

**MINUTES OF THE HAWKES BAY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL HELD
AT THE GAME FARM ON THURSDAY 30TH NOVEMBER 2017 AT
6.00PM**

PRESENT:

Councillors Hern, Williams, Bates (Chairman), Niblett, Lumsden, Mackie and Duley.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mark Venman (Regional Manager), Nathan Burkepile, Christine Tuck (Hawkes Bay Fish and Game staff) and Glenis Phillips (Minute Taker).

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

Red Hooper, Fred Nichol, Paul Elstone, Bob Spain, Lindsay Morris and Adam Jerram.

1.0 WELCOME

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6.00pm and welcomed members of the public.

The Chairman advised Councillors that this meeting will be recorded.

2.0 APOLOGIES

No apology was received from Cr McIntosh.

3.0 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (TUESDAY 17 OCTOBER 2017)

AGREED

3.1 That having previously been circulated to members, the Minutes of the meeting of the Hawkes Bay Fish and Game Council held on Tuesday, 17 October 2017, are a true and correct record. [17/11/3.1]

Hern/Niblett

4.0 MATTERS ARISING

- Cr Hern at the last meeting, queried Appendix I of the First Schedule regarding “camouflaged” row boats and where you can and cannot use them. Cr Williams was asked by Councillors to check with the New Zealand Council and report back as to whether a change could be made to read “*unmoored boat/watercraft*” rather than “*camouflaged rowboat*”. Cr Williams advised Council that it is in the Wildlife Act, and cannot easily be changed.
- Cr Williams was also asked by Councillors to find out more information on the status of sports fish because there have been three requests to remove trout or sports fish from waters in Northland, Wellington and Otago. Sir Geoffrey Palmer has been asked for a legal opinion on the status of sports fish but as yet there has been no reply.
- Cr Duley brought up the subject again of fish handling and the catch and release video. He is still very much of the opinion that the best fish handling techniques are not being promoted and it appears to be getting worse with trout being held up out of the water for

extended periods. After some discussion Councillors asked Mark to send another letter voicing our concerns to the Chairman of the New Zealand Council so that it can be included as an agenda item.

5.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF GENERAL BUSINESS:

Nothing tabled.

6.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER

The Conflict of Interest Register was passed around to Councillors to sign. Cr Bates noted that his family have put in a submission regarding the Ngaruroro Water Conservation Order.

7.0 2016-2017 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Council adopted the Performance Report for the 2016-2017 year.

AGREED

7.1 That Council adopts the Performance Report for the 2016-2017 year. [17/11/7.1]

Williams/Mackie

8.0 2018 GAME SEASON CONDITIONS

Cr Niblett raised concern about bag limits for mallard and grey duck and referred to recommendation 4.3 where it stated “...unless monitoring in January reveals there has been a significant collapse in the populations in which case staff are authorised to reduce the bag limit to 3-4 birds if deemed necessary...”. The Chairman said that it would need to be a very good reason to reduce the bag limit to such a level and that if something drastic changed in January then, the Manager should notify Councillors of the situation. Council have asked that the Manager email them the game season conditions for the 2018 hunting season prior to it being sent off to Robert Sowman in late January. Cr Lumsden asked whether there is a possibility that we will have restrictive conditions for the 2018 game season. Nathan said that it is likely that we will have intermediate conditions. Cr Lumsden said that the shoveler duck season length should be the same as the mallard season to keep the conditions simple to understand and this concept was supported by the Council.

Cr Williams asked whether the paradise shelduck season was going to tie in with the school holidays as the holidays were in July. Nathan said that the paradise shelduck counts will be carried out in January and we should have a better idea then of the current state of the population. If the season length is left at 10 weeks, then it will cover the first week of the school holidays in early July 2018. The Chairman said that having the first week of the school holidays in July is a great opportunity to take kids out hunting for paradise shelducks as highlighted by the game bird hunter survey data. He added that he was keen to keep the season length at 10 weeks so that the juniors could participate during the July school holidays even if it meant having to reduce the bag limit. The Chairman suggested that staff should talk to Matt McDougall to see whether we need to reduce the bag limit if we wish to have a ten-week season. Cr Duley suggested that a relaxed season for

paradise shelduck could be a 10-bird limit and 10-week season for relaxed conditions and an 8-bird limit and 10-week season for intermediate conditions.

Cr Duley made comment regarding Table 2 of the paradise shelduck season conditions on page 28 of the agenda as it states that the season length should be the same as that for mallard ducks. He added that the threshold criteria for the paradise shelduck would therefore require a minor change. Nathan added that a permitted system will operate for any junior paradise shelduck shoots much like occurs in the Auckland/Waikato region with registrations required.

Cr Williams said that at the present time we are unlikely to be in relaxed conditions (8 weeks season) for mallards and so unlikely to get out of the 6-week season length that applies to both restrictive and intermediate conditions. He suggested that Council could look at a 6-week season length for restricted conditions, 8 weeks for intermediate and 10 weeks for relaxed conditions. It was suggested that this could be reviewed next year at the October 2018 Council meeting.

Cr Niblett noted that there were two Upland Game properties that needed to be removed from the list and these included Glencoe Station and Thurlsholm Farm. Mark agreed to remove them from the list of Upland Game properties.

AGREED

8.1 *That the shoveler duck season length is to remain the same as that for mallard and grey duck. [17/11/8.1]*

Lumsden/Duley

8.2 *That the season length for paradise shelduck should be 10 weeks for both relaxed and intermediate conditions with a 10-bird limit for relaxed and an 8-bird limit for intermediate conditions. [17/11/8.2]*

Duley/Lumsden

8.3 *That Council re-affirms the threshold approach to setting mallard and grey duck harvest regulations (where grey duck are treated as mallard due to the difficulty in distinguishing between the species). [17/11/8.3]*

Williams/Duley

8.4 *That if the Hawke's Bay mallard and grey duck population is predicted to be equal to, or below 100,000 then a restricted set applies. Above 100,000 and below 200,000 the intermediate set applies, and above 200,000 a relaxed set of conditions apply. [17/11/8.4]*

Williams/Duley

8.5 *That restrictive conditions for the 2018 game season comprise a 6-week season with a bag of 6 mallard and grey duck (unless monitoring in January reveals there has been a significant collapse in the populations in which case staff are authorised to reduce the bag limit to 3-4 birds if deemed necessary); Intermediate conditions comprise a 6-week season with a bag of 8 mallard and grey duck; and Relaxed conditions comprise an 8-week season with a bag of 10 mallard and grey duck. Staff are to notify Councillors if the monitoring in January shows any major changes in the populations that would require a reduction in the bag limit. [17/11/8.5]*

Williams/Duley

8.6 *That the 2018 season conditions for shoveler duck be a 2-bird bag limit with a season length the same as that for both mallard and grey ducks. [17/11/8.6]*

Williams/Duley

8.7 *That Council maintain the length of the pukeko season to coincide with that for pheasants. [17/11/8.7]*

Williams/Duley

8.8 *That black swan thresholds remain the status quo but the bag limit if Restrictive conditions apply be increased from none to one, and the 2018 regulations be based on January 2018 monitoring results. [17/11/8.8]*

Williams/Duley

8.9 *That the shooting hours become 6:30am to 6:00pm. [17/11/8.9]*

Williams/Duley

8.9.1 *That the remaining conditions for 2018 are as per those that applied in 2017 and/or are set out in Appendix 2. [17/11/8.9.1]*

Williams/Duley

The Chairman asked Mark who put the draft Game Season conditions together this year and Mark advised him that he had drafted them based on last year's before asking Nathan to check them over.

9.0 LAKE TUTIRA

Mark advised Council that an opportunity has come up for saved money to be put back into habitat improvements at Lake Tutira and is looking for Council approval to go ahead.

Mark asked Councillors for their approval to spend up to \$5,000 on native plants for planting at Lake Tutira. Council asked Mark if this money was saved from reducing the trout liberations at Lake Tutira and Mark confirmed that it was.

The number of trout liberated into Lake Tutira during the 2017/2018 year has been reduced this season from 5,000 trout down to approximately 2,000 trout until conditions improve within the lake. Some of the money saved by reducing the size of the liberation this year has been earmarked towards "*monitoring the Lake Tutira trout fishery and working with Iwi and other agencies to help improve water quality*" as described in our current Operational Work Plan.

Mark informed council that an area of land on the eastern side of Lake Tutira has recently been cleared of willow and pest plants as part of the Tutira Mai Nga Iwi project. The area is due to be planted with a variety of native plants in June 2018. The proposed plant list includes a large proportion of *Carex Secta* and *Carex virgata* which can also provide habitat for various waterfowl species. The planting project could also provide an opportunity for members from the various angling clubs to attend and help plant this area and help give something back to this special area.

Cr Williams informed Council that the Regional Manager has got the authority to spend up to \$10,000 and does not have to ask for Council permission, but Councillors agreed that it is good

that he informs Council so that they are kept in the loop as to what is happening and can communicate with licence holders.

AGREED

9.1 That Council approves the use of \$5,000 to assist with this large-scale revegetation project at Lake Tutira. [17/11/9.1]

Williams/Lumsden

10.0 DATES FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS IN 2018

The Chairman opened the discussion around the proposed 2018 meeting dates and advised Councillors that he was unable to attend the 12 June meeting and asked if it could be moved to Thursday the 14th June if that would fit in with the NZ Council. Cr Williams advised that it would not interfere with the NZ Council meeting and all other Councillors were happy to change to the new date of 14 June.

Cr Lumsden then advised Councillors that the October date could be an issue for him due to other commitments. He said there could be a clash here, but he would have to check and report back to Council with the outcome. Cr Duley asked if we could bring the first meeting forward to the end of January as he may not be able to attend the 13 February meeting.

The Chairman then asked if we have to have these dates confirmed at this meeting and Mark said that we need to at least confirm the first meeting which is set down for 13 February 2018.

Unconfirmed dates for 2018 Council meetings are: 13 February, 3 April, 14 June, 7 August, 16 October and 27 November. Dates to be confirmed for the full year at the 13 February 2018 Council meeting.

11.0 DRAFT SPORTS FISH AND GAME MANAGEMENT PLAN

Cr Niblett commented that it was a good draft. Cr Williams said that it was good to see a RMA component featuring throughout the document.

Cr Duley asked if a panel of three Councillors could be selected to review any submissions received. Councillors Niblett and Bates indicated that they were keen to be on the panel and Cr Duley said that he might be able to assist but it depends on his availability early in the new year. The Chairman advised the Council that whoever wants to be on the panel can be, we just need a minimum of three. He advised Councillors that we can have more than three on the panel as it doesn't have to be restricted to just three, but it doesn't have to be a full Council.

Cr Duley asked when the submissions will be received, and Mark said that once it is approved by Councillors tonight, staff should be able to get the draft plan sent out next week. A minimum of 40 working days is required for written submissions to be received. It was decided to select a panel at the February Council meeting as submissions close in early March 2018.

AGREED

11.1 That Council provide staff with any additional feedback on the 10-year draft Sports Fish and Game Management Plan and approve it to be circulated more widely for public consultation. [17/11/11.1]

11.2 That Councillors select a panel of at least three Councillors to form a committee to deal with any submissions received at the February 2018 Council meeting. [17/11/11.2]

Niblett/Mackie

12.0 DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION MANAGED PROPERTY

The proposal that Nathan put forward at the August 2017 Council meeting was revisited for consideration by Councillors. Staff are looking for feedback and guidance as to whether this opportunity near the Waipawa River is still worth pursuing.

At the August meeting, Councillors said that it could be a good way to increase hunting opportunities especially for those wanting to learn, but costs needed to be weighed up and a plan produced. An updated plan and estimated budget has been included in the Papers for Information with this Agenda.

Cr Niblett asked how much staff time would it likely involve. Mark said the report estimated that it would involve 1 week of work each year and Nathan confirmed this. Cr Niblett then asked how much would that cost for just the staff time. The Chairman said we operate at approximately \$57/hr (average for person, vehicles *etc*) and so approximately \$2,300. Concerns were also raised about the cost of fencing and who should be responsible for fixing or replacing it. Nathan said that he hasn't had discussions yet with the landowners regarding fencing until he knows whether or not to proceed with this particular project.

There was good discussion about this piece of land, but Councillors ultimately wondered whether it was worth it. The Chairman said that it is a very hungry and expensive piece of dirt and with the river right there, are we going to get much benefit from our efforts?

It was noted that it is marginal pheasant country, but it might contain some quail. Councillors questioned the number of birds that would be present there and also questioned what sort of opportunity it would create for hunters. Even 40 hectares of excellent habitat might not hold that many birds and it might not be sustainable with a lot of hunting pressure. Nathan said that access wasn't great, but Councillors replied that we need to create somewhere that is accessible for hunters. Nathan added that it could be more useful for breeding and nesting habitat rather than just purely for hunting. Councillors agreed that if it is going to cost us significant money then its perhaps it is a waste of money. Our resources are limited, and it is a very dry and rocky area that will be difficult to revegetate.

Council felt that perhaps we need to look at this later. If we take it on how much work do we have to do? Nathan advised Councillors that fencing is probably the first thing that is required. Cr Mackie was asked to help check out the state of the fencing and report back on his findings.

13.0 5 YEAR STRATEGIC WATERFOWL HABITAT PLAN

Mark asked for any further feedback from Councillors regarding the draft 5-year waterfowl habitat plan for the Hawkes Bay.

He advised Council that a draft 5-year strategic waterfowl habitat plan for Council to review had been prepared, and feedback was provided at the August and October Council meetings. The plan has been modified based upon the feedback received.

There was a quick discussion around how the Hawkes Bay Regional Council owns the drains and how permission needs to be obtained from the HBRC to do anything on them. Cr Williams said that some of the corporate orchard owners might want to contribute to the costs of maintaining some of their drains through planting native vegetation.

Cr Niblett queried the use of cameras to monitor waterfowl in terms of them being time consuming and expensive. Nathan said that there is software available now that can help with sorting large numbers of images. Cr Niblett said that he would like staff to create a decent plan first for consideration by Councillors before starting on such projects.

Cr Duley mentioned that weeping willows had not been included in the habitat plan and Nathan said that he would add in some comments regarding their use.

AGREED

13.1 That Councillors approve the 5-year waterfowl habitat plan. [17/11/13.1]

Williams/Niblett

14.0 REVIEW OF REGIONAL MANAGER'S PERFORMANCE

The Regional Manager's performance over the past 12 months is to be reviewed and is to be reviewed on an annual basis. A committee of three Councillors, including the Chairman, needs to be selected to undertake this review and the Executive Committee will consist of Cr Bates (Chairman), Cr Niblett and Cr Lumsden.

Cr Williams asked Council for a bit more discussion to formalise this matter and to put forward a resolution and vote on it. A quick discussion around involving outside help was discussed and whether to include it in the resolution. The question was asked by Council if there was already an organisation in mind to help with this and Cr Bates advised that an organisation had been approached. Mark has met the person and so has Cr Bates and at the end of the day as long as the Regional Manager is happy then we can use them if the Executive Committee deem necessary.

The person to be approached if required, is Digby Livingston, and Council asked the question of when this review would likely take place. Cr Bates said that it would be nice if it could be done before Christmas, but that would depend on the Regional Manager's schedule and whether he could complete reviews with his staff prior to the Christmas holidays.

AGREED

14.1 That Councillors have approved a review of the Regionals Manager's performance and an Executive Committee consisting of the Chairman and two councillors to undertake this review has been selected. Councillors have agreed to an external organisation's input, if deemed necessary, by the Executive Committee. [17/11/14.1]

Duley/Hern

15.0 LIAISON OFFICERS REPORTS

15.1 EAST COAST/HAWKES BAY CONSERVATION BOARD

Mark received an e-mail from Te Kaha Hawaikirangi to be presented to Council at this meeting.

Te Kaha advised that their last meeting was a quiet one but there are a few points which may be of interest to Councillors.

There was discussion around what the DOC environment looks like with a new Government and new Minister. Obviously with the first Green party member now Minister for Conservation (Eugenie Sage), we hope to see more resource and priority given to DOC.

He goes on to say that the understanding of the new Government and new Minister is that they are pro 1080, focused on tourism sustainability and looking to double the number of DOC Rangers.

DOC are looking to reorganise the position of the Conservation Management Strategy to better place into the business case framework and align budgets with the outcomes required in the CMS. DOC has also released an updated National Compliance Strategy.

15.2 REPORTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES

Nothing Tabled.

15.3 REPORTS FROM NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL

Cr Williams gave a quick overview of Robert Sowman's summary of the November NZ Council meeting which was held in Wellington. He advised Councillors that this was the first meeting with the newly appointed NZ Council Chief Executive, Martin Taylor.

- Eugenie Sage, Minister of Conservation, attended the meeting for 40 minutes. This is a first for a Minister of Conservation in several years. She told the NZ Council her new position is her dream job and that she valued and recognised the advocacy role Fish and Game has played. DOC is to be asked to play a stronger advocacy role.
- Minister David Parker is leading work on freshwater. One outcome is to send a strong message to regional (govt) councils to change their ways. Her advice is that Fish & Game needs to continue to advocate for healthy waterways. She also said it could look at ways to make savings in doing this, such as with an internal legal advisor.
- Cr Williams advised Council that the new CEO of the NZ Council is on first name terms with the Minister for the Environment, David Parker.
- The science paper from Dr Murray Williams and memorandum provided to NZ Council on the release of captive reared mallards is to be consulted with Fish and Game Councils and others who have asked to see it with a request to respond by 1 March 2018 to a set of questions posed in the memorandum.
- Land Care Trust is to be advised that Fish and Game will continue to be represented on the Trust by the NZ Council Chief Executive.
- Three members of the Professional Fishing Guides Association attended the meeting to speak on the need for a guide's licence.
- The NZ Council office is to prepare a revised guide licence proposal for submission to the Minister of Conservation by the end of February 2018. The revised proposal is to be shared with Nelson/Marlborough, West Coast, Otago and Southland F&G staff and the Professional Fishing Guides Association Executive prior to being finalised.
- Term of Reference and recommended membership for a salmon committee to deal with restoring the rea run salmon fishery is to be provided following consultation with F&G councils.
- Cr Williams talked about environmental DNA which has been developed by a staff member in Wellington. He went on to say that basically you can detect fish spawning by the DNA collected in a water sample. It takes about 10 minutes, and this will give you an idea of whether the fish are spawning in the stream or not upstream of where the sample was taken.

16.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS

16.1 MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Chairman asked Mark if there was anything he wanted to discuss regarding the Management Report.

Mark asked Council for confirmation around the liberations of 2,000 rainbow trout into Lakes Tutira and Waikopiro which is planned for 7th December. This is the only liberation planned for these lakes during the 2017/2018 season. The annual liberation of trout was reduced to 2,000 trout this year until conditions in Lake Tutira improve. A proportion of the money saved will be put back into habitat enhancement work around these two lakes.

Mark said that there is an option to liberate 500 browns into the Maraetotara Stream at the same time. We plan to liberate 50 tagged rainbows into Lake Hawkston to complete this annual liberation as well. Craggy Range Winery have also enquired about purchasing some display trout for their pond.

Council left it to the Manager's discretion. Council suggested perhaps putting some brown trout in there and floy tagging them as this will give us some information and it can be pushed as a marketing tool.

Cr Niblett asked for some more information regarding the Game Bird Research Committee meetings that Nathan has attended and asked for information on research proposals to be reported back to Councillors on a more regular basis so that they can have some input into what is happening. Nathan spoke about some of the research that was being carried out especially involving cats. Nathan added that Darryl McKenzie is independently reviewing aerial transect counts and banding projects with a report due to be presented at the next NZ Council meeting. Cr Williams said that he had brought it up in May at NZ Council that we didn't see any information about research projects and results should be shared with other Councillors and staff.

16.2 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

AGREED

16.2.1 That the Health and Safety Report be accepted. [17/11/16.2.1]

Duley/Niblett

16.3 FINANCE REPORT

Westpac Bank Accounts

AGREED

16.3.1 That Bruce Bates (Chairman) be added as a signatory to the Hawkes Bay Fish and Game Council Bank Accounts. [17/11/16.3]

Williams/Hern

AGREED

16.3.2 That Kevin Williams be removed as a signatory to the Hawkes Bay Fish and Game Council Bank Accounts. [17/11/16.3.2]

Williams/Hern

AGREED

16.3.3 That the bank authorities and cheques are amended for Mark Venman (Regional Manager) to sign jointly with Christine Tuck (Administrator), Carmel Veitch (Eastern Fish and Game Accountant), Bruce Bates (Chairman) and/or John Lumsden (Councillor). [17/11/16.3.3]

Williams/Hern

AGREED

16.3.4 That Council approves the following payments [17/11/16.3.4]

September 2017	\$61,892.90
October 2017	\$46,719.06
TOTAL:	\$108,611.96

Williams/Duley

AGREED

16.3.5 That Council approves the proposed budget figures for the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Financial Performance & Cash flow for the 2016-17 financial year with Deficit of \$17,398, and approves the purchase of fixed assets valued at \$45,000 [17/11/16.3.5]

Williams/Niblett

AGREED

16.3.6 That Council approves the exterior painting of the staff house. Three quotes received and final decision to be left to the Manager. [17/11/16.3.6]

Williams/Lumsden

AGREED

16.3.7 That the Finance Report be accepted. [17/11/16.3.7]

Williams/Duley

16.4 LICENCE SALES REPORT

Cr Williams started off a quick discussion around this issue by asking why are we the only Council in “the black”. Christine added that the agents used to have a drop-down box where they could tick “Hawkes Bay” but this has now disappeared from their screens and appears to be done automatically now. This could be one reason why our licence sales are tracking well.

Council then held a discussion on perhaps direct debiting licences in the future as an automatic renewal unless you choose to opt out. This would mean that the fish and game bird licences would be issued to anglers and hunters before the start of the season and Fish and Game would receive the money earlier too and is a good marketing tool. Cr Bates asked if there is an easy way for this to work as it could help address some of the lapsed licence sales. Christine said that she would follow up with Kate who is part of the licence working party to see if she could identify any issues with this concept.

There was a discussion about printing costs for the regulation booklets and whether we needed to be printing as many for both islands. Electronic versions might be the best way forward with a cell phone app being an alternative option. Cr Williams commented on the North Island fish LEQ's and noted that Eastern's LEQ's have dropped from 20,000 in the 1980's to 10,000 last year while many of the other North Island regions remained relatively consistent.

AGREED

16.4.1 That the Licence Sales Report be accepted. [17/11/16.4.1]

Duley/Lumsden

17. MEETING CLOSES

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.47pm.

CONFIRMED



CHAIRMAN

DATE: 13/12/2018

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

- 3.1** *That having previously been circulated to members, the Minutes of the meeting of the Hawkes Bay Fish and Game Council held on Tuesday, 17 October 2017, are a true and correct record. [17/11/3.1]*

Hern/Niblett

- 7.1** *That Council adopts the Performance Report for the 2016-2017 year. [17/11/7.1]*

Williams/Mackie

- 8.1** *That the shoveler duck season length is to remain the same as that for mallard and grey duck. [17/11/8.1]*

Lumsden/Duley

- 8.2** *That the season length for paradise shelduck should be 10 weeks for both relaxed and intermediate conditions with a 10-bird limit for relaxed and an 8-bird limit for intermediate conditions. [17/11/8.2]*

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Niblett/Mackie

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Williams/Niblett

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