

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 171<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND  
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT THE ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW  
ZEALAND ON THURSDAY 16<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2018 AT 12.00PM**

**Present**

Murray Ferris, Lindsay Lyons, Barry Roderick, Neal Hawes, Peter Storey, Alan Baird, Ken Coombes, Steve Scragg, Laurance Tamati, Sandy Bull, and Annaka Davis.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Andy Garrick, Kate Thompson, Anthony van Dorp, Eben Herbert, Matt McDougall, John Meikle, Lloyd Gledhill, Matt Osborne, Carmel Veitch, Nigel Simpson, Lynne Sands and Mark Sherburn (Eastern Fish & Game)

**1.0 WELCOME**

1.1 Cr Murray Ferris opened the meeting at 12.00pm and welcomed back Cr Sandy Bull following the passing of his wife Colleen, and welcomed Pete Shepherd and Michel Dedual (DOC Fisheries Taupo).

**2.0 APOLOGIES**

2.1 Apologies were received from Cr David Woolner, Helen Neale (Department of Conservation), Ken Raureti (Bay of Plenty Conservation Board), and Ray Bushell.

2.2 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Ken Coombes) that the apologies for the 171<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [18/08/2.2]*

**3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (14 JUNE 2018)**

3.1 *Agreed (Neal Hawes/Laurance Tamati) that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2018 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [18/08/3.1]*

**4.0 IDENTIFICATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN COUNCIL POLICY**

4.1 *Agreed (Ken Coombes/Neal Hawes) that Agenda Item 10.15 relating to the changes made to the Anglers Notice Policy 2003 and Item 12.3 relating to the releasing of captive reared mallards to hasten recovery of wild populations that are at low levels be incorporated into Council Policy. [18/08/4.1]*

**5.0 MATTERS ARISING**

5.1 Cr Barry Roderick queried whether it should be recorded that if the new regulations relating to the removal of fly fishing only restrictions in some areas did not work due to angler conflicts, then those decisions could be revisited. Andy Garrick advised he did not consider this necessary as Resolution [18/06/10.3] signals this was Council's intent and an underlying provision associated with the removal of fly fishing only restrictions.

5.2 Kate Thompson provided some background information on the rationale and consequence of the move to licences becoming inter-available throughout New Zealand as requested by Cr Peter Storey at Council's June meeting.

5.3 Cr Steve Scragg noted he had not been present at the previous meeting when the discussion took place on the proposed licence fees for 2018-19, but felt that the Adult Winter licence was under-priced and that the margin between the short break and winter licence categories was very small. Andy Garrick informed Council that licence price

ratios had been a topic raised by the New Zealand Council and that there was general agreement that a review of the ratios should be carried out by the licence working group with the support of the R3 reference group.

## **6.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS**

- Cr Murray Ferris – Papers for Information
- Andy Garrick – Te Arawa Lakes Trust meeting

## **7.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER**

7.1 No conflicts of interest were identified.

## **8.0 2018-2019 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN**

8.1 Andy Garrick informed Council that the final draft of the OWP had been updated with minor corrections to grammar and layout and that no further submissions had been received on it.

8.2 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Lindsay Lyons) that Council approves the Operational Work Plan and budget for the 2018-2019 year. [18/08/8.2]*

8.3 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Lindsay Lyons) that Council delegate authority to the Regional Manager to approve expenditure during the year as set out in the Council approved Operational Work Plan and budget. [18/08/8.3]*

## **9.0 2018 FISH AND GAME COUNCIL ELECTIONS**

9.1 Council received the election schedule and associated papers. Andy Garrick highlighted August 30 as being the closing date for Councillor nominations and the submission of Candidacy Papers and supporting information to the Returning Officer at Electionz. Cr Lindsay Lyons informed Council of a small change to the Candidacy form which required candidates to complete a Candidate Interest Statement and gave a brief background to this. Cr Steve Scragg suggested that existing Councillors may wish to encourage others to stand and added that it would be nice to see some younger people put their names forward.

## **10.0 AUCKLAND WAIKATO FISH & GAME STERILE TROUT TRIAL**

10.1 Council considered feedback from staff and the additional information it had sought following Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Council's request to rear sterile trout at the Ngongotaha Hatchery for release into Lake Arapuni. It was noted that a similar trial had been proposed for the Eastern Region some years ago but this had not proceeded, due primarily, to the very low return rate likely from relatively low numbers of sterile trout that could be produced at the hatchery into waterbodies the size of the Rotorua lakes. Andy Garrick said that it was important to note that it is sterile fish we are discussing, not genetically modified fish as was the perception and/or concern of some people when the topic had been raised in the past.

10.2 *Agreed (Steve Scragg/Lindsay Lyons) that Council has no concerns over the use of the Ngongotaha Hatchery for the purpose of rearing sterile trout for another agency if there is capacity to do so without compromising other programmes. [18/08/10.2]*

## **11.0 USE OF DRAINS BY MALLARDS INVESTIGATION**

11.1 Andy Garrick informed Council that this investigation was the culmination of a project that was commenced and overseen by Matthew McDougall three years ago following an approach from the Royal Society of New Zealand's Science Teaching Leadership Programme to host a local teacher, Brigitta Nieuwboer. Andy advised that Matt McDougall would be presenting the findings of the study to a workshop on drains at the New Zealand Wetland Symposium which is to be held in the Hawke's Bay Region in September this year. Andy said that the results of the study provided a good starting point for Fish & Game to advocate for more sensitive drain management practices which could be undertaken without compromising the efficacy of the drains.

## **12.0 NOVEMBER MEETING OF NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL**

12.1 Murray Ferris referred to information within Agenda Item 12 about the New Zealand Council's proposal to meet in the Eastern Region in November of this year. Andy Garrick provided a brief overview of the two and a half day meeting and advised that the meeting would be held in this office, and this would provide a great opportunity for councillors from outside the region to view this Council's hatchery operations in addition to being able to meet with staff and Eastern Region councillors interested in doing so. Andy advised that field trip destinations on the Saturday had yet to be determined and suggested that there were a number of game bird habitat and/or fisheries related options that could be pursued. Council considered the possibility of visiting coastal Bay of Plenty wetland habitat developments and an upland game property in the morning, and an excursion onto one of the Rotorua lakes in the afternoon, and were invited to submit any other suggestions they might come up with to Andy.

## **13.0 LIAISON OFFICERS REPORTS**

### **13.1 *Tongariro-Taupo Conservation Board***

Nothing of relevance to report.

### **13.2 *Game Bird Habitat Trust***

Cr Steve Scragg advised that the NZ Game Bird Habitat Trust (GBHT) meeting which was held in July was by way of teleconference. He said that some good proposals had been received, but was disappointed with the number of proposals which had been poorly put together or were incomplete, and that there had been some discussion as to whether the incomplete proposals should be rejected. Steve advised that applications had been received from the Auckland/Waikato, Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, and Southland Fish & Game regions. Steve noted that the Trust was limited in what it could put into habitat projects from the funding currently available to it. Andy Garrick commented that he had heard that the GBHT was investigating other ways in which revenue could be generated, and Steve confirmed that this was something that was to be discussed at the next meeting.

### **13.3 *Department of Conservation***

Pete Shepherd from the Department of Conservation informed Council that work over the past few months had largely been business as usual, and advised that lake fishing had been good as was the quality of fish, but spawning runs had been later this year. They have been working more closely with the Regional Council on mitigation options for flooding in the lower Tongariro to ensure the best outcomes. Michel Dedual spoke of high smelt numbers at the southern end of the lake but lower numbers at the northern end, and noted that further investigation was required to determine whether the latter might have influenced the later spawning runs. Andy Garrick queried what the reasons

might be for the abundance of smelt at the southern end of the lake and Michael advised that monitoring over the past ten years indicated it was not uncommon to see high levels in the south. It was not common however to see the very low levels which have been recorded at the northern end. Cr Barry Roderick questioned whether brown trout keep the catfish in the lake under control? Michel advised that brown trout do eat the catfish but not in the numbers required to control the population.

#### **13.4 *New Zealand Fish and Game Council***

Cr Lindsay Lyons advised of changes to regional representation on the NZ Council. Chris Owen had replaced Paul Stenning for the Southland Region and Ron Stewart had replaced John Cumberpatch for the North Canterbury Region. Lindsay highlighted the lack of an audit policy across Fish & Game, and advised of the NZ Council's intention to undertake brief ad hoc audits of regions focussing on a specific element of Councils' functions or operations e.g. Health and Safety, Advocacy etc. Lindsay also spoke of the Cawthron Report on NZ Salmonid Stocking Practices which was included in the Papers for Information, and highlighted the very favourable report on Eastern Region's stocking and monitoring programmes. A recent focus of the NZ Council was the feed lots which were located next to river systems where cows were seen up to their bellies in mud. He advised this was being investigated by the Vets Association and asked that Andy distribute the video footage of this to Councillors. Andy queried whether this would also be picked up and dealt with by Regional Councils? Eben Herbert advised that break feeding was becoming more commonplace in recent years, and Regional Councils were currently grappling with this and implementing rules around the practice. Lindsay commented that the NZ Council was also following up on "spray & pray" practices, that a National Salmon Committee had been formed to address the salmon fisheries decline, and that the Council had been discussing fishing licence fee ratios. Lindsay noted that Nathan Burkepile had resigned from Hawke's Bay Fish & Game and had taken up a position as the Hawke's Bay Regional Co-ordinator for Landcare Trust. He added that Nathan had undertaken some brilliant wetland work for Fish & Game and it was a shame to see him go. Mark Sherburn queried Lindsay on the decision to bring regular issues of the Fish & Game magazine to an end. Lindsay advised that the minimal number of subscribers to the magazine was costing the organisation, but noted that the bi-annual special Fishing and Hunting editions would continue to be published and more emphasis would be placed on these.

### **14.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS**

14.1 Andy Garrick provided Council with a brief overview of highlights from this agenda's Management Report including:

- Lake Tarawera Spawning – record Te Wairoa trap run, largest since digital records have been kept, currently 2,078. Record spawning run also observed during the drift dive surveys below the Tarawera outlet.
- Lake Tarawera Research project – have been liaising with Michel Dedual from the Department of Conservation who has kindly offered to assist with the instigation of a smelt monitoring programme in mid-late November comparable to that DOC undertakes on Lake Taupo. NIWA has offered the use of their transducer at a nominal rate. We are very appreciative of the assistance from both NIWA and the Department of Conservation. Have met with Professor Troy Baisden from the University of Waikato who sees great merit in the general theme of the research proposal we have developed, but believes modifying it so it's a better fit with the broader lakes water quality programme would make it a better prospect for

receiving funding from MBIE. Dr Simon Stewart, who has been closely involved with the development of our current proposal, will be taking up a fulltime position at Cawthron in the New Year but has indicated a desire to retain an involvement with the project. The details of this have still to be worked out and will be influenced by recommended changes Troy and Simon deliver to the proposal as it currently stands.

- Aerial Mallard Transect Counts – Matthew McDougall has analysed the aerial transect counts that have been undertaken in April over the past five years. His analysis indicates that the mallard population appears to have been on the increase, which aligns with preliminary results from the 2018 game season opening Game Hunter Survey.
- Ruahihi Canal – Staff met with Crs Lindsay Lyons and Barry Roderick at McLaren Falls/Ruahihi canal to look at the potential for enhancing this fishery via additional stocking, the objective being to develop a more productive fishery handy to Tauranga and provide greater opportunity for licence holders.
- Tagged Trout Promotion – Staff have gone to considerable lengths to find a sponsor and/or underwriter for a scaled-up event. We have been unable to locate anyone prepared to underwrite events of this nature in NZ, Australia or the UK following issues such as those which arose with the “Odds On” Events being run several years ago. Potential sponsors we have approached see little potential return on investment for putting up a substantive prize. Cr Annaka Davis queried an event to be run on Lake Taupo with a \$1,000,000 major prize. Pete Shepherd (DOC) confirmed that they had been in discussions with an external contractor and this too appeared to be subject to obtaining an underwriter. He said that the event aimed to promote the local fishery, harvest of fish, and trout for the table. Destination Taupo had been approached by the contractor and were in support of the event as it promised to bring people to the region.
- Anglers Notice – Regional Anglers Notices were approved at the end of July and fishing licences will go on sale on Tuesday 21 August.
- A workshop involving BOPRC, Fish & Game, and DOC staff and two landscape consultants was recently held at these offices to agree on a conceptual habitat development plan for up to 80 ha of land adjoining the southern and western boundaries of the Lower Kaituna Wildlife Management Reserve to be funded by BOPRC.
- Pukehina Wetland Proposal – Regional Manager approached by a property developer who has purchased a 165ha low lying dairy farm with the aim of developing a 39ha ‘eco’ subdivision. In support of his application he has proposed putting the remaining 130ha of the farm into wetland. He came to Fish & Game to ask if we would be interested in assuming ownership and responsibility for the wetland once constructed. After considerable discussion around terms and conditions, risks and liabilities, management structures and funding, a Heads of Agreement has been signed between the developer, Fish & Game, Regional Council, and a collective of hapu supporting the project in principle subject to a number of conditions. A substantial part of the wetland will be available for hunting over, and Fish & Game will have a major input into the design of the wetland which will be constructed at the developer’s expense if the subdivision application is successful. A charitable trust will be set up comprising two Fish & Game trustees, a Regional Council trustee, one iwi trustee and one local community trustee. At our suggestion the developer has agreed to a levy being placed on the sale of each

property to provide a substantial proportion, if not all of the capital required to generate the annual income needed to fund maintenance programmes and inflation proof that capital. This project has the potential to provide win-win outcomes for all parties concerned, and if successful could be a model for other marginally economic lowland properties, or coastal properties threatened by sea level rise.

- Meetings - Nicki Douglas and members of the Te Arawa Lakes Trust Board, Ken Raureti Chair of the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board, Allan Munn Central North Island Director for the Department of Conservation, and Kirsty Luke Chief Executive of Te Uru Taumatua and her environmental team.
- Meeting with R3 Reference Group which comprises four regional managers, and Martin Taylor, Robert Sowman, and Steve Doughty (marketing consultant) from the NZ Council Office. The focus of this group is to be on the retention, reactivation, and recruitment of licence holders in that order as a means of increasing participation. The group is taking a lead from what has been done in the United States which has resulted in a massive turnaround in the numbers of people participating in fish and game related activities. Steve Doughty will attend one of our meetings in the New Year to discuss the R3 programmes likely to be developed here.

14.2 Cr Lindsay Lyons commented on 16-year-old Sean Johnston's report on the Te Kohika wetlands which had been included within the Papers for Information and thought he should be congratulated on his work.

**14.3 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Sandy Bull) that Council receives the Management Report and Licence Sales reports. [18/08/14.3]***

**14.4 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Sandy Bull) that Council receives the Health and Safety report. [18/08/14.4]***

**14.5 *Agreed (Steve Scragg/Laurance Tamati) that Council receives the Finance report and approves payments for May and June 2018 totalling \$331,335.18. [18/08/14.5]***

14.6 Cr Lindsay Lyons queried the number of licences issued to those hunting in preserves and how much licence revenue those hunters contribute. Andy Garrick advised that Upland Game Properties are required to submit returns on which licence details were recorded but it would be difficult to determine the number of licences directly a result of preserves as many hunt other water fowl as well.

## **15.0 GENERAL BUSINESS**

15.1 Cr Murray Ferris wished to query the regularity of hard copies of Papers for Information being sent out to Councillors. Andy Garrick advised that some time ago most Councillors had advised they'd be happy to receive the Papers for Information electronically, and generally that was what had been happening since then with the exception of two Councillors who had requested they continue to receive a hard copy. Councillors commented that the bulkiness of the Papers for Information needing to be referred to when some agenda items were being addressed was often beyond what it could be considered reasonable or practical to print off at home, and that a hard copy was useful for jotting notes on. Crs Laurance Tamati and Peter Storey advised they needed electronic copies only but the remainder of Councillors requested that a hard copy of the PFI be included with the hard copy of the agenda in future.

15.2 Cr Murray Ferris informed Council of a meeting earlier in the day with the Te Arawa Lakes Trust attended by Crs Barry Roderick, Lindsay Lyons and Murray Ferris, and Andy Garrick, and with Cr Laurance Tamati in attendance in his capacity as chair of Komiti Whakahaere. He said that they had had a good discussion around the

relationship of the Trust and Fish & Game, and working together in the future. As owners of the lake beds they acknowledged that Fish & Game are the experts in our field. Andy Garrick agreed that there were lots of opportunities for doing more together. Laurance noted that it would be good if Council could support this relationship.

- 15.3 Cr Sandy Bull congratulated staff on their compliance work and provided an update on the action to be taken by the Gisborne District Council in relation to unlawful activities being undertaken by a landowner on the Motu River.

**16.0 PUBLIC EXCLUDED SESSION**

**16.1** *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Alan Baird) that pursuant to Section 48 (1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, the public be excluded at 1.46pm from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely a discussion on the Council's self-appraisal of its performance and other confidential matters. [18/08/16.1]*

**16.2** *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Lindsay Lyons) that the public be re-admitted to the meeting at 2.41pm. [18/08/16.2]*

**17.0 MEETING CLOSED**

- 17.1 The meeting was closed at 2.42pm.



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Murray Ferris  
Chairman

## SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

- 2.0 APOLOGIES**  
**2.2** *Agreed (Peter Storey/Ken Coombes) that the apologies for the 171<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [18/08/2.2]*
- 3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (14 JUNE 2018)**  
**3.1** *Agreed (Neal Hawes/Laurance Tamati) that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2018 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [18/08/3.1]*
- 4.0 IDENTIFICATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN COUNCIL POLICY**  
**4.1** *Agreed (Ken Coombes/Neal Hawes) that Agenda Item 10.15 relating to the changes made to the Anglers Notice Policy 2003 and Item 12.3 relating to the releasing of captive reared mallards to hasten recovery of wild populations that are at low levels be incorporated into Council Policy. [18/08/4.1]*
- 8.0 2018-2019 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN**  
**8.2** *Agreed (Peter Storey/Lindsay Lyons) that Council approves the Operational Work Plan and budget for the 2018-2019 year. [18/08/8.2]*  
**8.3** *Agreed (Peter Storey/Lindsay Lyons) that Council delegate authority to the Regional Manager to approve expenditure during the year as set out in the Council approved Operational Work Plan and budget. [18/08/8.3]*
- 10.0 AUCKLAND WAIKATO FISH & GAME STERILE TROUT TRIAL**  
**10.2** *Agreed (Steve Scragg/Lindsay Lyons) that Council has no concerns over the use of the Ngongotaha Hatchery for the purpose of rearing sterile trout for another agency if there is capacity to do so without compromising other programmes. [18/08/10.2]*
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