

# AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME NEWSBRIEF

If you require further elaboration or clarification of items contained herein, or any other matters relating to F&G business, please don't hesitate to contact your local councillor or the office.

## **Matters arising from the Council Meeting of August 17, 2024**

1. **Letters from Minister:** It was noted that the Minister of Hunting and Fishing requires detailed rationale for any regulation changes especially if they appear to limit hunter or angler opportunity. He has made it clear that ad-hoc decisions without due consideration of biological and social factors are not going to be approved.
2. **Stone Jug Road Access:** We are awaiting the final wording for the creation of easements to provide access in perpetuity to this section of the Whakapapa River. It was noted that the initiative shown Auckland/Waikato F&G to create an access fund is being viewed favourably both within the organisation and externally and it is hoped this may be rolled out nationally.
3. **Whakapapa River:** Councillors requested an update on the issue surrounding a dwelling on public land that blocks access to the Whakapapa River. Dr Daniel explained the issue was that the District Council did not lodge the correct paperwork at the time, and the opportunity to formalise the access was lost. Dr Daniel is going to work with the CE to re litigate this issue with the Department of Conservation and see whether we can gain any traction to have access instated.
4. **Hamilton Anglers Club letter:** Gavin Hall spoke of the HAC letter focusing on a lake where kids and people with disabilities can have access to fish. HAC would like to develop a project in line with Fish and Games hooked on angling programme. Suitable locations were discussed and it was resolved that Dr Daniel would engage with Waipa DC to implement a project at Lake Te Koutu(Cambridge) which has a thriving perch fishery.
5. **Adopt a river:** The Chair discussed a Hamilton Anglers Club initiative to adopt a river. Anglers would do some riparian planting and enhancement of the farm and in return the landowner provides access to licence holders. A site visit is planned with the Chair and staff to run a trial programme on the Waihou.
6. **Letter of thanks:** A letter of thanks has been sent to retiring honorary ranger Theunis Miedema thanking him for his long service.
7. **Honorary Ranger Policy:** Longstanding Ranger and ex-councillor Andrew Kerr addressed the meeting, tabling a letter raising some concerns with the newly proposed national policy for honorary ranger's. The letter has been forwarded to NZ council seeking a response the issues raised.

## **Matters Arising from the Chief Executive's Report**

### **Arapuni stocking spawning surveys**

Recent spawning surveys in lake Arapuni found approximately 25% of fish spawning are hatchery. Dr Daniel explained that a recent meta-analysis suggests that this is likely to be having detrimental impact on the overall population. One more survey is scheduled and Dr Daniel will prepare a report for the next meeting. The ingoing liberations into this lake may need to be re-assessed as it may be more prudent to focus on spawning habitat enhancement projects rather than hatchery liberations.

### **Karapiro stream 2**

One of the landowner raised issues around pollution in the stream associated with a Christian Rock festive which discolours the stream. Dr Daniel will investigate when the festival is on.

**Quarry Lake Release:** The winter school holiday trout release was quarry lake on 1 July 2024.

### **Opening Weekend Gamebird Harvest Survey**

Opening weekend survey results were presented. Total harvest appears to be up slightly on recent years which may in part be due to an increase in number of hours hunted.

### **Waitomo District Plan**

We made a submission on the Proposed Waitomo District Plan in December 2022. Overall, we were pleased with the proposed plan and that a lot of our previous concerns were addressed in our initial submission on the draft version of the plan. Adam and Mischa provided further evidence focusing on the providing better access to significant trout fisheries in the district.

**Tree order:** The annual tree order was received and distributed to F&G clubs, committees and individuals for specified projects. For the most part, everyone received what they ordered – with some shortages of flax and cabbage and small discrepancies depending on the size of the trays. In total, around 5000 plants were distributed.

**Whanganui River Access:** Adam initiated an investigation into the gate to the Whanganui being locked in Taumarunui last month and the issue was resolved. Unfortunately, local anglers have informed staff there is now another fence being installed cutting off access to the river. Adam has called and emailed District Council staff make sure a gate is added to allow access.

**Te aroha Wetland:** Monitoring of water levels ongoing, site visit observed the water still exiting through ground seepage. Further management (likely via the installation of pumps to augment rainfall) is currently being investigated and priced up.

Funding from 1BT is being used for an upcoming planting day at Te Aroha wetland. These plants have been ordered and in planned for mid-august (exact date tbc). F&G Te aroha are currently carrying out weed control in the areas to be planted, with the planting day to be open to community to come help out (advertised predominantly via facebook).