

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 of 17 June 2017

- Mr Wilson updated the meeting on the proposed review of the consents for the Whangamarino weir by the Waikato Regional Council. DoC had requested that the review be postponed until early next year and had also commissioned a consultant report that had rejected the concerns raised by the regional council to justify the review. This proposed postponement was supported by Fish & Game and we had also stated our disagreement with the reasons put forward by the regional council to justify the timing of the review.
- Mr Wilson updated Councillors on the Flax Block weir and the issues raised by local landowners with the recent flooding. The regional council was currently carrying out a review of the flooding which would include modelling the role of all structures in the Flax Block including the weir.
- The Chairman expressed his disappointment at the decision by the NZF&G Council to take full responsibility for the decision to ban lead shot in subgauge shotguns. Councillors agreed that education over the negative impact of lead shot was crucial with recent research finding that ingestion of shot was much higher than previously thought.
- Councillor Williamson enquired about the current consent application by Watercare for the discharge from the Pukekohe Waste Water Treatment Plant into the lower Waikato River via the Parker Lane Stream. Mr Klee replied that the Hearing had been deferred until the issue of the weir on the Parker Lane Stream had been addressed. He noted that the plant was receiving 25% of their effluent from the new Pokeno Dairy Factory and that Watercare was seeking a 35 year consent.
- Councillor Kerr informed that the Police had been checking hunters at Hoods Landing during Opening Weekend. The Police had expressed considerable interest in accompanying rangers next year.
- Council approved the NZ Council recommendation of a 2017/18 adult whole season sports fish licence of \$127, and the adult whole season game licence of \$94.
- Council agreed to the following changes to the fish regulations for the 2017/18 season:
 - that Section 2.2 of the fishing regulations for the Auckland/Waikato region be amended to include the clause “or flooded backwaters of hydro lake tributaries not listed in Clause 2.2”
 - that the Tumai Stream is added to the list of waters in Section 2.2 where fishing is permitted.
 - that scented artificial lures can be used in all waters other than fly fishing only waters when actively retrieved so as to imitate a moving bait fish.
- Council discussed a proposed policy change regarding the aerial use of 1080. Council agreed that the policy is changed to: “*Council does not support the use of aerial 1080 in areas where alternative methods of pest control are feasible (practical)*”.

Matters Arising From Chief Executive's Report

Masters Project Heavy Metal Concentrations: All samples have now been processed by the lab and Katie Gibb is working on her statistical analysis. Gizzard's have been tested and of the total 343 x-rayed, we found 16% with ingested shot- only 2.3% of those were lead. Waikato had a slightly higher lead ingestion (3.5%) compared to Southland (1.2%). Analysis will continue over the next few weeks at which time more results will be available.

GBHS and Hunter Feedback: Hunters in some of the large wetlands like the Kopuatai, Opuatia and Whangamarino are reporting the best season in years whilst those big hill country farm dams that hold hundreds of birds in drought years are largely devoid of ducks. Lakes and rivers have been mixed results and birds are well dispersed in flooded paddocks and willow wetlands, where they are difficult to hunt and remain largely undisturbed.

Trout Releases: Adam Daniel has been investigating stocking Triploid fish in lakes to reduce the impact of hatchery fish on wild trout breeding and competing with wild spawning fish.

Whangamarino Weir consent review: Anna Sintenie and Mischa Davis have done preliminary research into the procedural requirements and some of the substantive matters raised by the Regional Council.

Pukekohe Wastewater Treatment Consent: We are preparing for an extensive consent Hearing for this application by WaterCare to substantial increase their treated effluent discharge into the lower Waikato.

Waikeria Prison Expansion Project: The Department of Corrections has put in an application to expand the Waikeria Prison as a response to meet the rising demand for prisoner places in New Zealand. The proposal states that the wastewater from the new facility will be treated and disposed of through the Te Awamutu wastewater treatment plant (TA WWTP) rather than being discharged into the river as it is now. We are concerned that the TA WWTP will not be able to cope with this increased wastewater and effectively put pressure on the surrounding rivers and ecosystem there.

Whakapapa Wastewater Treatment Consent: DOC is seeking resource consents from the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council for a number of discharge permits for the Whakapapa wastewater treatment plant which includes an adaptive management approach. Mischa will draft a submission on the applications requesting that the consent conditions will ensure an improvement in water quality and that if a staged approach is used that it is spelled out in the conditions. The adaptive management approach needs boundaries in the form of discharge limits (nitrogen, phosphorus, suspended solids and E. Coli) and time frames so we can hold them to each proposed level of enhanced treatment. We are also requesting that a bird management plan be included.

Mallards nesting on roadside verges: Mischa has been doing research into how to implement a ban on roadside spraying and mowing during the months of August and September in order to better protect nesting mallards. Mischa will draft a memorandum to the Waikato District Council requesting a ban.

Flooding on the Hauraki Plains: Met with Adam Munro, Section Manager for the catchment works on the Hauraki Plains. Some of the local landowners have blamed the magnitude of the recent flooding in the Hauraki Plains on weirs in the Kopuatai Wetland including the main weir on the Flax Block. The regional council is currently carrying out investigations/modelling to see whether the structures played a role (-ve or otherwise) in the recent flood events.

WCEET Wetland Projects: David lodged an application for 8 projects in conjunction with landowners to conduct wetland restoration and predator control work. The 5 wetland projects were all successful with \$80,000 (GST incl). This will be matched by landowner contributions.