

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 200th MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT THE ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW
ZEALAND ON THURSDAY 9th FEBRUARY 2023 AT 11.30AM**

Present

Crs. Ngahi Bidois, Murray Ferris, Kevin Coutts, Debbie Oakley, Lindsay Lyons, Mike Jarvie, Mark Sceats, Alan Simmonds, Jay Tapsell, and Scott Nicol.

IN ATTENDANCE

Arash Alaeinia, Kate Thompson, Matt Osborne (12.24pm), Mark Sherburn (12.35pm), Eben Herbert (12.47pm) (Eastern Fish & Game); John Waaka (TALT), and Barry Roderick.

1.0 WELCOME AND KARAKIA

- 1.1 Cr Ngahi Bidois (Chairman) opened the meeting at 11.30am with a karakia and welcomed John Waaka (Te Arawa Lakes Trust) to the meeting.
- 1.2 Cr Ngahi Bidois (Chairman) informed Council that he wished to add a Public Excluded Session to the end of today's meeting to update Council on items from the Public Excluded session held at the December meeting.

APOLOGIES

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Crs. Geoff Thomas and Ken Coombes.
- 2.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mark Sceats) that the apologies for the 200th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [23/02/2.2]*

3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (8 DECEMBER 2022)

- 3.1 *Agreed (Ngahi Bidois/Mike Jarvie) that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct subject to the following amendment.*
 - 14.1 - 1 October Opening
Amend all references pertaining to "Julian Danby" to "Julian Hughes". [23/02/3.1]

4.0 IDENTIFICATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN COUNCIL POLICY

- 4.1 No items were identified for inclusion in Council policy.

5.0 MATTERS ARISING

- 5.1 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting on 8 December 2022.

6.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS

- 6.1 Kevin Coutts – Councillor numbers for next election
Mike Jarvie – Building and site maintenance
Alan Simmonds – Pine tree situation across NZ

7.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER

- 7.1 Councillors were asked to inform the chair of any conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were recorded.

8.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS

8.1 *Health and Safety Report* – Arash Alaeinia informed Council that a staff member had recently suffered a sprained ankle and with this being so recent this was not included in the Health & Safety report. Barry Roderick expressed concern about the health and safety of volunteers assisting with duck banding and Arash Alaeinia advised he would liaise with staff about this. Cr Lindsay Lyons enquired as to whether a flotation device should be available for the children’s fish out pond in case a child falls. Arash advised that he would look into this but, as the property is a working site with multiple water hazards questioned, where do we draw the line. There was signage on the property informing visitors that children must be supervised at all times and expected that an adult would be nearby should such an incident occur. Cr Debbie Oakley suggested that it is management’s role to identify hazards and eliminate or minimise with appropriate records kept.

8.2 ***Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Scott Nicol) that Council receives the Health and Safety report. [23/02/8.2]***

8.3 *Finance Report* – Cr Debbie Oakley enquired whether the credit card in the name of Andy Garrick had now been closed, Kate Thompson confirmed it had. Debbie had also noted increased Council meeting expenses resulting from Councillor travel allowances and suggested that a higher budget be sought through contestable funding for the 2023-24 budget round. Cr Lindsay Lyons noted the spending on the lapsed participant email campaign and questioned the number sent and whether we can determine how effective this was. Kate Thompson confirmed that it was possible to see those who have since repurchased but difficult to ascertain whether they had repurchased because of the email campaign versus those who would have repurchased anyway. Further discussion occurred around retention, R3 objectives, and distribution of licence proceeds between Fish & Game regions.

8.4 ***Agreed (Murray Ferris/Kevin Coutts) that Council receives the Finance Report and approves payments for November and December 2022 totalling \$353,148.35. [23/02/8.4]***

8.5 *Management Report* – Management report was taken as read.

8.6 *Licence Sales Report* – Kate Thompson provided a more recent update on licence sales Key points noted were:

- The current variance is down on last season but with continued return of non-resident anglers throughout the season we expect to see year end results on a par with last season.
- It was concerning to see the numbers falling in the family and season categories. These being made up by Auckland Waikato based anglers followed by Rotorua and Tauranga and a smaller decline in Taupo.
- Gisborne and Wairoa numbers have increased this season, and this is likely contributed to by Lake Waikaremoana now able to be fished without too many restrictions.
- Four weeks of Eastern’s peak sales period had seen very poor weather.

Cr Lindsay Lyons expressed concern about the effects of climate change on New Zealand fisheries and how this will impact non-resident visiting anglers. Arash Alaeinia agreed that we have had some concerning weather events but highlighted that we are seeing good numbers of international anglers returning, and the lakes are fishing well albeit some of the streams have been impacted by these weather events. Cr Debbie Oakley agreed advising that NZ is certainly a destination of choice with international

anglers currently. Barry Roderick asked whether we were looking to run the “Fish for Gold” event once again this season? Arash Alaeinia said he would liaise with staff but understood that prior Fish for Gold promotions had not materially increased angler numbers as hoped. He advised that staff are involved with supporting organisations and clubs who run these competitions as opposed to running the promotions ourselves.

9.0 GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE 2023-24 OWP

9.1 Arash Alaeinia overviewed the purpose of the item and called for Council discussion around whether the current priorities should be carried through to the 2023-24 operational year or whether there were changes that Council wished to consider or have staff look in to. He advised he had commenced discussions with staff and that following this meeting he would look to formulate a draft OWP for the April meeting of Council. He reminded Council that with such limited resources any reasonable additions to work programmes would need to be offset by a reduction in effort elsewhere.

9.2 After some discussion Council concluded that the current priorities were still relevant and should be carried through to the 2023-24 work programme. Council discussion included.

- Climate change
- Economic recession
- Banding project costs and F & G role in monitoring populations
- Trend counts
- Access to Kaingaroa forest
- Ruahihi canal/Lake McLaren fishery
- Utilisation of a drone to assist with some monitoring
- MPI contribution to the banding programme
- Operational relationship with Hawke’s Bay F & G Council
- Wetlands – new requirements for farms
- Water quality – Rangitaiki river
- MPS Freshwater – consents required to enhance or maintain wetland habitats
- Fuseworks – access for Councillors

9.3 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Lindsay Lyons) that Council agreed that the current Council Priorities as detailed would be carried through to 2023-2024 Operational Work Programme. [23/02/9.3]*

10.0 ANGLERS NOTICE REVIEW

10.1 Matt Osborne highlighted the need to amend note 5.2 of the Anglers Notice following the December meeting resolution in which Council supported reverting the opening of lakes Tarawera, Rotoiti, and Okataina back to the 1st of October. Note 5.2 related to anglers fishing from boats in winter shoreline areas “from 1 July until the 1st Saturday in October”, Matt Osborne advised that this needed to be amended to “from 1 July until 1 October”.

10.2 Matt Osborne also highlighted an issue that had be raised by Compliance staff relating to the landmark pole at the Lake Rotorua end of the Ohau Channel. It is currently situated approximately 10 meters above the weir on the Ramada Resort side of the Channel and is often obscured by trees. There is no landmark pole on the Takinga Street side. To make the limits clearer for anglers’ staff proposed that the fly fishing only upstream limit be moved back to the Lake Rotorua outlet weir. Council supported

this proposal and confirmed that no further consultation was required for this minor change.

- 10.3 Barry Roderick relayed a story to Council regarding Czech Nymphing where he understood that large numbers of trout had been caught using this method. Barry highlighted the argument put to Council previously that spin fishing was considered detrimental to a particular “fly fishing only” river and questioned whether Czech Nymphing should not also be considered in this light as this method seemed far more detrimental than spin fishing. Barry suggested that Council may wish to review what is happening in Europe as Czech Nymphing had been banned in several countries.
- 10.4 ***Agreed (Murray Ferris/Debbie Oakley) that Council agrees with the consultation process and time frame for considering changes to the 2023-2024 Anglers Notice [23/02/10.4]***
- 10.5 ***Agreed (Murray Ferris/Debbie Oakley) that Council did not identify any issues for further discussion for the 2023-24 Anglers Notice but suggested that Czech Nymphing be incorporated for further discussion next year when a full review of the Anglers Notice will be undertaken. [23/02/10.5]***
- 10.6 ***Agreed (Murray Ferris/Debbie Oakley) that Council approves the amendment to Note 5.2 of the Anglers Notice to read “No licence holder shall fish for trout from a boat in the designated winter shoreline-fishing areas on lakes Tarawera, Rotoiti, and Okataina from 1 July until 1 October”. [23/02/10.6]***
- 10.7 ***Agreed (Murray Ferris/Debbie Oakley) that Council approves the amendment to the fly fishing only area of the Ohau Channel to read “between the lake Rotorua Outlet weir and landmark approximately 200m downstream of the weir”. [23/02/10.7]***

11.0 LIAISON OFFICER REPORTS

11.1 ***Report from the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board.***

No Report

11.2 ***Report from the Department of Conservation***

No Report

11.3 ***Report from the New Zealand Council***

The New Zealand Council was due to meet in the coming days and Cr Debbie Oakley asked for Council feedback on a proposal to remove the current exemption on use of lead shot in 410 shot guns within 200m of water. There were mixed opinions from Council and pros and cons identified included.

- the 410 was not originally designed to shoot ducks
- low use, predominantly by kids, small impact on environment
- used by some older hunters also
- same range, not as much shot
- wounding, happens with 12g too
- social licence
- best option for juniors to learn with
- Canada geese can be shot with lead over water at any time
- Police phasing out lead in firearms due to lead residue
- nontoxic shot was not available for 410's when steel shot introduced for sub gauges, there is now a reasonable number of non-toxic options available overseas

12.0 GAME BIRD HABITAT TRUST NOMINEE

12.1 Cr Ngahi Bidois called for nominations for the Game Bird Habitat Trust. Barry Roderick was nominated but declined as he was not available. Arash Alaeinia suggested Andy Garrick as a possible nominee and a staff member had also mentioned Erin Garrick who also comes from an environmental background. Cr Mike Jarvie asked whether Andy had been contacted. Arash confirmed that he had, and Andy was happy to be considered but Erin had not been contacted as her name had only been mentioned recently.

12.2 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Murray Ferris) that council supports the nomination of Andy Garrick for the Game Bird Habitat Trust Board. [23/02/12.2]*

13.0 DRAFT FUTURE EASTERN FISH & GAME

13.1 Arash advised that this was an opportunity for some robust discussion by Council on the “Future Eastern Fish & Game” and said the paper touches on the point Cr Sceats raised at the last meeting about what can be implemented now that does not require legislative change. Arash advised that he had since received some fantastic and constructive feedback from the staff team on the paper and invited Council to do the same.

13.2 Cr Murray Ferris expressed concern about the proposed “Professional development for elected members”. Murray had been to several of these courses in the past and found them to be expensive and somewhat ineffective. Cr Ngahi Bidois understood that the NZ Fish & Game Council had been working with the Institute of Directors to develop suitable programmes. He described the programmes provided by the Institute of Directors and informed Council that he had completed several of their courses and he had found them to be outstanding. Cr Kevin Coutts was concerned about cost of such courses and felt that the qualifications Councillors come with are sufficient to do the role for which they were elected. Kevin was primarily concerned about whether licence holders would see this as necessary spending of licence holder funds. Cr Debbie Oakley informed Council that a budget had been allocated at a National level for Governance training. She advised that the New Zealand Fish & Game Council had already undertaken some governance training and Council Chairs would follow, it was then expected to be rolled out to Councils. She said it may be that Council’s join with others for this purpose, but details were yet to be confirmed. Debbie reiterated that the Ministerial Review highlighted that Fish & Game needs to improve its governance. Debbie acknowledged that many within the Council will have undertaken governance training previously but felt that it was worthwhile for those who are experienced to sit in on the same training with those who are not or are new to Councils. Arash Alaeinia believed there was two aspects to professional development firstly, even in you have had some form of training there is always new information, new processes, and a refresher reminds you of the things you already know but that are not at the forefront of your mind. Secondly, for those who are new to taking a position on boards it creates an attraction to come and join Fish & Game Council that invests in their Councillors to help them grow and benefit them for opportunities in their future. He said the review had highlighted that our governors need governance training.

13.3 Council were asked for their final comments.

- Cr Scott Nicol felt it was worthwhile to obtain extra knowledge and learn something new and with fewer councillor numbers expected that cost would be reduced.
- Cr Murray Ferris wanted to ensure that the training was professional and relevant.

- Cr Lindsay Lyons highlighted issues with Governance in some regions over the past few years which had ultimately led to the Governance Review.
- Cr Alan Simmonds believed the issues were with one or two regions and did not think anyone on this Council needed governance training, he believed this Council was doing a fine job and acting responsibly and appropriately.
- Cr Kevin Coutts felt it would be more worthwhile to spend the funds on staff development.

13.4 In closing the discussion Cr Ngahi Bidois asked Council to provide feedback on the discussion document directly to Arash once they have had the opportunity to give it some good thought. Arash reiterated that this is the opportunity for us to look at the future Fish & Game we want for Eastern. This is your opportunity, in less than a year there will be a general election and a future Government is more likely to support an organisation that has a plan, a vision, and has unified agreement. He said if we do not act, decisions will be made for us, so asked Council to share with him their views of what they want.

14.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

14.1 Cr Kevin Coutts – Councillor numbers for the next election

Councillor numbers was also an item within the Future Eastern Fish & Game paper and Arash explained why he had proposed 10 seats for this Council in the upcoming election. Cr Kevin Coutts felt that there was little difference in having 10 or 12 Councillors and with the review no longer being enforced there was no real need to change. Cr Debbie Oakley provided background to why the number of 8 had been recommended advising that this provided the opportunity to co-opt or appoint experience that you need. Cr Alan Simmonds suggested that a council of 8 might also increase competition for the people standing. Cr Ngahi Bidois asked that Council also forward their thoughts on Councillor numbers to Arash to incorporate into the next discussion paper.

14.2 Cr Lindsay Lyons spoke of the National party's mandate prior the last election to bring Fish & Game into a sports club of NZ combining with the likes of the Big Game Animal Council and the Canoe Assn. With these ideas about Lindsay reiterated the importance of Fish & Game carrying out the recommendations that had been identified through the review process. Cr Kevin Coutts noted that local MP Todd McClay had been assigned to a Hunting & Fishing portfolio and suggested Council meet with him to understand what his role and ideas would be, should the National party be successful in the upcoming election. Arash Alaeinia advised that following the cancellation of a meeting with Corina Jordan (NZFG CEO) he took the opportunity to invite Todd McClay to informally meet with staff and provide his visions for the role and this also provided an opportunity for staff to highlight some of their concerns regarding sport fish angling and game bird hunting. He said that Todd was still in the process of meeting various groups within the fishing and hunting community and was working on formulating his vision for this role. Council agreed that it would be great to have Todd McClay attend a council meeting to provide Councillors the opportunity to understand his role and ask their own questions which may be quite different to the staff operational perspective. Arash Alaeinia confirmed that he would extend an invitation to Todd McClay for the next meeting of Council.

14.2 *Cr Mike Jarvie – Building and site maintenance*

Cr Mike Jarvie asked whether there is a maintenance programme for the site as he had noted that some of the buildings on the property that appeared to need a tidy up, and as we are open to the public, he felt that presentation of the site was important. Arash confirmed that there is a maintenance plan and maintenance is carried out by the team when they are not undertaking our primary operations and when the weather permits.

14.3 *Cr Alan Simmonds – Pine tree situation across NZ*

Cr Alan Simmonds raised concerns about the Pine Forest issue that has been resonating with people he had met across the country. Alan highlighted concerns regarding significant areas of productive farmland being converted to pine for overseas corporations to claim carbon credits and how this would not only impact rural communities but also access for freshwater angling and game bird hunting. Alan highlighted a few areas of concern and advised he would provide some figures at the next meeting. Cr Debbie Oakley confirmed that this was on the agenda at a national level and suggested articles of interest could be viewed in the Fuseworks mediamine. Eben Herbert reminded Council of the uproar when forest was being converted to pasture some 15 years ago and believed the conversion to forestry was not the big issue and focus should not be on conversions as such but on conditions put on these conversions such as species being planted and what types of access arrangements are being agreed upon. Cr Lindsay Lyons also raised the issue now being seen on the East Coast from forestry slash and the degradation to fisheries resulting from this.

14.4 *Closing comments –*

With the King's Coronation taking place 6th May Opening of Game Bird Season Cr Mark Sceats asked whether any consideration had been made for this on the GB licence as this might be attractive for some hunters.

Barry Roderick asked the manager whether regions such as Otago or Auckland Waikato's OWP's could be provided alongside Eastern's in the PIF's. Arash said it would be useful to compare with regions that have geographical and resource similarities.

15.0 PUBLIC EXCLUDED SESSION

15.1 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that pursuant to Section 48 (1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, the public be excluded at 2.21pm from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely, to update Council on items from the Public Excluded session held at the December meeting. [23/02/15.1]*

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

GENERAL SUBJECT OF EACH MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED	REASON FOR PASSING THIS RESOLUTION IN RELATION TO EACH MATTER	GROUND(S) UNDER SECTION 48(1) FOR THE PASSING OF THIS RESOLUTION
Confirmation of public excluded minutes and update Council on items from the Public Excluded session held at the December 2022 meeting.	Good reason to withhold exists under section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982	Section 48(1)(a)(ii)

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 9 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:

ITEM	REASON UNDER ACT	SECTION	PLAIN ENGLISH REASON
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.
Protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence ... where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.	Sec 9(2)(ba)(i)	Disclosing the information would jeopardise the relationship with the supplier because the supplier may no longer trust the Council to hold its information in confidence.	Not unless there is a public interest in disclosure of the specific information.

Note:

Section 48(4) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 provides as follows:

“(4) Every resolution to exclude the public shall be put at a time when the meeting is open to the public, and the text of that resolution (or copies thereof):


- (a) Shall be available to any member of the public who is present; and
- (b) Shall form part of the minutes of the Council.”

15.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that Council moves out of public excluded at 2.40 pm. [23/02/15.2]*

15.3 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that the public be re-admitted to the meeting at 2.40pm. [23/02/15.3]*

16.0 MEETING CLOSED

The meeting closed at 2.40pm.


 Ngahi Bidois
 Chairman

Summary of Resolutions

APOLOGIES

2.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mark Sceats) that the apologies for the 200th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [23/02/2.2]*

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