



AGENDA

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

21 MARCH 2020

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME

A Meeting of Council will be held at the
NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Drive, Hamilton,
on Saturday 21 March 2020 commencing at 11a.m.

AGENDA

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M. Young
Chairman

9/03/20

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME

Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton,
on Saturday 29 February commencing at 11am.

PRESENT:

Chairman: D. Cocks

Councillors: G. Avery, A. Kerr, P. Shaw, C. Sherrard, S. Smith, E. Williamson, G. Annan,
N. Juby

Staff: B. Wilson, J. Dyer, J. Shaw, A. Daniel.

Visitors: P. Hardy (DOC), R. Foster

1. APOLOGIES

M. Young, W. Howard, D. Klee

It was moved;

that the apologies be accepted.

Annan/Smith - CARRIED

The chairman welcomed Jane Shaw (RMA Officer) to her first council meeting. The chairman also welcomed visitors Paul Hardy and Dick Foster.

2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:

None declared.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 14 DECEMBER 2019:

It was agreed that Ben Moore had not attended the previous meeting.

It was moved;

that the minutes of the previous meeting of 14 December 2019, as amended, be accepted as a true and correct record.

Smith/Kerr - CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

In reply to a question, Mr Wilson stated that he had not yet investigated the rights of contractors regarding access and the potential to impose bonds.

Mr Shaw stated that he had been contacted by DOC Wellington regarding his query on Blue Ducks and was pleased with the response. He thanked Paul Hardy for his efforts on this.

Councillors thanked Paul Hardy for his regular attendance at council meetings on behalf of the Department of Conservation.

5. CORRESPONDENCE:

Emails were tabled from:

Graham Pyatt, Anne and Kevin Julian thanking Adam Daniel for his professionalism in their recent encounters with him while trout fishing. Councillors agreed that this was excellent feedback and great for the image of Fish & Game. Councillor Annan also expressed his appreciation for the professionalism shown by David Klee with his interactions with hunters and their families during the recent duck banding days in the Waikato.

It was agreed that the remaining correspondence be considered in committee when discussing the New Zealand Fish & Game Council meeting of 14th and 15th February 2020.

It was moved;
that all correspondence be accepted.

Annan/Shaw - CARRIED

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

Mr Dyer was asked why the number of ducks banded was low at some sites. He replied that there were problems with turkeys and with neighbouring properties feeding out.

Mr Dyer was asked about the King Country trend count. He replied that numbers were near the threshold and the data/report would be provided at the next council meeting.

Mr Wilson reported that they would be advising licence holders in the pre-season newsletter that a special season in the King Country was likely in 2021. Councillor Kerr enquired as to whether the hunt would be for junior hunters only, but in reply it was agreed that the thresholds applied only to the length of the season.

Mr Foster spoke on his considerable concern regarding the ongoing botulism outbreak in the Hauraki Plains. He thanked David Klee for his effort in coordinating a response to the outbreaks, which was the worst Mr Foster had seen in the 66 years he had hunted in this area. He noted that it was also affecting birds in the Kopuatai Peat Dome. Mr Foster had

been carrying out weekly sweeps of the Piako River, which he described as an absolute sewer and the carnage was shocking. He would have liked to see more councillors involved.

Councillor Shane Smith agreed that the situation was terrible but noted that there had been councillor involvement and that he had spent the last three weekends assisting with cleaning up dying birds. The Upper Piako Management Group had also been actively involved.

Mr Foster stressed his concern that DOC had not met their responsibilities for controlling the outbreak and had a long history of not adequately managing wetlands on the Plains.

Mr Foster was thanked by the chairman for his comments.

After further discussion it was moved;
that staff report back to council on whether effort should be diverted from the banding programme to controlling botulism outbreaks.

Cooks/Juby - CARRIED

Mr Wilson informed councillors that staff were preparing for several hearings concerning discharges from wastewater treatment plants including the Open Country Dairy factory discharge into the Piako catchment. He recommended that Council considers using funds from the non-resident levy to employ external water quality experts to provide supporting evidence. Because the non-resident levy was placed in a discretionary fund, there was a process involving consultations with the other Fish & Game regions and the New Zealand Fish & Game Council to gain approval for the use of these reserves.

Mr Wilson emphasised that the standard of recent submission prepared by staff was very high, especially due to the efforts and expertise of Jane Shaw and Anna Sintenie. However, they had been at a disadvantage in recent hearings in not having access to independent experts.

It was moved;
that council applies to the New Zealand Fish & Game Council for up to \$20,000 from the Auckland/Waikato non-resident fund for the funding of water quality experts to assist in RMA advocacy work.

Williamson/Annan - CARRIED

Mr Foster left the meeting at 12:06pm.

Councillor Annan informed the meeting that there was no notification about the recent Northern Paradise Shelduck season on the Fish & Game website. Mr Wilson apologised for this oversight and briefly commented on the issues with using the website.

Councillor Juby agreed that the website had problems, and this was acknowledged by the New Zealand Fish & Game Council and would be addressed.

In reply to a question, Dr Daniel updated councillors on the access issues to the upper Whakapapa River noting that the CE of NZFGC, Martin Taylor, had been very helpful on this matter.

It was moved;

that the Chief Executive's bi-monthly report to be accepted.

Smith/Annan - CARRIED

Mr Wilson introduced the financial report emphasising that a budget deficit was likely due to the renovations of the office complex.

It was moved;

that the financial report be accepted.

Smith/Annan - CARRIED

The meeting rose for lunch at 12:30pm and resumed at 1pm.

7. NZF&G Strategic Communications Plan:

The draft NZ Council communications strategy was tabled.

The spokesperson policy was discussed and each point accepted or rejected as noted below:

- Coordinate all media activity through the NZC Comms Team. **Rejected**
- Empower the Chief Executive of the NZC to serve as official spokesperson on public policy issues and in appropriate high-profile media opportunities, and, where appropriate, the South Island and North Island Communication Advisors. **Rejected**
- Agree that only the Chief Executive and the NZC Comms Team, or staff nominated by them (either generally or on particular matters), may provide official comment to the media on behalf of Fish & Game New Zealand and the New Zealand Fish and Game Council. On matters related to governance, the New Zealand Fish and Game Chairperson may speak to the media on behalf of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council. **Rejected**
- Where an issue or topic is run by the NZC, in the first instance the NZC takes the lead on responding. Regions are empowered to localise these issues after talking with the NZC Comms team. **Rejected**
- NZC office has authority to take over any regional media engagement if it's in the national interest. **Rejected**

- NZC office will maintain a nationwide network of media Spokespersons, who represent Fish & Game in regional media markets and on topics of expertise who are invited by the NZC Office to speak on campaigns as needed – e.g. Fish & Game scientists, regional experts, managers etc. **Rejected**
- NZC office will organise a training program for Spokespersons including media training. **Accepted**
- NZFGC office will provide media relations guidance and support to the regional Fish & Game Councils. **Accepted**

The media policy was discussed and each point accepted or rejected as noted below:

- Fish & Game New Zealand has a strong commitment to no surprises – regions do not engage with media without first informing NZC Comms Teram, and the NZC Comms Team keeps regions informed in advance of its media activity, particularly when its media activity has a regional focus. **Rejected**
- Regions are empowered to comment on and issue media statements on local issues subject to checking in with the NZC Comms team before commenting. **Accepted**
- All media enquiries relating to Fish & Game New Zealand policies, operations and issues received by a staff member or a region must be directed to the NZC Comms team, who will, in consultation with the NZC and/or the regional Manager/Chief Executive, where appropriate, determine a spokesperson to address the enquiry. This spokesperson is then responsible for coordinating the gathering of relevant information and communicating with the media. The roles of spokespeople are further outlined in the spokesperson policy above. **Rejected**
- Any staff member or region who becomes aware of an issue or event that has the potential to impact significantly on the NZC and Fish & Game New Zealand’s reputation or stakeholder relationships must immediately notify the NZC Comms team. The staff member must not make any comment to the media, even if it is the media who have alerted him or her to the issue/event. The NZC Comms Team will then follow the above policy to determine who the spokesperson should be. **Rejected**
- The research by Fish & Game scientists is a critical element in underpinning the credibility of what the organisation says on various issues. It also provides valuable opportunities for proactive media. Fish & Game Comms team will ensure it keeps exploring opportunities to better harness the research. **Accepted**
- Fish & Game New Zealand is committed to following its style guide attached in appendix one **Accepted (but concerns over American spelling style)**

The digital/social media policy was discussed and each point accepted or rejected as noted below:

- Fish & Game New Zealand runs Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn pages. **Accepted**
- Fish & Game national communications advisors alongside the Business Development Manager manages all social media engagement. Regional staff will get access to the pages for local posts in line with the digital and social media strategy. **Rejected**
- all digital channels will be managed centrally **Rejected**
- only one facebook page to operate (similarly for any other channels), regions to only post approved content **Rejected**
- Social media guidelines for the type of content that can be posted, and to which channel and an approval process for content will be developed and a commitment to a weekly content schedule which will be circulated and discussed **Accepted**
- Fish & Game New Zealand notes that influencers can play a part in carrying Fish & Game's messages through their own channels and through earned media. Identifying anglers and hunters with profile would help Fish & Game expand those who can talk on their issues, particularly through blogs and opinion pieces. Most importantly, influencers strengthen Fish & Game's voice so help get greater cut through. The NZC is committed to investigating how to develop Fish & Game 'ambassadors' to provide a fresh voice on issues. **Accepted**

Mr Wilson updated councillors on current policy, which was that all media releases, including social media, had to be approved by either himself or the chairman. He noted for example that David Klee had obtained his approval before posting on Facebook about the recent botulism outbreak.

Councillors emphasised their lack of confidence in the national office to competently handle regional media issues, especially given the considerable adverse impact of recent media campaigns on the relationship between Fish & Game and the local rural community.

It was moved;

that the NZF&GC be informed of Councils concerns with the draft communication strategy.

Cocks/Juby - CARRIED

Mr Hardy left the meeting at 2:05pm.

8. OSH REPORT:

Mr Wilson summarised the OSH report and noted that staff were considering options for dealing with the potential coronavirus epidemic.

It was moved;
that the OSH report be accepted.

Smith/Kerr - CARRIED

9. NZF&GC Meeting 14th and 15th February 2020

The meeting moved into committee at 2:05pm.

It was moved;
that Council moves into public excluded meeting

Smith/Annan - CARRIED

REASON UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982	SECTION	PLAIN ENGLISH REASON	WHEN REPORT CAN BE RELEASED
Protect the privacy of natural persons	Sec.9(2)(a)	Information provided identifies a particular person or can easily be connected with a particular person.	Once the person to whom the information relates consents to its disclosure

The meeting moved out of committee at 2:39pm.

It was moved;
that Council moves out of public excluded meeting.

Annan/Avery - CARRIED

10. GENERAL BUSINESS:

Councillor Sherrard suggested that the other F&G regions be informed that all chairman correspondence should be sent to both the chairman and vice-chairmen of the Auckland/Waikato Council. Mr Wilson agreed to do this.

The non-attendance of council meetings by Mr B. Moore was discussed.

Councillor Kerr asked whether council was controlling hunters on the Lake Waikare property. He expressed his concerns over goat carcasses left by hunters. Mr Wilson replied that they had a booking system for the property. He agreed to inform hunters using the property that they shouldn't leave carcasses.

Councillor Kerr inquired whether council had a list of maimai owners on Lake Waikare as it was a good time to remove derelict maimai due to low water levels. Mr Dyer replied

that no such list existed that was up to date.

Councillor Shaw suggested that the recent changes in the game season regulations be promoted in a press release to the farming media.

Councillor Shaw informed the meeting that he would be assisting with a "Town to Country" farm day on Sunday and it was a good opportunity to promote Fish & Game.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 2.50pm.

AGENDA ITEM 5

The Manager
Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council
156 Brymer Road
R.D. 9
HAMILTON.
27th February 2020.

Attention: Ben Wilson/Adam Daniel.

Dear Sirs,

Re: Annual fish releases into Lake Pupuke.

I am writing in my capacity as President of the North Shore Fly Fishers Club Inc.

Following discussion within our club membership and committee, I would like to relay formally, that our club no longer supports the release of trout into Lake Pupuke on Auckland's North Shore.

We have taken this stance in the light of recently published findings indicating a serious decline in the water quality in the lake which, (anecdotally), is supported by our members' observations of the poor condition of the few fish caught. Even only a few weeks after release, the fish show a marked reduction in condition.

Given the very considerable costs involved in purchasing and transporting the fish, we consider that those funds could probably be better redirected elsewhere.

Yours sincerely,

David Symes
President North Shore Fly Fishers Club Inc.

2/11A Hauraki Road.
Hauraki
Auckland 0622
021673045/ 09 4866257

Ben Wilson

From: Dave Malcolm <dmalcolmnz@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, 1 March 2020 4:25 pm
To: Ben Wilson
Subject: Remit from Hamilton Fish and Game Association

Auckland/Waikato region traditionally hold a special Paradise Duck Weekend (subject to sufficient numbers) North of the Harbour Bridge to align with the Northland Regions special weekend season in late February each year. This weekend has recently included an allowance for Pukekos.

Hamilton Fish and Game Association remit:

- That a special weekend Pukeko season be established for the whole of the Auckland/Waikato region to align with the special Paradise Duck and Pukeko season north of the Harbour Bridge
- This would only include private land and not Fish and Game or DOC land
- This would encourage farmers and young hunters to get out and control some birds at a critical time of the year
- Farmers may wish to register their interest with AWF&GC to get some assistance

Cheers

Dave Malcolm
Chairman
Hamilton Fish and Game Association (Inc.)
423 Tauwhare Road
RD 3, Hamilton 3283
New Zealand
Mobile: +64 274 879 002

Bi-Monthly Chief Executive's Report

Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Meeting March 2020

OUTPUT 1: SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Project 1111 – Drift Diving

Drift dives were completed at the Whakapapa River at Owhango. The traditional dive at the footbridge was not accessible due to the closure of the Whakapapa Intake Road by the new landowner.

Project 1112 - Banding.

A juvenile female mallard banded at Pipiroa on 13th January this year was recovered 1,970km away, exhausted but otherwise healthy just over 3 weeks later in Lifou Island. Shortly after this, we learnt of another banded drake mallard being recovered on the same island, which was banded at Pipiroa the day after the female one. And it seems there was a third mallard present, though it did not have a band. At least, with all the calm fine weather around the time of the Pipiroa banding, we can probably rule out a storm as being a likely way these two banded birds might have been blown off course.

Project - 1116 Trend Counts.

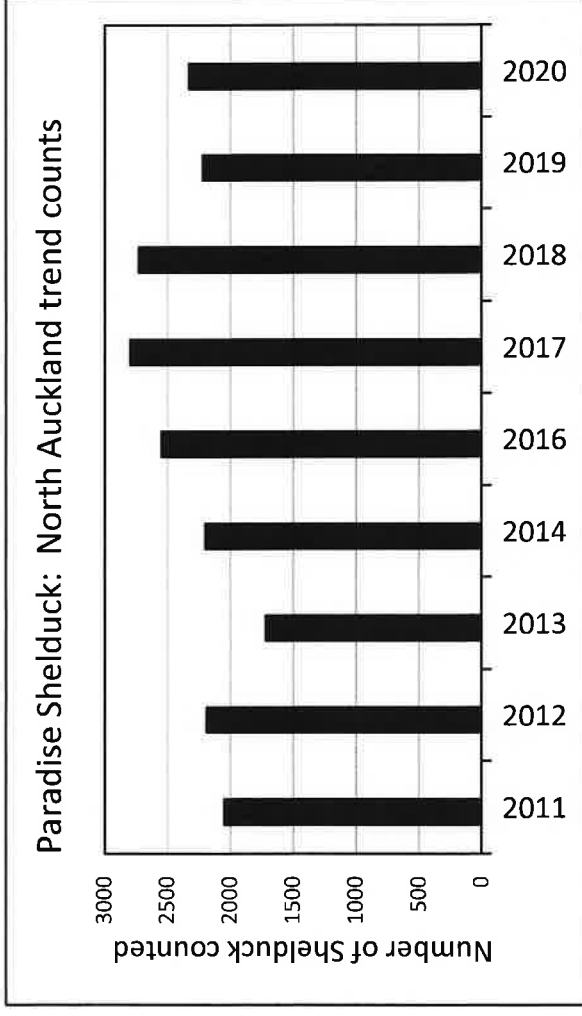
The Northern shelduck trend count, done by Northland F&G manager Rudi Hoetjes and his new staff member Graham Gallagher was well up; 4,846 this year compares with 3,370 last year. However there were several new sites contributing to this total, and the designated survey sites show only a slight increase (Graph 1). Only 64 people applied for a Special Parry permit this year. The number of permits issued for this season has been declining steadily for a number of years, roughly half of the peak number now. Therefore, this is the last year for permits. From 2021 this special season will instead be gazetted and shown in the regulation booklet.

Hunters checked seemed more than happy with having lots of birds about, with hotspots from Kaukapakapa to Waipu checked. However popular fields in past years in some cases were empty as maize had either been planted elsewhere this year on the farm or not at all, or it was late to be harvested and still standing. That all had quite an influence on where the birds (and hunters) were. Also new housing has since popped up in two popular spots ruling them out now and in future.

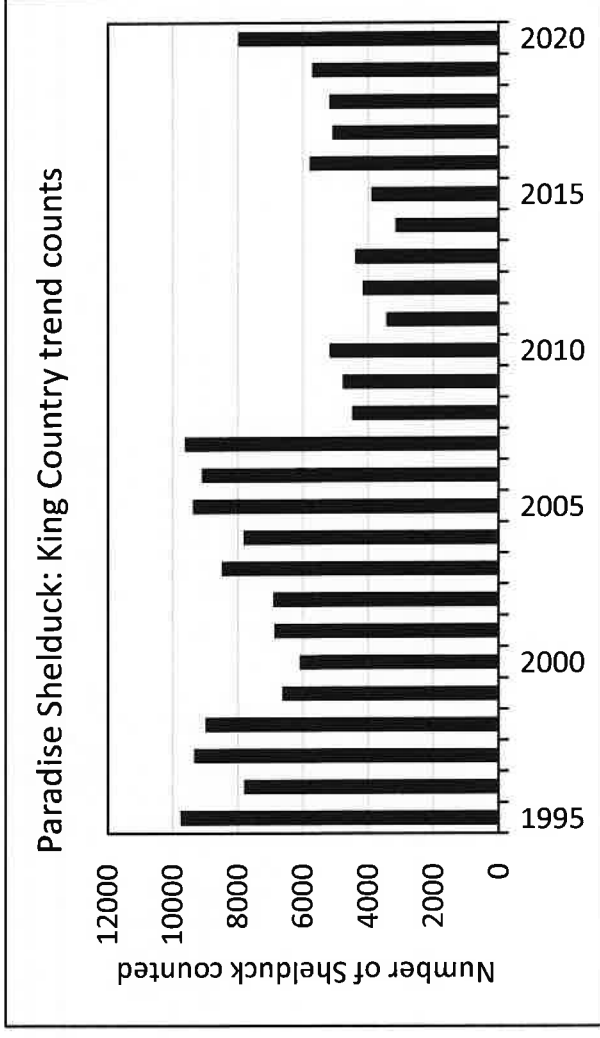
The paradise shelduck trend count this year in the King Country comfortably exceeded the threshold for a Special Season for a weekend and nudged the next threshold for a 1 week, 2 weekend season (Graph 2). The season is not gazetted and thus permits will need to be issued in 2021 however. We can use Both Barrels and similar publicity to forewarn hunters of this forthcoming season.

Swan numbers also seem to be up somewhat this year in the Western Harbours / Waikato Lakes trend count compared with 2019 (Graph 3). Since we are flying above the Canadian

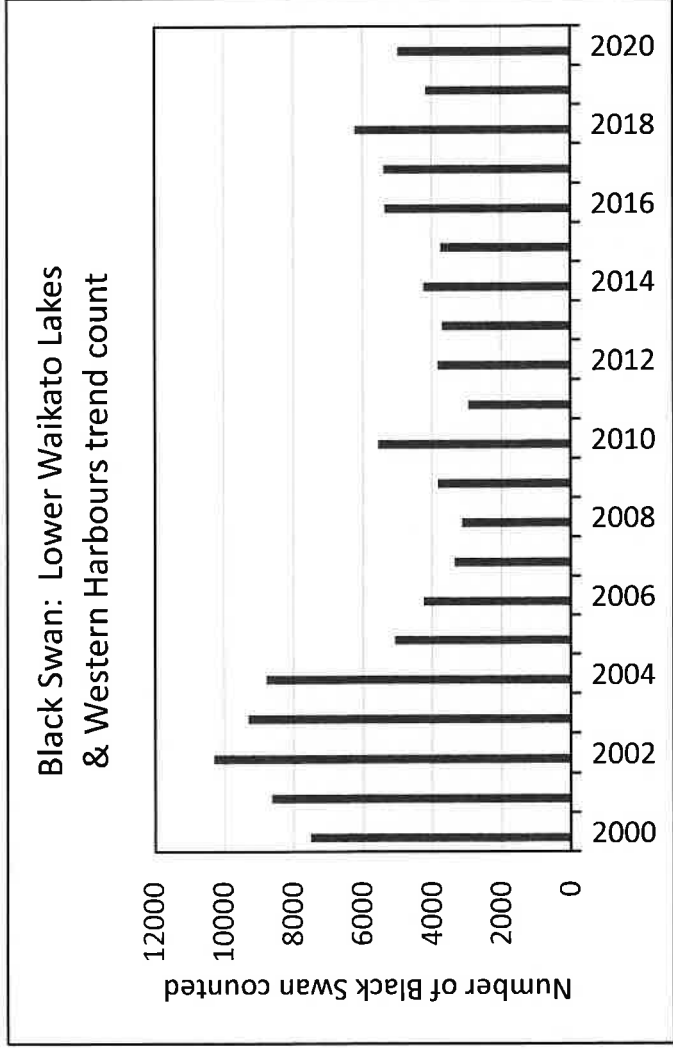
geese sharing habitat with the black swan, we count them anyway. This year their numbers were somewhat down when compared with 2019 (Graph 4).



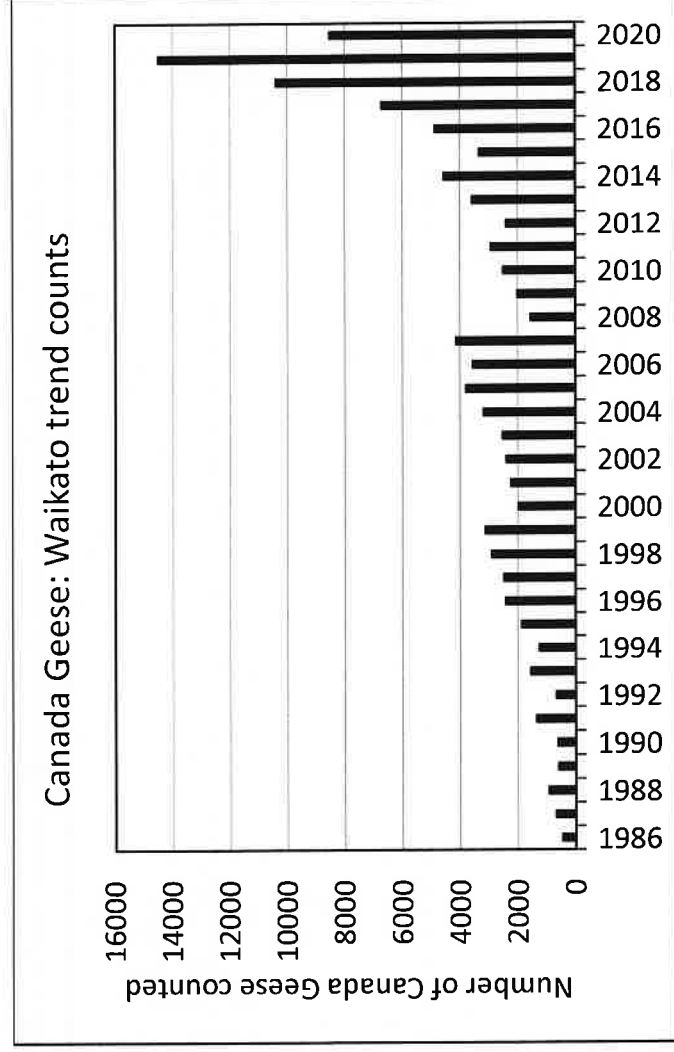
Graph 1: Paradise Shelduck trend count North Auckland



Graph 2: Paradise Shelduck trend count King Country



Graph 3: Black swan trend count in Western Harbours and Waikato Lakes.



Graph 4: Canada geese trend count, Western Harbours and Waikato Lakes.

Project 1161 - Trout Releases

Preparation for testing of sterile trout to ensure the fry are in fact sterile was arranged for March 6th with the University of Waikato.

Project 1181 – Gamebird Control

Botulism: As you will be aware David Klee met with DOC and formulated a joint media release discussing the issues that staff from both agencies have faced this summer. A copy of the full press release has been provided to councillors. The issues in this system, tie in strongly to our RMA advocacy role and the now numerous consent submissions and hearings we have attended in order to reduce the cumulative impacts on the lower Piako/Firth of Thames environment.

Mr Dyer was told that Watercare’s WWTP at Mangere had only had 2 botulism cases this summer and those were back in November. He decided to investigate himself. Found 21 dead birds and 8 sick ones, all parries and mallards plus one dead shoveler. These birds were in various states of decay, from quite old to recent. If they are indeed doing daily checks out there, they will hopefully now be more observant following this unannounced “audit” .

Also followed up was a stormwater site at Narrow Neck, near Devonport. A local volunteer has been doing what he can to remove dead birds, rescue sick ones and provide freshwater for the numerous ducks still remaining. Mr Dyer’s second visit was to assess what progress was being made pumping out the stagnant black pond water and exchanging it with fresh, which has been going on for a number of days now. Auckland Council’s pump was already permanently on site, just not being used. Auckland Council has not only been pumping the site but also provided a contractor who does daily checks for sick/dead birds. It has been decided not to put barley bales in this pond this year as there is a trial planned shortly, in April, for a nano-bubbler. This new device, if successful, is aimed at reducing odour complaints but any improvement in water quality should hopefully also assist with botulism issues in future.

OUTPUT 2 HABITAT PROTECTION/MANAGEMENT

Project 1211 RMA

Waitomo Wastewater Treatment Plant: Further to February’s update, Jane Shaw visited the site and met with representatives from Tourism Holdings Ltd. The company has, in the last week, approved a significant amount of work to be completed at the site which will assist the site in treating the waste it receives. Discussions will continue with Tourism Holdings Ltd to explore whether a common goal can be identified and incorporated into the site’s new resource consent that enables a reduction in their impact upon the Waitomo Stream and for the application to progress without a Hearing.

Ohinewai/ Ambury Development: There is ongoing work relating to this proposal and discussions with representatives continue. There appears to be a move towards the

developer investing in the Huntly Wastewater Treatment Plant for the treatment of the wastewater. This seems a more realistic option in comparison to the previous proposal for the wastewater to be treated at a temporary plant whilst waiting for the multi-region treatment plant to be built. Details of the proposed upgrade to Huntly WWTP will be sought at the next meeting.

We are providing information to the consultants on the recreational use of the area for assessment by their noise consultants in relation to the reverse sensitivity covenants we are seeking. We are also following up on the flood level assessments in relation to the Whangamarino Wetland to seek clarification on the impact of raising water levels (a potential option for the wetland in future).

Resource Consent Applications: Recently Jane met with Waikato Regional Council to discuss the resource consent process, the management of consent breaches and their views on AWF&G's work in this area. Their feedback was really positive, they welcomed our input on Resource Consent applications and are happy to assist in sharing information relating to discharges to water so discussions with applicants can start at an earlier stage enabling more cohesive applications to be submitted.

District Council Meetings: All District Councils/ City Councils in the AWF&G region have been proactively contacted to discuss their wastewater treatment strategies and operations. The objective of this is to work to establish strong working relationships with them, discuss the key legal drivers relating to their discharges, understanding their investment plans and work with them through their Resource Consent applications before they submit them to the Regional Council.

Puke Coal: Following on from our submission on their application, a site visit will be completed early in March. This will assess the general management of the site and approach to site operations and compliance. Several conditions have proposed by the applicant to improve their stormwater management and the suitability of these will be reviewed whilst on site.

Fonterra Waitoa: A site visit is planned for early March to review the site operations in relation to their stormwater discharges. They have applied to discharge stormwater into the Waitoa River to Waikato Regional Council. The objective of the meeting is to discuss the changes proposed, possibilities for optimisation to reduce product loss into the stormwater system and monitoring programs.

“Healthy Environments” - Waikato Resource Management Plan: Anna Sintenie has drafted the feedback for WRC. The focus is around ensuring there is integrated management between coastal waters, freshwater and inland catchments. There is strong policy support for this approach, and it is the only way for regional plans to restore degraded coastal ecosystems such as estuaries. The Council has extended the consultation period for another month, so Anna has discussed concerns and the best angle for submission with DOC planners.

Open Country Dairy: Disappointingly the applicant failed to follow through with agreed actions from our last meeting and we received no further correspondence or updated consent conditions that reflected some of the agreements. This continues the ongoing theme of failure of OCD to honour its commitments. Subsequently WRC released its section 42A assessment of the application and in an unprecedented move, at least in David's working history recommended that the application be declined outright. David is currently working on his expert evidence for the hearing at the end of March.

We are working with DOC to co-ordinate evidence and are pleased to see the Council experts will be presenting evidence on some key aspects of our case. This is a promising development.

Our focus at hearing will be covering off matters that may not be covered by expertise from other parties. We are looking at far field cumulative effects on the wetland and Firth of Thames, and concerns for gamebird populations. We will also look to have our previous MOU with Open Country Dairy put before the Commissioners.

Thames WWTP: Further progress has been made to try and find a mutually agreeable outcome. It was acknowledged by the applicant that the consent conditions previously applied for were not in keeping with their application which continually reference no increase in contaminant loading. The newly proposed limits are a step in the right direction but still allow for some increases to some contaminants loads. One of the main issues is that no significant upgrade is planned for the site. David has requested analysis and costing of further treatment options particularly to decrease P, as this could be done through dosing without requiring significant infrastructural investment. Also, and perhaps of greater direct consequence to F&G is that 1300 dead birds have been removed from the site this year, multiple requests have been made for further information as to other provisions in the draft botulism plan especially what preventative measures were taken, but we have not received a response. Birds are continuing to frequent the site and die which is hugely disappointing, especially since staff were first provided with our botulism management plan some 5 years ago and the contractor is aware of the issue from other sites they manage.

Cambridge WWTP: The hearing for this will likely be delayed until at least the end of May due to the applicant seeking an extension to reach an MOU with other parties. Ultimately the Waipa DC is seeking to rely on the long-term development of a south Waikato "sub-regional" wastewater treatment solution. It is effectively arguing that investment in improvements in the meantime will detract from this long-term project. By Waipa DC's admission, this long-term project would take at the very least 10 years to come to fruition, which is even longer than the current application for an interim consent. It is disappointing to see the Waipa DC is taking a cynical approach to the Vision and Strategy: minimising investment into its part in restoring the Waikato River, banking on water quality being unimproved over that time in its projections.

A recent memo from Waipa DC suggests Waipa are also going to rely heavily on the "single nutrient" approach to justify a massive increase in N load (i.e. that as long as they manage Phosphorous, it doesn't matter that they increase Nitrogen). They are arguing that Pukekohe is a precedent to do so. We are concerned that there will be effects from the

increase in N. We are also concerned that if Waipa succeed in this argument, it could be applied more widely. This would entrench the Nitrogen input levels for many years to come. We are investigating avenues for rebuttal including high quality witnesses.

National Developments: The National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity is under consultation. Anna has reviewed it and considers it takes some good steps in the prevention of further biodiversity loss and attempts to increase indigenous vegetation cover. There is certainly more that could be done, including ensuring that incremental changes from wetland or indigenous grassland to pasture are not entrained. Anna considers the NPSIB is unlikely to impact greatly on Fish and Game restoration works and projects, with activities associated with restoration projects being identified as having value in the NPS. The National Office has proposed a submission, and suggestions have been made by regional officers. The feedback has been largely consistent with our own reading.

Project 1221 – Council Land

Piggott Wetland:

Several hunters noticed dead birds on this block, in one case being cleaned up by a hawk, (which is something in the hawk's favour, as it reduces the amount of maggoty meat remaining that could potentially spread infection). The question was; where were these birds coming from? An investigation showed that Watercare's adjoining Tuakau Waste Water Treatment Plant had at least hundred or more dead waterfowl that had died over a prolonged period. However, when discussing it with staff there, Mr Dyer learnt that complaints from horse-owning neighbours meant that a Zon-gun was not considered a practical option to move healthy birds on. However, so-called shell-crackers or bird-frites were something unknown to Watercare staff there and they were keen for their contractor to try this option. A large amount of alligator weed was also growing at the water treatment site, some of which is starting to show up on the Piggott Block where ironically we have had to provide a Pest Plant Control Plan for it to Regional Council. However, Watercare have said they have plans to spray this persistent weed again shortly.

Project 1231 – Other Land

Wetland Projects. David has managed the earthworks component for 3 projects which are being funded by WCEET, WRC GBHT and the landowners, creating close to 7 Ha of new wetland and riparian habitat at a total value of \$141,000.

Project 1241 Assessment and monitoring (water quality study)

The Lake O discharge has continued to pollute the Whanganui River. Similar to last summer, suspended solids in the discharge are far higher than the water being taken out of the Whakapapa or Whanganui. Adam has informed Genesis Energy staff of the issue and is yet to get a response that would indicate what monitoring NIWA are doing on this issue. Adam is currently preparing a report on his monitoring programme.

OUTPUT 3 PARTICIPATION

Project 1311 Access negotiation

Adam met with DOC on the Whakapapa Intake Road, DOC staff indicated that the road should be open for driving access and that they would meet with the new owners to discuss mediation. An angler also phoned in to inform staff that he had first hand knowledge of an agreement with DOC for the new owners of the former Landcorp station to swap land with DOC for a wastewater disposal site. The angler has given a sworn statement.

Adam, Jack Kos, Brian Anderton and Martin Taylor met with the CEO of the Walking access commission on the Whakapapa Intake Road issue. Both parties agreed to push the issue as far as it needs to go including potential court action.

Project 1341 – Other Publications

OUTPUT 4: PUBLIC INTERFACE

Media Release- David and DOC staff put together a joint media release highlighting the issues in the lower Piako catchment this summer.

Reel Life has been focused on communicating the Whakapapa Intake issued as we have received over a dozen calls and or emails about the lack of access.

Project 1431 - Liaison advocacy

RiverCare meeting - David attended the latest RiverCare meeting.

Adam has been involved in the CCD, gave a talk to the North Shore Fly Fishers.

OUTPUT 5 LAW ENFORCEMENT

Project 1511 – Ranging/Training

Adam contributed to the legal case against N. Lockley, who was convicted of fishing without a licence.

Project 1531 – Legal

Adam attended the Freshwater Biosecurity Partnership Programme Steering group meeting in Auckland to represent the National Fish and Game Council.

**B. Wilson,
Chief Executive**