

Operational Report.

Operational Report – for the period ended March 2020

Prepared by: Dean Kelly – Manager

Introduction

The Council's adopted governance policies require the manager to provide an Operational Report, specific proposals for capital expenditure and acquisitions as well as major issues and opportunities for the Council. There are further requirements for the Manager to provide assurance that the Management Limitations are being observed. The format of this report is therefore to certify compliance with Governance Policies, Management Limitations and provide other material, responses or assurance that Council objectives, strategies, plans, performance, risks, operation, resources and structure are being met.

Notifications of intention to purchase unbudgeted capital items in excess of \$10,000

All regions including the NZ Council have committed to no capital expenditure over this period.

Matters for the information of council

Staff:

Staff holiday entitlements: Manager, 42 hours
 Hokitika Officer, 99 hours
 Northern Officer, 113 hours

Vehicles:

Managers Vehicle: (start)70,729km (fin)77,525km. Total private for period:1,810km
Fish & Game Officer Vehicle: 5,470km (start) 13,080 (finish) Total private for period: 2,592km
Fish & Game Officer Vehicle: (start) 39,844 km (fin.) 47,898km Total private for period: 1,709km

COVID-19

Currently the country is in an unprecedented state of emergency. Alert Level 4 restrictions have forced us to change operations. We have all staff working from home remotely. No field work is allowed under the current restrictions.

The implications on fishing and hunting will be felt in the coming months with less fishing and hunting expected due to restrictions on movement and a significant reduction in non-residents fishing. West Coast Fish and Game has applied for work and incomes wage subsidy scheme.

The Chair has cancelled the April meeting in accordance with the restrictions but the council will need to discuss options for the upcoming gamebird season, budgeting and workplans as well as the Sportsfish season regulations. The best process would be a telephone/video conference call with the council's opinion stated to NZ Council and then adoption at subsequent meetings when the restrictions are lifted. The Government has changed the rules here though and the council can resolve items as long as the meeting is either recorded and broadcast subsequent to the meeting or a summary of the meeting is published.

Bi-monthly report on outputs

1111 Drift Diving

Sportsfish surveys have been completed, local volunteers and staff were utilised. Drift dives were completed on the Karamea River. Report attached.

1112 Lake Netting

Lakes Brunner and Poerua netting survey report completed.

1114 Trend Counts

Paradise shelduck moult counts were completed.

1115 Sportsfishery Research

The Second round of electric fishing has been completed along with the download of two temperature loggers. Juvenile trout were found at all three sites again at similar concentrations. Sonde in New River collecting environmental data.

Consulted with Brendan Hicks regarding the status of his salmon otolith microchemistry work. Finalised report yet to be received but final analysis done.

1116 Backcountry Fisheries Management

Trail camera battery change in Mokihinui in December and January and six angler licences checked. Compliance trip undertaken into Karamea River with Baylee, only two anglers observed.

1121 National Hunter Survey

Survey report completed.

1161 Fisheries Enhancement

Staff have reviewed and updated the sports fishery enhancement matrix. North Canterbury have closed their Rakaia Hatchery. The Council should have a discussion if the West Coast should be following this initiative considering the evidence for detrimental effects of Hatchery reared fish on locally adapted wild populations.

1171 Regulations/Gazette Notices

Worked with Jack Kos to finalise changes to gamebird gazette notice.

1181 Game Bird Control

Paradise Shelduck complaints have been frequent, especially as the big mobs left moult sites and predated on young crops. Issues have been responded to by organised hunts with junior/new hunters or delegated to keen hunter list under permit. Benefits of taking new hunters to such great hunting already been observed with enthusiasm and willingness to now invest in the sport.

1211 RMA Plans/Policy/Consents

Two site visits regarding resource consent applications were required during the period.

1212 Dairy Industry/Farmer Advocacy

Building relationship with farmers that have been affected by the increase in the paradise shelduck population. These relationships will provide for facilitated organised hunting in the gamebird season.

1213 DoC

Receive permission to use motorbikes on the Old Ghost Road to access trail cams with Westport Office. Discussed option of getting a landing permit for a drift dive site in the Kahurangi Wilderness Area (upper Roaring Lion) with Motueka Office.

1311 Access

We have contacted Orica regarding gamebird hunting access, it is the hope that we can gain access for gamebird hunters in the weekends as a minimum. Reinstalled signage at Lake lanthe after high water levels and wave action knocked over signage at carpark.

1312 Assisted Hunting

Discussions around next years events and upping our game to provide variety to encourage more hunting.

1331 Website/Ezines/Social Media

Relevant material been posted on website. Regular Facebook engagements have been done, focusing on promoting salmon fishing. Submitted West Coast Reel life for February and March.

1332 Fish & Game Magazine

The Gamebird supplement for the magazine was completed.

1361 Clubs, Outdoor Recreation Groups

Attended and assisted with Lake Brunner Fishing Competition. Attended a weigh in of the Mokihinui Fishing Competition and provide them with Fish & Game information to hand out, as well as some magazine to give out for spot prizes. Sent out invite to all West Coast licenceholders to attend fishing educational seminars, had a limited response but have aided many new anglers with advice via email. Compiling responses and a decision will be made on what is our best option to address those interested. Approval form received from South Westland Lions for Lake Mapourika Salmon Comp. Approval letter completed. Discussed option of Fish & Game have presence at King Kahawai competition with event organisers.

1362 Junior Hunting/Fishing Days

We have made advancement in creating a young hunters clubs and have utilised the group to respond the paradise shelduck complaints. Completed junior clay target shooting in Westport and held two organised events for juniors where complaints had been received. All those that attended have great success.

1371 Okuru Hut

The hut was visited twice during compliance trips, lawns mowed. Other region rangers have used the hut over the period and increased ranger activity in the area as well as completed some maintenance on the property.

1421 Media/Communication

Regular media release promoting the salmon season, the great trout fishing this season and the special junior season/clay targets. Footage was filmed on Lake Brunner to create a video show casing the great fishery and teaching new anglers to how to be successful. This will hopefully get released in the coming month. Recent media articles have focused around COVID 19 and there is ongoing discussion with the NZ Council and this issue.

1511 Compliance

Effort focused on South Westland lakes (Moeraki, Paringa, Mapourika, Ianthe) during salmon season. Good numbers of angler contacts made. Two English anglers FWL at the Waikiti River, both have since purchased full season non-resident licences and completed diversion agreements.

1531 Prosecutions

Prosecution of two English anglers FWL at the Waikiti River completed. Diversion agreement completed and payments made.

1621 Agent Liaison

Visits to agents Greymouth, Reefton and Westport regularly. Communication regarding upcoming game season and COVID 19.

1841 National Liaison

Liaison was required for; 2020 Regulations, Communications Strategy, Whitebaiting regulations, Salmon enhancement.

1910 Staff Salaries & Payroll

Staff performance reviews were completed

1980 Offices

The office

Staff Recommendation:

That this report be received.