

WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL, HELD ON TUESDAY 11 JUNE 2024 AT 3.00PM AT NGA MANU NATURE RESERVE EDUCATION CENTRE, 74 NGĀ MANU RESERVE ROAD, WAIKANAE

1. Present:

Chairman Paul Dewar. Councillors Malcolm Francis, John Hancock, Don Scott, Jim Cook, Aaron Passey, Steve Brown, Prof. Stephen Haslett, Jennifer Yanko.

Video Link Councillors: Colin Shore

In Attendance:

Fish and Game Staff: Phil Teal, Dr Matt Kavermann,

Licence Holders: Elliott Teal (part), Joy Allen (part)

Welcome and Confirmation of Agenda

Chairman Dewar opened the meeting and extended a welcome to all councillors and staff.

2. Apologies:

It was noted that apologies were received from:

Councillors Andrew McGregor, Richard McIntyre,

Staff: Ami Coughlan, Hamish Carnachan.

Public: Dr Murray Williams

It was then moved that

the apologies received be accepted

Jim Cook/Malcolm Francis

Carried

3. Conflict of Interest

The Conflicts of Interest Register was discussed. Councillors updated their conflicts of interest as follows:

- Councillor Passey noted that he was no longer the Federated Farmers Executive Member–Chairperson Sharemilkers Section but was still Chair Tararua Dairy Section
- Councillor Francis noted that he was no longer on the Committee of the Kapiti Fly Fishing Club

It was then moved that

The Conflicts of Interest Register be updated accordingly to record the change in status of Councillors on various Trusts and Committees.

Steve Brown/Steve Haslett

Carried

Mr Teal confirmed that the Conflict-of-Interest register would be updated, and Conflict of Interest Management Plan would also be updated with the removal of the conflicts of interest declarations.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting of 19 March 2024:**

Following consideration of the draft Minutes of the meeting of the Wellington Fish and Game Council of 19 March 2024 it was moved that *the Minutes of the meeting of the Wellington Fish & Game Council of 19 March 2024 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.*

Steve Brown/John Hancock

Carried

5. **Matters Arising:**

It was clarified that the risk management matrix would be developed to coincide with strategic planning discussion forums – most likely to be in the February cycle of meeting schedule.

It was confirmed that the Trout Order for 2024/2025 Financial Year had been confirmed by Eastern Region Fish and Game Council.

Further clarification on the draft budget items – relating to income associated for the Project Upper Rangitikei Trout Fishery Management (Genesis Energy funding) and Project Controlled River Fisheries (GWRC contribution to more intense drift dives on the Hutt, Otaki, and Waikanae Rivers). Confirmation of income from permits to offset production costs and have a minor residual retained in dedicated reserves.

Dr Kavermann confirmed that the eDNA technique was a useful management tool for identifying presence or absence of species in the waterway – but doesn't measure abundance – and therefore would not be taking over as a principal monitoring tool to replace other techniques such as drift dive or electric fishing.

Mr Teal confirmed that there still had been no formal warrant of fitness of the building undertaken by the owner of the office.

6. **Public Forum**

An opportunity was afforded to members of the public to discuss specific issues but no public present at this time. No specific issues were discussed.

7. **New Zealand Fish and Game Council Business**

Councillor Haslett confirmed that the NZ Fish and Game Council had set the draft budget and agreed to consultation process but final recommendation to the Minister still needs final ratification following consultation process.

The principles used were to:

- cap the licence fee this year – in response to Minister indicating increases in licence fees could be clearly demonstrated as necessary.
- consider a 3% cut in budget suggested by NZ Council to regions
- agreed that this was not enough of savings to cover requested budgets and the shortfall would require a call on (regional) reserves
- it was a clear understanding that this is a one-year option – and that the allocation and budgeting process needs urgent review.
- Further work needs to be undertaken to confirm where the organisation can become more efficient?
- The principle to prioritise adequate funding for staff remuneration was confirmed and supported by NZ Council

Councillor Haslett provided an overview of the NZ Council supported Working Groups on Future Finance and Future Structure. Discussion ensued on the contradictory approaches such as consideration of paying councillors without identifying a source of funds that would be required. Councillor Francis undertook a calculation of \$15,000 annual cost per Council based on \$250 per attendance – but this assumption may be an underestimate given meeting fees are not uncommon at \$750 per meeting. Council concluded that it was most unwise to pay any governors if a mix of volunteers was to be retained as underlying protocol and structure.

Councillor Haslett noted that the following year may be challenging one for NZ Council which will still need to address the current issues – and assuming that there will inevitably be a change in NZ Council membership (given retirements) which may affect momentum for direction and/or change. There are still no coherent options for future finance or organisational structures that have been developed and presented for adoption.

Councillor Haslett considered that feedback from Wellington Council's Chair letter was relevant. It was agreed that the organisation needed to consider a zero base budgeting process based on funding needs – and moving away from allocating resources based on where licences are sold. This was seen as inhibiting thoughts of amalgamation and potential perceived loss of resources (and control) in southern Fish and Game regions. Councillors expressed their frustration at lack of progress of other Council's to consider changes to operations and governance.

Councillor Haslett noted that the Research Sub-Committee of NZ Council is trying to encourage (and has preference for) quality internal applications for research and not relying on those external to organisation. He further noted that the funds accumulate as no research applications this year.

Councillor Haslett noted the recent workshop on legal RM funds and discussion about Otago RM issues requiring funding in the order of \$10,000. It was discussed as to what extent the legal fund is going to be able to cover costs, as well as other risks such as the Minister changing the priority of advocacy as a key function of regional Fish and Game. Councillor Scott acknowledged that there was an argument for this approach – and would only be feasible if principles and policies are developed at a Central Government level. It was agreed by Council that Fish and Game must achieve outcomes that protect the resource.

After brief further discussion it was moved that

***The report from Wellington Council's appointee Councillor Haslett
on NZ Fish and Game Council business and meetings be received***

Malcolm Francis/Jennifer Yanko

Carried

Councillor Haslett confirmed that there was no discussion by NZ Council or from the Minister in providing guidance as to the preferred number of councillors for each region – it remains up to twelve (with several Councils retaining a membership of eight or nine).

8. Public Forum

Public are afforded an opportunity to speak to any issues – but no additional members of the public indicated that they wanted to address Council.

9. Regional Governance – Chairman's Report

The Chairman to provide an overview report of key issues since the previous meeting. He provided an overview of the response to the Minister of Hunting and Fishing regarding a request for details on financial and operational resources.

He noted that the contestable fund application was submitted to NZ Council for budgetary consideration focused solely on remuneration increases – which were taken as a priority.

Chairman Dewar noted the difference in culture of fishing in European countries given his recent experiences in the Czech Republic as part of the World Masters Flyfishing Team. He recounted that it cost \$70 per day to fish

– with locals paying 40% of that fee – and there was a focus on utilising catch as a food resources with nearly 1,000,000 licence holders.

Councillor Hasslet acknowledged a vote of thanks for the preparation of financial and commentary material for the Minister of Hunting and Fishing who requested summarised financial data.

It was moved

To acknowledge the work undertaken by staff to prepare the summarised financial data to the Minister in a timely manner

Steve Haslett/Malcolm Francis

Carried

After further discussion it was moved to

Receive the report by the Chairman on regional governance issues and responses to the Minister and NZ Council

Aaron Passey/Jennifer Yanko

Carried

10. Inter-regional Business - Governance

A. Shared Resources Update

Chairman Dewar provided a brief update on the progress of shared resources between Wellington and Taranaki Fish and Game Councils – which was progressing without issue.

B. Regional Chairs' Forum Update

Brief report from the Chairman of any interactions of the Fish and Game Regional Chairs' Group including how the budget presentations to NZ Council were conducted at the NZ Council meeting on 18 April 2024.

Chairman Dewar noted that the Chairman for Eastern Region had recently resigned and had been replaced by another Councillor.

It was then moved that

Council receive the report presented by the Chairman on Inter-regional Business – Governance focus for the previous period since the last meeting of Council.

Colin Shore/Jim Cook

Carried

11. Licence Fee Recommendation

Chairman Dewar provided an overview of the consultation on the Licence Fee Recommendation made by NZ Fish and Game Council. He referred to the draft response outlined in the agenda to provide the basis for a letter he sent to NZ Council. He confirmed that the response noted:

- Wellington Fish and Game Council support the proposed recommendation to the Minister of Hunting and Fishing.
- Wellington Fish and Game Council considers that NZ Council has / has-not taken a prudent and pragmatic approach to the budget process and in setting the licence fee accordingly.
- Request that NZ Council lead a zero-budget assessment of the costs for running each region and NZ Council. A Zero Based budget system is to find out the minimum critical mass of funding to provide for legislative responsibilities to be met by each region (and NZ Council).
- Undertake (with urgency) cost benefit assessments of cost efficiency suggestions and implement them if materially beneficial.
- Consider any reviews and changes/updating to the budgeting system over the next six months so it can be implemented next year.
- Consider the 'licence' as a 'national' licence - not regional licence- in order to reduce tension from levy-paying regions.
- The 'product' - licence - needs to be appropriately priced -The Licence Price
- Optimisation Project needs to be prioritised as urgent and advanced with haste
- Consider a genuine nationwide (but regionally focused) marketing plan needs to be developed and programme needs to be implemented - moving beyond cross region boundaries issues.
- Consider other (non-licence) income sources and implement urgently — with appropriate financial structures (e.g. Council controlled Trusts) to accommodate (i.e. non-core project funding).
- Consider structural changes (shared resources or amalgamations) to achieve cost savings of up to 10%
- Identify positive cost benefit initiatives in undertaking corporate functions on a shared resources or centralised basis.

After brief discussion it was moved to

Confirm and retrospectively support Wellington Council's feedback to NZ Council on the Licence Fee Recommendation and confirm that the deliberations from Council Workshop held on Tuesday 28 May 2024 – Zoom Meeting are appropriately reflected in that feedback

Steve Haslett/Jim Cook

Carried

As part of the Licence Price Optimisation Project Councillor Francis considered that the Senior Loyal licence should be extended to Senior Gold Card holders. Councillor Haslett further noted that the non-resident component of licence sales was seen as additional income. Councillor Brown noted that even the perceived high price of the licence in overseas countries – such as the example given in the Czech Republic – did not deter

anglers from buying a licence. Councillor Passey considered that simplifying our licence offerings (categories) should be contemplated in any review. Councillor Haslett noted that there may need to be universal agreement to change – but careful consideration of the potential consequences of making alterations to the licence product offerings is required – as it is Fish and Game’s sole source of income. He concurred that the Family Licence is also too complicated and inflexible for many average anglers to understand the value of the licence.

Councillor Passey noted that some regions appeared to have excessive reserves (well beyond the 20-50% operational budgetary guidelines – and questioned how the system allowed this to accumulate and now could not be readily accessed by the wider organisation.

12. 2024/2025 Draft Anglers Notice

Dr Kavermann provided an overview of the proposed changes to the Anglers Notice considered (1) for this upcoming year, and (2) for simplifying regulations into the future:

A. Consider changes to the Anglers Notice 2024/2025

The first part of the briefing paper covered three recommended amendments for the 2024-25 Anglers Notice (AN)

1. the use of soft baits in the Wellington region,

Dr Kavermann clarified that soft baits are considered a ‘bait’ but are used more like a spinner lure (cast and retrieve technique) and in other regions they are allowed for use in spin fishing waters.

The draft recommendation was *that The Council agree to add a Note through the 2023/2024 Anglers Notice for the WFGC region sports fish regulations that reads:*

"Scented artificial lures may be used in fly fishing and spin fishing waters, when actively fished so as to imitate a bait fish."

Councillor Francis considered that the draft recommendation would potentially allow for lures to be dipped in egg roe and leave a scent on the lure – which could have unforeseen consequences for harvest rates on local waters such as the Otaki River. Councillor Brown doubted whether this method (referring to scented soft baits) would have a significant impact on a harvest/sustainable harvest basis or whether it was focused on ethics. Councillor Francis suggested that all North Island fisheries (and a preference for NZ wide) should follow the

same principles of regulation setting and that in the Taupo area this practice is not acceptable.

Further discussion noted that Fish and Game were trying to simplify the regulations to reduce perceived barriers to participation – with Councillor Brown considering this an example of why the rules get so complicated – and potentially opened up more waters to other fishing techniques.

Dr Kavermann considered that the draft recommendation was very specific on scented soft baits which is the main purpose of any suggested changes to become more consistent with other regions.

Councillor Francis noted that this was just one of the challenges that the fisheries were facing and increased harvest pressure (on self-sustaining populations i.e. not stocked) was a risk to sustainable management especially if it is a free rule with all fishing techniques.

It was then moved

The Council agree to add a Note through the 2023/2024 Anglers Notice for the WFGC region sports fish regulations that reads:

"Scented artificial lures may be used in fly fishing and spin fishing waters, when actively fished so as to imitate a bait fish."

Jim Cook/Aaron Passey

An amendment was moved to

remove the word "scented" from the motion

Malcolm Francis Steve Haslett

Brief further discussion ensued noting that artificial lures are allowed to be used now but not to be scented. Dr Kavermann further clarified that this specific advice for schedule 1 was specifically for soft baits.

the amendment was lost and the original substantive motion remained

The original motion was voted on and carried

2. Fishing methods on the Mangatoro, Kopuaranga and Mangatarere rivers

Dr Kavermann outlined the issues and recommendation to include spin fishing in the three rivers listed – which are currently restricted to fly fishing: Mangatoro, Kopuaranga and Mangatarere rivers

It was moved that

The Council agree to permit fly and spin fishing in the Mangatoro, Kopuaranga and Mangatarere waters

Jennifer Yanko/Jim Cook

Councillor Brown questioned why these rivers should not include bait fishing options as well and whether the rules should be restrictive.

An amendment was proposed to the motion

to add bait fishing to those three waters as well as spin fishing

Councillor Brown/Don Scott

Carried

5/4 majority

Councillor Francis considered it would a fair concept to consider totally liberalizing fishing techniques but these fish would not be released without risk of harm using bait fishing techniques and there should be consideration into the ethics of fish handling or requiring fish to be killed to prevent cruelty and on necessary secondary mortality.

the amended substantive motion was put

The Council agree to permit fly and spin fishing and bait fishing in the Mangatoro, Kopuaranga and Mangatarere waters

Jennifer Yanko/Jim Cook

Carried

5/4 majority

Malcolm Francis requested recording his vote against the motion and Paul Dewar abstained

3. Removal of all restrictions use of treble hooks.

After discussion it was moved

The restriction on the use of treble hooks be removed from the 2024/25 fishing regulations for the Wellington Fish and Game region to allow greater angling opportunity for all licence holders.

Don Scott/Jim Cook

Carried

Mr Teal noted that the issues on use of treble hooks should be dealt with consistently nationwide and needed to be identified as a widespread nationwide approach to regulation; i.e. do we allow for use of treble hooks in NZ or not.

B. Confirm the draft 2024/2025 draft Anglers Notice

Confirming the remaining season regulations for Wellington region as drafted – with recommendations to be made to the Minister of Hunting and Fishing (via NZ Council).

It was moted that

All other regulations as listed in the draft Anglers Notice remain the same

Colin Shore/Jim Cook

Carried

C. Wider Regional Project: Simplification of Angling Regulations

Dr Kaverman provided an overview and consideration being given to simplification and rationalisation of angling regulations on a national basis – and specifically on an inter-regional basis for the lower North Island. No action required.

The second part of the briefing paper discusses a 12-month plan and process for simplifying the Wellington Fish and Game region regulations with the intent of removing actual and perceived barriers to sports fishing from 2025 onwards. This will require a substantial revision of the current regulations and recommended that bag limits and season lengths be used to manage fisheries for the 2025-26 season. This approach aligns with other Fish and Game region’s regulation policy setting and National principals for fisheries management¹. Staff will socialise the revision and simplification of fishing regulations and collect feedback from clubs and anglers over the following 12 months before making formal recommendations to the Wellington Fish and Game Council in June 2025.

Dr Kavermann noted that there was an opportunity to simplify regulations – and take into account the more intense and extreme flooding events – and moving away from methods based regulations to harvest based approaches to ensure sustainable harvest of populations.

Chairman Dewar noted that in terms of regulation effectiveness the ‘average’ angler doesn’t catch two fish anyway on most occasions.

Councillor Francis use a local example to illustrate the compounding pressures on fisheries - that the Otaki River levels were very low as a result of differing climate patterns and expressed concern that opening up fish harvest pressure by liberalising fishing techniques could compound mortality effects on the

¹ Designated Waters Licence Summary of Feedback and Response (2023) New Zealand Fish and Game Council Report. 9pp.

population from harvest, habitat change, and climatic effects and increase risk of reducing sustainability and viability of the fisheries.

Councillor Scott still believed a potential solution was promoting put and take fisheries in still water lakes - or intensively stock river fisheries – in order to overcome environmental extremes. Councillor Francis considered that there may be a change in policy on stocking rivers in the future if it was considered necessary – and determine the underlying reasons for populations not being self-sustaining. Councillor Passey noted that put and take lakes fisheries were becoming less acceptable in terms of social license to operate.

Dr Kavermann reiterated that it was the intention to take the topic and potential approaches to clubs and have a wider interaction with licence holders to see if liberalising regulations was widely supported within the angling community.

13. Strategic Matters

A. Strategic Statements

The strategic statements developed at the previous Council were confirmed. It was also acknowledged that they are aligned with Taranaki Fish and Game Council.

B. Risk Management Review

Mr Teal provided an update risk management of issues associated with avian influenza (HPAI – High Pathogenic Avian Influenza) – remains low risk of entering NZ, and of low risk to human health.

C. Iwi Engagement

Mr Teal confirmed that he is actively developing a strategic approach to engaging with Mana Whenua and how to incorporate a co-operative process in decision-making.

He noted that he is undertaking a detailed register of interest in Mana Whenua groupings and contacts – and rohe (areas of interest).

Mr Teal also noted that he is developing an education programme to upskill staff and governors on tikanga and processes for engagement.

D. Governance Review – Number for Election

Chairman Dewar lead discussion on considering and confirming the number of governors to be considered for Election 2024 and the pros and cons of changing numbers. He confirmed that there would be two separate elections – one for Taranaki and one for Wellington regions – as the Minister of Hunting and Fishing had not indicated changing the election cycle within the timeframe required if changes were to be made.

Chairman Dewar confirmed that Taranaki Council currently has eight councillors and and reconfirmed that this would be retained for the upcoming election.

Council further considered the election timetable presented by NZ Council for the upcoming Fish and Game elections in October 2024.

Councillor Francis questioned why there was a requirement to change the current situation of twelve councillors as this number gave a better representation within a diverse region of urban and rural inhabitants. He noted that there was only one Councillor in the southern ward and none currently residing in the Wellington City zone. He indicated support for change but noted that the rest of the organisation isn't – which gives backing for Wellington Council to choose what best suits Wellington region's needs.

Councillor Scott reiterated this approach and suggested retaining 12 Councillors in the foreseeable future.

Chairman Dewar noted the Ministerial Review on Fish and Game Governance suggested a lesser number of governors per Council – and promoting increasing diversity on Councils (potentially by appointment). Council did not universally support these particular recommendations of the Review.

Councillor Haslett noted that no external entity had the power to make decisions for the changes - unless it is undertaken by the Minister who may define ways to make changes.

After further discussion it was moved that

Wellington Council retain the number of potential councillor positions (candidates) for Wellington region at twelve for the upcoming Fish and Game elections

Don Scott/Malcolm Francis

Carried

Majority 5/3

Chairman Dewar reiterated that some Councils have reduced the size of their Council. Councillor Francis considered that Wellington Council had functioned well in the past with the full complement of twelve 12 governors - given their voluntary contribution and the expectation of time commitments.

Chairman Dewar reminded councillors that Wellington is still actively progressing with shared resources and an amalgamation process with Taranaki region, and considered that it was prudent to discuss any governance structure sooner rather

than later. It was agreed that this would occur in the process in the development and defining the amalgamation proposal and both Councils would deal with the issue then.

Brief discussion was held on potential governance structures of an amalgamated entity including the current ward structures (3 in Taranaki, 3 Wellington and remainder from the 'at large' vote).

Councillor Passey acknowledged that potentially only six Councils are likely to have elections anyway given past record of governance participation.

E. Strategic Plan – Five Year Outlook

- Defer

F. Sports Fish and Game Bird Management Plan Review

- Defer until subsequent meeting – NZ Council is developing a template for confirming Sports Fish and Game Bird Management Plans
- Potential changes to requirements with new legislation
- Consultation with Mana Whenua and other stakeholders will be required prior to plan drafting.

14. Policy and Legislation Considerations

Key legislation relating to Fish and Game activities were briefly discussed:

A. Wildlife Act Review

In September 2023 the previous Minister of Conservation announced the formal review of the Wildlife Act – which was to begin in March 2024. There has been no update as to the priority or timetable in progressing this review.

B. Resource Management Act Review

Repeal of the Natural and Built Environment Act 2022 (NBEA 2022) in December 2023 reverting back to the Resource Management Act 1991.

The Fast Track Consenting Bill was introduced into Parliament in early March 2024 and NZ Council presented their submission and staff appeared in front of Select Committee in May 2024.

C. Arms Act Review

The Government announced in February 2024 that firearms legislation will be reviewed. This includes rewriting the Arms Act 1983, transferring responsibility for that act to the Ministry of Justice, and transferring the Firearms Safety Authority to another department such as the Department of Internal Affairs. At this stage there is no indication that the current approach to maintaining a firearms registry will be materially changed or curtailed.

D. Organisational Policies

Policies that are currently being developed by NZ Council – open for regional consultation and feedback:

a. Research Application Process and Application Process (Form)

Council supported the approach defined by the NZ Council Research subcommittee noting that there is still a requirement to undertake a ‘research scan’ to confirm information needs identified by regional practitioners (last undertaken in 2019) which will assist in define priorities for research. It was agreed that Fish and Game should be undertaking research that is important to Fish and Game in the mid-term timeframes.

It was agreed that

Wellington Council support the approach to research defined by NZ Council

Malcolm Francis/Aaron Passey

Carried

It was acknowledged that there needed to be an appreciation of the priority of research – and the capacity to undertake this internally given staff resources and opportunity costs if resources are focused on research.

b. Draft National Health and Safety Policy for Rangers

After brief discussion it was moved that

Wellington Council support the draft policy with a view to adopting this once ratified **Malcolm Francis/Steve Brown**

Carried

c. Draft National Health and Safety Policy

After discussion it was moved that

Wellington Council support the draft National Health and Safety Policy for further development and would adopt once ratified following consultation

Aaron Passey/Don Scott

Carried

d. Protected Disclosures draft Policy

Council discussed the merits of the policy and noted that the current policy adopted by Wellington was still fit for purpose – but there is support for having policy developed that can be uplifted by regions as they see fit.

It was moved that

Wellington Council would support the development of this generic policy relating to Protected Disclosures but noted that Wellington already had policy that was fit for purpose and would be retained in the short term.

Aaron Passey/John Hancock

Carried

15. Health and Safety Report March 2024 and April 2024.

After discussion it was moved that

Council to receive staff report on Health and Safety for March 2024 and April 2024

Malcolm Francis/Steve Brown

Carried

16. Species Management

a. Game Bird Population Counts – Preliminary Overview

Dr Kavermann provided a brief preliminary overview of the results of mallard and pukeko transect counts conducted in April 2024 – noting that while the mallard numbers were still in the ‘moderate to normal’ range that most change in numbers (down) were found on the western side of the Tararua Range.

b. Research Update – Angler Motivation

Discussion ensued on the recently published research paper funded by NZ Fish and Game Council (by Cohen Stewart et al.) on understanding the relationship between trout fishing and wellbeing of anglers.

Donald Scott fly fishing versus spin fishing

Elliott Teal and Ms Allen joined the meeting at 6:00pm

The meeting adjourned at 6:15pm for dinner and reconvened at 6:55pm

Elliott Teal was presented with a medal to recognise his volunteer contribution to the mallard banding programme over the last ten years.

Elliott Teal and Ms Allen left the meeting at 7:05pm

It was acknowledged that a permit was issued to take sports fish as part of fish salvage exercise in the Hutt River to depopulate the streams in preparation for instream works being carried out in April 2024.

17. Habitat Advocacy and Management

Mr Teal provided a brief summary of activity in March and April 2024 related to resource management advocacy:

a. Regional Planning advocacy

Horizons Regional Council are continuing with the Oranga Wai consultation – the next generation of Regional Plan changes to reflect NPS FM 2020 – focusing on water quantity and water quality parameters. The timetable to complete the Plan Change revision for public notification has been formally revised to September 2027 from the December 2024 deadline.

Horizons Regional Council are continuing with their Plan Change 2 of the Regional Plan (One Plan) to introduce an additional tool – Nitrogen Loss Risk Scorecard - to deal with nitrogen leaching from intensive farm use. This is in

addition to using Overseer modelling which provides an estimate of nitrogen leaching loss at root level – but is subject to regular review (and improvement) with empirical trials to verify estimates. Uncertainty in the model estimates are typically in the order of 20-30% so the absolute number must be used with caution in regulatory frameworks. The hearing was reconvened on 7 June 2024 and will continue until at least 16 June 2024 to hear additional evidence.

18. Participation

Mr Teal provided an overview of activities undertaken by staff in March and April 2024 including:

b. Access Management

- Access Point descriptions included on new website.
- Will consider appropriate update of access sign inventory in next financial year.
- Preparation was undertaken for access to hunters for forestry blocks.

c. Information to Clients

- Weekly angling email newsletter – the Lower North Island Low Down – was posted weekly until early April.
- Weekly hunting email newsletter – the Game Bird Hunting Bulletin – was posted weekly prior to the season – will continue until end of June and then once in mid-July to focus on upland game hunting opportunities.
- The website has been substantially refreshed and released in February 2024 – updated items.
- 2024 Game Season Magazine distributed.
- 2024 Game Season Regional Newsletter distributed - sent out to previous year's licence holders and lapsed hunters.

d. Licence Holder Engagement

- Deliveries of trout from Taranaki hatchery to water reservoirs in Rangitikei catchment.

19. Public Awareness/Communications

Mr Teal provided a brief overview of activities that had involved staff regarding public awareness and communication in March and April 2024:

a. Iwi Engagement

- Attended Wairarapa Moana Statutory Reserve Board first official meeting.
- Liaised and assisted Ngati Kahungunu hapu - Ngāti Hinewaka - to collect some raupo to renew the walls of our wharepuni, Makotukutuku, at Te Papa

- Attended hui on Treaty Settlement implementation with Ngati Apa and DoC
- Supported Rangitaane o Manawatu in freshwater fish surveys.

b. Public Awareness

- Contributed to NZ Council co-ordinated public awareness campaign – Re Wilding
- Contributed to NZ Council co-ordinated public awareness project to define the public good undertaken by Fish and Game.

c. Communication

- Press Releases on opening of the Game Season 2024.

d. Promotions

- Staff attended Hunting and Fishing Duck Night as guest speaker.

20. Licence Sales and Licence Management System

Mr Teal provided a brief summary of licence sales up until 9 May 2024:

Licence Sales Report for 2023/2024 Fishing Season YTD – were up in terms of LEQs by 1.4% compared to previous year (2,955 c.f. 2914) but considerably more (28% up) in numbers of individual licence sales.

National licence sales value LEQ is down 1.8% (70,784 c.f. 72,104).

Licence Sales Report for 2023/2024 Game Season YTD – were down in terms of LEQs by 1.6% compared to previous year (3,121 c.f. 3,173)

National licence sales value LEQ is down 2.1% (30,125 c.f. 30,771).

It was moved that

Council receive Licence Sales Report for 2023/2024 Fishing Season YTD (up to 9 May 2024) and for 2024 Game Season YTD (up to 9 May 2024)

Aaron Passey/Steve Haslett

Carried

Mr Teal provided a brief overview of the performance of the Licencing Management System noting that it was performing well with no issues of continuity of service.

It was then moved

Council receive the update report for March and April 2024 for contract management of provider of services to manage the licensing platform and database management.

Colin Shore/Jim Cook

Carried

21. Operational Summary 1 March 2024 to 30 April 2024

After discussion and clarification it was moved

Council to receive the staff report on Operational Summary for March and April 2024

Jim Cook/Malcolm Francis

Carried

22. Financial Statements to 30 April 2024 and Financial Transactions for March and April 2024

After discussion it was moved that

Council receive Financial Statements for Year-to-Date for the 2023/2024 Financial Year –Income Statement up to end April 2024 and Financial Transactions for March and April 2024.

Don Scott/Aaron Passey

Carried

23. Correspondence and Media

Discussion ensued on recent media items not contained in the daily media reports received for internal circulation noting:

- Dame Lynda Topp’s contribution to highlighting the benefits to wellbeing of angling as well as recently being announced as a patron to NZ Fish and Game,
- recent acknowledgement of Dr Murray Williams in the King's Birthday Honours receiving the Officer of the NZ Order of Merit for his contributions to waterfowl conservation and management in NZ, and
- the Waitangi Tribunal hearing reconvened for Otaki — Raukawa hapu — Ngati Koroki relating to Otaki River rights.

It was agreed to write a letter to Dr Williams formally congratulating him on his formal acknowledgement of his work and contributions to game bird research and management over many decades – noting his unwavering positive contributions to mentoring and encouraging Fish and Game staff over this time.

It was then moved to

Receive media reports up until the 30 April 2024

Malcolm Francis/Steve Brown

Carried

24. Recognition Awards

Elliott Teal was acknowledged for his volunteer work over the last nine years in assisting with the mallard banding project and contribution to the banding team.

25. Conservation Board Liaison

Discussion ensued on the potential attendance at the next Conservation Board meeting scheduled in Palmerston North on 9 and 10 of August 2024 – with interest shown by Mr Teal, Councillors Brown and Scott in attending subject to availability.

26. General Business

Councillor Brown discussed the options of alternative formats for the agenda including receiving agendas in electronic form only – and potentially condensing the agenda to draft motions and summarised considerations. This was not supported for further consideration.

27. Confirmation of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting date and location was confirmed as 13 August 2024 in Upper Hutt.

Discussion ensued on holding an additional meeting to be held jointly with Taranaki Fish and Game Council to discuss a continued shared resources arrangement and moves to formally amalgamate. This was supported in concept as long as enough notice was given to a meeting to allow Councillors the opportunity to attend.

It was then moved that

The Chairman and Chief Executive be authorised to organise a joint meeting with Taranaki Fish and Game Council at a suitable venue and date in order to further progress formalising arrangements towards amalgamation.

Malcolm Francis/Don Scott

Carried

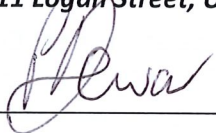
Councillor Scott informed the Council of his intended absence between 19 June and 5 August 2024 as he would be in the UK over this period – and would be unavailable for meetings or to consider Council business.

Chairman Dewar informed Council that he would be overseas in the US from the end of July to the end of August and while he could consider specific items of Council business via emails, he would not be able to attend the meetings during that period – including the meeting scheduled for 13 August 2024.

Chairman Dewar thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution.

There were no further specific items of general business, the meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Next Meeting to be held: Meeting on Tuesday, 13 August 2024 at Upper Hutt Cosmopolitan Club, 11 Logan Street, Upper Hutt at 3.00pm.

Chairman  Date 15.8.24