

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 151st MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT THE ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW
ZEALAND ON WEDNESDAY 15th APRIL 2015 AT 12.00PM**

Present

Lindsay Lyons, Barry Roderick, Michael Little, Terry Wood, Peter Storey, Terry Sutton, Steve Luscombe, Neal Hawes, Laurence Allingham, Annaka Davis.

IN ATTENDANCE

Colin Paton (T/T Conservation Board); Kim Turia, Mark Venman, Helen Neale (Department of Conservation; arrived 1.20pm); Andy Garrick, Kate Thompson, Nigel Simpson, Lynne Sands, Mark Sherburn, Lloyd Gledhill, Matt Osborne, John Meikle, Matt McDougall, Eben Herbert (Eastern Fish & Game); Ray Bushell, and Ian Pirani (arrived 2.45pm for presentation).

1.0 In the absence of the Chairman, Cr Murray Ferris, Andy Garrick addressed the meeting and informed Council of the protocol involved in appointing an Acting Chair for the meeting, noting that Lindsay Lyons was Council's Vice Chairman.

1.1 *Agreed (Terry Wood/Laurence Allingham) that Cr Barry Roderick be nominated to stand in to chair the meeting in the absence of Chairman, Cr Murray Ferris. (motion not carried) [15/04/1.1]*

1.2 Cr Barry Roderick declined the nomination advising that it would be more appropriate for Cr Lindsay Lyons to assume this role.

1.3 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Neal Hawes) that Cr Lindsay Lyons be nominated as Acting Chairman for the 151st meeting of the Eastern Fish & Game Council in the absence of Chairman, Cr Murray Ferris. [15/04/1.3]*

2.0 WELCOME

2.1 Cr Lindsay Lyons opened the meeting at 12.05pm and welcomed Councillors, staff, Kim Turia and Mark Venman (Department of Conservation), Colin Paton (T/T Conservation Board), and Ray Bushell.

3.0 APOLOGIES

3.1 Apologies were received from Crs Murray Ferris, Steve Scragg, and Ian Pirani.

3.2 *Agreed (Mike Little/Terry Wood) that the apologies for the 151st meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council are sustained. [15/04/3.2]*

4.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (18 FEBRUARY 2015)

4.1 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Peter Storey) that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2015 are confirmed as true and correct. [15/04/4.1]*

4.2 Identification of resolutions for inclusion in Council Policy.

4.3 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Mike Little) that Item 11.2 relating to Council's endorsement of the programme for novice hunters at the Waewaetutuki wetland be included as Council Policy. [15/04/4.3]*

5.0 MATTERS ARISING

- 5.1 Cr Terry Sutton queried the outcome of Item 10.3 regarding a permit issued by DOC to liberate a large number of mallard duck within the region. Andy Garrick advised that he had had considerable dialogue with the Conservation Partnerships Manager for the Central North Island in relation to this permit and had formally expressed Fish & Game's concern about the process. Andy had since communicated with the department's Permissions Manager in Hamilton, and had lodged an Official Information Act request (which the Department insisted was required) to view not only this permit, but that of the supplier of the mallards. DOC advised release of the permits would be subject to the approval of the permit holders which was subsequently granted after the permit holders had contacted Andy to query why. He expected to receive a copy of the permits in the very near future.
- 5.2 Following up on Item 7.9, Cr Annaka Davis asked whether there was an intention to form a closer relationship with the Rotorua Lakes Council or as the item suggested "it would be good to"? Andy Garrick advised that this was very much on his agenda, highlighting the contributions anglers in particular make to the local economy, and the need to ensure that trout fishing is recognised in local authority promotions. He said that discussions had been very limited to date as Rotorua Lakes Council had advised Destination Rotorua was undergoing a structural review, and it may be better to defer an approach until this process had been completed.
- 5.3 Cr Lindsay commented on the loss of large events such as the International and Tagged Trout competitions, and suggested that collaboration with Destination Rotorua could lead to the re-establishment of such an event(s) e.g. in conjunction with opening week? Andy Garrick confirmed that the loss of these two events had left both a void and a potential opportunity, and agreed the proposal warranted further consideration by staff and Council.
- 5.4 Cr Barry Roderick wished to formally thank Michel Dedual (Department of Conservation) for his attendance at the February meeting, and acknowledged the constructive and useful input he had made to discussions on the diversion wall and other fisheries issues.
- 5.5 Cr Steve Luscombe queried progress on the report requested from staff on the effects of unpinned autos on duck harvest. Andy Garrick advised that staff had deferred the preparation of a report for Council on this subject pending the outcome of discussion taking place at a national level, and a need to consider issues of a more immediate nature at this meeting. Staff will present a report to enable a more in depth discussion in relation to this topic to a Council meeting later in the year.

6.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS

- Neal Hawes - Oreti Cycleway
- Andy Garrick - 1080 application, South Taupo Wetlands

7.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER

- 7.1 Cr Annaka Davis queried her possible Conflict of Interest in relation to the General Business item about 1080 in her role as a Health Protection Officer for the Public Health Service. In recognition that this was to be a matter for information and discussion only, with no recommendations or resolutions arising, there was no requirement to register a conflict of interest.

8.0 COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 8.1 *More Waterfowl:* Andy Garrick reminded Council that at its last meeting it was suggested that the priority "More Waterfowl" was not the most appropriate wording for what Council was wanting to achieve, and that he had been asked to suggest an alternative. After an additional suggestion from Cr Barry Roderick, Council agreed this priority should be reworded to "Enhancing Habitat for Waterfowl Production" and that there was a need to define and be able to measure "Production". Some discussion occurred in relation to this and Matt McDougall said that he would like to consider this further in conjunction with other staff and come back to Council with a recommendation.
- 8.2 Ray Bushell asked whether there were to be discussions with Regional Councils about service drains and incorporation of their management into regional plans. Andy Garrick confirmed that Fish & Game had initiated contact with some key staff and would continue to be involved with Council at various levels both statutory and operational.
- 8.3 Cr Barry Roderick queried the new pond at the Kaituna WMR and whether the intention was to use this area for hunting or to enhance production. John Meikle advised that funding was supplied for the development of open water habitat, and while it was intended some hunting would take place in this area, the primary objective was all about productivity.
- 8.4 Cr Barry Roderick congratulated Matt McDougall on the completion of his thesis on the effects of harvest regulations on hunter effort, harvest rates, and annual survival of mallards and grey ducks, and acknowledged his excellent analysis of data and logical progression through a wide range of issues. Barry also pointed out that Matt's work had provided Council with the necessary information to act responsibly in setting of game season conditions. Matt advised that his work had now been reviewed by two U.S. Geological Survey staff, one of whom was a joint author of the paper, and he had received compliments from them. The thesis is closer to being published now and he is happy to explain any areas of uncertainty Councillors might have.
- 8.5 Cr Steve Luscombe voiced his concern in relation to the significant numbers of ducks being shot outside of the season according to Game Hunter Survey results, the need to limit the harvest of hen mallards, and information he had obtained that one South Island region (Otago) was asking hunters what they wanted in terms of bag limits. A discussion followed over a need for national co-ordination of game bird monitoring and regulation setting.
- 8.6 Andy Garrick confirmed there was increasing support within Fish & Game for standardising monitoring programmes, and that he had been requested to convene a meeting of North Island regions to develop if possible, a standardised and co-ordinated approach to mallard monitoring. A meeting attended by game bird staff from four regions had been held (Taranaki and Hawkes Bay not present but briefed subsequently), and a consensus was reached by all present on an approach involving a combination of aerial transect counts, trapping, and banding. The concept of basing monitoring efforts around "Duck Management Units" as opposed to Fish & Game boundaries received support, as was a proposed approach for validating the DMUs that have been initially delineated. Subject to support from regional Fish & Game councils, a statistical review by Darryl MacKenzie of what has been proposed, and availability of funding, at least five of the six North Island regions are likely to implement a co-ordinated approach to monitoring in 2016.

- 8.7 *Water Quality and Quantity:* Cr Barry Roderick acknowledged the upcoming meeting of anglers, the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, and its independent expert panel regarding the Ohau Channel wall, and asked whether staff would be putting forward design prescriptions for a fish pass at this meeting? Andy Garrick advised that the primary purpose of the meeting was to agree if possible, on principles rather than specifics, and to provide an opportunity for the Regional Council to hear from interested parties. Council discussed consent conditions, monitoring results, and the environmental factors influencing those results. Cr Steve Luscombe suggested it was imperative that staff develop a detailed plan for a fish pass to present. Andy advised that he and Matt Osborne had had promising discussions with Regional Council earlier in the year and would be well prepared for the meeting.
- 8.8 *Access:* Cr Lindsay Lyons informed Council that the New Zealand Council had been investigating the Health and Safety obligations of farmers and other land owners in relation to allowing recreational access across their land, following the distribution of a "Safer Farms" package by WorkSafe NZ. He advised that the package was directed at commercial operators accessing private land and should not affect the recreational angler or hunter. Cr Annaka Davis acknowledged this verbal advice but suggested that formal notification from WorkSafe NZ should be sought. Andy Garrick agreed that once settled, a definitive statement should be requested from WorkSafe NZ. Andy noted that while Eastern Region had received similar advice to that provided to the NZC, an article had just been published in the Rural News quoting a statement from a senior WorkSafe official which flew directly in the face of assurances we had received from them to date. Andy advised that Eastern Region would continue to seek clarification from WorkSafe NZ but National Office should also be doing so.
- 8.9 *Maximising Fishery Opportunities:* Cr Barry Roderick queried progress on the proposal to change opening day to the first Saturday in October. Cr Annaka Davis noted that this idea had been dropped following consultation with staff and other regions.
- 8.10 Cr Terry Wood queried whether a joint Fish & Game/DOC Taupo licence was to be considered with the new licence categories? Kate Thompson confirmed that this was not currently on the agenda. Kim Turia (Department of Conservation) advised that further discussion was likely to occur following the completion of the National Anglers Survey which has included Taupo anglers this year. Cr Annaka Davis suggested that many anglers may not be aware that (with the exception of Taupo) they can fish outside of the region that they purchased their licence in and thought that promotion of this might increase participation.
- 8.11 Cr Terry Sutton advised that the Gisborne Anglers Club was fully supportive of the additional monitoring programmes being undertaken at Waikaremoana.
- 8.12 *Agreed (Mike Little/Steve Luscombe) that Council had reviewed activities and progress towards existing priorities and did not identify new directions to be incorporated into future project planning processes. [15/04/8.12]*
- 9.0 **ANGLERS NOTICE**
- 9.1 Council discussed the submissions received for the 2015-2016 Anglers Notice and agreed that these should be retained for consideration with the biannual review. Cr Barry Roderick requested acknowledgement be sent to those who has submitted, and Andy Garrick confirmed that this had been done.

- 9.2 *Agreed (Mike Little/Terry Wood) that no issues had arisen outside of the regular Anglers Notice biannual rotation that required extraordinary changes to the Anglers Notice for the 2015-2016 Season. [15/04/9.2]*
- 10.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2015-2016 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN**
- 10.1 Andy Garrick provided a brief overview of the Operational Work Planning process and the need to confirm the draft budget and proposed contestable funding applications at this meeting. Andy highlighted one of the key changes within the work plan was a reduction in revenue from other regions for fish and ova and the resulting need to apply for contestable funding to provide for this reduction. Cr Barry Roderick queried whether the staff costs associated with work at Waikaremoana could be funded from the Waikaremoana Fund? Andy Garrick advised that Waikaremoana projects were yet to be finalised and he could look at the terms of the trust fund as to whether some of this work could be funded by the trust.
- 10.2 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Mike Little) that Council approves the proposed contestable funding bids for the 2015-2016 Operation Work Plan and that consideration should be given to funding the staff time component of specific projects being undertaken at Waikaremoana from the Waikaremoana Sports Fish Trust Fund. [15/04/10.2]*
- 11.0 SPECIES MONITORING REPORT**
- 11.1 Council received the 2014 Opening Day Angler Creel Survey report and discussion followed around the many variables influencing size and catch rates including:
- increased use of glow bugs on Lake Tarawera;
 - liberation numbers and strategies;
 - stocking trials and capacity;
 - smelt populations;
 - effects of algal blooms;
 - Lake Tarawera water quality;
 - data watch returns.
- 11.2 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Terry Wood) that Council receives the 2014 Opening Day Angler Creel Survey Report. [15/04/11.2]*
- 12.0 LOWER KAITUNA WMR CROPPING PROPOSAL**
- 12.1 Council discussed the Lower Kaituna WMR cropping proposal and agreed with the conclusions not to proceed with this proposal. Cr Mike Little queried whether the Regional Council would support riparian planting of the area. John Meikle advised that Fish & Game would be encouraging DOC to exclude stock from wet areas of the paddock, and Andy Garrick indicated that staff would be investigating means of undertaking some planting within these areas.
- 12.2 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Mike Little) that Council receives the report on the Lower Kaituna WMR Cropping Proposal and agrees with its conclusions not to proceed with this proposal. [15/04/12.2]*
- 13.0 LEAD SHOT**
- 13.1 Andy Garrick advised that Item 12 of the agenda on lead shot was presented to the New Zealand Council for information following a request from the Council for further research on lead shot ingestion by game bird waterfowl. The research proposed was in preparation for a decision on the use of lead shot in sub gauges to be made in 2017.

Andy wanted Council to be aware of the NZC's request and to provide Councillors with the opportunity to express their opinion. Council discussion revolved around:

- effects of lead shot on waterfowl mortality;
- other factors affecting populations;
- impacts of steel shot;
- impacts of lead shot use on junior and elderly hunters;
- the reason the exclusion came about and why did it not apply to all gauge at the time;
- overseas research.

13.2 Andy concluded by saying that the previous work he had undertaken was scientifically robust, and yes, birds do ingest lead shot. He said that while there are other more significant factors that are likely to be impacting on mallard populations lead shot ingestion is nevertheless, another potential cause of mortality that could be avoided. Andy will be putting together ideas for further research and will present these at a future meeting of Council.

14.0 LIAISON OFFICER REPORTS

14.1 Bay of Plenty Conservation Board

Helen Neale thanked Andy Garrick for his attendance at the last Bay of Plenty Conservation Board meeting noting that it was great to have him present and provide an overview of Fish & Game's role. Helen confirmed that Ken Raureti, the current Chairperson of the Board, would represent the Board at future Fish & Game Council meetings, and that they expected two new positions to be filled by the end of May and these appointees would provide back up for Ken when he was unavailable.

14.2 Tongariro Taupo Conservation Board

Colin Paton commented on the 1080 application to South Taupo wetlands in February and the issues arising from this with signs restricting access for four months. Andy Garrick advised that Matt McDougall and he had met with the company who undertook the operation (EPRO) and had concluded that there was a lot of misinformation circulating in relation to this programme. He noted that the aerial application of 1080 had largely been restricted to private (Maori) land and that every land owner had provided consent. Much of the DOC land that was included in the operation was being treated with feratox and brodifacoum as opposed to 1080. Andy said that consultation/notification of the operation had been comprehensive in contrast to reports received. Nevertheless Fish & Game staff would inspect the area and make contact with the holders of any pegged stands located to ensure they were aware of the operation and potential risks that might still exist at the opening of the season. A positive arising from the meeting with EPRO was that the company would provide advance notice to Fish & Game of any operations coming up of this nature.

14.3 East Coast/Hawkes Bay Conservation Board

Not represented.

14.4 Department of Conservation, Central North Island Region

Helen Neale advised of the Community Conservation Partnership Funding process underway, and confirmed the review that the Department and Eastern Fish & Game were undertaking into the administration and management of wetland reserves in the Bay of Plenty. Mark Venman talked about the Taupo fisheries' new initiative to employ tablets in the field to undertake angler surveys, capture photos, and view their licence database in the field. He said that this was working well and was well received by anglers. Mark advised that the most recent survey data showed an average trout

size of 470mm and 1.3kg, and noted many good condition fish in the 2-3 kg range. He also advised that the Waipa trap had been reinstated to monitor early spawning. Kim Turia provided an update on the Online Licensing system and advised that most agents were now on board, and DOC's intention was to become paperless by 1 July for whole season licences. Helen Neale commented on DOC's advocacy around the lakes, and advised they were keen to receive feedback about this work and whether there might be more effective ways of getting the message out.

14.5 Report from the New Zealand Council

Lindsay Lyons' report had been pre-circulated. Lindsay commented on the excellent communication and collaboration now occurring within the NZ Council. He felt that they were all working on the same page and that issues that had historically plagued the Council had diminished. Lindsay also spoke about the ring fencing of funds gained from the non resident licence and noted that the application of these funds applied to lakes as well as rivers.

15.0 MANAGEMENT REPORT

15.1 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Neal Hawes) that Council receives the Management Report, Finance and Licence Sales reports, and approves payments for January and February 2015 totalling \$381,223.29. [15/04/15.1]*

16.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

16.1 Cr Neal Hawes expressed concern over Fish & Game's stance to oppose the Oreti cycleway and the level of funding applying to this. Lindsay Lyons advised that information was provided within the NZC minutes and that he would circulate this to Council for their information.

16.2 Cr Lindsay Lyons noted that the second item that had been identified for General Business (1080 South Taupo Wetlands) had already been dealt with.

16.3 Cr Lindsay Lyons then welcomed Ian Pirani to the meeting and outlined the contribution Ian had made to the conservation and management of waterfowl and wetlands before presenting him with a framed game bird habitat stamp print in recognition of the significant contributions he has made.

17.0 MEETING CLOSED

17.1 The meeting was closed at 3.16pm.


.....
Lindsay Lyons,
Acting Chairman

10-6-2015
.....
Date

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

IN ATTENDANCE

1.1 *Agreed (Terry Wood/Laurence Allingham) that Cr Barry Roderick be nominated to stand in to chair the meeting in the absence of Chairman, Cr Murray Ferris. (motion not carried) [15/04/1.1]*

1.3 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Neal Hawes) that Cr Lindsay Lyons be nominated as Acting Chairman for the 151st meeting of the Eastern Fish & Game Council in the absence of Chairman, Cr Murray Ferris. [15/04/1.3]*

3.0 APOLOGIES

3.2 *Agreed (Mike Little/Terry Wood) that the apologies for the 151st meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council are sustained. [15/04/3.2]*

4.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (18 FEBRUARY 2015)

4.1 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Peter Storey) that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2015 are confirmed as true and correct. [15/04/4.1]*

4.3 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Mike Little) that Item 11.2 relating to Council's endorsement of the programme for novice hunters at the Waewaetutuki wetland be included as Council Policy. [15/04/4.3]*

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8.12 *Agreed (Mike Little/Steve Luscombe) that Council had reviewed activities and progress towards existing priorities and did not identify new directions to be incorporated into future project planning processes. [15/04/8.12]*

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10.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2015-2016 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN

10.2 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Mike Little) that Council approves the proposed contestable funding bids for the 2015-2016 Operation Work Plan and that consideration should be given to funding the staff time component of specific projects being undertaken at Waikaremoana from the Waikaremoana Sports Fish Trust Fund. [15/04/10.2]*

11.0 SPECIES MONITORING REPORT

11.2 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Terry Wood) that Council receives the 2014 Opening Day Angler Creel Survey Report. [15/04/11.2]*

12.0 LOWER KAITUNA WMR CROPPING PROPOSAL

12.2 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Mike Little) that Council receives the report on the Lower Kaituna WMR Cropping Proposal and agrees with its conclusions not to proceed with this proposal. [15/04/12.2]*

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