

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 152nd MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT THE ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW
ZEALAND ON WEDNESDAY 10th JUNE 2015 AT 12.00PM**

Present

Murray Ferris, Lindsay Lyons, Barry Roderick, Michael Little, Peter Storey, Terry Sutton, Steve Luscombe, Neal Hawes, Annaka Davis, and Laurence Allingham (arrived 12.05pm).

IN ATTENDANCE

Colin Paton (T/T Conservation Board); Andy Garrick, Kate Thompson, Nigel Simpson, Lynne Sands, Mark Sherburn, Lloyd Gledhill, Matt Osborne, John Meikle, Matt McDougall, Anthony Van Dorp, Eben Herbert (Eastern Fish & Game); Ray Bushell, Bill Clark, Kris Batelaan, Andrew Perring, and Ken Coombes.

1.0 WELCOME

1.1 Cr Murray Ferris opened the meeting at 12.00pm and welcomed Councillors, staff, Colin Paton (T/T Conservation Board), Ray Bushell, Bill Clark, Kris Batelaan, Andrew Perring, and Ken Coombes.

2.0 APOLOGIES

2.1 Apologies were received from Crs Terry Wood and Steve Scragg, Leilani Ngawhika and Helen Neale.

2.2 *Agreed (Mike Little/Lindsay Lyons) that the apologies for the 152nd meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council are sustained. [15/06/2.2]*

3.0 Cr Murray Ferris thanked Cr Lindsay Lyons for his chairing of the April meeting of Council in his absence.

4.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (15 APRIL 2015)

4.1 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Barry Roderick) that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th April 2015 are confirmed as true and correct. [15/06/4.1]*

4.2 Identification of resolutions for inclusion in Council Policy.

4.3 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Steve Luscombe) that Item 10.2 relating to Council's support of funding the staff time component of specific projects at Waikaremoana from the Waikaremoana Sports Fish Trust Fund, be included as Council Policy. [15/06/4.3]*

5.0 MATTERS ARISING

5.1 Cr Barry Roderick congratulated Matt Osborne and Andy Garrick for their contribution at the public meeting convened by BOPRC in May for the Ohau Channel Diversion Wall.

5.2 Cr Barry Roderick also commented on Item 8.9 of the minutes relating to the proposal that opening day be changed to the first Saturday in October and the decision not to pursue this. Barry asked that this be reconsidered and requested that Andy Garrick take this up nationally.

5.3 Cr Lindsay Lyons asked if further information had been obtained from Worksafe NZ regarding the Health & Safety obligations of farmers and other landowners allowing

access across their land. Anthony Van Dorp advised that, to date, no further information had been provided from Worksafe NZ. Andy Garrick informed Council of communications between Bryce Johnson and the Walking Access Commission, and Bryce's suggestion to the WAC that the Commission puts out a press release advising farmers and the public of the real situation in relation to access across farmland. Andy noted that the National Office of Fish & Game should be doing this also once the legislation had been finalised. It was noted that Worksafe NZ would be present at the upcoming field days at Mystery Creek and this could be an opportunity for Council or staff to seek further information. Steve Luscombe advised he would endeavour to do so.

6.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS

- Mike Little – Media releases

7.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER

7.1 No conflict of interest items were identified.

8.0 COUNCIL PRIORITIES

8.1 *More Waterfowl:* Andy Garrick suggested that Council might wish to reconsider the changes to Priority One that it proposed at its last meeting ("Enhancing Habitat for Waterfowl Production") noting that "Waterfowl" includes swans and geese as well as ducks, when Council's primary concern is more particularly with mallards (greylards). At its last meeting Council requested that performance measures be defined to determine whether habitat enhancement was leading to increased productivity, and Matt McDougall undertook to consider this in conjunction with staff. Matt informed Council that while staff can report on enhancement works undertaken and provide some measures of productivity across the region, it's not possible to link the two and draw conclusions relating to cause and effect. Council discussion followed over the measurability of targets and various initiatives that could be undertaken to enhance productivity including;

- Enhancement of existing ponds
- Riparian planting
- Drain management
- Predator control
- Regulations relating to unpinned autos, roבודucks, pond feeding, hen harvest (paper to be produced to consider these items when 2016 game season conditions being discussed).

8.2 Andrew Perring suggested that Council approach the issue by looking at "what the successful people are doing". He informed Council of a particularly productive pond in the Auckland/Waikato region which had seen significant habitat enhancement, predator control, and monitoring by hunters. He suggested there is a need to look at the future rather than focusing on what has occurred in the past. Matt McDougall provided an overview of the importance of collating and reviewing past seasonal data.

8.3 Cr Steve Luscombe suggested that there was no need to get bogged down with methods of measuring success, but would like to see staff develop and implement a habitat enhancement strategy. Andy advised that staff had already commenced drafting an operational strategy to provide direction beyond the one year time frame provided for in the annual OWP.

- 8.4 *Agreed (Steve Luscombe/Barry Roderick) that staff develop a habitat enhancement strategy to produce more ducks. [15/06/8.4]*
- 8.5 *Angler and Hunter Access:* Cr Murray Ferris invited Andrew Perring to address the Council about his concerns relating to the removal of the dinghies at Lake Waikareiti.
- 8.6 Andrew Perring spoke about his concerns over the removal of the row boats at Lake Waikareiti and felt that the decision to remove them could have been turned around had Fish & Game acted in the best interests of its licence holders. Andrew was particularly critical of the Manager's role in the issue and for providing him with conflicting and incorrect information, and not acting promptly to inform licence holders. He stated that Andy's advice that DOC was behind the removal of the boats was factually incorrect as he knew that it was a decision that had been made by one person on the Maori Trust Board and he had told Andy that this was the case. Andrew had spoken with Fish & Game staff at the Auckland Boat Show and was not impressed that there was no information available on the Waikareiti situation there, and that staff were not sufficiently informed to provide information on what was happening, and that this was further evidence of Andy's incompetence.
- 8.7 Cr Murray Ferris acknowledged Andrew's comments and the points that he had made, and that noted that nothing is ever as simple as it sometimes seems. Murray stated that he fully supported how the Manager had dealt with the situation and that he would now provide Andy with the opportunity to respond to Andrew's submissions.
- 8.8 Andy Garrick acknowledged Andrew's comments, and advised that Fish & Game was also very concerned about the removal of the boats and how this had come about. Andy advised Council that he would comment on the key points raised by Mr Perring and provide an overview of what had happened and what he (Andy) had done, as documented in greater detail in the paper he had circulated to Councillors and Mr Perring prior to the meeting, but noted that he would not be responding to the personal allegations made. Andy informed Council of the extensive enquiries he had made with the Regional Directors of Partnerships and Services within DOC in addition to other staff and ultimately the Director-General, and confirmed that he too had received a lot of conflicting information which had taken considerable time to unravel. He noted that informing anglers and licence holders more generally of matters affecting them is a high priority for Eastern Fish & Game as evidenced by the prolific number of media releases made by this region. Andy noted however, that we only issue press releases when we are 100% sure of our facts and there is value to be obtained from a press release. Andy confirmed that Fish & Game had not put out press releases to date as the public and angling community appeared to have been well informed via the media and other interest groups prior to Fish & Game being notified of the decision, and because there was still outstanding information we were endeavouring to obtain. Andy highlighted the need for Fish & Game to work with iwi groups associated with the Te Urewera settlement, and that the various entities he was attempting to establish relationships with were, he understood, to have been preoccupied to date with setting up infrastructure, systems and processes, and the Waikareiti row boat situation had not been a priority for them. Andy advised that contrary to Mr Perring's assertion, the Tuhoe board had no knowledge of, and were not consulted over the decision to halt the hire of the row boats. Andy had spoken to Lou Sanson, the Director-General of Conservation, and he had confirmed and made it very clear, that he had personally made the decision, that iwi had not been consulted, and that the decision had been based purely on health and safety grounds. Andy advised that the D-G had indicated there appeared to be a high level of support to bring the boats back subject to health

and safety concerns being addressed. Andy advised that coincidentally, he was scheduled to meet with Te Uru Taumatua at Taneatua tomorrow, and one of the items on the agenda, along with various others needing to be addressed before the end of the year, would be the Waikareiti row boats.

In conclusion Andy noted his concern over Mr Perring's treatment of Fish & Game staff at the boat show which Andy considered to be totally unacceptable, and his advice that he had been telling sports outlets and others, e.g. Federated Farmers, that Eastern Region was a disaster, an unwarranted and unfounded allegation. Andy reiterated that Fish & Game is no less concerned over the removal of the boats but time and patience were required to enable due process to take place.

8.9 Cr Murray Ferris thanked Mr Perring for taking the time to travel down from Auckland and address Council with his concerns.

8.10 Andrew Perring reiterated the importance of this issue to him and that he would be following developments closely.

8.11 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Terry Sutton) that Council has full confidence in the Manager, Andy Garrick, in dealing with the issues, and his endeavours to reinstate the row boats at Lake Waikareiti. [15/06/8.11]*

8.12 *Maximising Fishery Opportunities:*

Cr Annaka Davis queried Fish & Game staffs' statement relating to a provision to install a fish passage into the Ohau Channel diversion wall. Andy Garrick explained that the resource consent for the construction of the wall provided for the independent Fisheries Review Panel (in consultation with Fish & Game) to recommend to the BOPRC the installation of a fish passage if monitoring results indicated there was a need for such. Andy went on to explain that the BOPRC had undertaken to set up an Ohau Channel Fishery Liaison Group to progress the concept, and that he would be attending a meeting tomorrow to discuss who should be on that committee, and what its terms of reference should be. Andy noted that consent for the wall was up for renewal in 2017, and this provided leverage for installation of a passage. Cr Terry Sutton queried what effects a fish passage might have on water quality in Rotoiti, and Andy advised this would be a matter that would need to be taken into account, and modelled, during the design phase. He noted that the existing consent provided for a specified amount of water to bypass the wall into Rotoiti should a passage be installed. Cr Lindsay Lyons noted that parts of the wall were corroding quite fast and that this would need to be rectified too.

Cr Barry Roderick recommended that spawning habitat and options for its rehabilitation be investigated also.

9.0 ANGLERS NOTICE

9.1 Council acknowledged Agenda Item 8 "2015-16 Anglers Notice" and no further discussion was required.

9.2 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Peter Storey) that Council agrees the status quo applies for the 2015-2016 Anglers Notice. [15/06/9.2]*

10.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2015-2016 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN

10.1 Council discussed the 2015-2016 Operational Work Plan and draft budget. Andy Garrick confirmed the approval of contestable funding bids, as submitted, and also an additional \$3,000 that had been allocated to Eastern Region to provide for monitoring of mallards in the Northland Region that had been agreed to at a North Island mallard monitoring meeting, but not applied for by the region. Andy confirmed that a

- provision of service arrangement between the Hawke's Bay and Eastern Region Fish and Game Councils had been agreed to, and that funding from the Waikaremoana Sport Fish Habitat Enhancement Fund had been incorporated into the budget to compensate for the staff time component of the fisheries monitoring projects that were planned to be undertaken at Lake Waikaremoana in the 2015-2016 year.
- 10.2 *Agreed (Mike Little/Laurence Allingham) that Council had reviewed the Draft 2015-2016 Operation Work Plan and that it had not identified any further amendments required. [15/06/10.2]*
- 10.3 Andy Garrick advised that the draft would now be circulated to interested parties for comment, and that feedback would be circulated to Council prior to the August meeting when final approval of the OWP would be required.
- 11.0 2015-2016 LICENCE FEE**
- 11.1 The 2015-2016 Licence Fee proposal from the New Zealand Fish and Game Council was discussed briefly and accepted.
- 11.2 *Agreed (Annaka Davis/Neal Hawes) that the Eastern Council support the NZ Council's recommendation of a 2015/16 adult whole season sports fish licence of \$124 and an adult whole season game licence of \$92 (inclusive of a \$2 fee for the Game Bird habitat stamp) inclusive of GST. [15/06/11.2]*
- 12.0 DRAFT REPARATION POLICY**
- 12.1 Andy Garrick introduced the Draft Reparation Policy which the NZ Council had proposed be adopted as national policy, informing Council that the draft had been prepared by Anthony Van Dorp based on his experiences within the Eastern region. Andy advised that the document enables compliance staff and managers to tailor reparation to the variety of situations and circumstances experienced within and between regions. Cr Mike Little considered the policy to have been well thought out. Cr Annaka Davis suggested that there should be greater emphasis on educating juniors as part of the process, e.g. consequences of actions on the fishery. Anthony Van Dorp confirmed that education is a big part of what we are doing and that it is related to the scale and nature of the offending. He said that the policy allows us to tailor solutions for individual situations.
- 12.2 *Agreed (Annaka Davis/Neal Hawes) that Council has reviewed and supports the draft reparation policy, subject to further discussion on education prior it being adopting as national policy by the NZ Council. [15/06/12.2]*
- 13.0 CAPTIVE REARED MALLARD LIBERATION POLICY**
- 13.1 Andy Garrick opened the discussion noting that there had been considerable interest expressed recently in the release of captive reared mallards within the Eastern Region, and advised Council that further requests to rear and release mallards were likely. He said that there was a need to establish a policy on the rearing and release of mallard ducks and wanted Council to provide some guidance around this. Andy advised that staff had no preconceived position in relation to the release of captive reared mallards, and noted that there could be considerable merit in doing so, particularly when wild populations are at a low ebb as they currently are in many areas. However there were also, potential and real issues that need to be considered. Council discussed the matters raised in the paper provided in the agenda including:
- timing and location of releases;

- animal welfare issues and the potential conflict between pond feeding rules as applied in the Auckland/Waikato Region and the need to provide supplementary feeding of released birds immediately prior to the game season;
- compliance issues;
- impacts on Fish & Game monitoring programmes for wild mallards and banding in particular;
- potential issues relating to commercialisation;
- assessment of bird health prior to release and impacts on wild populations.

13.2 ***Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Mike Little) that Council adopts the recommendations as listed on pages 36 and 37 of the June meeting agenda with an additional recommendation that the following items be considered by staff when criteria are formulated:***

- *authorities should be issued to both a person and a place and for a period not exceeding five years;*
- *potential compliance issues are taken into account;*
- *that no releases occur within 20 km of a Fish & Game banding site;*
- *timing of release is stipulated;*
- *releases are not used as a means to develop or support commercial activities;*
- *failure to abide by conditions will result in Fish & Game applying to have an authority revoked;*

and that these be incorporated into a preliminary policy. [15/06/13.2]

14.0 SPECIES MONITORING

14.1 Council received the 2015 Game Bird Trend Count report. Cr Lindsay Lyons queried the continued monitoring of Canada geese in parts of the South Island despite them having been removed from the First Schedule of the Wildlife Act. Matt McDougall advised that they are no longer monitored within the Eastern region due to the costs associated with doing so. He advised that an additional three days flying was required to do this, and following the removal of the species from the schedule the birds appeared to have dispersed into different areas making them increasingly difficult to monitor. He suggested that there would need to be good reason to resume monitoring as it did require a lot of resources.

14.2 ***Agreed (Steve Luscombe/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the 2015 Trend Count report. [15/06/14.2]***

15.0 LIAISON OFFICER REPORTS

15.1 Bay of Plenty Conservation Board

Bill Clark introduced himself, commenting that “he was pleased to be here” and recognised the value in the relationship between DOC and Fish & Game. Bill noted that the recent focus of the Board had a lot to do with wetlands on the Rangitaiki plains. Andy Garrick asked if the Department or Board was considering anything that might be topical to Fish & Game presently as it was difficult to interpret this from the agenda the Board put out. Bill advised he would share anything arising with us at future meetings.

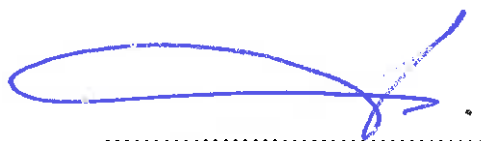
- 16.6 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Lindsay Lyons) that Council receives the Management Report, Finance reports, and approves payments for March and April 2015 totalling \$255,955.40. [15/06/16.6]*
- 16.7 Kate Thompson provided a brief update on licence sales and expected year end position.
- 16.8 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Steve Luscombe) that Council receives the report of licence sales. [15/06/16.8]*

17.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

- 17.1 Cr Mike Little expressed concern over media releases in the local paper (Wairoa Star) showing the Hawke's Bay Game Season conditions but not Eastern Region's. Andy Garrick advised that this was unfortunate as this information had been put out in the same press release, and that the exclusion of Eastern's conditions may have been a result of the paper recognising Wairoa as being a part of the Hawkes Bay Regional Council region but not realising that while this is so Wairoa sits within the Eastern Region of Fish & Game. Mike also queried what information had been put out about the datawatch releases at Waikaremoana, and Andy Garrick advised that this had been communicated to anglers via the Fish & Game website and twitter.
- 17.2 Some discussion occurred over conflicting angling reports on the Ruakituri River. Cr Murray Ferris was due to head to the Ruakituri over the coming weeks and would make some further enquiries.
- 17.3 Cr Murray Ferris thanked visitors and Council for their attendance and looked forward to catching up in the next couple of months.

18.0 MEETING CLOSED

- 18.1 The meeting was closed at 2.42pm.



.....
- Murray Ferris,
Chairman

1/09/15
.....
Date

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

2.0 APOLOGIES

- 2.2 *Agreed (Mike Little/Lindsay Lyons) that the apologies for the 152nd meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council are sustained. [15/06/2.2]*

4.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (15 APRIL 2015)

- 4.1 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Barry Roderick) that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th April 2015 are confirmed as true and correct. [15/06/4.1]*
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