more than a small percentage of total emissions. The methodology suggests using a 5% threshold, which has been adopted.

The following emissions have been excluded on this basis:

Emission source excluded	Explanation
Specific emissions from activities of staff who were with the organization for a short period during the inventory timeframe	Generally, the emissions resulting from the work of these staff will be captured, such as fuel use in work vehicles or electricity and refrigerant leakage associated with their office. The major emission source not counted would be from commuting, which will be a very small percentage of the total given the short time they spent employed during the inventory timeframe.
Councilors' work from home	There are no records associated with the work Councilors undertake at home. Given staff emissions from working at home are just 0.05% of the total, it is likely that Councilors' emissions from this activity will be insignificant.
All hatchery electricity bar pump 610	Staff were unable to get accurate records from Oceana Gold about the electricity use of the hatchery – bar pump 610. Based on the electronics used in the hatchery operation (outside of the container fridge – see below), it is likely that the impact on total organization emissions will be insignificant.
Removal and disposal of effluent from the hatchery	Similar to the above, obtaining accurate records of effluent removal and disposal has been difficult. It is estimated that around 400kgs of effluent is removed and disposed of every 4 years or so. The current waste and freight transport emissions for the 2022/2023 year suggest that these emissions are insignificant.

There are three additional exclusions which do not fall into the *de minimis* category but are proving difficult to measure. That these are excluded detract from the certainty of this inventory:

1. The Otago Fish and Game Council owns and manages numerous wetlands around Otago. Wetlands can be both an incredible source of carbon sequestration and/or a heavy emitter, depending on their individual characteristics. There is currently no reliable method for calculating wetland carbon emissions or sequestration.
2. Staff were not able to collect records on the electricity usage or refrigerant leakage from the hatchery container fridge. It is likely that emissions from this container fridge will have a more than insignificant impact on total emissions for the organization.

3. There are no records of travel undertaken by honorary rangers over the course of their work, and it is difficult to estimate after the event. Given the nature of emission in the organization, it is possible that these emissions could be significant.

If a long-term project emissions reduction project is approved, staff should look for opportunities to include these factors in future.

Recommendations

Staff recommend that this report be received.

Nigel Paragreen

Environmental Officer

14 January 2025

Appendix 1 – Results of the GHG inventory for 2024/2025

Figure 1: Total calculated emissions based on user input into worksheets			
Default Scope	Emission Source	kg CO ₂ -e	Percent of total kg CO ₂ -e
Scope 1	F&G vehicles & equipment - fossil fuel	24,541.06	29.70%
Scope 2	F&G vehicles & equipment - electricity	15.23	0.02%
Scope 3	Contractor travel	117.30	0.14%
Scope 3	Staff commute w/o F&G vehicle	12,642.44	15.30%
Scope 3	Councillor commute	2,491.35	3.02%
Scope 3	Working from home	45.09	0.05%
Scope 3	Aircraft charters	7,672.43	9.29%
Scope 3	Work travel in non-F&G vehicles and work trips	818.70	0.99%
Scope 2	Electricity - offices and huts	2,683.90	3.25%
Scope 1	Glenorchy hut gas	26.74	0.03%
Scope 3	Electricity - hatchery pump 610	9,656.33	11.69%
Scope 3	Transport and distribution losses - electricity	939.66	1.14%
Scope 3	Freight transport - sea	78.47	0.09%
Scope 1	Freight transport - F&G vehicles	113.41	0.14%
Scope 3	Water supply and wastewater treatment	535.84	0.65%
Scope 3	Waste	761.43	0.92%
Scope 1	Refrigerants & other gases	19,480.66	23.58%
		82,620.03	100.00%

Figure 2: GHG emissions by scope	kg CO ₂ -e	Percent of total kg CO ₂ -e
Total scope 1	44,161.87	53.45%
Total scope 2	2,699.13	3.27%
Total scope 3	35,759.03	43.28%

Figure 3: Focus on Scope 3 emissions	kg CO ₂ -e	Percent of total kg CO ₂ -e
Contractor travel	117.30	0.14%
Staff commute w/o F&G vehicle	12,642.44	15.30%
Councillor commute	2,491.35	3.02%
Working from home	45.09	0.05%
Aircraft charters	7,672.43	9.29%
Work travel in non-F&G vehicles and work trips	818.70	0.99%
Electricity - hatchery pump 610	9,656.33	11.69%
Transport and distribution losses - electricity	939.66	1.14%
Freight transport - sea	78.47	0.09%
Water supply and wastewater treatment	535.84	0.65%
Waste	761.43	0.92%
	35,759.03	43.28%

Figure 4: Emissions categorised and detailed by key emission sources	kg CO₂-e	Percent of total kg CO₂-e
Road and boat vehicle emissions	39,223.56	47.47%
F&G owned - fossil fuel (without commute in work vehicles)	22,860.67	27.67%
F&G owned - electricity from Chargenet	15.23	0.02%
All staff commute - Dunedin	6,941.61	8.40%
All staff commute - Cromwell	6,797.40	8.23%
Councillor commute	2,491.35	3.02%
Contractor work kms	117.30	0.14%
Aircraft charters	7,672.43	9.29%
Travel and accommodation for work	272.38	0.33%
Nigel's RM team meeting	259.18	0.31%
Sharon's agent's trip	13.20	0.02%
Refrigerants & other gases	19,480.33	23.58%
Fridges and Freezers	3,387.81	4.10%
Air conditioners	16,092.52	19.48%
Electricity and gas for energy	12,366.98	14.97%
Offices and huts (includes charging electric car at work)	2,710.64	3.28%
Hatchery pump 610	9,656.33	11.69%
Freight transport with non-F&G vehicles	78.47	0.09%
Water supply and waste	1,297.26	1.57%
Transport and distribution losses - electricity	939.66	1.14%
Working from home	45.09	0.05%

Appendix 2 – Inventory results through the years

Trends	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2024/2025 change from 2022/2023
Total emissions	103,149.93	112,238.50	82,620.03	-19.90%
Scope 1 emissions	72,165.66	63,653.79	44,161.87	-38.80%
Scope 2 emissions	2,058.52	1,940.16	2,699.13	31.12%
Scope 3 emissions	28,925.75	46,644.56	35,759.03	23.62%
Fossil fuel for vehicles	41,877.41	33,658.87	24,541.06	-41.40%
All staff commute	14,049.55	16,190.68	13,739.01	-2.21%
Fridges and freezers	13,770.00	13,191.70	3,388.14	-75.39%
Air conditioners (refrigerant)	16,518.26	16,210.06	16,092.52	-2.58%
Hatchery pump 610 electricity	7,083.58	7,866.67	9,656.33	36.32%
All aircraft travel	4,929.92	21,340.99	7,929.13	60.84%

15.0 General Business

15.1 Family Licences

(Chair to speak to this item)

15.2 NZC Lost Access Database

(Chair and Cr Barker to speak to this item)