

WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL,
HELD ON TUESDAY 8 APRIL 2014 AT 3.10PM AT HOTEL COACHMAN, 140
FITZHERBERT AVENUE, PALMERSTON NORTH**

1. Present:

Chairman Martin Taylor, Councillors Simon Muckley, Andy Tannock,
Andrew Morris, Jim Cook, Strato Cotsilinis, Eric Neumann

2. In Attendance:

Staff: Phil Teal (Manager), Steve Pilkington,

Licenceholders: Roger Smailes, John Wilkinson

3. Apologies:

Councillors Richard Moore, Chris O'Meara, Brad Johnson, Mark Grace

Staff: Sue Wray, Corina Jordan

Licenceholders: Reg Cull

It was then moved that:

the apologies be accepted.

Strato Cotsilinis/Andrew Morris

Carried

4. Conflicts of Interest

A list was available for viewing of the existing declarations of Conflicts of Interest. There was no additional declaration of Conflicts of Interests declared.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting of 18 February 2014:

After a brief discussion it was moved that:

the Minutes of the last meeting of the previous Wellington Fish & Game Council of 18 February 2014 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris

Carried

6. Matters Arising

Councillor Andrew Morris noted that he had yet to receive a copy of the scoping paper for a financial review that had been coordinated by Mathew Hall (CSI NZC appointee). Councillor Morris undertook to request a copy of

that paper from Mr Hall so that can be distributed to Wellington Councillors for their information.

Mr Teal confirmed that a patterning sheet for shotguns had been produced and distributed to large agents, as well as a sample being sent out via the Fish & Game NZ Special Issue magazine.

7. Licenceholder Participation Session

Chairman Taylor welcomed the licenceholders present and gave them an opportunity to briefly speak on issues that were of significance to them.

Mr Wilkinson outlined his concerns regarding the use of steel shot in terms of the potential effect on antique shotguns, and potential negative effect on duck population from mortality of non-lethal shot - given that steel is the only cheap alternative to lead shot. He also noted his concerns regarding the low number of ducks present, and the use of un-pinned semi-auto shotguns.

Mr Smailes related that he had received negative feedback from several rural landowners on the publicity campaign undertaken by Fish & Game NZ which they considered was a continuing antagonistic approach to the rural sector. He further noted that this had culminated in the recent "lock the gates" campaign which could potentially create access issues for hunters and anglers. He postulated that an alternative approach using peer pressure and/or positive reinforcement could achieve a positive outcome, without Fish & Game being at odds with the rural sector. He then questioned Council on whether they were happy with the approach of a perceived antagonist approach by Fish & Game NZ, and whether it was appropriate that this matter should be dealt with following a formal written submission.

Chairman Taylor noted that the previous water quality campaigns over the last ten years had created considerable public awareness about water quality issues, and the effects of land intensification on water quality. He noted that while public opinion had been galvanized, the next steps were to ensure improved water quality outcomes were achieved beyond the voluntary accords to change practices. Councillor Tannock acknowledged the negative feedback directed to Fish & Game by rural people who would normally be supporters of Fish & Game principles, and this had created tension for licenceholders access. Councillor Cotsilinis considered a written submission would provide an opportunity to discuss formally. He noted the level of land intensification had largely outweighed those benefits accrued from better farming practices in response to greater recognition to look after the environment. He also considered that Fish & Game was not isolated in their concerns for potentially decreasing water quality resulting from land intensification citing the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's report on the subject and the cautionary conclusions made in that report. Mr Smailes then agreed to

send a letter to Council to engender further discussion. Councillor Morris requested that a copy of this letter be sent to NZ Council for their information.

Mr Teal noted that Reg Cull asked that several issues be brought to the attention of Council as he could not attend the meeting. These included:

- He opposed the proposals to require the use of non-toxic shot for 20 gauge (sub-12gauge) shotguns. He considered that this would disadvantage young, elderly, injured, and lady hunters with the smaller gauge being popular option for them. This opposition was based on the high cost of ammunition alternatives, availability of ammunition, and practicality of using non-toxic shot of smaller gauge size.
- He considered that the recent public perception survey on water quality issues funded by Fish & Game which was used as a basis for the public awareness campaign had created tension between landholders and hunters/anglers with access issues being a potential result. He considered Fish & Game needed to focus on positive reinforcement of good farming practices and potentially be proactive in assisting projects.
- He considered that steel shot was still unpopular and while it might be suitable on smaller ponds, he considered it was an issue in larger open water areas where there was competition between hunters. He requested that alternative options be reconsidered to the administration of the use of lead and non-toxic shot.
- He also noted some operational issues:
 - mixed messages in the Fish & Game NZ Magazine regarding ‘skybusting’ yet advocating ammunition for long shots (up to 70m);
 - specific wording of the Lake Omanu in the regulation booklet (noting that he knew of at least 14 permanent licenceholders that have resulted from the scheme)
 - website refreshing information – including Council information.

8. Draft Annual Plan And Budget

After discussion of the annual planning process involving identification of contestable fund projects, the following potential projects were considered worthy of further consideration at the budget meeting to be held in April:

- Novice hunting and fishing opportunities and co-ordination, and how to co-ordinate in with nationally focused initiatives to increase long term participation (in-line with application made in 2013);
- Salary adjustments including any CPI adjustments

It was then moved that:

Contestable fund applications be made for the novice hunting and fishing opportunities project, and for salary adjustments.

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris

Carried

9. **NZ Council Business**

Councillor Morris gave a report of the NZ Council meeting held on 21 to 23 March 2014. He informed Council that Peter Robinson had resigned as Chairman of NZ Council citing his preference to devote time to the youth development programme.

Councillor Morris noted that their field trip on 22 March 2014 involved looking at land intensification of land use (primarily cropping for finishing lambs) and potential and mitigation measures (riparian management) of the effects on salmon spawning streams.

Councillor Morris noted that there had been a strategic plan discussion and preparation of a draft agenda for the (now likely to be postponed) Governors' meeting.

Councillor Morris noted that there had also been discussion by NZ Council on how the legal and RMA function could be more effectively and efficiently undertaken, including alternative options of more public awareness campaigns. Discussion ensued on the funding mix for public awareness and legal cases, the risks of undertaking aggressive public opinion campaigns, and an outcomes based review process in undertaking different options. This was also based on the premise that unfavourable changes to the RMA may occur.

Councillor Morris informed that sponsorship that had been in place for North Canterbury F&G region's 'Fish In Schools' youth programme had come to a conclusion and they were seeking for it to be continued with internal funding. After discussion it was moved that

Wellington Fish & Game Council support in principle the 'Fish In Schools' project being undertaken by North Canterbury Fish & Game Council being continued with

*Martin Taylor/Jim Cook
Carried*

Councillor Morris informed that NZ Council had received correspondence from Neil Hayes regarding an inference of decline of mallard numbers due to use of steel shot. He had been invited to attend a NZ Council meeting to discuss his views.

Councillor Morris briefly informed Council that Eastern region had sought NZ Council's support for raising and releasing mallard duck, with it concluded that each region proceed as they saw fit. It was also clarified that permission to hunt waterfowl on Game Preserves would likely be declined, as per current policy.

Councillor Morris gave an overview of discussions relating to staff involvement in external activities, and policies on dealing with potential conflicts of interests in these cases. This discussion had arisen from requests

for Nelson/Marlborough F&G region Manager to be involved as a Trustee on the Lee Valley Dam proposal. Advice was sought regarding employment contract clauses that were appropriate for consideration.

Councillor Morris clarified that the licence category proposals were considered, voted on, and adopted as per consultation and circulation.

It was then moved that

The report presented by Councillor Morris relating to the NZ Fish & Game Council meeting from 21 -23 March 2014 be received

Simon Muckley/Andy Tannock
Carried

10. Draft Prosecution Policy for Fish & Game New Zealand

Discussion ensued on the draft national policy relating to prosecutions considered at the February meeting with it reiterated that Wellington Fish & Game Council did not have disagreement with the proposed policy. In the proposed policy there is reference to a national policy (paragraph number 19 draft Fish & Game New Zealand Prosecution Policy (2014)) on operating a reparation scheme should a region be operating such.

Discussion ensued on two legal opinions – Chen & Palmer Barristers and Solicitors (4 November 1998), and Anderson Lloyd Lawyers (15 March 2013) – regarding operating a reparation scheme. The latter provided advice as to what should be covered in the national policy and needs to be considered in context of the existing draft reparation policy for Fish & Game NZ. It was then moved

That Wellington Fish & Game Council request that New Zealand Fish & Game Council format and formalise a national policy for operating a reparation scheme in conjunction with the confirmation of the draft Fish & Game New Zealand Prosecution Policy.

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris
Carried

Wellington F&G Council directed staff to continue with the reparation scheme using the draft reparation policy as basis for approach.

11. Proposed Phasing Out of Paper Licences

Discussion ensued on the proposal (including timetable) from NZ Fish & Game Council (Robert Sowman dated MMMMM) to phase-out the option of issuing paper licences. Councillor Tannock noted that while most retailers were supportive regarding the concept, it did come with additional hardware costs and retail staff time being tied up at Point of Sale systems. Councillor Cottilinis related that Taupo retailers had expressed similar concerns when opinions were canvassed for Taupo Fishing District licence retail sales options. Councillor Tannock noted that the timeline could be extended if

necessary following consultation with retailers, and that a suggestion be made to NZ Council for appropriate hardware be provided for larger outlets.

It was the moved

That the proposal for phasing out of paper licences detailed in the paper by NZ Fish & Game Council (Robert Sowman undated) be supported by Wellington Fish & Game Council.

Andy Tannock/Jim Cook

Carried

12. Parangarahu Lakes (Pencarrow Lakes) draft Co-Management Plan:

Discussion ensued around the draft Co-Management Plan for the Parangarahu lakes which included prohibiting recreational duck hunting. Issues regarding the legality of this management options was discussed and public awareness of this issue in the past. It was agreed that an Official Information Act request for information be made to Greater Wellington Regional Council requesting detailed of the forward funding allocation made in budgets for the Te Roopu Tiaki committee.

After confirming that there was not a specific budgetary item for legal advice, Messrs Teal and Taylor were requested to find a lawyer to obtain a quote of an upper limit of \$5000. It was also requested that the NZ Fish & Game Council CE be invited to provide advice on legal counsel and how to proceed.

Mr Teal gave an overview of the key principles to be covered in any submission by Wellington Fish & Game Council which was due on 26 May 2014. It was then moved

That the principles relating to the access for recreational hunting on the Parangarahu lakes be the basis for a submission for Fish & Game

Simon Muckley/Martin Taylor

Carried

After further discussion it was moved that

Legal advice (treaty settlements/constitutional expertise) would be sought to clarify the legal standing and basis for any proposed restriction of access of recreational hunters to the Parangarahu lakes

Martin Taylor/Andrew Morris

Carried

13. Mallard Research Update:

Mr Teal gave an update of progress on the research projects being undertaken by NZF&GC with the most notable being the arrival of the PhD student relating to the mallard productivity model development project. It was also confirmed that the international supervisors that Fish & Game was linked into

as part of this project were highly respected within North American science community and would add considerable value in advice and oversight.

Mr Teal noted that the number of birds banded was less than anticipated but that subsequent discussions by the Mallard Research Group on preferred methods for estimating population change may obviate any long term commitment required.

14. Trout Reservoir Options Update:

Mr Teal gave a brief update of the activity of measuring water temperature at the Avalon Boat pond with a temperature logger to assess site suitability, over the summer and shoulder months.

15. Junior Novice Participation Update:

Mr Teal gave an overview of the recent efforts in establishing contacts with two schools and other similar outdoor programmes that could be supported.

16. Lake Wairarapa Update:

Mr Teal gave an overview of work being planned or undertaken on Yules Lagoon for re-opening the diversion channel as a water supply, and ensuring a shallow bund of less than 30cm at the lower end of the site. The work could not be completed due to inclement weather but it was still hoped to offer two novice hunting positions at the site for Mr Cudby confirmed that there were no consents required from Regional Council to undertake the works.

17. Management Report 1 February – 31 March 2014:

Mr Teal provided brief comment on:

- Bartons Lagoon fish removal study
- Collaborative project with Cawthron Institute
- Zone committee selection for Ruamanahga catchment
- Goose cull recently undertaken by local farmers on Lake Wairarapa

It was clarified that a wholeseason licence is required to obtain a backcountry licence endorsement (which is free) to fish for sportsfishing the Whakareaukaou River

After discussion it was moved that

The management report for 1 February – 31 March 2014 be received.

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris
Carried

18. Licence Sales Report to 31 March 2014

After brief discussion it was moved that

The Fish Licence Sales and Game Licence Sales reports as at 31 March 2014 be received.

Simon Muckley/Andrew Morris
Carried

19. Expenditure Report

After discussion it was moved that

the Expenditure Report for 28 February 2014 and Financial Transactions for January and February 2014 be approved

Strato Cotsilinis/ Jim Cook
Carried

Mr Teal indicated that he anticipated replacing an operations vehicle within the foreseeable future as part of prudent asset replacement, and it was anticipated that this would be undertaken via the All of Government contract process.

20. Correspondence

Brief discussion ensued on correspondence and media including the high level of public awareness obtained for the paradise shelduck special season in February.

Mr Teal noted that there were continuing confusion arising from press reports that are being printed in syndicated papers across the country that relate to one region's season conditions – but inferring more widespread application of restriction.

It was then moved that

Correspondence and Media reports for January – March be received

Jim Cook/Andy Tannock
Carried

21. General Business

After discussion it was moved that

A budget item for Lake Omanu management be established from the dedicated reserve for reparation with the allocation be up to \$1000 for traps, and \$1500 for spray/application

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris
Carried

It was requested that the volunteers from the Foxton Waterfowlers Club that manage the site be requested to record the catches of predators.

Council agreed that following a request from an honorary ranger in Wairarapa that up to two novice hunters may be located at a temporary ponding site in Boggy Pond for this season.

Councillor Cook noted a local fund raising wetland tour near Marton/Bulls elicited good public profile for the efforts of Fish & Game, and that there was significant demand from landowners to place wetlands on their property.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 5.15pm.

Next Meeting to be held: Masterton Cosmopolitan Club, Tuesday 10 June 2014 at 3.00pm.

Chairman _____ Date _____

CONFIRMED