

**CONFIRMED REPORT OF THE 2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
EASTERN FISH AND GAME COUNCIL HELD AT THE FISH & GAME NEW
ZEALAND EASTERN REGION OFFICE, ROTORUA
18TH NOVEMBER 2015**

Present

Crs Murray Ferris (Chairman), Lindsay Lyons, Neal Hawes, Barry Roderick, David Woolner, Alan Baird, Sandy Bull, Ken Coombes, Laurence Tamati.

In Attendance

Andy Garrick, Kate Thompson, Anthony van Dorp, Lloyd Gledhill, Mark Sherburn, Matt McDougall, Lynne Sands, Eben Herbert, John Meikle, Carmel Veitch (F&GNZ); Terry Wood, Laurence Allingham, Ray Bushell, Trevor Richardson, Paul Badger, and Frank Thompson.

1.0 Welcome

The Council Chair, Cr Murray Ferris, opened the meeting at 4.00 PM and welcomed all in attendance.

2.0 Apologies

2.1 Apologies were received from Crs Annaka Davis, Steve Scragg, Mike Little, Terry Sutton and Steve Luscombe; and Alan Robinson.

2.2 *Agreed (Sandy Bull/Neal Hawes) that the apologies for the 2015 Annual General Meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained.*

3.0 Report from the previous Annual General Meeting (26 November 2014)

3.1 *Agreed (Terry Wood/Neal Hawes) that the report of the Annual General Meeting held on 26 November 2014 be confirmed as true and correct.*

4.0 Matters Arising from the previous meeting

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2014.

5.0 2014-2015 Annual Report

5.1 *Audit:* Murray Ferris reported to Council and staff that Eastern Fish & Game Region had again received a favourable audit, adding that this was a reflection of the high levels of competence within the Eastern staff. Murray also acknowledged the assistance provided to the New Zealand Council and to other Fish & Game regions by staff members within the team.

5.2 *Operational Highlights:* Andy Garrick (Regional Manager) advised that staff would again provide a brief overview of achievements during the past financial year.

5.2.1 Matt McDougall firstly thanked Council for their role in appointing Andy Garrick to the position of Regional Manager adding that he had fitted into the role seamlessly and that it was a pleasure to be working with him. Matt introduced Brigit Nieuwboer (sponsored by Royal Society of NZ under the Science Teaching Leadership Programme) who has been working with him over the past six months undertaking research on drain productivity in the coastal Bay of Plenty, advising that this had been and will continue to be a great collaborative project with the involvement of the Regional Council. Matt also introduced Harri Condie who was currently assisting

with banding data analysis for the Hawke's Bay Region. Matt was pleased to advise that his paper on mallard survival and harvest rates had been acknowledged by the USGS, and that several of their key staff had indicated they were impressed with this work. Matt also spoke of his involvement with the Waikato Catchment Environmental Enhancement Trust and of the \$800,000 granted over the year for wetland enhancement work within the Waikato catchment.

- 5.2.2 Carmel Veitch spoke of her role in supporting the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council under their administration contract, and more recently her involvement with the financial review committee set up by the New Zealand Council. She said that the aim of the committee was to have all regions reporting in a consistent manner, and that a standardised approach would improve processes going forward. Carmel advised that work had been undertaken towards reviewing and refining Health and Safety policy and operational procedures for the Eastern Region adding that with the new legislation coming into effect in 2016 significantly more effort would need to go into this area. Carmel thanked Andy Garrick for his support, wisdom, and direction during the year.
- 5.2.3 Mark Sherburn reported that it was business as usual within the Hatchery team and that OWP targets had been met, producing good quality fish from the best possible crosses. He said that hatchery work involved a lot of work with trapping, breeding, and liberations adding that the Eastern Region would be much weaker without the liberation of trout. In terms of client services Mark spoke of public awareness and social media becoming a bigger part of what we do, and commented on our attendance at the Auckland boat show, the increased awareness created by the "Fish for Gold" promotion, continued media input through Grant Dyson (NZ Council Public Awareness Advisor), and more recently Lloyd Gledhill's appearance on "Gone Fishin". Lloyd Gledhill added that it had been another successful year with the Hatchery remaining disease free.
- 5.2.4 Mark Sherburn also spoke on behalf of Matt Osborne advising that fishing reports across the region had generally been good, and that improvements had been seen in the wild fishery in Lake Tarawera. He said that extensive work had been done at Waikaremoana providing a good picture of what was occurring within spawning streams. Andy Garrick commented on Matt's involvement with various groups with interests in the Ohau Channel diversion wall and the recent proposals to install a fish passage there.
- 5.2.5 Anthony van Dorp provided an overview of compliance efforts during the year, and particularly those over the 2014-15 summer period when high numbers of trout sought refuge in Lake Rotorua streams requiring greatly increased input from compliance staff. He advised the region was currently supported by 12 honorary rangers, and the total contacts made by staff and honoraries for the year was 3,700 with an overall compliance rate of 98%. Anthony noted that the uptake of reparation had slowed, and this had resulted in an increased need to follow up in court. He commented on the defended hearing and sentencing of a high profile offence on Rotoiti and thanked the Department of Conservation for allocating their senior solicitor to represent Fish & Game. Anthony added that work with Robert Sowman had been ongoing in relation to CLE prosecutions and the establishment of a national reparation policy. Access points, tracks and signage had been maintained during the year, and work was underway to enhance access on the East Coast, most immediately in the upper Waikaretaheke River, and in due course an access brochure for the Wairoa catchment will be produced. Anthony had continued to liaise with the Walking Access

Commission and noted a highlight of his year was his involvement with projects at Waikaremoana.

- 5.2.6 Lynne Sands from the administration team spoke briefly on the successful conversion to the Xero accounting package, and was pleased to report that she had received some very positive feedback from licence holders following the introduction of the new licence categories.
- 5.2.7 Eben Herbert spoke of his involvement with the Rotorua and Whakatane District Plans, and the positive outcomes for Fish & Game arising from submissions, pre hearings, and Council hearings. Eben advised that he was also involved with the Gisborne and Bay of Plenty freshwater advisory groups and that the plans were close to the point of being released for public comment. Gisborne was the first one to be notified nationally. Eben was pleased to report that the Awakaponga pump project for which \$30,000 in external fund was obtained was now up and running despite contractors expressing doubts the system would work.
- 5.2.8 John Meikle acknowledged the passionate crew that work at Eastern Fish & Game and the opportunity to share ideas and have an input into projects. He noted that it was difficult to draw out particular highlights in terms of habitat achievements this year due in part to the many changes to staff at Regional Council and the Department of Conservation. This had generated some frustration, and he suggested there was a need to move backwards in order to move forwards, and an ongoing focus on development/ redevelopment of relationships would continue to be important.
- 5.2.9 Kate Thompson said the 2014-15 year saw the bedding in of new licence system and the conversion of all of the Region's agents to Agency Online. She spoke of the enormous task of introducing the four new licence categories, and her ongoing role of providing support to other regions via her involvement with the Licence Working Party. Kate thanked Lynne Sands for her additional work with the Children's Fishing Programme, her support to agents during their conversion to Agency Online, and more recently the "Fish for Gold" red tag promotion.
- 5.2.10 Andy Garrick said he had little further to add other than to note that considerable effort during the year had gone into establishing and maintaining relationships with external agencies and organisations, and this was paying dividends. In closing he wished to acknowledge the effort, dedication and professionalism of the Eastern Region team, and the contribution staff had and continued to make, not only within the region but at a national level also.

6.0 Questions from the Public

- 6.1 Lindsay Lyons queried Anthony Van Dorp on progress with instant fines. Anthony advised that Fish & Game had at the last minute been excluded from proposals for an Infringement Notice system included in the bill currently before Parliament, and the status quo remains for now.
- 6.2 Trevor Richardson from the Western Bay of Plenty Fish & Game Club requested Council consider an out of season swan cull on Tauranga harbour to avoid clashes with the game bird season and other sports activities.
- 6.3 Ray Bushell thanked various staff and acknowledged Brigit Nieuwboer's drain productivity work. He noted a memorable highlight of his year had been a demonstration of the use of explosives to excavate a pond at the Kaituna Reserve.

8.0 Closure

8.1 Murray Ferris said that it was a pleasure working with all, he wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and looked forward to seeing everyone again on 18 February 2016. The meeting was closed at 4.43 PM.