

# **AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME NEWSBRIEF**

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

## **Matters arising from Council Meeting and AGM of 17 November 2018**

1. Extensive discussion took place at the AGM on the role and recent performance of the NZ Council. It was agreed that the NZ Council be informed of the concerns of the Auckland/Waikato Council over the lack of transparency, poor communications with regions, and the proposed structural review.
2. Mr John Atkinson spoke at length at the AGM of his concerns regarding the stalling of the NZ Council in dealing with issues arising from Section 23 of the Wildlife Act 1953 (sale of game and sale of shooting rights prohibited). Mr Atkinson stressed that something needed to be done soon as otherwise there would continue to be controversy and trouble as was currently occurring in the Hawkes Bay Region. Councillor Sherrard replied that the Hawkes Bay issues were being dealt with by the NZ Council, and that the issue has been discussed in committee.
3. The following appointments were made:
  - Chairman: Murray Young
  - Vice Chairman: David Cocks
  - Vice Chairman: Grant Anna
  - NZ Councillor: Nigel Juby
  - Council's representative on the Land & Water Habitat Trust: Andrew Kerr
4. General discussion took place on the environmental impacts of dairy farming and the Healthy Rivers RMA process in the Waikato catchment. It was acknowledged that the Healthy Rivers Plan Changes was a long process taking considerable staff resources.
5. A remit was tabled from the Waipa District Council that "gamebird hunting be restricted to current fixed stands on Lake Cameron and Mangakaware for the duration of the dabbling duck season". The staff report was supportive of the remit as it was seen as a good mechanism to deal with ensuring public safety and reducing the potential for conflict with surrounding landowners. Mr Wilson emphasised that the remit needed to be considered immediately rather than postponed to 2019, when all gamebird regulations in the region would be under review. Councillors agreed that for the 2019 game season onwards, gamebird hunting will be restricted to current fixed stands on Lake Cameron and Mangakaware for the duration of the dabbling duck season.
6. The NZ Council had advised that the pre-season magazines in 2019 will be produced by a new publisher. The new arrangement has meant some cost savings and consequently there will be up to four pages available for each regional supplement at no cost to the regions.
7. The 2019 meeting schedule was set as follows:
  - 16 February 2019
  - 6 April 2019
  - 15 June 2019
  - 17 August 2019
  - 12 October 2019
  - 14 December 2019

## Matters Arising From Chief Executive's Report

- **Aka Aka Canal:** John Dyer has been assisting Ian Southy to do waterfowl counts along the Aka Aka canals bordering the Waikato Delta. These counts will be compared by Dr Murray Williams to Wildlife Service ones done many years ago along the same transects using the unpublished data Murray has for these.
- **Avian influenza research.** David Klee is co-author of a recently published paper titled *Ecology of avian influenza A(H5) and A(H7) viruses in wild birds in New Zealand*.
- **Gamebird harvest survey supplementary questions:** Every year we take the time to ask hunters a number of supplementary questions during our harvest surveys.
  - The majority (60%) of hunters supported an increase in season length to 6 weeks, many added the caveat that this should only occur if bird numbers were high.
  - Only 47% of hunters always use a dog to retrieve their shot game, whilst 36% never use one. The remainder occasionally used a dog or used their friends' dogs.
  - Only 36% of hunters supported grey teal becoming a game bird.
- **Te Onetea Stream:** The Waikato Regional Council currently has a long-reach digger putting poles in the Te Onetea Stream to make a weed trap. The Te Onetea flows between the Waikato River and Lake Waikare. The weed trap will be navigable for boats, but hunters need to be aware of it if they suddenly come across it. It will be appropriately marked to warn them, but with vandalism and etc., they shouldn't rely on that.
- **Proposed Waikato District Plan:** The Waikato District Council is now in the process of summarising the submissions and they'll call for further submissions once this summary is available. We anticipate that they will be requesting further submissions in the early part of 2019 with hearings being held in the second part of 2019.
- **Project Martha – Waihi:** We have now received the Regional Council's Report concerning the proposed abstraction of 20% of flow from the Ohinemuri River to fill the Martha Mine pit. We are proposing conditions to the regional council which will minimise the impact of abstraction on trout habitat and mitigate any residual effects on the extent of trout habitat. These include a suitable temperature threshold above which abstraction cannot occur, and riparian planting to increase shade. We hope that by the time we reach hearing we can agree on a suitable set of conditions
- **Thames Wastewater Treatment Plant Consent Renewal:** We have received notice that this consent is being renewed. Our main focus will be management of avian botulism which has been an issue at this plant, with nearby wetlands and bird populations also affected. We will also be looking to see that the cumulative load of contaminants to the Waihou River be reduced.
- **Healthy Rivers (PC 1) Ongoing:** The Waikato Regional Council has indicated there will be pre-hearing technical forums at the end of November to start of December 2018. These will be relevant for science and economic evidence.
- **North Emmett:** The first phase of this project has been completed with Neil Rankin, removing water-weeds using a 12-tonne digger. The wetland will now be intensively planted. Synlait are funding this work at no cost to F&G licence buyers as wetland mitigation for their own consent work nearby in Pokeno
- **Sponsorship:** Adam Daniel was able to secure 12 fishing rods and 100's of soft baits for the Tokoroa take a kid fishing competition on November 2-4.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL  
AND ALL THE BEST FOR 2019**