

WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL,
HELD ON TUESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2015 AT 3.00PM AT HOTEL COACHMAN,
140 FITZHERBET AVENUE, PALMERSTON NORTH**

1. Present:

Chairman Strato Cotsilinis, Councillors Jim Cook, Simon Muckley, Andy Tannock, Andrew Morris, Don Scott, Paul Shortis, Marc Flaws, Brad Johnson, Malcolm Francis, Chris O'Meara, Dan Waechter

2. In Attendance:

Staff: Phil Teal (Manager), Steve Pilkington,

Immediate Past Councillor: Eric Neumann

Licenceholders: Paul Browne, Mike Hickey, Adrian Hickey

Conservation Board: Don Adams

3. Apologies:

Councillors Brad Johnson (for lateness)

Staff: Sue Wray, Hamish Carnachan, Corrine Deans, Corina Jordan

Licenceholder: Reg Cull

It was then moved that:

the apologies be accepted.

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris

Carried

4. Election of Chairman

Mr Teal called for nominations for the position of Chairman.

Strato Cotsilinis was nominated by Chris O'Meara, seconded by Jim Cook

There being no further nominations Strato Cotsilinis was declared Chairman.
Acclamation.

5. Confirmation of Meeting Timetable

The draft meeting schedule was presented and it was moved that

the meeting schedule for 2016 be:

16 February 2016 *Upper Hutt (Wellington)*
5 April 2016 *Masterton (Wairarapa)*
7 June 2016 *Palmerston North (Manawatu)*
16 August 2016 *Upper Hutt (Wellington)*
11 October 2016 *Palmerston North (Manawatu)*
6 December 2016 (&AGM) *Masterton (Wairarapa)*

Simon Muckley/Chris O'Meara
Carried

6. Election of Appointee to New Zealand Fish & Game Council

After brief discussion

Andrew Morris was nominated by Andy Tannock, seconded by Chris O'Meara

There being no further nominations Andrew Morris was declared Wellington Fish & Game Council's appointee to NZ Council. Acclamation.

7. Appointment of Salary Sub-Committee

After brief discussion it was moved

That the salary sub-committee be composed of Andy Tannock, Simon Muckley, and Strato Cotsilinis

Chris O'Meara/Malcolm Francis
Carried

8. Conflicts of Interest

A list was available for viewing of the existing declarations of Conflicts of Interest. No new conflicts of interest were declared.

9. Minutes of Previous Meeting of 13 October 2015

Councillor Shortis requested that a comment attributed to him in the draft minutes be removed and after a brief discussion it was moved that:

the amended Minutes of the Wellington Fish & Game Council of 13 October 2015 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris
Carried

10. Matters Arising

Mr Teal provided a review of the Action List regarding:

- Walking Access Commission Review – ten years from inception – review will start in 2018
- Weekly Fishing Report Assessment – the 'opened' log was for readers who had opened the file
- Curriculum Material Development for Fish in Schools – this had been progressed with a supplier providing a cost estimate;

- Lake Wairarapa Wetland Treaty Settlement; covered in Lake Wairarapa Update
- Funding Duddings Lake Promotion – underwritten by Fish & Game by grant funding should cover most of shortfall.
- Mallard Research Fund and Next Steps

11. NZ Council Business

Councillor Morris confirmed that most recent NZ Council meeting had seen several new appointees to the NZ Council.

Councillor Morris noted that the national licence sales report had indicated a decline in fish licence sales for the early part of the season compared to 2014/15 especially in the Wellington and Auckland/Waikato regions (~ -10%). NZ Council considered that the promotion of licence sales was primarily a regional function and some tweaking of regional budgets may be required. Councillor Morris indicated that the licence sales graphs (2013/14, 2014/15, and 2015/16 to date) provided by Mr Teal were very useful in putting licence sales into perspective.

Councillor Morris gave an overview of RM cases including the implementation of provisions in Horizons Regional Council's Regional Plan. It was also considered prudent to follow up on successful cases to ensure provisions had been correctly implemented.

Councillor Johnson arrived at 3.20pm

Councillor Tannock attended the NZ Council meeting held in Hamilton, and gave a background on the Game Bird Habitat Trust activities and possible extra income opportunities. This included the option to review the \$2 gamebird habitat stamp royalty to \$3. He considered that the Trust was turning away projects that were worthwhile as there were not enough funding to go beyond current lists of projects. He considered this was further compounded by the practice of stamp collecting and items such as artwork were less popular which had been an important income stream. After further discussion it was considered that the Wellington F&GC would consider a remit for the 2017 season to the Minister before the May NZ Council meeting. Councillor Tannock would seek to obtain relevant facts and figures for discussion at the April meeting of Wellington F&GC.

Councillor Morris noted that Warwick Lampp from Electionz.com had provided an overview of the recent F&G regional elections including ensuring integrity of information of candidate profiles.

Councillor Morris informed Council that NZ F&GC had withdrawn from Land And Water Forum prior to its recent report provided to the Minister for the Environment.

Councillor Morris noted that there would be opportunities to support candidates in the upcoming Local Government Elections in 2016 that promoted better outcomes for Fish & Game interests.

Councillor Morris provided a brief summary of the field trip around the Waikato lakes and a brief overview of the work undertaken on the Mallard Research Project.

Councillor Morris confirm that the NZ Council had undertaken a review of its governance policies which will be of interest to regional F&GCs.

Councillor Morris reported on North Canterbury F&GCs proposals to fund the continuance of the Fish In Schools programme and indicated that he had voted against the motion due to the way NCF&GC were wanting to use their reserves. There were also issues regarding intellectual property which may provide an indeterminate result for other regional Fish & Game Councils.

It was then moved

That the report presented by Councillor Morris relating to the NZ Fish & Game Council meeting on 20-22 November 2015 be received

Simon Muckley/Andy Tannock

Carried

12. Recommendations for the 2016 Game Season

Mallard:

Mr Pilkington gave a brief overview of the summary provided in the staff report regarding increasing numbers seen in the April 2015 mallard transect count. Mr Teal gave a brief overview of the supporting information contained in the email survey conducted which noted hunter preferences for options for any restrictions on bag limit or season length ó should they be deemed necessary. Mr Pilkington provided further information on the forecast El Nino event and potential effect on rainfall.

Councillor Tannock noted that he had received anecdotal feedback that confirmed a good breeding season in the Manawatu and Wairarapa areas.

After further discussion it was prudent to make a preliminary recommendation that would be reconsidered in January following a review of climate and rainfall data.

It was then moved that

The mallard season conditions for the 2016 game season be a bag limit of eight birds per hunter per day, and season length of eight weeks

Chris O'Meara/Jim Cook

With an amendment moved

That these recommendations be subject to review of severity of drought conditions at the end of January

Andy Tannock/Malcolm Francis

The amendment was accepted by the original proposers and the motion was put

The mallard season conditions for the 2016 game season be a bag limit of eight birds per hunter per day, and season length of eight weeks, subject to review of severity of drought conditions at the end of January

Chris O'Meara/Jim Cook

Carried

It was noted that the alternative option to be considered in January would be an eight week season length and six bird limit.

Paradise Shelduck:

It was noted that the conditions for paradise shelduck is subject to the January moult counts, and would be considered by telephone conference in late January.

NZ Shoveler:

After brief discussion, it was moved that

The current shoveler limit be retained at two birds per day for the waterfowl hunting season

Strato Cotsilinis/Marc Flaws

Carried

Pukeko:

After discussion it was noted that pukeko distribution is not even throughout the region ó being locally common and more sparse in some localised areas also.

It was then moved

That the current limit of five birds per day for the Wellington region be retained

Chris O'Meara/Andrew Morris

Carried

Red-Legged Partridge

After discussion it was moved that

The conditions for red-legged partridge remain the same as 2015 season

Andrew Morris/Brad Johnson

Carried

Black Swan:

It was noted that the conditions for black swan is subject to the January counts, and would be considered by telephone conference in late January.

Bob-White Quail

After brief discussion it was moved that

The conditions for bob-white quail remain the same as 2015 season

Chris O'Meara/Brad Johnson

Carried

Pheasant:

After discussion it was moved that

The main season conditions for pheasant remain the same

Andrew Morris/ Marc Flaws

Carried

The merits of allowing Game Preserves (Upland Game Properties with Special Conditions) to provide hunting in April prior to the main start of the season was discussed. Mr Cook indicated his potential conflict of interest in these discussions and did not participate in the discussion.

It was moved that

any requests for an early start to the game season for Upland Game Properties with Special Conditions in April 2017 would be declined

Andy Tannock/Andrew Morris

Carried

California Quail:

After brief discussion it was moved that

There be no change to the season conditions for California quail for the 2016 game season

Andrew Morris/Dan Waechter

Carried

A letter from licenceholder Reg Cull was considered. He outlined his concern about the practice of groups to feed out before and during the season, thereby taking birds away from public area hunting opportunities. He was seeking a fairer and ethical manner regarding the practice.

Discussion ensued on the following points:

- supplementary food was seen as important to reduce migration and starvation;
- pond feeding had been legal for 35+ years;
- acknowledged that some operations were relatively large in amount,
- most hunters appeared happy with the status quo.
- If the option of stopping feeding during the season was pursued would it be too hard to enforce.
- Had there been a noticeable increase in numbers of ponds being fed

Councillor Tannock suggested that Mr Cull's letter be received and indicate to Mr Cull that it had been discussed at length.

Mr Cullø's second point in his letter referred to a loyal card or licence option. It was considered that Wellington F&G Council didn't have the ability to directly influence this option. Councillor Johnson requested that the statistics of hunters' ages be presented to see if a discount materially affects revenue. Licenceholder Paul Browne noted that there would be support amongst hunters for a loyalty senior licence category.

It was then moved that

A letter be sent to NZ F&G Council indicating licenceholder demand for a senior loyal licence for game hunting and that this should be considered after research on how many would be eligible and potential revenue impact

Andy Tannock/Dan Waechter

Carried

Councillor Tannock suggested a letter be sent to Mr Cull indicating that this option would be actively looked at.

The issue of potentially restricting multi-shot shotguns from 5 to 3 was discussed, with the Council retaining its existing position of not allowing magazine extensions, rather than magazine restrictions.

It was then moved that

All other season conditions to remain the same

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris

Carried

The email survey highlighted that hunters would like to see actions that contributed to habitat improvement and predator control to improve mallard numbers. Licenceholder Paul Browne noted that the habitat values at Boggy Pond and Wairio Wetlands at the Wairarapa sites had improved hunting opportunities. Councillor Tannock noted the importance of predator control and noted figures from the Swamp Comp promoted by the Waterfowl Enhancement Trust had gone from 750 tails 2 years ago to 1155 1 year ago to nearly 2000 tails this year ó indicating enthusiasm by hunters to trap predators.

13. Junior Novice Angling/Hunting Programme Update

Mr Teal provided an overview of the Fish In Schools programme and a summary provided by Hamish Carnachan of the four schools involved in 2015.

Councillor Scott indicated that Manawatu Freshwater Anglers potentially may have a small surplus from the Children's Fish Out Day to be in a position to get some environmental learning items that could contribute to the Fish in Schools programme.

Mr Teal gave an overview of a proposal to get a formal curriculum material developed. Mr Carnachan had obtained an indicative quote from a supplier and there had been interest from NZ F&GC and Southland F&G in contributing to costs in the order of \$15,000 but required another region to meet about \$2,500 shortfall. Eric Neumann sought clarification on the details of the outcomes from the supplier (nature of material ó e.g. digital focus), given that this was a modest cost. It was agreed to support the concept in principle and pursue if the outcomes were appropriate for the contribution.

Mr Teal also noted that he had sent a letter to North Canterbury F&GC when they were seeking funding for the continuation of their Fish In Schools programme ó which requested more formal outputs that could be used in other regions.

14. Mallard Research Update

Mr Teal noted that the mallard research project was progressing well this year which up to 60 hens being radio tagged in Southland and Waikato regions. He reported that there were no significant issues with project management that had arisen the previous year. Councillor Tannock provided an update from the field trip held at the NZ Council meeting in the Waikato, and noted that nesting appeared to be late this year and that duckling mortality was similar in both regions. He expressed his concern that it was coming to the end of the current field work and would prefer to see a programme of research continue ó rather than other freshwater projects being given priority. He thought there needed to be direction from the researchers and Managers to define work going forward and that this should be expressed to NZ Council and other regions. He considered that hunters would support an investment back in the resource through research. Councillor Johnson considered that more rigorous appraisal need to be done to ensure enough data had been collected to confirm cessation of project and then provide direction for future research.

15. Lake Wairarapa Update

Deferred until later in meeting.

16. Wairarapa Water Storage Report

Mr Teal confirmed that Fish & Game had withdrawn from the Stakeholders Advisory Group and that we would be seeking updates with the regional council directly.

It was moved that

*That Wellington Fish & Game Council receive the report on the
Wairarapa Water Use Project*

Andrew Morris/Marc Flaws

Carried

17. Baring Head Report Update

Mr Teal presented the summary of hunter activity at Baring Head that was provided to Greater Wellington Regional Council

It was moved that

Wellington Fish & Game Council receive the report on hunter use of Baring Head

Chris O'Meara/Simon Muckley

Carried

18. Management Report 1 October – 30 November 2015

Mr Teal noted that the NZ Council had agreed that the extra funds generated from non-resident licence sales be ring fenced for projects in the region where sales were generated. This use of funds still needed to be defined but the principle was to use it on projects relating to backcountry fisheries. Mr Carnachan had indicated some options such as the use of trail cameras to assess use of sites within Forest Park boundary. After further discussion it was moved that

Wellington Fish & Game Council establish a dedicated reserve derived for non-resident licence sales "additional income" to be used on backcountry projects.

Strato Cotsilinis/Dan Waechter

Carried

After discussion it was moved that

The management report for 1 October – 30 November 2015 be received.

Jim Cook/Andrew Morris

Carried

19. Fishing Licence Report

Mr Teal expressed his concern regarding licence sales compared to last year and outlined the promotion activities that would be taken up till Christmas period. He noted that while lower than last year it was only slightly lower than two years ago with potential reasons being speculated as poor weather in October and November, economic climate, and the start of the season coinciding with Rugby World Cup. Any further action would be reviewed following the February Council meeting

After brief discussion it was moved that

The Fish Licence Sales report as at 27 November 2015 be received.

Andrew Morris/Brad Johnson

Carried

Conservation Board chairman Don Adams noted that there was a potential review regarding issues around whitebaiting activities which he brought to the Council's attention.

Licenceholders Paul Browne, Mark Hickey, and Adrian Hickey, and Conservation Board chairman Don Adams left the meeting at 5.20pm.

20. Expenditure Report

After discussion it was moved that

the Expenditure Report for 31 October 2015 and Financial Transactions for September and October 2015 be approved

Simon Muckley/ Brad Johnson

Carried

21. Correspondence and Media

The Children's Fish Out Day at Dudding's Lake was successful with a huge effort from Manawatu Freshwater Angler Club members and staff - Steve Pilkington in particular. Over 400 fish were caught over the two day period.

Mr Teal noted that the Rangitaane iwi settlement for the Manawatu had been completed which included DOC areas and Tangimoana Forest, and there needed to be dialogue with the iwi post settlement to explore common management goals.

Brief discussion ensued on correspondence and media after which it was then moved that

Correspondence and Media reports for September – October be received

Chris O'Meara/ Dan Waechter

Carried

22. General Business

Council discussed the options of co-opting Eric Neumann to Council acknowledging his contributions to date had been highly valued. These options would be considered at the February meeting following review of standing orders.

The Council agreed *to move into Public Excluded session (at 5.40pm)*

Brad Johnson/Jim Cook

Carried

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting namely the agenda item:

Wairarapa Lake Treaty Settlement Process

The withholding of information is necessary to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by councillors or officers and to maintain legal professional privilege and potentially commercially sensitive information.

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a)(II) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 9 of the Official Information Act

1982 which would be prejudiced by the holding of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public

Wellington F&GC move out of committee (at 5.50pm) and that the public be invited to return to the meeting.

Chris O'Meara/Simon Muckley

Carried

There were no resolutions resulting from in-committee discussions.

Eric Neumann left the meeting at 5.50pm

Discussion arose on the value of Corina Jordan's role as Environmental Manager and acknowledged her efforts but also appreciated the finite resource she provided, and any next steps in developing the RM function within Fish & Game.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 6.02pm.

Next Meeting to be held: Upper Hutt Cosmopolitan Club, Upper Hutt, Tuesday 16 February 2015 at 3.00pm.

Chairman _____ Date _____

Lake Wairarapa – Treaty Settlement Process

December	Notes from 2 December meeting shared	Sharon Blaikie	
	AIP initiated 22 December	Sharon Blaikie to send to Kathy Hautuma when it comes out	
January	Site Visit DoC/Fish & Game January /early February to become familiar with site and share data/inventory. Stock take data available	Sharon and Kathy to organise	
February	Communications meeting discussion; Purpose: OTS messaging reflects DoC/F&G understanding	Sharon to co-ordinate ó ideally same day as site visit	
	AIP likely to be signed ó becomes public	Sharon/Kathy to send to Phil	
	DoC/OTS/Iwi Field trip ó Purpose: understand iwi aspirations. Views	Sharon to organise	
March	4 way conversation/meeting	Sharon to ensure full input into agenda from all	
	End/March early April DoC to have a draft instrument(s) (i) Management agreements DOC-F&G; (ii) Authorisation tools for maimais	Donna/Sharon: Donna's research for this commencing January 2016 based on existing situations ó keeping intentions/ethics from existing practices	
	Another meeting DOC F&G to discuss draft		
May	End of May target for formal documents to be signed		