

Meeting of the
New Zealand Fish and Game Council
Conference Centre, Wellington Airport
Friday 22 May 2015
Commencing 9.30 am

PRESENT

NZ Councillors (in geographical appointee order)

Chris Lynch, Colin Sherrard, Lindsay Lyons (Chairman), Graeme Jobey, Alan Flynn, Andrew Morris, Paul Dixon-Didier (arrived at 10.20am due to flight delays), Andrew Harris (representing West Coast interests in the absence of Jean Willis), Matthew Hall, Dave Witherow and Paul Stenning.

In Attendance

Bryce Johnson Chief Executive, Alison Lyall Finance & Administration Manager (arrived 10.30 am), Don Rood Communications Manager, Robert Sowman Policy & Planning Manager.

Participation

Kevin Payne (President) & Bryan Coleman (Fish & Game liaison), Professional Fishing Guides Association (9.55 – 10.45 am).

INTRODUCTION

1 Welcome

The Chairman welcomed people and introduced Andy Harris, Chairman of West Coast Fish and Game Council. He advised the Council of Kevin Payne, President of the Professional Fishing Guides Association and Bryan Coleman's purpose to meet with the Council at 10.00 am.

2 Apologies

Jean Willis and late arrival of Paul Dixon-Didier & Alison Lyall.

Resolved: (Matthew Hall/Chris Lynch)

That the apologies of Jean Willis and the late arrival of Paul Dixon-Didier and Alison Lyall be accepted

3 Identification of Other Urgent Business and Agreement on Agenda Order

It was agreed items listed on the agenda as proposed public excluded matters will be dealt with in open committee as no confidential papers were submitted for this meeting.

4 Annual Agenda/Conflicts of Interest Register

May annual items include consideration of the national budget and licence fee for 2015/16 and angler notice issues requiring NZ Council consideration (none of which have been raised by regions). The conflict of interest register was not available immediately but councillors were asked to identify those topics where a conflict may arise and enter these during the meeting.

5 Environmental Scan

This item is intended to last 30 minutes and allows councillors to raise or comment on recent media issues or matters occurring in the regions. Subjects discussed at this May meeting included:

- Taranaki's Freshwater Plan was recognised as one of the first since the introduction of the national policy statement for freshwater. Consultation phase is now underway.
- An environmental manager has been appointed for the Landcorp Wairakei Estate in Taupo to provide overall environmental leadership.
- Lake Waikare hearing resulted in new conditions being imposed on the applicant
- Environment Waikato \$109,000 grant has finally been received by Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game.
- Wetland workshops with US advisor Tom Biebighauser resulted in a large participation by dairy farmers.
- Recent dairy industry and prices has affected confidence. The Hunter Downs irrigation scheme is on hold until it gets more "buy-in". This could be the same for similar irrigation proposals.
- The lowland rivers in South Canterbury have still not recovered from the drought despite recent rain. The one area that has changed has been a rise in drain water with the stopping of irrigation takes.
- The axing of Campbell Live is of great disappointment for Fish & Game interests as the programme ran positive coverage of water quality.
- The NZ Labour party has introduced an SOP for environmental reporting. This is gaining wide support from Opposition parties.
- It was noted the political climate has changed with the Northland by-election and this may prove to the benefit of environmental protection.

6 Confirmation of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Nothing was identified in the minutes requiring further discussion.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Graeme Jobey)

That the minutes of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council meeting of 20 – 22 March 2015 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

7 Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes from Previous Meeting

No matters arising from the previous public excluded minutes were noted, making it possible to confirm these minutes without going into a public excluded session.

Resolved (Chris Lynch/Colin Sherrard)

That the public excluded minutes of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council meeting of March 2015 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

8 Matters Arising from Minutes

No items were identified. Copies of letters written by the Chairman following resolutions at the last meeting were asked to be circulated to councillors. It was agreed that this become standard practice at the time they are sent out as correspondence from the Chairman.

It was also agreed that minutes be sent out a week prior to the agenda asking councillors to raise matters for clarification or correction to save time in meetings. However councillors would retain the opportunity to discuss any points of issue in the open meeting.

9 Review of Accumulative Action List from Previous Meetings

No action was recorded from discussion on the accumulative action list.

10 Professional Fishing Guides Association

Executive members Kevin Payne (President) and Bryan Coleman (Fish & Game liaison) joined the meeting at 9.55 am.

The Chairman introduced Kevin and Bryan to the NZ Council and invited Kevin to speak. The Professional Fishing Guides want to establish a dialogue with the NZ Council and the Association remains committed to the Memorandum of Understanding and the establishment of a guide licence.

The guide licence as a subject is fresh in peoples' minds again and there is an opportunity to re-activate it at the highest levels. It was agreed to draft a letter to the Minister of Conservation under a combined letterhead and signature of both agencies requesting a meeting to discuss the need for a guide licence.

Resolved (Paul Stenning/Colin Sherrard)

That a joint letter from the NZ Council and Professional Fishing Guides Association be sent to the Minister of Conservation restating the need for a guide licence.

Discussion then moved to guides needing to be aware of the range of licence categories with four new categories to be introduced. The Professional Fishing Guides were encouraged to check that clients have the correct licence. The Association also asked about how the additional component from the non-resident licence is to be managed. The Association was encouraged to talk with regional Fish and Game Councils if it wanted to promote certain areas or matters that might qualify for this extra funding support.

Northland Fish and Game Council's letter on utilising the non-resident licence revenue was then discussed. This was a letter to the NZ Council Chairman to have been considered under Correspondence later in the May meeting. Northland had proposed that the extra revenue be held in a national fund and distributed according to criteria and by application. Debate ranged for and against this suggestion. It was accepted this be commented on by the Finance Review Committee, and that Northland be thanked for their letter.

11. National Licence Sales & Licence Systems Update

Discussion occurred on the issues associated with licence sales and some time was spent clarifying the difference between actual licence sales (in number), LEQ targets set at the start of the year and revenue received.

Resolved: (Chris Lynch/Alan Flynn)

That the May 2015 national licence sales update be received.

12 RM/Legal Update Report

- Tukituki catchment (Ruataniwha) project has overspent its approved sum of \$80,000 by \$9,593. However, High Court costs payable to Fish and Game of some \$24,600 are still to be received. It was also noted that this case is not yet concluded.
- The previously approved, but paused, Ngaruroro Water Conservation Order application is still being finalised. There is an indication that other significant parties may join Fish and Game as co-applicants in submitting the WCO.
- It was noted the Canterbury Land & Water Regional Plan summary in the RM/Legal report was minus the final page. This should be corrected before circulating the report with the minutes from this meeting.

- Selwyn Waihora outcomes raise a question as to whether Fish and Game can rely on outside defence rather than do this themselves. In this case, the Commissioner was critical of how this material was presented (by the Forest & Bird legal counsel).

13 Executive Review Committee

No report has been prepared for inclusion in this agenda. Processes were reported as ongoing. A full report will be provided for the July meeting.

14 National Office Review

The Chief Executive has discussed the report with staff. It has been proposed that the Executive Committee (or the Chairman) meet with staff, perhaps with the assistance of the report's author to identify next steps to implementation. A document will then be prepared for consideration by the full Council. Thanks were conveyed to staff for their participation in this process.

15 Self-Appraisal Provision

The Chairman has received completed forms from six councillors and prepared this information in the form of a spreadsheet. Once the collation has been completed, the comments will be considered by Councillor Lynch as a means of reviewing the form for next year. The report will be provided for Council in July. It was agreed a stamped addressed envelope would assist in completing and returning the form in future.

16. Review Financial Management of F&GNZ

Matthew Hall spoke to his paper on the Financial Review. He also referred the Council to the resolution in item 14 of the March 2015 minutes. This resolution was promoted on the basis of Tier Two requirements. It may be that Tier Three will be accepted by the OAG as best practice for Fish and Game. If this is the case, a saving will be made in costs to prepare to that level.

Resolved (Chris Lynch/Paul Stenning)

That the Council receive and accept Matthew Hall's report on the Financial Review.

Resolved: (Paul Dixon-Didier/Colin Sherrard)

That the NZ Council approves expenditure of up to \$2,500 as the cost of convening a meeting of the Financial Review Committee to be held in Christchurch. This meeting to take place before mid June 2015.

Resolved: (Matthew Hall/Andrew Morris)

That the NZ Council approves expenditure to an expected budget of \$7,000 on developing the New Accounting Standards that will meet External Reporting Board requirements as outlined in Carmel Veitch's schedule of work through to the 31st August 2015. This approval of Council is subject to final acceptance by the Financial Review Committee who may amend the programme provided it does not exceed the costs approved by the NZ Council.

17. Draft NZ Council Business Plan

The draft Business Plan represents NZ Council's operational work plan for 2015/16, excluding the contestable fund items. These contestable fund projects will be added once the proposed licence fees have been approved. Specific changes were annotated on the draft plan and accepted for inclusion in a final business plan to be submitted at the July meeting.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Paul Stenning)

That the NZ Council

- 1. Note that the Business Plan has two sets of projects and budgets – NZ Council and National Projects**
- 2. Note the highlighted changes to the Business Plan as presented in the revised draft.**
- 3. Agree to accept the revised draft Business Plan in May for interim-approval, to be confirmed as a final plan at the July NZ Council meeting once licence fees, and hence contestable fund projects, have been approved by the Minister.**

The meeting stopped for lunch at 12.45 pm and reconvened at 1.20 pm.

18. Follow-up on NZ Council Auditor's Report 2013/14

The NZ Council Auditor (Grant Thornton) was asked to clarify what is meant by “all related party transactions” and what is the legal basis in asking for this information. The legal right to require this information remains uncertain. It was agreed this matter be raised in the Financial Review.

19. Operational Report

The operational report was considered on a project by project basis with questions raised mainly for information.

Project 1110: Species Advocacy

The subject of grey teal becoming a game bird resulted in the Chairman writing to the Minister of Conservation for the species to be monitored. The Minister's reply of 19 March 2015 reiterated the point of “cultural harvest” of native waterfowl generally. The Council agreed to receive the letter from the Minister and proposed a future discussion by the NZ Council.

Project 1210: Habitat Advocacy General

The Chief Executive provided further updates on activity associated with meetings he has attended.

Project 1440 Youth Programme:

Managers have asked for information on what is going on within Councils' throughout the country. This national stocktake will be key in considering how best to coordinate future Fish & Game NZ initiatives in this project area.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Paul Stenning)

That the Operational Report for May 2015 be received.

20. NZ Council Bi-Monthly Financial Report No 4

No discussion raised

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Graeme Jobey)

That the Financial Report to 30th April 2015 be accepted.

21. Fish & Game NZ Finance Report

No discussion raised

Resolved: (Paul Dixon-Didier/Paul Stenning)

That the National Financial Report to 30th April 2015 be received.

22. Specific proposals for Capital Expenditure

There were no proposals for capital expenditure and hence no discussion.

Resolved: (Alan Flynn/Andrew Morris)

That the Specific Proposals for Capital Expenditure report for May 2015 be received.

23. Applications for RM/Legal Funding

NZ Council ask for reports to include an indication on what projects are likely to be forwarded for consideration in the foreseeable future as a means of planning for probable RM/Legal expenditure.

a. Mountain Cycleway (Oreti)

Councillor Lynch asked how much of the initial approved amount (\$56,006) was spent. It was noted that to date no reimbursement request has been received by NZ Council.

Resolved: (Paul Dixon-Didier/Andrew Morris)

That the NZ Council approve the funding of the Mountain Cycleway (Oreti) appeal case from the 2015/16 RM/Legal fund to total of \$110,000.

b. Hinds/Hekeao Plains Area Catchment Plan

Budget was accepted.

c. Heaphy Road

Budget was accepted.

Resolved: (Chris Lynch/Paul Stenning)

That the NZ Council:

- 1. Approve the funding of Variation 2 – Hinds/Hekeao Plains Area Catchment Plan from the 2014/15 RM/Legal fund to a total of \$81,500.**
- 2. Approve the detailed budget for the Heaphy Road stopping.**

The Chief Executive noted that two additional projects (the Ngaruroro WCO, already approved in principle, and additional research by Russell Death) will require RM/Legal funding:

- A more detailed proposal for the Ngaruroro application of \$100,000 plus will be submitted to a future meeting.
- The Russell Death work on nutrient research is proposing to add another parameter (of \$15,000) to the original research approved in November 2014.

Funding of the Russell Death research was considered urgent and although not included in this agenda the Chief Executive asked that it be approved at this meeting.

Resolved (Dave Witherow/Andrew Morris)

Council agreed to a temporary suspension of Standing Orders (2.5 Extraordinary business) due to urgency and approve an additional \$15,000 for the Russell Death research on nutrient limits and natural character.

24. Research Programme Update for 2015/16

This item was discussed as part of the budget implications on the licence fee. Research proposals have been recommended from the April meeting of managers.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Colin Sherrard)

That the Council accept the recommendations from managers for funding the following research in 2015/16:

Project	Cost \$
Land use and water quality catchment model	30,000
Levels of heavy metal accumulation and ingested lead shot in NZ mallards	55,000
Trophic interactions and potential use of food-web manipulation in the restoration of two eutrophic Central Otago lakes	5,000 (10k for 2 yrs)
Lindis River trout	9,469
Validation of DMU's	3,000
Peer review of Southland nitrate report	2,000

Plus the \$34k per year from the game licence (\$1 per licence to go towards mallard research)

25. Staff Scholarship

Only one scholarship application was received for the 2015/16 financial year. This was from Adam Daniels, Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council to attend the 2015 American Fisheries Society Conference in Portland USA.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Paul Stenning)

That the Council

- 1. Note that \$10,000 is available for the scholarship from the NZ Council budget for the 2015/16 financial year**
- 2. Agree to support Adam Daniel's application for \$6,700 in the 2015/16 financial year subject to a report submitted to the NZ Council.**

26. 2015/16 Fish & Game NZ Budget and Licence Fee

The proposed budget and licence fee recommendations from the April meeting of managers was discussed and accepted.

Resolved (Chris Lynch/Andrew Morris)

That the Council confirm the 2015/16 Contestable Funding allocations as recommended by managers.

Resolved (Chris Lynch/Dave Witherow)

- 1. That for the purposes of consultation with regional Fish and Game Councils, the NZ Council recommend a 2015/16 adult whole season sports fish licence of \$124 – TBC – and an adult whole season game licence of \$92 – TBC- (inclusive of a \$2 fee for the Game Bird Habitat Stamp) inclusive of GST.**
- 2. That following consultation with regional Fish and Game Councils, the NZ Council hold a telephone conference at 7pm (TBC) Wednesday 17th June to set licence fees for 2015/16.**

27. **Reparation Policy for Consultation as National Policy**

This draft policy on reparation is intended for those councils that wish to use reparation and for this practice to be applied as transparently and consistently across regions as possible.

Resolved: (Graeme Jobey/Paul Dixon-Didier)

That the draft policy be circulated to regions for consultation in the understanding that it would be adopted as Fish & Game NZ's national policy to standardise the practice by those Councils who recognise and utilise reparation.

28. **NZ Council Appointee on the Taupo Fishery Advisory Committee**

The NZ Council is represented on the Taupo Fishery Advisory Committee by its appointee approved by the Minister of Conservation. The current approved representative is Rob Pitkethley who no longer works for Fish & Game, hence, the need to ask the Minister to approve a new appointee.

Resolved: (Chris Lynch/Paul Stenning)

That the Minister of Conservation be asked to approve the appointment of Andy Garrick, Regional Manager Eastern Fish and Game Council, to represent the New Zealand Fish and Game Council on the Taupo Fishery Advisory Committee.

29. **Correspondence**

The Council agreed to receive the correspondence addressed to the Chairman and determined appropriate replies.

30. **Other Business**

Two issues were raised.

- Health & Safety issues causing confusion over access to farm properties. Discussions with Federated Farmers have been very positive for a joint initiative to clarify the intent of the legislation.
- Concern was expressed over the practice allowing duck hunting on upland properties with special conditions. In response, it was noted by the two councils where this occurs (Auckland/Waikato and Eastern) that it is a condition that such hunting does not take place on days of organised upland game hunting.

Closing Remarks

The Chairman thanked Council and staff for their support.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 4.25 pm Friday 22 May 2015.

Confirmed:

Date:/...../2015