

## **AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME**

A Meeting of Council will be held at the  
NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Drive, Hamilton,  
on Saturday 18 August 2018 commencing at 11a.m.

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\* Denotes attachments

**M. Young**  
**Chairman**

30/07/2018

**AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME**

**Minutes of a Meeting of Council**  
**held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton,**  
**on Saturday 16 June 2018 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, S. Smith, E. Williamson.

**Staff:** B. Wilson, J. Dyer, D. Klee, A. Daniel

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

**1. APOLOGIES**

B. Smith.

It was moved;

*that the apologies be accepted.*

*S. Smith/Juby CARRIED*

**2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:**

None declared.

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 7 APRIL 2018:**

It was moved;

*that the minutes of the previous meeting of 7 April 2018 be accepted as a true and correct record.*

*Cocks/S. Smith CARRIED*

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

Nil

**5. CORRESPONDENCE:**

Nil.

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

Mr Klee updated Councillors on the Lake Waikare/Whangamarino appeal, noting that ICM will be doing a Section 127 application under the RMA to manipulate the Te Onetea gate to try and achieve the suspended sediment reduction in the discharge from Lake Waikare to the Whangamarino Wetland, and if that doesn't work there is an obligation to look at other measures.

Brief discussion on the current high RMA workload which was partly due to the consent renewals for the Waikato Fonterra dairy factories. A submission will soon be lodged on the Te Rapa discharge consent.

In reply to a question, Dr Daniel stated that he was pleased with the outcome of the meeting with the Eastern F&G Council to discuss the availability of triploid trout. Eastern Councillors were generally supportive of the initiative and will consider the issue further in committee before getting back to him with a decision.

Councillor Annan complemented Dr Daniel on the high standard of his recent presentation to the Te Awamutu F&G club.

Councillor S. Smith expressed his disagreement with the statements made to staff by a "concerned hunter" that the Flax Block water levels were on par with the lowest he had ever seen them at this time of year. Councillor Smith noted that water levels in the block at markup and opening weekend were more than adequate and far higher than during the drought year of about 4 years ago. The weir boards were currently set at 1.7m. He suggested that staff ask the concerned hunter to contact the Flax Block hunter association to discuss further. Councillor Smith was concerned about incorrect information circulating amongst the hunter community.

It was moved;

*that the CE Bimonthly report be accepted.*

*Juby/Annan CARRIED*

Mr Wilson noted that further to his report more trees had been removed near the office on the advice of the arborist. Furthermore, we had agreed to refund the Astronomical Society 50% of the costs of removing trees next to the store, which were close to power lines.

It was moved;

*that the Financial Statements be accepted.*

*Annan/S. Smith CARRIED*

## **7. FISH AND GAME MARKETING ANALYSIS:**

The Report "Marketing Analysis" prepared by Steve Doughty was tabled.

Councillors agreed that the number of hunters and anglers in the Auckland/Waikato region was constrained by resource limitations and thus there was little potential to increase licence sales despite an increasing population. The ecological collapse of the lower Waikato lakes and the impact of urban sprawl had negatively affected a large area of the region that once held high numbers of dabbling duck. Mr Wilson reminded Councillors that he had a long list of over 200 hunters who were seeking places to hunt in the Waikato. Formerly these hunters would be directed to the lower Waikato lakes, but this was no longer an option.

Councillors agreed that additional promotions could increase fish licence sales but again there were resource constraints especially compared to the comparatively under-utilised fisheries in adjacent regions (ie. Eastern lakes and Taranaki rivers). It was emphasised that Council's extensive promotion of coarse fishing had not increased licence sales and that most of the regions coarse fisheries had subsequently collapsed due to the illegal introduction of koi carp, which was not a sports fish. Nevertheless, it was agreed that it was important to maintain licence numbers and that some marketing was essential.

Councillors were concerned that the report emphasis that "minimal skill and resource should be the new mantra" as this fed the perception held by a small section of the public that hunters and anglers were unskilled.

It was moved;

*that individual Fish & Game regions should be responsible for their own promotions and marketing.*

*Cocks/Annan CARRIED*

Council rose for lunch at 12.30 and resumed at 1.30

**8. 2018/19 LICENCE FEE RECOMMENDATION:**

Councillors discussed the 2018/19 licence fee recommendations with concern expressed over the process, and with agreed that F&G should be looking at other forms of revenue including a tax on sporting goods.

It was moved;

*that the recommendation of an adult whole season sports fish licence fee of \$130 and an adult whole season game licence fee of \$96 be accepted.*

*Sherard/Annan CARRIED*

The modification to licence categories and ratios with whole season fees was then discussed. Councillors were concerned over the proliferation of licence categories which would discourage new participants.

It was moved;

*that the number of licence categories should be reviewed by the licence committee with the objective of reducing the number of categories.*

*Juby/Cocks CARRIED*

**9. 2017 NATIONAL STAFF CONFERENCE:**

The report on the 2017 National Staff Conference was tabled. Mr Wilson noted that Auckland/Waikato would be holding the 2019 conference.

**10. PIGGOTT WETLAND REPORT:**

Mr Dyer's report was tabled.

Mr Wilson advised that a report would be sent to Winstones as partial funders of the project, and that an offer would be made to show Winstones staff the project. Several Councillors expressed interest in visiting the site and Mr Wilson agreed to arrange this.

**11. OSH REPORT:**

The OSH Report for June 2018 was tabled.

Councillor Juby suggested that the possibility of police accompanying rangers on opening weekend should be considered as occurred in several other F&G regions.

It was moved;

*that the OSH Report for June 2018 be accepted.*

*S. Smith/Cocks CARRIED.*

**12. NZF&GC MEETING 27 – 28 APRIL 2018:**

Councillor Sherrard summarised the minutes and answered questions.

**13. GENERAL BUSINESS:**

Councillor Sherrard thanked Mr Klee for his efforts in restoring wetlands in the Opuatia area.

Councillor Shaw advised that self-setting automatic traps based on the fenn trap were being produced by NZ Auto Traps for \$320 + GST. The traps were on display at the NZ Fieldays. Councillor Shaw also informed that DoC had an extensive display of predator trapping at the Fieldays. Mr Wilson stated that he was informed that DoC budget for Fieldays was \$60,000.

Councillor S. Smith expressed his disappointment that the regulations booklet was often not distributed by licence agents when issuing game licences. Discussion ensued of whether the booklet should be mailed to licence-holders but Mr Wilson emphasised that a high proportion of game licences were sold by agencies in the last week of the game season.

It was agreed that the pre-season game newsletter should have a section summarising the game regulations including season dates.

Mr Tyson informed the meeting of his concern over political pressure from groups such as SAFE to restrict the right to use firearms and hunt to individuals over the age of 18 years. Councillor Carey stated that this policy had recently been introduced in Poland.

Councillor Kerr enquired whether SNA zoning was being considered for F&G wetlands. Mr Wilson replied that the Waikato District Council was considering such zoning for virtually all F&G wetlands and that Mischa Davis was looking at the implications for F&G.

Councillor Juby asked whether staff had access to disinfecting equipment for visiting farms due to the M. bovic outbreak. Mr Wilson agreed that such equipment was essential.

Mr Wilson recommended to Councillors that Standing Orders for Council meetings be reviewed at the August meeting. It was requested that both the proposed and existing Standing Orders be sent to Councillors well prior to the meeting.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 2.45pm

UNCONFIRMED

28 June 2018



AGENDA ITEM 5

Lindsay Lyons  
Chair  
NZ Fish and Game Council  
PO Box 13-141  
WELLINGTON 6440

COPY FOR YOUR  
INFORMATION

Dear Lindsay

**FISH AND GAME MARKETING ANALYSIS:**

The Report "Marketing Analysis" prepared by Steve Doughty was considered by the Auckland/Waikato Council at their meeting on 16 June 2018.

In the Auckland/Waikato region, councillors consider that the number of hunters and anglers are constrained by resource limitations and thus there is little potential to increase licence sales despite an increasing population. As the region with the greatest national population increases, both historic and projected, councillors felt that Auckland/Waikato fish and game bird populations were likely to come under increasing pressure and that population increases present more challenges than opportunities. Referring to LEQ stats as a percentage of population appears to be a novel idea and one apparently without international precedent.

The lower Waikato, including the delta and the numerous lakes and wetlands, was once by far the most intensively hunted area in New Zealand. However, during the 1980s, the ecological collapse of the Waikato lakes, introduction of pest fish, and the impact of urban sprawl had a catastrophic impact on dabbling duck numbers in this area. Consequently, hunter numbers plummeted, and it is only Council's efforts in managing and restoring habitat that have kept hunter numbers reasonably stable over the last 20 years.

There is no shortage of potential hunters; the Auckland/Waikato Office already holds a list of over 200 groups of potential hunters who are seeking places to hunt. Formerly these groups would be directed to the lower Waikato lakes, but this is no longer a productive option. Despite healthy increases to the mallard population in the past two years in the Auckland/Waikato region, around 20% of active hunters reported shooting no birds on opening weekend this year. Moreover, 'seeing lots of game birds in their hunting area' consistently ranks as the most important variable for hunters to have an enjoyable hunting season.

The Auckland/Waikato Council believes that habitat restoration and further research into harvest management are crucial to maintaining and perhaps increasing dabbling duck populations which in turn may boost hunter numbers in this region. Trying to increase hunter participation without ensuring there is adequate resource for them to hunt is only

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*Statutory managers of freshwater sports fish, game birds and their habitats*

**Auckland/Waikato Region**

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likely to increase churn. Fortunately we have been successful in funding restoration work from external sources, despite current F&G national budget policy acting as a deterrent to the raising of external funds.

Councillors agreed that additional promotions could increase fish licence sales but again there are resource constraints especially compared to the comparatively under-utilised fisheries in adjacent regions (ie. Eastern lakes and Taranaki rivers). Council's extensive promotion of coarse fishing has not increased licence sales, probably because most of the region's coarse fisheries have collapsed due to the illegal introduction of koi carp, which is not a sports fish. Nevertheless, we agreed that it is important to maintain licence numbers and that some marketing is essential. However, Auckland/Waikato fish licence sales are not far below their long-term maximum, and thus councillors believe that any increase is likely to be modest compared to the opportunities available in other regions.

Councillors are also concerned that the report emphasis that "minimal skill and resource should be the new mantra" as this feeds the perception held by a small section of the public that hunters and anglers are unskilled and cause unnecessary animal suffering.

Councillors felt that Fish and Game was doing well with our current policy of concentrating on protecting the resource rather than focussing on promotion of participation. As the report illustrates, inflation adjusted revenue from fishing licence sales has actually increased by 55% between 1997-98 and 2017-18 due to stable license sales and increasing the price relative to inflation.

The Auckland/Waikato Council considers that individual Fish & Game regions should be responsible for their own promotions and marketing.

Yours sincerely



Murray Young  
Chairman



**Bi Monthly Managers Report****Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Meeting August 2018**

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**OUTPUT 1: SPECIES MANAGEMENT****Project 1111 Drift Diving:**

Completed three reports including four drift dive surveys Mangatutu, Waihou, Waimakariri and Awakino. All rivers were in reasonable order except for a sharp decline in fish spotted in the Waihou and Waimakariri. This has been seen in past surveys and is not alarming at present.

**Project 1121 Fish Harvest Assessment:**

Tag recovery has been slow but reasonable fish numbers have been reported in lake Arapuni.

**Project 1162 Pheasant Releases:**

John Dyer has carried out onsite visits for two applications for new pheasant preserves. One application has subsequently been withdrawn and may not be going ahead. The second in the Awhitu Peninsula near the Manukau Heads is looking like it is full steam ahead pending DoC permits. The opportunity to re-establish two large wetlands that were drained at least 50 years ago and to protect another wetland in a natural state is going to be one of the spin-off benefits.

**Project 1181 Fish Releases:**

**Triploid Trout:** Adam Daniel presented a triploid trout report to the Eastern Council who have asked to deliberate the idea of raising the trout and that we consult with iwi. To date Tainui and Raukawa have been contacted and neither have responded.

Annual trout releases were conducted in Waiuku lakes and Lake Moananui

**Project 1181 Gamebird control:**

Pukeko continue to be a problem for commercial gardeners with permits issued where it isn't suitable for shotguns to be fired. Local hunters are helping a Hamilton daffodil grower to control pukeko, with about 30-40 birds pulling out young plants.

**OUTPUT 2 HABITAT PROTECTION/MANAGEMENT****Project 1211 R.M.A.****Healthy Rivers (Plan Change 1)**

Timeline: The Waikato Regional Council has indicated that it will make a call for Further Submissions in August, and that hearings will commence late 2018. They have also indicated that they are not anticipating a final decision to make the Plan Change operative until April 2020.

Further Submissions: A Draft Summary of Decisions Requested has been released by the Waikato Regional Council. This contained some inaccuracies and missed out some of Fish and

Game's submissions. It is important that this Summary accurately reflects our submission because this will define the scope for any arguments we can pursue at hearing. Anna Sintennie has reviewed the Draft Summary, comparing it to Fish and Game's submission, and requested amendments which the Council has now indicated it will adopt. A Final Summary of Decisions Requested has not yet been released, but it is likely to include some amendments to the Draft as requested by other parties.

Anna has been working on Fish and Game's further submission based on the Draft Summary of Decisions requested.

Hearing Preparation: Anna has provided preliminary instructions to an external planner, and an environmental economist to support Fish and Game's case at hearing. The Planner will provide an assessment of the overall case strategy which will inform us as to what expert evidence will be needed as the case progresses to hearing.

**Northland Regional Plan:** We have been contracted by the Northland Fish and Game Council to case manage the review of the Northland Regional Plan. We have arranged a panel of expert witnesses, including for planning, wetlands and freshwater, to present evidence at the hearing which will be taking place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September. We are currently in the process of preparing and reviewing expert evidence which is due on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August.

**Waikato District Plan review:** The Waikato District Council are currently accepting submissions on the Proposed Waikato District Plan. The Proposed Plan was notified on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July with the submission period running until the 9<sup>th</sup> of October. This will be followed by a hearing where independent commissioners will hear the submissions. Key changes that we will be seeking in our submission will mainly be in relation to the rural zone such as hunting being allowed as a permitted activity and being exempt from noise rules, and earthworks for wetland creation, maintenance and enhancement being allowed as a permitted activity. Other changes we will be seeking include buffer/setback rules for building near wetlands, allowing for all signs erected by Fish and Game to be a permitted activity, and including provisions that acknowledge the recreational values of gamebird hunting and sportfishing in the Waikato District.

**Waipa District Council Te Awamutu Wastewater consent applications:** All parties have withdrawn their wish to be heard and the consent has been granted.

**Fonterra Te Rapa:** This application to renew a discharge consent to the Waikato River was notified and a submission was made by Anna. Fonterra had made substantial reductions of their discharges about 10 years ago after a few non-compliances, and this has meant that they have been operating well below their consented limits for the last few years. The application now requests that less stringent limits be applied, which are generally considerably higher than current discharge levels.

Our submission is that the limits applied for are too high and should not exceed current discharge levels; for a long consent term they should still require a reduction. Our point was that the previous limits were not set on the basis of the requirement to restore the river. The discharge limits should still be contributing to the restoration of the river at an appropriate and equitable level and should not get a 35 year consent on the basis of the current limits. We asked for improved limits, more mitigation or offset, and a shorter timeframe.

**Fonterra Te Awamutu:** Consent officers at the Council have indicated that this will be processed alongside the Te Rapa consent.

**Fonterra Tirau:** Fonterra has agreed to our proposal to make a financial contribution for every year that the plant upgrade is delayed. Amendments to the consent, and an associated side agreement have been proposed and tabled for consideration by Fish and game, DOC, and Raukawa iwi. The agreement is that \$50,000 will be put into a fund administered by Fonterra for restoration projects in the Oraka catchment every year for 3 years (if the plant is not upgraded after 3 years, Fonterra will be in breach of its consent). We have been feeding into the terms of the agreement and have attempted to have the funds held by Fish and Game in order to enable funds to create leverage, however, other parties have not agreed to this and it is likely that these funds will be released according to consensus between the 3 submitters for a series of small projects over time.

**Crusader meats/JF Ramsey discharge to land consent:** Horizons Regional Council is attempting to have the applicant and landowner agree to a set of conditions. A Cultural Impact Assessment has also been commissioned, which is not due until December.

**Meremere Clearfill site (next to North Shepherd Wetland):** An application has been filed. Anna is following up with Council to ensure Fish and Game is considered an affected party.

**Long Term Plans:** The Council has released the decisions on the Waikato Regional Council LTP. They did grant our request to exempt consent holders of small dams from fees. The decision indicated that in relation to new consent charges for small dams, consent holders who can demonstrate that they do not limit water availability can apply to the Council for a remission at the time of invoice.

### Project 1221 Council Land

**Ward Ranch High Court Case:** A hearing on the preliminary question (i.e. is the action outside the Statute of Limitations) is likely to be held on the 23 October.

**North & Central Shepherd:** North Shepherd maimais and ponds were inspected and the pondholders of several that fell short of the grade were contacted. One pond, "the junior pond", was re-balloted several years ago but the hunters has since shifted to Tauranga without F&G being informed. This pond is now seriously overgrown but could be re-balloted again to someone willing to get it back into the good open-water state that staff had it in some years ago. Another pond in the wetland will need to be sorted in the next few years or it too could be balloted. The original hunter there left for Cambridge and despite spending a sizable sum on the pond, it has since slipped back again under the new ownership.

Note that work to control willows under power lines is being done down along the Central Shepherd causeway.

**Dean Wetland:** The presence of Mexican water lily in this wetland is quite a concern as it can spread with wind and wave and, particularly if it was to drift off into the wetland and grow unnoticed inside the willows, it could potentially spread quite alarmingly. For this reason it has been sprayed a number of years now, starting from when it completely covered one of the balloted ponds. Part of the problem of control of this tuber-based plant is that much of the leaf can be under water and the sprays we use only kill on contact. It has been suggested that Reglone is the way to go to overcome this and NIWA have a number of publications which hold it in high esteem in this role.

**McKenzie Wetland:** At time of writing, (25 July), this area is in flood with water topping stopbanks. We may have to look carefully at Mill Creek to make sure there are no obstructions

that would exacerbate future flood events. Removal of Glyceria blockages by spraying last summer on the outer canal within the wetland has meant that boat access is once again possible the length of the wetland and so overdue maimai inspections have since been completed. One maimai is apparently abandoned by the tenanted hunters and this too could be available for ballot once staff have contacted the most recent marked-up hunter.

John Dyer considered that he saw a spotless crane, a small pukeko-like bird that is roughly blackbird sized, in one of the ponds but only for a split second before it disappeared. However an hour later it was heard in the next pond to this, confirming that this species is still present. One of the Geoff Thomas videos caught on film a spotless crane pointed out to them by John in the Dean Wetland many years ago after what was considered decades of absence there. It's been about that long again till this sighting. Possibly by using taped bird calls in spring it might prove to be more common there than we think. This species is otherwise found in the Kopuku and Whangamarino Wetlands.

**Aka Aka Wetland:** An inspection by canoe and with waders has been completed by John of ponds along the stopbank (northern) side of the wetland. Three ponds of old, all close together, have long since been abandoned and grown over. However at least one of these is far enough away from existing ponds in the wetland that the site could be resurrected. Neighbouring pondholders will be consulted for their views. Weed spray to improve boat access was done at the time and it may be that some simple earthworks by the entry to assist boat launching would be useful to other hunters and encourage parts of this wetland to be better utilised.

**Waikare Wetland:** Having come across patches of alligator weed and yellow flag next to our Waikare property, but in a somewhat cryptic place, John sprayed it with permission of the owner, Mr Bretton Harvey. Craig Purvis, who looks after noxious weeds for the Waikato Regional Council was subsequently given the GPS coordinates as weeds on this part of the lake normally fall under their control.

**Cathcart Wetland:** The recent investigation of maimai tenure and also spraying while in the McKenzie Wetland, (mainly for pampas and Glyceria), meant that an inspection of the "boat ramp" in the North Cathcart wetland was also possible, (vehicle access being impractical in the flooded conditions, only a boat can get into this part of the wetlands at the moment). The Cathcart Wetland is substantially overgrown but there's a bit of a gap in the weeds by a suitable boat launching site that should allow staff to gain access to the open water in summer to spray and win back some of these weeds that threaten the open water there.

### **Project 1231 Non Council Land**

**Auckland Council Pest Management Plan and Budget 2028:** Auckland Council reached their decision on the 10-year Budget and Auckland Plan 2050 which we submitted on back in March. They approved the proposal to deliver a 30 year water quality programme in 10 years by bringing \$856 million of future investment into the next 10 years. \$404 million of that would be used by Watercare and funded through their charges. The remaining \$452 million would be council projects and funded through the targeted rate. They also approved \$311 million over 10 years for environmental initiatives which include pest management and of this \$5.53 million will go towards freshwater pest management of which about half will go into managing pest fish including koi, tench, rudd, perch, and catfish in priority lakes in Lakes Ototoa and Tomarata. They also approved the general rate rise of 2.5 per cent for the next two years and 3.5 per cent for the remaining eight years of the budget – which is what we supported in our submission.

**Auckland Council Rates Remission and Postponement Policy:** We made a submission in April opposing Auckland Council's proposal to adopt a new Rates Remission and Postponement Policy which would remove the rates remission for privately protected, or covenanted land replace it with grants schemes. Auckland Council agreed to adopt the new policy which will come into effect for the 2018/2019 year and apply to rates from 1 July 2018.

While Fish and Game do not currently own any land in the Auckland region that is protected by covenants, under the Reserves Act 1977 Fish and Game may enter into a covenant with the owner of any land to provide for the management of that land's reserve values.

**Whanganui Water Study:** Adam collected samples in May and June at 15 sites on the upper Whanganui. Suspended solids, turbidity and conductivity were samples processed by the University of Waikato. Adam has completed an interim report on the project with some interesting result indicating that there may be elevated sediment associated with illegal trails within the park.

**Lake Arapuni:** Adam has been working with Councillor Annan to identify where and when 1080 will be dropped on Arapuni Spawning streams. The Waikato Regional Council has deliberately withheld the location and timing of the drop to prevent public backlash. When the 1080 drop occurs, staff will inspect the spawning streams.

#### 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

**Black Fern Lodge:** Adam has continued to correspond with the property managers on access and found that the OIA office were not helpful in clarifying if the overseas investor was responsible for legal fees associated with an existing access. We have agreed to cover the fees in this case but made clear that future OIA purchases should be required to cover all costs of public access to avoid irrelevant fees being imposed to prevent access.

**Landcorp:** Adam submitted a formal request to Martin Taylor on 12 June to negotiate access on the two upper Whakapapa Landcorp farms with Landcorp's national office. The request included maps and descriptions of 9 potential access points that need to be formalized with parking and signage. Attempts to access the farms has been hit and miss despite the property being in public ownership. Although the access will be primarily walk-in it will allow access to prime fishing areas. There has been no response at this point on the progress of that request.

#### Project 1331 Magazine/Supplement

Adam, Ben and Nigel completed the 2018 Fish magazine and supplement.

#### Project 1341 Other Publications

**Both Barrels:** John Dyer has been regularly preparing Both Barrels, the local E-Zine for gamebird hunters email boxes. There is one left to write for August and the likely subject will be a summary of the supplementary questions asked by staff as part of the Gamebird Hunter (Phone) Harvest Survey. In particular those questions relating to support for the shortened

dabbling duck season length, the 3-shot rule and the ban on feeding ponds just before and in the gamebird season. Hunters sometimes have quite definite views about such subjects based on their own individual interpretations and perhaps also the small group of their hunting buddies. But this survey is a relatively large-scale randomised region-wide view and will give those that read it a much better overview of hunter's general support for our policies.

**Banding Office:** John has assisted DoC Banding Office with articles for their internal E-Zine to bird banders. For instance, with accounts of waterfowl banded in NZ being found in other countries in the Pacific, (how do these non-migratory birds find these sometimes tiny islands such as Lord Howe off Australia?), also their uncanny ability to find their way home if they are relocated.

**TV:** John assisted the producers of television programme Shortland Street to do a scene based on gamebird hunting. We provided several stuffed ducks that are mounted to suggest they have just been shot. "Payment" was in wine and some beers which were given as thanks to one of the landowners who has helped us for a number of years with a banding site on his farm.

#### **OUTPUT 4: COMMUNITY ADVOCACY/LIASION**

##### **Project 1431 Liaison/Advocacy**

Adam attended a meeting to set up a stream care group for the Mangatawhiri River.

Adam gave a talk to the Auckland Kayak club on trout fishing. Most of the members had fishing rods and only 1 of the 40 in attendance had a current trout licence.

I met with the Minister of Conservation, Eugenie Sage, at an informal meeting organised by DoC, and briefly discussed local issues concerning Fish and Game.

#### **OUTPUT 5: LAW ENFORCEMENT**

##### **Project 1511 Ranging**

John Dyer ranged on Lake Waikare opening morning where hunters on the southern end of the lake were having their best year in many years with limits and near limits common. Then off to Lake Whangape where fog until about 10am had slowed proceedings considerably but things picked up after that. Most of the hunters on these lakes were inspected with the only offence being a single grey teal floating in the water which didn't seem to belong to anyone!

On Sunday John checked out the Piggott Wetland, who were generally having a terrible time. Could it be all the recent exposed earthworks was flaring off the ducks? The hunters didn't seem to think so. There also seemed to be flooding on the nearby Booker Trust property that may have diverted ducks elsewhere.

Ranging was then done from the Elbow boat ramp to Tuakau along the true right bank and then back along the true left bank. One hunter said he hadn't been checked in 50 years! It was suggested he buy a lotto ticket as he was clearly a lucky chap. The hunters in this area were doing OK, but mostly seemed to think they should be doing better. The only thing that could be called "an offence" was that one had a large box of mixed older faded and all red coloured plastic cartridges, one of which was lead – the rest were all steel including those in his belt and those in his magazine.

**Ranger warrants:** We're currently renewing all the ranger warrants, which requires all rangers to undergo a police vetting process.

## **OUTPUT 8: PLANNING REPORTING**

### **Project 1841 National Liaison**

Adam has been answering queries about triploid and working on the revamp of the Check Clean Dry message that will occur this year with two public meetings scheduled for the North and South Island.

**SAFE:** John Dyer assisted F&G National Office over an attack on gamebird hunters made by SAFE who claimed that many thousands of birds were wounded and that Fish & Game did not collect such statistics because they did not want to know. In fact, the Wildlife Service, later Department of Conservation and then Fish & Game have all collected such figures continuously starting 1968, in terms of "shot but not recovered". This has always deliberately been misrepresented by SAFE as meaning all these birds are wounded and suffering. In fact, "shot but not recovered" refers in the vast number of cases to birds which are stone dead but not able to be found in the raupo, rushes and so on, especially if the hunter does not have access to a good dog. What we have not calculated, but it would be interesting to do so, is how many subsequent hunters, especially those with good dogs, find these same birds afterwards. So "shot but not recovered" refers only to the hunter being directly asked. Since ubiquitous hawks arrive almost as soon as they hear a shot these days and have an uncanny ability to find birds no matter how carefully they attempt to hide, we would think few if any unrecovered birds are left suffering and forgotten. The head of SAFE has previously admitted to us that wild gamebirds lead far better lives than battery hens.

**B. Wilson**  
**Chief Executive.**