

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME

A Meeting of Council will be held at the
NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Drive, Hamilton,
on Saturday 19 August 2017 commencing at 11a.m.

AGENDA

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2. Possible conflicts of interest arising from meeting agenda	
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5. Council correspondence (nil as of 3/8/2017)	
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M. Young
Chairman

04/06/2017

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME

Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton,
on Saturday 17 June 2017 commencing at 11.00am.

PRESENT:

Chairman: M. Young

Councillors: G. Annan, C. Carey, D. Cocks, W. Howard, N. Juby, A. Kerr, P. Shaw,
C. Sherrard, B. Smith, S. Smith, E. Williamson.

Staff: B. Wilson, J. Dyer, D. Klee, A. Daniel (11.20)

Visitors: P. Hardy (DoC), R. Tyson.

1. APOLOGIES

M. Davis, A. Sintenie.

It was moved;

that the apologies be accepted.

S. Smith/Howard CARRIED

2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:

None declared.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 8 APRIL 2017:

A typo was noted on the date for the previous meeting; "113 February", it should be "11 February".

It was moved;

that the minutes of the previous meeting of 8 April 2017 as amended be accepted as a true and correct record.

Annan/Juby CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Councillor Juby thanked staff for organising the field trip which he found very informative.

The Chairman observed that most Councillors knew little about trout fishing and suggested that a field trip looking at trout fishing and management issues would be beneficial. Councillor Juby agreed to liaise with Dr Daniel to determine possible options.

5. CORRESPONDENCE:

Nil.

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BI-MONTHLY REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:

Mr Wilson updated the meeting on the proposed review by the Waikato Regional Council of the consents held for the Whangamarino weir. 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.

General discussion on the impact of roadside mowing on waterfowl nesting, with it noted that district councils would require some persuasion to stop mowing in August/September.

Mr Wilson updated Councillors on the Flax Block weir and the issues raised by local landowners with the recent flooding. The Waikato 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 application by Watercare for the Pukekohe Waste Water Treatment Plant. 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 Sherrard asked whether Fish & Game had been informed of the proposed new poultry farm near Lake Whangape. Mr Klee replied that no notification had been received.

Councillor Howard requested an update from staff on the Gamebird Harvest Survey. Mr Klee replied that returns had been mixed but generally those wetlands that hadn't shot well for years had had a very good season. However it would be some months before the survey report would be available. He also noted that in previous seasons, harvest rates were often low when there was a lot of water around since the birds were more widely distributed.

Mr Wilson briefly reviewed the ranging efforts over the season stressing the comparatively low numbers of active rangers compared to the 9,000 hunter out on Opening Weekend. The Police had expressed considerable interest in accompanying rangers next year. Councillor Kerr informed that the Police had been checking hunters at Hoods Landing during Opening Weekend.

It was moved;

that the CE Bimonthly report and Financial Statements be accepted.

S. Smith/Cocks CARRIED

7. 2017/18 LICENCE FEE RECOMMENDATION:

Councillors discussed the licence fee recommendations from the NZF&G Council. There was general agreement by Councillors that more should be done at a national level to seek other sources of funding especially bequests. Councillors also expressed surprise that other F&G regions were not seeking external funding for habitat restoration, but noting that there was little incentive to seek such funding due to the generosity of the recent Fish & Game budget round.

It was moved;

that 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 be accepted.

Cocks/Williamson CARRIED

The meeting rose for lunch at 12.30pm and resumed at 1.15pm.

8. 2017/18 DISTRICT ANGLERS NOTICE:

Councillors discussed Dr Daniel's report with informative contributions from Councillors Juby and Annan who had considerable experience from many years of fishing on the hydro lakes.

Councillor Kerr expressed his reservations over the proposed changes considering that the regulations should be tightened rather than relaxed due to the perilous state of the wild trout fishery.

It was moved;

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.

Juby/Annan CARRIED

Councillor Kerr voted against the above motion.

Dr Daniel's report on a change to the soft bait fishing regulations was discussed. Some reservations were expressed by Councillors regarding the potential to use large gap hooks to snag trout, but it was emphasised by Mr Wilson that there were no current regulations on hook size.

It was moved;

that the fishing regulations be amended to allow for scented artificial lures to be used in all waters, other than fly fishing only waters, when actively retrieved so as to imitate a moving bait fish.

Juby/Annan CARRIED

9. PROPOSED POLICY CHANGE: AERIAL USE OF 1080:

Robust discussion took place with views strongly expressed both for and against the proposal.

It was moved;

that Council's policy on the aerial use of 1080 be changed to "Council does not support the use of aerial 1080 in areas where alternative methods of pest control are feasible (practical)".

Howard/Sherrard CARRIED

6 for, 4 against.

Councillors S. Smith, B. Smith, & Williamson voted against the motion.

It was agreed that staff were delegated to make such decisions in accordance with the policy.

10. OSH REPORT:

Mr Wilson presented his report noting that influenza had significantly affected staff over the previous month. Next year funding would be allocated for influenza vaccinations on a voluntary basis.

It was moved;

that the OSH Report for May be accepted.

Annan/Juby CARRIED

11. NZF&GC MEETING 19-20 MAY 2017:

Councillor Sherrard summarised the discussions held by the NZF&G Council at their recent meeting – including;

- The guide licence had gone back to the Minister with little progress being made.
- A bequest policy was being looked at
- A Governor symposium on “future proofing Fish & Game” would be held next year.

15. GENERAL BUSINESS:

Mr Klee asked Councillors whether there were any questions they would like to see asked during the gamebird harvest survey. In reply it was suggested that hunters should be asked whether the hunting of swan should cease with the closure of the dabbling duck season.

Mr Richard Tyson, former F&G Councillor, informed the meeting that there were considerable opportunities to promote coarse fishing to the large Asian community in Auckland. Dr Daniel reported that coarse fishing promotions were being considered and that there had recently been support from the NZF&G Council for such.

Councillor Juby informed that he would be speaking to the Auckland Freshwater Anglers Club on the 14th August and invited other Councillors to attend.

Mr Dyer suggested that the fishing regulations be changed to allow coarse anglers to use more than one rod. Mr Wilson replied that such recommendations to change the fishing regulations needed to be made to Dr Daniel several months before the June meeting so that an informed report could be presented to Council.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 2.15pm.

UNCONFIRMED

Bi Monthly Managers Report

Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Meeting August 2017

OUTPUT 1: SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Project 1117 Gamebird Research

Gamebird Research: David Klee chaired the game bird research session at the recent staff conference and presented Katie’s preliminary results. Jenn Sheppard also attended to present more of her results. With a number of projects nearing their completion it will be important for the research committee to conduct a stock take of current research needs and develop another 5-10 year strategy of further projects. It appears that there have been some comments about the lack of new proposals being presented to managers and NZ Council. As David pointed out at the meeting, this is not due to a lack of ideas or further research requirements, but more about ensuring that the current work streams are finished to a level where they withstand the rigour of the scientific community. Then it will be time to review, reprioritise and embark on the next identified projects.

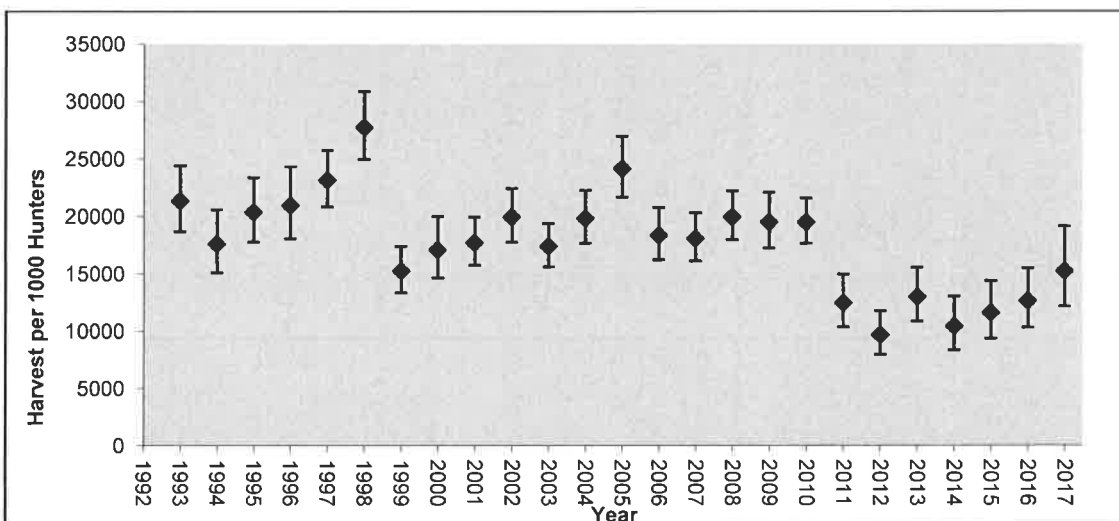
Aerial Transects: A report written by Matt McDougal and David for Duck Management Unit 1 is appended. This will be added to over the coming years. It will be interesting to see how these results compare to the Linken-Peterson estimates obtained from banding.

Project 1121 Fish Harvest Assessment:

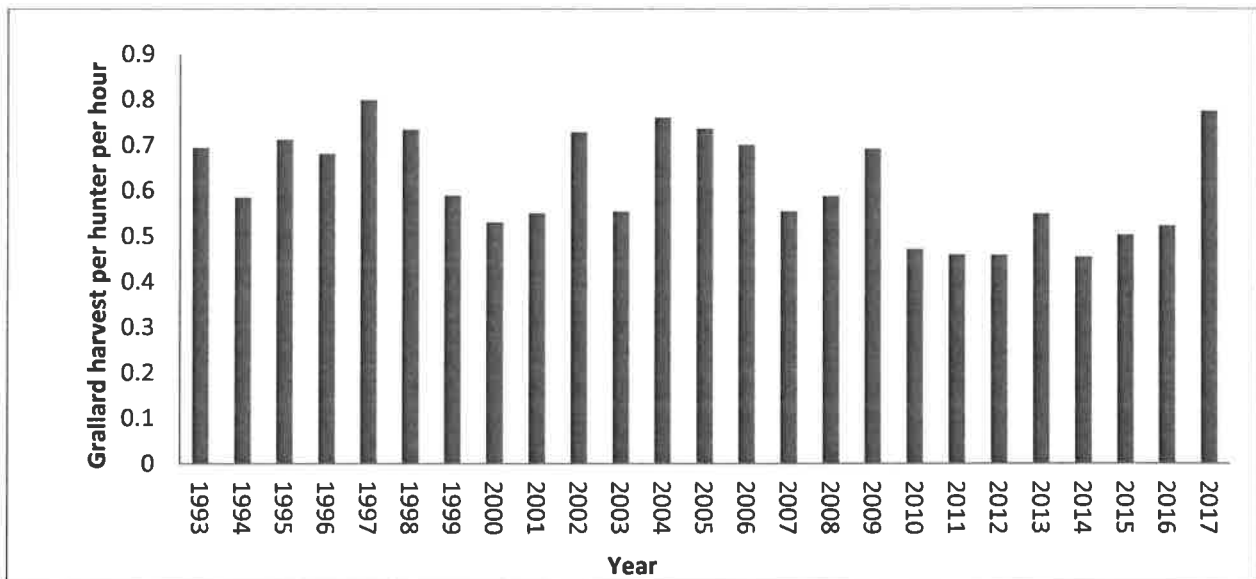
Adam completed the Whakapapa-Whanganui angler use report and presented the findings at the National Fish and Game Conference.

Project 1122 Gamebird Harvest

Game Bird Harvest Survey: At the time of writing we are about to embark on the final GBHS of the year. Despite the mixed reports from hunters due to the abnormal rainfall conditions we experienced this summer and autumn, it appears that the average grallard harvest per hunter is the best we have had for some years. It would seem that the guys who had an average or below par season were more than offset by hunters that had an extremely good season.



When this is put in context of average effort the results are even more impressive as the average harvest of 15.3 ducks per hunters was achieved in lowest average effort ever recorded at 19.7 hours. This results in one of the highest harvest rates in terms of grallards per hunter per hour. It should be noted that high harvest rates are not necessarily a surrogate for high population and population data will be presented once we have all our band return and reporting rate information.



Project 1181 Fish Releases:

Adam completed the Lake Ototoa trout releases in June.

Project 1181 Gamebird control:

We are constantly asked what can be done about pukeko. In urban areas where shooting is not an option this is a lot more problematic than rural areas. A FAQ sheet has been prepared so we don't have to answer the same questions every time. This should speed up the permit process, list people's options and correct a lot of misinformation such as "they're native so they're protected, right?"

We are currently experimenting with plastic sleeves for young trees and wetland plants. These supposedly eliminate pukeko damage and cost just 22 cents each. Time will tell. The sleeve is held in place by 3 or 4 bamboo stakes and supposedly does not need to be anchored in place. It has multiple holes in it to eliminate humidity issues and to facilitate gas exchange.

Pukeko will pull out small bare plants repeatedly, no matter how often they are replanted. There seems to be no obvious reason for this as in many cases they don't actually eat any part of the plant. If they do, it is usually when there is a fleshy part of the plant around ground level. The latest complaint is about banana plants that local pukeko will not let establish in the middle of Blockhouse Bay.



OUTPUT 2 HABITAT PROTECTION/MANAGEMENT

Project 1211 R.M.A.

Waikare/Whangamarino Consent Review: We have reached the Phase 2B Hold Point;

Hold Point - Three possible outcomes are envisaged.

- 1. Agreement of options that move from full feasibility assessment (Phase 2B) to detailed assessment (Phase 2C) to inform sediment reduction target/limits, associated measurement variables and the timeframes which apply;*
- 2. No agreement reached on options that require detailed assessment; or*
- 3. Unclear – advise parties on preferred approach.*

As previously discussed, 3 options were identified by the experts. All bar one of the parties have agreed to move forward with all of these, however, the Lumsden farm are only happy to proceed with the first option, that being water quantity within Lake Waikare. A meeting is scheduled for the 16th of August to discuss this issue. The reasons for Lumsden Farms taking their current position is unclear. It would be unsatisfactory from F&Gs perspective to have gone this far down the track, had the experts whittle down the options and now have the entire process derailed, when only preliminary information is available and full technical feasibility assessment has not yet been completed.

Waikato Freshwater Strategy: This was made operative by the Waikato Regional Council. A review of the document showed it is a potentially helpful advocacy tool including strong support for transition to an allocation system which deals with both water quantity and quality. It also includes:

- Acknowledgement of the assimilative and storage values of wetland and support for protection, re-creation and construction of wetlands;
- Statements on landuse encouraging activities that suit the capability of land.
- Recognition that we have reached or are nearing full allocation (quality and quantity) of fresh water across the region.
- Acknowledgement of the pressure and demands of the increasing population.

Healthy Rivers (PC 1) Ongoing: There has been no further movement on this from the Council. Anna has continued with a review of other submissions to identify which may raise significant issues.

Waikare/Whangamarino Catchment Management Plan: David and Anna have provided feedback for this plan and were going to attend a public meeting to showcase some of the work F&G is conducting with progressive landowners in the catchment. This meeting was cancelled at the 11th hour because as we understand it some of the local landowner's in the catchment were unhappy about how the process had been run to date. We are unsure exactly what path this plan will take from here, but staff will attend meetings and keep informed.

A group of farmers have now formed a Trust "the Primary Stakeholders Catchment Trust" to engage in this process, and are presenting their own technical information on the catchment state.

Drain Clearance Waikare: David met ICM staff that want to clear the mill drain which is subject to contamination from mill site. Levels of copper, chromium and arsenic are above threshold levels where they could cause adverse effects to aquatic systems. ICM have agreed to do some further work and come back to us.

Pukekohe WWTP: David, Mischa and Anna again met with Watercare services staff and their consultants to go over our submission. Whilst we made a small amount of headway at this meeting, the issues around total Nitrogen loading increases remain unresolved. The applicant remains of the opinion that Phosphorous is limiting and therefore increasing Nitrogen to the lower Waikato River is not an issue, and an option to offset, was disappointingly rejected outright by Watercare at the end of July. Anna & Mischa's focus is now on planning evidence for the hearing at the end of August.

Further work has been done to assess potential effects on the Piggott Wetland, which were raised in our submission, however this will only been presented within evidence exchange timeframes. The hearing is set to commence on the 29th of August with evidence in chief due the week prior. A negotiated outcome seems unlikely at this stage. The issue around the Weir was also raised at the meeting and potential to remove it altogether was mooted given it was a requirement of a lapsed consent. David explained that this would be an unsatisfactory outcome and would lead to the dewatering of a significant wetland. David reminded Watercare that the weir was put in in order to mitigate the destruction of wetland habitat at the time of processing the previous consent and that there was an ongoing requirement to ensure that wetland extent and health is not compromised further.

Future Proof Strategy: Future Proof is a 30 year strategy to address projected Waikato population growth (a doubling in 50 years, most of which will occur north of Hamilton). It is a joint document between the three Councils (Hamilton, Waipa and Waikato) and the Waikato Regional Council. It is incorporated into the Regional Policy Statement and with the intention to be included in the three Council plans, as well as long term planning documents. It directs settlement pattern and infrastructure planning in the region. Anna prepared a submission which covered the following points:

- **Implementation:** The document has potential to set a lower standard for dealing with adverse effects than that in the RMA. This is a concern as it could erode our position in future consent applications. The document should be consistent with the RMA requirements, as well as the NPS for Freshwater Management and the Vision and Strategy for effects on freshwater.
- **Growth and settlement patterns:** the submission covered two issues -

- Wetlands: Future Proof does not identify the existing uses and ecological values of wetlands. Growth and settlement patterns should be limited in areas where there is existing nearby hunting activities, and sensitive wetland habitats.
- Flood protection: Future proof does not address flooding hazards to new settlement and industrial areas, and the impacts of further drainage on Fish and Game values. This should be addressed as part of planning for settlement patterns particularly around Pokeno, Te Kauwhata and Tuakau. Flood hazard management which is sustainable and consistent with the RMA would require: changes to land use patterns to be subject to ponding requirements; avoiding further drainage; and reviews of existing flood management schemes.
- Vision and Strategy: Future Proof does not require improvement to water quality as required by the Vision and Strategy. Our submission was that it must be consistent.
- The Shepherd Wetland: This wetland is adjacent to one of the areas specifically identified for industrial growth. A specific submission on the sensitive wetland environment and existing use values of that wetland was made.

Clevedon quarry expansion: Fulton Hogan Limited has applied for resource consent to expand their existing quarry at 546 McNicol Road near Clevedon. The expansion is sought in order to meet the demand for aggregate products within the Auckland market.

The site of the quarry is located directly opposite the Wairoa River which is of great significance to anglers in the Auckland region as it is the closest river containing trout to Auckland city and is the only major trout stream in the Auckland area holding both rainbow and brown trout.

Mischa and Adam prepared a submission in opposition to the expansion, namely the proposal to increase truck movements from the quarry from one hundred a day to over a thousand a day which we believe will have an adverse effect on the Wairoa River and on the natural character along the transport route.

Hyndman's quarry expansion: Hyndmans Quarries Ltd applied for resource consent to continue activities at the Hyndmans Quarry over several decades and to increase the extent of the quarry extraction activities. The existing quarry has a discharge into the Piakonui Stream, a tributary of the Piako River south of Morrinsville which is one of the most prominent areas in the region for gamebird hunting.

Mischa and Adam prepared a submission on the application opposing the proposed increase in discharge volume into the Piakonui Stream due to the adverse effect it would have on the stream and downstream environments. We also opposed the water-take proposal in the application due to it being a large water-take for a relatively small tributary which could potentially allow for a water-take greater than the existing flow of the Piakonui Stream tributary.

Mischa and David met with people from Hyndman's quarry to discuss our submission. They agreed to reduce their discharge load. They have provided further information and we will be discussing further the possibility of them reducing their water-take.

Inghams application: The consent holder has agreed to use offset conditions, in order to ensure that there is no net increase in nitrogen loading to the Firth of Thames catchment as their discharge increases. A number of our requested conditions have been inserted in the conditions

of consent including reviews by qualified experts to ensure the proposed offsets will achieve their intended outcomes and feedback loops for F&G to ensure we can keep a watching brief on how the offset conditions work in practice.

Waikeria Prison Expansion Project: Since we made our submission on the application to expand the Waikeria Prison the Department of Corrections decided to apply to have the matter determined by the Environment Court. We believe they opted for this as opposed to going to Council hearing as they considered it a more efficient means to get their application pushed through. We decided that it would not be worth joining the hearing as an s274 party and would wait to make a submission when the Te Awamutu sewage plant is re-consented.

Cleanfill site: There is a proposal to build a very large “clean-fill” dump at 62 Bluff Road near Pokeno. Staff were unable to visit the site easily as the access road, (Pioneer Rd that was closed on the day of the Councillor’s field trip), had completely fallen away and the road closed for rebuilding. When it reopened recently and a staff visit could be made, the landfill site itself is clearly also crumbling into the valley below as well. The whole hillside has split in two and is sliding into a large pond below, (visible from Bluff Rd). In the same way a nearby hill on the same property also broke in two a few years ago and slid off into the valley below, (visible from SH1). The 2 streams in this valley feed through a single culvert under the SH1 expressway into the F&G Cathcart Wetland so the risks to our water quality are obvious. There have been a number of other subsidences in this area, one nearby is the size of a football field, (off Kellyville Rd). This road is now blocked off to heavy traffic as a separate part of it is also poised to collapse soon. Nearby Koheroa Rd, (off Kellyville Road), to Meremere village is another nearby road that is also now closed to all traffic. Obviously Fish & Game will be asking why on earth this Bluff Road site is being considered and how are our 200+ hectares of Mangatawhiri Wetland interests being safeguarded?

We were not contacted directly by the district, nor regional councils about this proposal, and had to learn about it from neighbours. However none of our neighbours east of SH1 were informed by the district or regional councils either, despite all being downstream of these works. The 30 truck movements a day proposed could well damage the access road to this site. At another clean-fill site for instance, it has been estimated that the cost of rebuilding the road damage alone will top \$1 million, most of which will fall back on ratepayers. When Auckland Council approved that site it considered the effects would be “no more than minor”.

Project 1221 Council Land

Piggott Wetland: While planting out trees there this year staff came across a marker post covered up by grass that had been originally installed on site by the Waikato Valley Authority. This should prove to be very useful in future, for instance, should there be a geotechnical survey of our stopbank height in conjunction with the Wastewater Treatment Plant increased discharge consent on our eastern boundary creek.

Dean Wetland: There are 18 grey teal nest boxes and a number of mallard nest boxes in the Dean Wetland area known as ‘Railway Pond’. It looked like one of the old Wildlife Service designs of mallard nest box actually had a mallard in it. However a game camera showed otherwise with a grey teal in residence. A harrier hawk subsequently obliged us with a few selfies while it sat on the box. This suggests this box design may not be ideal if hawks can so easily land and look into the box. The same bird perhaps was later seen flying quietly down the channels between the willow-clad islands there at just a few meters height, presumably trying to

catch duckling broods out in the open. It might also have been trying to catch out mallards released onto this Wetland that use this zone.

The new Wildlife, (Australasian Harrier), Notice 2012 spells out that F&G can take the necessary measures to address this sort of problem, (see in part below), but it comes with a number of strings attached. For instance, any trap used needs to be safe around gamebirds, or it is self-defeating. It also needs to be legally checked at least daily. Hearsay evidence would also suggest that hawks that were once caught elsewhere in our region in years' past, that were relocated nearly 60km away, simply returned home. The better option would seem to be to establish by experiment which nest box designs make it difficult or impossible for hawks to land on them and steal eggs, ducklings or sitting birds within.

5 Fish and Game Council may hunt, kill, or possess Australasian harrier to protect game birds

- (1) This clause applies if, on any land, a Fish and Game Council—
 - (a) traps or attempts to trap a game bird; or
 - (b) holds a game bird in a cage or pen; or
 - (c) releases a game bird.
- (2) The Fish and Game Council may hunt or kill an Australasian harrier on the land if—
 - (a) the Australasian harrier kills or injures the game bird; or
 - (b) the presence of the Australasian harrier on the land is a risk to the game bird.

McKenzie Wetland: Problems with people, (not necessarily hunters), parking between the railway tracks and also walking along tracks has been addressed in several ways. One by signage, now being made up. Two by getting the message out to all permit holders and 3 by maintaining gates are locked. Interlinked padlocks have been wrongly linked, leaving one or more parties locked out, or left unlocked, or stolen altogether. The high water levels have undoubtedly played a part in this as people fight for limited parking, those that should be there and those that shouldn't. Ironically work to fix a foot bridge that might have been of considerable help in providing access was put off for some time, until diabolical weather made the original work untenable for the present.

Project 1231 Non Council Land

Wetland Improvement Advice: Assisted a landowner with advice on wetland improvement near Warkworth on a property that adjoins the fish farm there. Interestingly, (in terms of bird-control), she had a problem with doves that sat on her roof in very large numbers. She purchased a hawk-shaped kite which her farm manager thought was most likely a waste of time. However just the act of bringing it out of the shed, even before it was erected on a pole, scared all the problem birds away.

Staff also assisted with advice and technical help on an application made to Gamebird Habitat Trust for fencing and other remedial work to a series of 5 connected ponds in Waerenga. As the applicant pointed out, this is very centrally placed in "the duck factory" being near Lake Waikare, the Whangamarino and the Hauraki Peat Dome wetlands. His hunting partner drives a digger so it's hoped the Trust can get good value for any investment made onsite.

Jet skiers: We had several complaints within the season about inconsiderate jet skiers making life difficult for selected gamebird hunters who were going about their lawful business. One had

just lost his wife and was entitled to be treated decently in those circumstances. Control over watercraft is what the Waikato Navigation Bylaws 2013 were supposed to address. These apply as far upstream as Waipapa Stream, (if you are scratching your head as to where that is, then it is right next to the Meremere drag strip), and downstream to Motukakaho Island within the Closed Game Area near Hoods Landing. It reads:

1.13.7 Speed restriction during duck hunting season:

The speed restriction included all waters in the area from the downstream end of Motukakaho Island extending upstream to a line extending across the river at Waipapa Stream (near Gregory Rd) but excludes all tributaries and streams entering the Waikato river.

Within the speed restriction zone during the period from two weeks prior to and two weeks following the start date of the duck hunting season:

- a) the speed provisions in clause 2.5 apply and in any area of the waterway where a vessel may exceed 5 knots, the vessel's speed shall not exceed 15 knots.

(Note: For the purposes of this clause, the commencement date of the duck hunting season is declared by notice in the NZ Gazette for any one year and generally commences on the first Saturday in May)

We have since been in touch with the harbourmaster responsible for enforcement of these bylaws within this area. We're look at putting out signage before the next game season to ensure this law is more widely known and respected by all river users.

We have also had heated complaints of people shooting clay targets in this same area on the eve of the gamebird season. There are several clay target clubs not far away. That is where such activities should be based. Also vexed complaints about a fireworks display. This sort of disruption seems quite extraordinary and surely local hunters can make their displeasure known to the participants.

WCEET Wetland Projects: David lodged funding applications in conjunction with landowners and F&G clubs in order to restore wetland habitat and conduct predator control. All wetland projects were approved in full and a total of \$79,000 secured from WCEET and a total project value of \$225,059. The total includes an application to the WRA of \$44,800 which is still pending. None of the predator control projects were funded at this stage, with the indication given that the Small Scale Community Initiatives Fund would be an appropriate source for these applications. The fund opens on August 18 and a total of 5 predator control applications will be lodged.

Gamebird Habitat Trust: David helped put together an application for a wetland restoration project Total project value = \$28,219.

Project 1235 Trees

This year's tree order was received and dispatched to clubs and individuals conducting projects.

OUTPUT 3 PARTICIPATION

Project 1311 Access Negotiation

Waipapa River: Adam ordered and received the new self-closing deer fence gates and signs to improve access to the Waipapa River on the existing legal access.

Access Moakurarua River: We've encountered an access issue involving foreign ownership of a trout river near Otorohanga.

In 2009, Honokiwi Holdings Limited (50%USA, 50% Japan ownership) were granted consent to buy 788 ha of land at Tapuae Road, Honokiwi, Otorohanga. The applicant stated that they would be acquiring the land and developing it into a plantation of Californian Redwood.

Honokiwi Holdings were granted consent under the Overseas Investment Act because the proposed Investment will benefit New Zealand by "*...protecting indigenous flora and habitats for indigenous fauna and trout; and improving walking access over the Land.*"

However, there are no public access covenants/reserves showing on the Walking Access Commission website and the Commission was unaware of any access. No surprise that the American property manager is not allowing public access. This would appear to be a blatant misuse of the OIA and contrary to what we were told at the time of the decision.

A complaint was laid with the Overseas Investment Office who reported back that an access covenant was put in place on the true right-hand bank of the River. So we will be working with the Walking Access Commission to put this information on their website and they will be approaching the landowner with this information.

Project 1331 Magazine/Supplement

Adam, Ben and Nigel completed the 2017 Fish magazine and supplement.

Project 1341 Other Publications

Adam has been writing the monthly reel life.

OUTPUT 4: COMMUNITY ADVOCACY/LIASION

Project 1431 Liaison/Advocacy

Morrinsville F&G meeting: David gave a presentation at the recent Morrinsville meeting which was well received. Members were not aware of the amount of research that was happening in the region to help inform management decisions.

Hauraki Plains Floods: We've had several discussions with the WRC over the flooding last autumn on the Hauraki Plains. An issue is the impact of weirs installed by F&G & hunters on the flood storage capacity of the Kopuatai Wetland & Flax Block. The WRC is currently modelling the impact of the weirs and there may need to be some changes in their management.

OUTPUT 5: LAW ENFORCEMENT

Project 1511 Ranging

Powerboat lvl 2 course: David attended the refresher course held in Eastern.

OUTPUT 8: PLANNING REPORTING

Project 1841 National Liaison

National Fish and Game Staff Conference: All staff attended a very successful 3 day-conference in Dunedin. As well as an excellent opportunity to meet staff from other regions there were also formal presentations/workshops on:

- Licence-holder Recruitment, Retention & Reactivation
- Fisheries Research & Monitoring
- Resource Management
- Administration
- Game Bird Research & Monitoring
- Fisheries Research & Monitoring

Adam gave a talk at the conference on how to evaluate the impact of irrigation diversion systems on fish populations. Recent applications to increase agricultural water diversions have put South Island staff under pressure to ensure trout and salmon are not impacted by proposed diversion projects. As previously mentioned, David gave a presentation on game bird research.

Fish Regulations: Proposed 2018 fishing regulation rule changes were submitted with justifications to be included in the 2018 Gazette

OUTPUT 9 ADMINISTRATION

OSH: The safety checks were conducted on the boat and ATV.

B. Wilson
Chief Executive.