

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 14 October 2017

- Concern was expressed over the outcome of the Pukekohe Waste Water Treatment Plant consent hearing and the lack of input from WRC water quality experts. Mr Klee noted that he had requested a meeting with the science manager at the WRC to express Fish & Game's concerns.
- In reply to a question, Mr Wilson informed that EcoFx would be pre baiting the Williamson Wetland later this month and putting out bait stations in early November.
- Councillor Kerr expressed his disappointment over the lack of effort by pondholders in regards to the predator control programme, weed control, and general rubbish removal on the Williamson Wetland. Councillor Cocks disagreed, noting that it has been difficult to work on the wetland due to the wet winter and that it took some time for new pondholders to get established. It was agreed that a letter be sent to all pondholders reminding them of their responsibilities, especially weed control and taking part in predator control programmes.
- The Chairman asked what could be done about the elevated levels of heavy metals in mallards. Mr Klee replied that the next stage of the research would be looking at the implications on human health. Preliminary results suggest that the flesh was ok to consume but offal consumption should be limited, similar to beef. There was also a need to track down the source path for copper. Cadmium from fertilizer is already acknowledged to be a problem in the Waikato.
- Staff were thanked for the quality of the preseason fishing newsletter.
- Councillors Annan and Shaw noted that due to the requirements of the mallard banding programme they would probably be unable to attend the April 2017 Council meeting & fieldtrip if it was held in Owhango. Councillor Carey was also unsure if he could attend. It was agreed that the fieldtrip did not need to coincide with a Council meeting and thus a March date would be preferable.
- Councillors discussed the recent governance review emphasising the current excellent relationship between Councillors and staff.
- Councillor Sherrard summarised the discussion held by the NZF&GC at their recent meeting. He noted that the new CE, Martin Taylor, would be starting on 6th November.
- Councillor Kerr enquired as to whether Council owned the Polaris ATV used in the Angler Use Monitoring Study, and if so whether it was being serviced regularly. Mr Wilson replied that the ATV was purchased at a discount from Polaris and it was being serviced annually.
- Councillor Annan informed that he had been asked by Councillor Juby to raise the issue of a User Group fieldtrip around the F&G wetlands next year. It was agreed that a midweek fieldtrip could be arranged if there was sufficient interest from User Groups.
- Councillor Sherrard advised that Southland F&G Councillors carried out the gamebird harvest survey phone calls and he suggested that this was a good opportunity for Councillors to talk to licence holders. Mr Klee replied that he was always looking for people to do the phone surveys and any assistance from Councillors would be much appreciated.

Matters Arising From Chief Executive's Report

Heavy Metals Study: All sample results have been received from the lab, with a total of 170 pre-season-bloods, 140 post-season bloods, 60 eggshells, and 343 livers and gizzards. Elevated level of copper was interesting; the levels reported in the livers were much higher than other studies in wild mallards, with 23.1% of samples having concentrations above level 70mg/kg which have been observed to result in acute copper toxicosis in other studies. Cadmium was found to be elevated above environmental levels in 32.4% of bird livers, with 5.1% having levels elevated above the level which is considered to induce adverse effects. 3.9% of the livers had lead levels considered elevated enough to have subclinical poisoning (levels which cause physiological effects but are insufficient to impair biological functions, resulting in no outward signs of poisoning, animal has a high chance of recovering if exposure ceased). Lead levels in 2.4% of livers were high enough to be considered in danger of clinical poisoning (threshold where pathological manifestations of physiological effects are observed, such as anaemia, muscular incoordination, anorexia and microscopic lesions in tissues). Pre-season bloods found 9.4% elevated above environmental levels, with 5.3% high enough to assume toxicity. This was slightly decreased in post season, with 7.1% elevated and 2.1% toxic.

New Tank: Adam Daniel has ordered and received the new trout tank for his truck. The tank will replace the old barrels that were top heavy and had broken lids. The new tank will be fitted with a window so they can be used for display and educational purposes.

Whangamarino Weir: Anna Sintenie and David Klee met with the Regional Council to discuss the next steps in the Whangamarino Weir consent review. The Council initiated a review earlier in the year raising a number of issues it claimed were associated with the operation of the weir. It was agreed that Regional Council experts would meet with an expert elected by DoC and Fish and Game (as co-consent holders) to ideally arrive at an agreed understanding potential issues with the weir.

Future Proof Strategy: Anna Sintenie made a presentation summarising Fish and Game's submission on the Future Proof Strategy to the Hearing Committee. The presentation emphasised the effects on wetlands and hunting activities which would be caused by expansion of living zones in to existing rural-zoned areas, particularly in the northern Waikato (Te Kauwhata, Meremere, Pokeno, Tuakau areas).

Clevedon Quarry: We met with Fulton Hogan to discuss our concerns with the proposed expansion of the Clevedon Quarry on the adjacent Wairoa River and negotiations are continuing.

Cleanfill site at Bluff Road: Grander Investments Ltd has applied for a resource consent for a cleanfill operation to dump 1.7 million cubic metres of soil from the Pokeno subdivision at 62 Bluff Road and reprocess it for resale. The site is within a gully that contains a couple of degraded wetlands. The gully itself and surrounding area is also erosion prone having already suffered some recent major slips. Of most concern to Fish and Game is that wetlands in the gully drain into the Dean Wetland. We are concerned that the cleanfill operation will have a significant adverse effect on this wetland. It is not clear yet whether the application will be publically notified. Currently the application is on hold while the Council waits to receive further information from the applicant. We have been pressuring the Council to publically notify in which case we will be making a full submission.

Williamson Wetland: Met with EcoFX and some 170 bait stations should be installed during October in the Williamson Wetland.

Game bird Habitat Trust: David Klee helped put together an application for a wetland restoration project which received partial funding of \$6000 from the GBHT.

Waipapa River: Adam Daniel dropped off the new self-closing deer fence gates and signs to improve access to the River on the existing legal access. Adam has updated some of the WAMS locations at the request of WAMS staff to include access on Moakurua Stream.