

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 204th MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT THE ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW
ZEALAND ON THURSDAY 12 OCTOBER 2023 AT 11.00 AM**

Present

Crs. Ngahi Bidois, Debbie Oakley, Lindsay Lyons, Mike Jarvie, Kevin Coutts, Jay Tapsell, Scott Nicol, and Murray Ferris.

In attendance

Arash Alaeinia, Kate Thompson, Matt McDougall, Eben Herbert, Anthony Van Dorp (Eastern Fish & Game); Carmel Veitch (New Zealand Fish & Game), Ken Raureti (Te Arawa Lakes Trust), Dave Conley, James Barnett (Department of Conservation), Stan Hayman, Pat Swift, Dave Parr, Eddie Bowman, and Barry Roderick.

1.0 WELCOME AND KARAKIA

1.1 Cr Ngahi Bidois opened the meeting at 11 am welcoming Councillors, Staff, and members of the public.

2.0 APOLOGIES

2.1 Apologies were received from Cr Mark Sceats. No apology was received from Cr Alan Simmons; however, it was noted that he had purchased fishing licence for the 2023-24 Season.

2.2 Cr Ngahi Bidois acknowledged Ken Coombes resignation from Council, reiterating his work commitments were the compounding factor of his unavailability to the Council. Cr Murray Ferris acknowledged Kevin Coombes for his outstanding contribution within the Council, Executive Committee, and his assistance to staff with the Lake Tarawera research project.

2.3 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Murray Ferris) that the apologies for the 204th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [23/10/2.3]*

3.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

3.1 Arash Alaeinia called for nominations for the position of Chair.

3.2 *Moved (Murray Ferris/Jay Tapsell) that Cr Ngahi Bidois be nominated for Council Chair. [23/10/3.2]*

3.3 *Moved (Murray Ferris/Jay Tapsell) that nominations for position of Council Chair be closed. [23/10/3.3]*

3.4 Cr Ngahi Bidois was duly appointed to the position of Chairman.

3.5 Cr Ngahi Bidois called for nominations for the position of Deputy Chair.

3.6 *Moved (Lindsay Lyons/Murray Ferris) that Cr Kevin Coutts be nominated for Council Deputy Chair. [23/10/3.6]*

3.7 *Moved (Murray Ferris/Lindsay Lyons) that nominations for position of Council Deputy Chair be closed. [23/10/3.7]*

3.8 Cr Kevin Coutts accepted the nomination and was duly appointed to the position of Deputy Chair.

3.9 Cr Ngahi Bidois called for nominations for the position of the Eastern Region's appointee to the New Zealand Council.

3.10 *Moved (Murray Ferris/Scott Nicol) that Cr Debbie Oakley be nominated for appointment to the New Zealand Fish and Game Council. [23/10/3.10]*

3.11 *Moved (Mike Jarvie/Murray Ferris) that nominations for position of New Zealand Council Appointee be closed. [23/10/3.11]*

- 3.12 There were no further nominations and Cr Debbie Oakley was duly appointed to the position of Eastern Region's New Zealand Council appointee.
- 3.13 Cr Ngahi Bidois recommended that the incumbent staff member, Matthew McDougall, should remain Council's representative on the Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust given his expertise and history in the role.
- 3.14 ***Moved (Murray Ferris/Kevin Coutts) that Council confirms Matthew McDougall as its representative on the Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust. [23/10/3.14]***
- 3.15 ***Moved (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that nominations for position as Council's representative on the Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust be closed. [23/10/3.15]***
- 3.16 Mat McDougall confirmed that he was happy to continue this role.
- 3.17 Cr Ngahi Bidois provided a brief background to the role of the Executive/Managers Performance and Remuneration Committee which typically consisted of the Chair, Deputy Chair, NZ Council Representative, and one other council member.
- 3.18 ***Moved (Scott Nicol/Murray Ferris/) that Cr Ngahi Bidois be nominated for a position on the Executive/Manager's Performance and Remuneration Committee. [23/10/3.18]***
- 3.19 ***Moved (Murray Ferris/Lindsay Lyons) that Cr Kevin Coutts be nominated for a position on the Executive/Manager's Performance and Remuneration Committee. [23/10/3.19]***
- 3.20 ***Moved (Murray Ferris/Scott Nicol) that Cr Mark Sceats be nominated for a position on the Executive/Manager's Performance and Remuneration Committee. [23/10/3.20]***
- 3.21 ***Moved (Mike Jarvie/Murray Ferris) that Cr Debbie Oakley be nominated for a position on the Executive/Manager's Performance and Remuneration Committee. [23/10/3.21]***
- 3.22 There were no further nominations and Cr Mark Sceats was duly appointed to the Executive/Manager's Performance and Remuneration Committee along with the elected Chairman Cr Ngahi Bidois, Deputy Chairman Cr Kevin Coutts, and NZ Council Appointee Cr Debbie Oakley.
- 4.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (10 AUGUST 2023)**
- 4.1 ***Agreed (Ngahi Bidois/Mike Jarvie) that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 August 2023 be confirmed as a true and correct record subject to correction to wording between items 7.4 and 7.5 as follows;***
Change wording from 'broke' to 'adjourned'. [23/10/4.1]
- 4.2 **IDENTIFICATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN COUNCIL POLICY**
 No items were identified for inclusion in Council policy from the minutes of the meeting held 10 August 2023.
- 4.3 **MATTERS ARISING**
 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held 10 August 2023.
- 5.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS**
 Nil
- 6.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER**
- 6.1 Councillors were asked to inform the chair of any conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were recorded.
- 6.2 Cr Lindsay Lyons queried Cr Ngahi Bidois role within Te Arawa, particularly in relation to Lake Okataina. Cr Ngahi Bidois acknowledged his whakapapa to Te Arawa, and did

not feel conflicted regarding the Golden Clam biosecurity risk surrounding Lake Okataina. He advised that no one in his family makes any decisions within the Te Arawa Lakes Trust nor monetary gains. He felt comfortable representing both Te Arawa iwi and the Eastern Fish and Game Council. Cr Jay Tapsell also acknowledged his whakapapa to Te Arawa, and his role on Council to represent all licence holders.

6.3 Cr Debbie Oakley wished to highlight Ngahi's contribution as iwi liaison and the work he has done with the Chair of New Zealand Fish and Game Council, Barrie Barnes, and Fish & Game CEO Corina Jordan, adding that his contribution was very well regarded by the New Zealand Fish and Game Council.

6.4 Cr Lindsay Lyons said there is nothing wrong with having a conflict of interest, he has had conflicts himself in the past. It is more about what people see from the outside whether it's a perceived conflict or actual conflict of interest. Lindsay wanted to ensure that Council addresses any conflicts from the outset to show that this has been considered and accepted by Council as is the case here.

6.5 Ken Raureti explained Cr Ngahi Bidois role at the hui around the Lake Okataina closure. Ken had requested that Ngahi open with karakia and engage with important organisations that were MPI, Te Arawa Lake Trust (TALT), Eastern Fish and Game and Ngati Tarawhai; Ken acknowledged he was here today for TALT.

7.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS

7.1 Health and Safety Report - Arash Alaeinia updated Council on a recent incident regarding a verbal and physical assault to a staff member during a poaching offence investigation. Cr Kevin Coutts queried further information.

7.2 Arash also updated Council regarding an ongoing issue of a shoulder injury to a staff member whilst performing a repetitive work task, previously reported.

7.3 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Debbie Oakley) that Council received the Health and Safety report. [23/10/7.3]*

8.0 BIO SECURITY THREAT AND IMPLICATIONS ON FISHING

8.1 Council discussed the impact of the Gold Clam Bio Security threat, the closure of Lake Okataina and Controlled Area Notice (CAN) imposed on the lake for 1 month by MPI and the possibility of other Rotorua lakes closing.

8.2 New Zealand Council Chair, Barrie Barnes, acknowledged the handling of the situation by everybody involved in this highly emotional situation. He said the New Zealand Council had become involved having a greater opportunity to hold MPI and other political interests to account. This was not just a Te Arawa lakes issue but could be of national importance. Fish & Game Officer, Adam Daniel, is on the TAG group for biosecurity with MPI, he has a lot of knowledge on the issue. Additional comments;

- uppermost priority advocating for cleaning stations at the source
- MPI was unaware these boats imported from US had residual water in them.
- better scientific solution than 45-degree water is needed. Suggest forbid vessels like this travelling to other areas if been within Karapiro/Maraitai
- the clam is not likely to get upstream, without input via vessel
- the Golden Clam has been known to be here for 2-3 years
- F&G will continue to push MPI

8.3 Comments and concerns from Council included the following;

- support of F&G working with MPI
- focus should be at source, in the Waikato
- stop wake board boats travelling from the areas of the incursion
- concern for Taupo and other rivers around the region
- there is need to collaborate as high potential to affect all of NZ

- lack of controls let PSA in, resulting in closure of Orchards. M.Bovis closure of farms. Didymo – Fish & Game put measures in place to prevent the spread
 - education is going to need to be a big part of this campaign
 - questions over effectiveness of cleaning stations
- 8.4 Dave Conley, Operations Manager for Taupo Fishery, was present today to hear the conversation sharing concern as a neighbouring fishery. They are confident there are no clams in the Taupo fisheries at present and commented on ongoing delimiting surveys and eDNA sampling which has been carried out for several years. There is obviously concern about the clams getting to Taupo, but the idea of containment is the preferred option as there are 26-28 boat ramps on Lake Taupo alone, it is not practical to install wash stations, it makes more sense to focus on the river. Management options for Taupo fall under the Reserves Act so there may be potential to come up with other management options. Irrespective of the decisions made by MPI, Taupo fishery is committing to beef up education around biodiversity. It's their first line of defence for management, bearing in mind they don't see anglers as the primary vector group.
- 8.5 Ken Raureti from the Te Arawa Lakes Trust agreed with discussion today and informed Council that the hui with the Trust and MPI was called for prior to Lake Okataina being put under the spotlight. It was called to have a public consultation to let the public know about the threat of the clams and escalated when Ngati Tarawhai announced they were going to close the lake. He believed the positive thing to come away from hui was that MPI, Te Arawa Lakes Trust, Eastern F&G, Rotorua Lakes Council, and the Regional Council are now all inputting into the korero around strategies for the management of the Golden Clam.
- 8.6 Barry Roderick highlighted the Kiwifruit sector and PSA, following this, information was gathered from around the world on other pests that may affect the industry. The Clam has come in through boats, what else is out there ready to arrive on our shores? Has MPI changed its behaviour moving forward to prevent further pest introduction?
- 8.7 Cr Kevin Coutts queried the legality around transportation of the clam from one water source to another. Arash Alaeinia advised that MPI have made it illegal to move water (and the Clam) from the Waikato and move it to another area.
- 8.8 Cr Murray Ferris questioned the spread through water taken for drinking water? Arash Alaeinia reassured that hefty water filtrations are place for drinking water, and farms are also using the Waikato as a water source, requiring permits etc.
- 8.9 Stan Hayman questioned the number of rowing events are held since the clam was discovered within the Waikato and expressed concern about the clam already being spread through these events. He understood the last big rowing regatta was down in Ruitaniwha, above Lake Benmore, in the South Island. Cr Ngahi Bidois advised that there was no knowledge of the clam being found elsewhere. James Barnett spoke of a three-phase program in place looking immediately in the Waikato, going out to the regions such as Waipa, and then much further afield. There are eDNA protocols in place to monitor elsewhere.
- 8.10 Arash Alaeinia highlighted that education is needed to stop the spread, the eDNA will identify how far it has spread, then what actions can be taken to contain it in those spaces. Cr Ngahi Bidois acknowledges prevention is better than cure because once the clam is in waterways it's incredibly hard to manage.
- 8.11 Cr Lindsay Lyons speaks on MPI stating their protocols at Picton (wash stations) worked to prevent the spread of Didymo. He understood that the containment of Didymo to the South Island was primarily due to the makeup of the water i.e. glacial vs volcanic. He felt that care should be taken in publicly stating that the wash stations are mitigating the spread of pests.

9.0 Council adjourned for lunch with a karakia from Ken Raureti at 12:22pm, Council reconvened at 12:50pm.

10.0 2024 GAME SEASON CONDITIONS

10.1 Arash Alaeinia advised that he had received an email from Cr Mark Sceats requesting a review of our policies and criteria for setting of the Game Season conditions. He said that this meeting provided Council with the opportunity to raise items they would like staff to consider for the December meeting.

10.2 Cr Kevin Coutts had received feedback from several hunters that the cost of the licence is not good value for the number of birds able to be taken and queried the possibility of increasing season length without changing the current threshold policies.

10.3 Matthew McDougall advised that season length impacts the numbers we are seeing, the longer the season the bigger impact on hen survival, adding that hen numbers had been down over the last few years. He said that there is a lot of uncertainty which impacts populations such as weather, success of the breeding season, predator numbers, and disease. Operating in an uncertain environment we need to take care, or we run risk of impacting populations and future harvest which could have long term repercussions. The Bay of Plenty has a lot of hunters and unfortunately not a lot of habitat, primarily drains and roadsides. Matt said that it would be interesting to see what happens with the longer season but questioned whether we would be prepared to take the risk that there might be less ducks in the following seasons?

10.4 Matt McDougall also responded to Cr Kevin Coutts query about pheasant limits, commenting on the population assessments undertaken each year and impact that current forestry practices might be having on pheasant populations.

10.5 Cr Lindsay Lyons agreed, it's a balancing act, and recalled the 1985 unrestricted season in the Waikato, followed by an outbreak of botulism which decimated the population, so the following season was very poor. He said you don't know what's around the corner that could affect our population.

10.6 Cr Debbie Oakley spoke to licence holder feedback about value for money and questioned whether bag limits could be higher for opening day? Debbie had also received feedback that the native Weka was decimating ducklings in the Opotiki area.

10.7 Matt McDougall responded advising opening weekend has the biggest impact on the populations and the bag limits were the most effective method for controlling harvest. He said that on average most hunters take 2.5 ducks over opening and the restrictive bag limit manages a small group of very successful hunters.

10.8 Arash Alaeinia said that he would have a discussion with Matt McDougall to see if there is any capacity to look at the current criteria in time for the December meeting. Matt advised that he usually reviews the criteria every five years.

10.9 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Kevin Coutts) that Council considered the proposed threshold levels and criteria for regulation setting and did not identify any variants for ratification at its December 2023 meeting, unless there was sufficient time to review the policies prior to that meeting. [23/10/10.9]*

10.10 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Kevin Coutts) that Council did not identify any other game season condition matters it would like further information on, or consultation with hunters about, before its December 2023 meeting. [23/10/10.10]*

11.0 WAIKAREMOANA SPORTS FISH HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND

11.1 Arash Alaeinia called for questions about the Waikaremoana Sports Fish Habitat Enhancement Fund update. No questions raised.

11.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that Council received the Waikaremoana Sports Fish Habitat Enhancement Fund update. [23/10/11.2]*

12.0 2022-2023 DRAFT PERFORMANCE REPORT

12.1 Arash Alaeinia called for comments on the 2022-2023 Draft Performance report. There were no comments and Cr Ngahi Bidois suggested that Council could feedback to Arash by email if they had anything to add.

12.2 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Murray Ferris) that Council received the draft reports comprising the Statement of Service Performance and Financial Statements for the 2022-2023 year. [23/10/12.2]*

13.0 DATES FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS IN 2024

13.1 Cr Ngahi Bidois discussed prior conversation about meetings being held on the weekend to work around councillors that need to take leave from work to attend.

13.2 Arash Alaeinia spoke to the proposed meeting timetable which accommodated the option to meet on up to two Saturdays as previously suggested. He asked for Council to consider the proposed dates and confirm which meetings will take place on a Saturday.

13.3 Cr Scott Nicol suggested that it would be appropriate to have the AGM on a Saturday to enable public to attend.

13.4 Pat Swift queried the possibility of live streaming these meetings for public.

13.5 *Agreed (Jay Tapsell/Scott Nicol) that Council confirms the schedule of meeting dates as submitted for the Thursday meetings and that the Saturday meetings would take place on 10 August 2023 and 7 December 2023. [23/10/13.5]*

| | Date | Venue | Key Topics |
|------------|-----------------------|---------|---|
| 1 | Thurs 1 February 2024 | Rotorua | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council Priorities,• Anglers Notice – initial consideration |
| 2 | Thurs 4 April 2024 | Rotorua | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• OWP - first draft plus bids proposed for contestable funds |
| 3 | Thurs 30 May 2024 | Rotorua | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Licence Fees• OWP - second draft• Anglers Notice – finalise recommendations |
| 4 | Sat 10 August 2024 | Rotorua | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalise OWP |
| 5 | Thurs 7 November 2024 | Rotorua | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Game Conditions - initial consideration• Annual Performance Report – draft• Final meeting 2021-2024 Fish & Game Council• Inaugural meeting 2024-2027 Fish & Game Council |
| 6 | Sat 7 December 2024 | Rotorua | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Game Conditions - finalise recommendations |
| AGM | Sat 7 December 2024 | Rotorua | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present Annual Performance Report |

13.6 There was no Council feedback for the New Zealand Council on its draft meeting and budget timetable for 2023-24.

14.0 DRAFT POLICY ON SETTING NATIONAL POLICY

14.1 Cr Debbie Oakley confirmed that the New Zealand Council had approved the Draft National Policy on setting National Policy and is seeking feedback from regions. Debbie clarified the meaning of the wording “or its delegate” under item 3.18 and advised the primary aim of the policy was to enable consultation with regions to occur within one meeting cycle.

14.2 Council considered the Draft National Policy on setting National Policy and did not have any further feedback to the NZC.

15.0 DRAFT CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

- 15.1 Cr Debbie Oakley advised that the New Zealand Council is encouraging regions to take on the proposed Conflicts of Interest Policy. Cr Kevin Coutts queried delegates voting rights. Cr Lindsay Lyons advised standing orders at the NZC table can be suspended allowing the appointee to vote. Cr Debbie Oakley confirmed representation can change at council meetings.
- 15.2 Council supported the review and update of the Eastern Fish and Game Council's Conflict of Interest Policy to reflect the NZC Policy once adopted.

16.0 DRAFT CODE OF CONDUCT

- 16.1 Cr Lindsay Lyons asked whether feedback could be supplied to Arash Alaeinia. Arash confirmed he was comfortable with the content of the Policy and was happy to receive feedback. Discussion included.
- there needed to be a clause giving staff the right to refuse to do something they believed was unsafe
 - no mention of use of illegal drugs
 - staff concerned not informed
 - query relationship between manager and staff
 - reminder Council are the employer of all staff, under employment law a staff code of conduct required
 - use as tool to dismiss staff, ultimately comes back to what's in individual's employment contracts
- 16.2 Concern was raised by Matthew McDougall and Eben Herbert **around No 6: "Ensure the participations of political matters does not conflict with your duty to F&G and council and any partnership with government agencies."** Will this hamstring staff raising concerns with other organisations such as the Department of Conservation? Eben Herbert highlighted the Ruitaniwha dam project in the Hawke's Bay where Fish & Game had a different view to DOC. Arash Alaeinia believed this was a fair question to provide in our feedback.
- 16.3 Arash Alaeinia confirmed he will supply feedback to the New Zealand Fish & Game Council and introduced Georgia Beuth, new Fish & Game Officer, to the Eastern Fish and Game Council.

17.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS

- 17.1 Arash Alaeinia wanted to acknowledge and thank the staff for their work over the last two months with the hosting of the staff conference, the NZ 4x4 expo, spring liberations and preparation for opening, compliance, and the Lake Okataina - Golden Clam issue.
- 17.2 Cr Kevin Coutts informed Council that some people are holding back on buying their licence due to uncertainties around other lake closures. Cr Ngahi Bidois suggested to go with the official information provided to the public until otherwise advised.
- 17.3 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Kevin Coutts) that Council received the Finance Report and approves payments for July and August 2023 totalling \$288,246.24. [23/10/17.3]*
- 17.4 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Kevin Coutts) that Council receives the Management and Licence Sales Reports. [23/10/17.4]*

18.0 LIAISON OFFICERS REPORTS

- 18.1 *Bay of Plenty Conservation Board*
Arash Alaeinia had received apologies from Sara Carley who had emailed an update. Four new appointees to the Conservation Board. DOC wish to provide more effort to maintain a stronger relationship with Fish & Game. Arash informed Council that he had scheduled to catch up with the appointees early in the new year.

18.2 *Report from New Zealand Council*

Cr Debbie Oakley noted the Papers for Information contained the information from the last NZC meeting. She advised that the two working groups were meeting most fortnights, collating discussion notes and aim to provide NZC with feedback/information by the November meeting.

19.0 **MEETING CLOSED**

19.1 **Cr Jay Tapsell closed the meeting with a karakia at 2.00pm.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ngahi Bidois', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

Ngahi Bidois
Chairman

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

- 2.0 APOLOGIES**
- 2.3 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Murray Ferris) that the apologies for the 204th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [23/10/2.3]*
- 3.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS**
- 3.2 *Moved (Murray Ferris/Jay Tapsell) that Cr Ngahi Bidois be nominated for Council Chair. [23/10/3.2]*
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| | | | |
|------------|------------------------------|---------|--|
| 3 | <i>Thurs 30 May 2024</i> | Rotorua | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licence Fees • OWP - second draft • Anglers Notice – finalise recommendations |
| 4 | <i>Sat 10 August 2024</i> | Rotorua | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise OWP |
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| AGM | <i>Sat 7 December 2024</i> | Rotorua | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present Annual Performance Report |

17.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS

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