

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME

A Meeting of Council will be held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Drive, Hamilton on Saturday 20 February 2021 commencing at 11 a.m.

AGENDA

	<u>Page</u>
1. Apologies	1
2. Possible conflicts of interest arising from meeting agenda	1
3. Minutes of previous meetings held on 12 th December 2020 *	1
4. Matters arising from previous minutes	1
5. Council correspondence *	6
6. Chief Executive's bi-monthly report & financial statements	
6.1 Bi-monthly Chief Executives Report *	8
6.2 Financial Statements *	17
7. Fish and Game – Resource Allocation Project *	26
8. Guiding on Public Land*	31
9. Game Bird Guides*	33
10. NZ Council Meeting of 16 th – 17 th February 2021	
11. National Environmental Standards Freshwater, Update	
12. Sports fish and Game bird Management Plan, Update	
13. Ward Ranch, Update *	35
14. OSH Update *	36
15. General Business	

* Denotes attachments

G. Annan
Chairman

29/01/21

AGENDA ITEM 3



AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME

Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton
on Saturday 12 December 2020 commencing at 11:30am.

PRESENT:

Chairman: G. Annan

Councillors: E. Williamson, C. Sherrard, D. Cocks, P. Shaw, G. Avery, A. Kerr, S. Smith,
N. Juby (By Zoom).

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

Visitors: P. Hardy (DOC).

1. APOLOGIES:

W. Howard, M. Davis, J. Atkinson.

It was moved;

that *apologies be accepted*

Smith/Kerr CARRIED

2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:

None declared.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 17th OCTOBER 2020:

It was moved;

that *the minutes of the previous meeting of 17th October 2020 be accepted as a true
and correct record.*

Cocks/Sherrard - CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Mr Dyer was asked for an update on Council's request that he organise the hunters in the Aka Aka wetland to form a user group. Mr Dyer replied that no progress had been made and that the Aka Aka hunters did not currently get together as a group.

Mr Wilson advised that there had not yet been a reply from the three letters sent by the Chairman to the NZ Fish & Game Chairman.

Concerns were expressed by Councillor Williamson over whether the recent MOU by the Waipa District for the Cambridge Wastewater treatment plant could be enforced. Mr Klee replied that the environmental compensation and offsetting were also conditions of the consent and were enforceable. He would be closely monitoring the implementation of the consent to ensure that the commitments were met.

5. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

The three letters from the Chairman to the NZF&G Chairman were tabled.

The email from Ray Grubb, NZF&G Chairman, concerning Fish & Game's relationship with Federated Farmers was tabled. Mr Wilson had been by asked by Mr Grubb to meet with his local Federated Farmers counterparts to discuss areas where the two agencies could work more closely together especially wetlands, public access, and involvement in Catchment Care groups.

Councillors agreed that a closer working relationship with the farming community was desirable.

It was moved;

that Council supports the Chief Executive, Ben Wilson meeting with his Federated Farmers counterpart to discuss how the two agencies can work more closely together.

Smith/Cocks – CARRIED

Councillor Juby emphasized the considerable efforts by the current and previous NZF&G Chairmen, Mr Paul Shortis and Mr Ray Grubb, over the last year in a period of considerable challenge for Fish and Game.

It was moved;

that the current and previous NZ Chairmen, Mr Paul Shortis and Mr Ray Grubb be thanked by council for their considerable efforts on behalf of Fish & Game over the previous year.

Smith/Cocks – CARRIED

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

Discussion ensured over the new NES for freshwater and especially the lack of demarcation between exotic and indigenous vegetation.

Dr Daniel updated on the Whakapapa Intake Road access issue noting that he had met with the iwi landowner, who had also met separately with Martin Taylor. No progress had been made.

Mr Wilson advised that there were no major changes to the regulations for the 2021 game season. Leigh Barton, the Cambridge property with special conditions, would no longer be operating. Another property, Thornwood, releasing 400 pheasants, would be operating near Otorohanga. The season length for the 2021 game season would be five weeks, with closure at Queen's Birthday Weekend.

Mr Wilson stated that the report from Concept Consulting on resource allocation within Fish & Game was recently completed. Hard copies of the report will be sent to Councillors.

Mr Wilson introduced his financial report. He expected fish licence sales to be down at the end of the year due to the lack of overseas anglers. It was noted that there had been a good response by overseas anglers to a recent request that they still buy a licence to show their support for Fish & Game.

It was moved;

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

Smith/Kerr - CARRIED

7. NZ COUNCIL MEETINGS OF 20th & 21st NOVEMBER 2020:

Councillor Juby introduced the minutes from the November NZ Council meeting. The NZ Council had agreed that commercial pheasant preserves would be phased out by the end of the 2025 season. Councillors agreed that this was a good result.

The meeting discussed the decision by the NZ Council not to provide any exemptions for black power hunters as a suitable non-toxic shot, especially bismuth, would be available for the 2021 game season.

8. DRAFT MEETING SCHEDULE:

It was moved;

that the *meeting schedule for 2021 be approved.*

Sherrard/Cocks - CARRIED

9. NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS FRESHWATER, UPDATE:

Mischa Davies's report was discussed. Councillor Juby emphasised to the meeting the considerable efforts by Ms Davis and Mr Wilson on informing other regions on this issue. The impact of the NES on maimai construction and wetland maintenance were now seen as national issues and not just concerns specific to the Auckland/Waikato region.

10. PUBLIC ACCESS REPORT:

Councillor Juby expressed his appreciation for the high quality and usefulness of this report which will be of considerable benefit to Council in advocating our interest in access to rivers and wetlands.

It was moved;
that Ms Davis be thanked for the high quality of her reports on the NES and public access.

Annan/Smith - CARRIED

11. LAKE PUPUKE STOCKING REPORT:

Dr Daniel's report was discussed along with the recommendations of local anglers.

It was moved;
that the recommendations from the Lake Pupuke Stocking Report be supported.

Cocks/Williamson – CARRIED

The meeting rose for lunch at 12.45pm and resumed at 1:15pm.

Mr Klee, Dr Daniel and Councillor Juby left the meeting.

12. MOU LICENCE DATABASE:

It was moved;
that the draft MOU on the licence database as amended by the regional managers be approved.

Cocks/Sherrard – CARRIED

13. SPORTS FISH AND GAME BIRD MANAGEMENT PLAN:

Mr Wilson updated the meeting noting that the plan had been sent to iwi contacts recommended by DOC but to date there had been no reply.

14. WARD RANCH UPDATE:

Mr Wilson had been preparing evidence for the case which would likely be held in March 2021. The Chairman had recently written to the Minister of Conservation expressing his disappointment that DOC had not allowed Fish & Game to withdraw from the proceedings.

15. OSH UPDATE

It was moved;
that the OSH report was approved

Kerr/Shaw – CARRIED

16. GENERAL BUSINESS:

Councillor Shaw expressed his appreciation to Mr Stan Bowen for his generous donation of bait stations to Fish & Game. It was agreed that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr Bowen.

Mr Dyer recommended that the limits for the 2021 special shelduck in north Auckland be increased from 10 to 15 to act as an incentive to increase hunter participation, which was currently very low.

It was moved;
that the limit for the 2021 special shelduck season north of the Auckland harbour bridge be increased to 15 per day.

Smith/Shaw – CARRIED

Councillor Smith requested that the dates of the banding season be publicised to interested parties.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 1:30pm.



Blythen Wetland Society Incorporated
64B Houghton Road
RD 10
Hamilton 3290

10 December 2020

Ben Wilson
Chief Executive Officer
Auckland Waikato Fish and Game
156 Brymer Road
RD 9
Hamilton 3289

Re: Blythen Wetland Society Predator Trapping Programme

Dear Ben

We held our AGM on 15 November 2020. The meeting was well attended with all ponds represented. The wetland is in reasonable shape and some work is need for maintenance and repairs on the main causeway, some of which was completed following the AGM, and around the culverts where the surrounds have been eroded. This work will continue as time and funds permit.

Our predator control programme is still going well and continues to be well supported by members. Last year our tally for the trapping was:

- 16 Mustelid
- 4 Cats
- 112 Possum
- 27 Rats
- 2 Hedgehog
- 1 Hawk

Our tally to date is:

- 7 Mustelid
- 7 Cats
- 36 Possum
- 15 Rats
- 2 Hedgehog

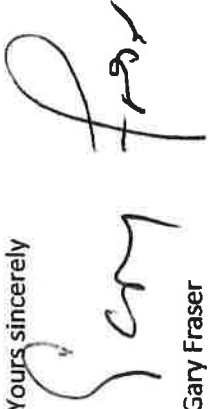
There was quite a discussion at the meeting on best methods of trapping, baits etc. to ensure that we are being as effective as possible and the impact that urban development in the area is having on the surrounding wetlands.

The question was raised as to whether the surrounding wetlands are undertaking similar predator control programmes and I have been asked to write to ask that if there are none in place that AWF&G encourage them to undertake such as the group feel that while we are making good progress within our wetland it is only creating a void for predators to enter from the neighbouring wetlands and lessens the effectiveness of what we are trying to accomplish.

Could I please ask this to be tabled at the next council meeting and if you would like someone from our wetland to attend we would be happy to be there.

We appreciate the support we get from AWF&G and look forward to a more normal lead up to next season following the Covid 19 outbreak and the effect that it still has upon the way we do things.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Fraser". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "G" and a long, sweeping "F".

Gary Fraser
Chairman

Bi-Monthly Chief Executive's Report
Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Meeting February 2021

OUTPUT 1: SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Project 5111: Drift Diving

Prepared for 2021 drift dives by fitting gear to new staff and getting a mask. Drift dives will begin in late January depending on weather.

Project 5112: Banding

Its been a tough start at many of our banding sites, numbers are generally down on previous years and we have had to work hard sometimes doing multiple trapping events to get what we need. At the time of writing, we have banded about 1850 birds with Te Awamutu and Wellsford to go, so despite the extra effort we will need extremely good catches to achieve 3000 which is our annual target.

This year the Parakai site was short one key worker, Murray Young, who would mow the site adjoining the pond with his big tractor/mower without fail. He will be sorely missed. At Parakai there were 430 new birds and 27 recaptures there this year.

213 new ducks were banded this year at Aka Aka, a big improvement on last year and vindication of the relocation to a slightly different, more secluded pond site. Harrier hawks have been a major issue at banding sites this year and a live trap was used to remove 10 birds at Aka Aka.

Project 5115: Population Surveys

A special effort will be made to promote tag returns at the Arapuni Fishing Competition to monitor the sterile trout released last year. Adam is making signs and looking at setting up an online tag reporting system in addition to the phone reporting. Signs will be put up in January to alert anglers to the sterile fish monitoring program.

Adam and Clair completed fish surveys in both the Mangatawhiri and Mangatangi Reservoirs. Both reservoirs have self-sustaining rainbow trout populations and young of the year fish were found in the upper Mangatawhiri River and Rata Creek.

Project 5116: Trend Counts

Northland Manager Rudi Hoetjes has kindly done our northern trend flights for us in the past. This year, Rudi has cut back on flights due to budget constraints and thus John Dyer did ground counts of the eastern sites while Rudi did the Kaipara Harbour and adjoining ponds in the west, (the flight leaves from Parakai airfield, so this area must be flown anyway). The ground count numbers point to shelduck being well up in this northern area. The north of the Harbour Bridge Special Paradise Shelduck Season is already Gazetted, and so will go ahead on 20/21 February.

The King Country tend count revealed 8,075 paradise shelduck this year, thus passing the pre-set threshold. Council have agreed to restart the King Country Special Paradise Duck Season with a 1-weekend season, (27-28 February), for anyone who obtains an appropriate diary from the Hamilton Office for the princely sum of \$5. We've sent an email out to all game licence holders (those who agreed to receive our publicity releases) with details on the Special Season. We have also contacted all landowners in the area who have previously held a permit to disturb/cull shelducks. A press release will also be prepared.

Project 5161 Trout Releases

The plan for 2021 is to release 2-year-old fish into both Parkinson and the Pupuke gravel pit. Adam will deliver the fish to cut back on costs. There is an ongoing effort to improve access to Lake Whatihua with a fishing platform and altering the paper road access across the fence.

Project 5181: Control.

Botulism Outbreaks: We are currently dealing with outbreaks on Paeroa, Waihi, Huntly, Ngatea, and Te Aroha WWTPs. Council responses have been mixed. Hauraki District Council have employed a contractor to conduct dispersals and carcass recovery with direct report to both us and the Council. This has worked very well, and we are encouraging other councils to adopt similar policies. Having contractors that can accurately identify bird species, botulism symptoms and knowledge of how to conduct dispersals at the scale and frequency required to stop birds using the sites is critical.

OUTPUT 2: HABITAT PROTECTION/MANAGEMENT

Project 5211: RMA

Waikato District Plan

Since we presented at the hearing on the Proposed Waikato District Plan for the Rural Chapter on the 29th of September, we have had concluding reports back from the Waikato District Council officers which has covered the majority of concerns raised in our original submission. Overall we have had successful outcomes from these reports. However, our outstanding concerns are regarding the Landscape and Natural Character areas, these include:

- The conditions applying to earthworks in Landscape and Natural Character areas are very restrictive – only earthworks for the maintenance of fences, tracks and drains may be undertaken without restriction, for all other earthworks only 50m3 may be excavated and only from an area of 250m2 otherwise a resource consent is required.
- Building a maimai in a Landscape and Natural Character Area requires a resource consent.

There are two remaining hearings before we receive a final decision from the commissioners on the whole of the plan. We are looking to present on the General Rezoning hearing which has come up as a result of the Waikato District Council having received a large number of submissions seeking rezoning of particular areas, which are scheduled to be heard in early 2021. Some of these areas include zone changes from rural to residential and industrial in areas adjacent to or close to wetlands valued for their gamebird resource.

We also made a submission on Stage 2 of the Waikato District Plan Review which specifically concerns natural hazards and the effects of climate change. Stage 2 has consisted of the development of a new set of proposed objectives, policies and rules to manage the risk to people and structures on land subject to natural hazards. It has also included the development of provisions to mitigate and/or adapt to the effects of climate change. We sought to be able to undertake earthworks for conservation activities and the construction of a maimai as permitted activities (not requiring resource consent) in the Flood Plain Management Area and Flood Ponding Area's. We will be presenting at this hearing when required.

Mischa is currently preparing a document to summarise where our wins and losses are from the entire hearings process and provide a recommendation on what we may wish to appeal on to the Environment Court depending on the outcomes of the commissioner's decisions.

National Environmental Standards for Freshwater Regulations

Mischa has prepared a draft submission which will be made on behalf of Fish and Game Council seeking amendment to the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater Regulations (NES-FW). This comes after concerns being raised that NES-FW will have a considerable detrimental impact on Fish and Game licence holders and on Council's own operations regarding the maintenance and construction of maimai and other activities in wetlands, including wetland restoration works. The submission seeks amendment to the NES-FW regulations to provide for those activities in wetlands.

An unintended consequence from the new NES-FW, which was implemented in August last year, is that activities with little to no environmental effect on wetlands have been captured by the regulations. The new regulations now pose a major impediment to anyone wishing to build a new maimai, restore a wetland, or even plant an oak tree near a farm pond. Furthermore, Fish and Game's ability to carry out wetland restoration and maintenance projects on our own wetlands will be very much constrained.

We have identified two main areas of concern where we wish to see an amendment to the NES-FW regulations – these are construction of wetland utility structures, and wetland restoration work.

We are now seeking feedback from other Fish and Game RMA staff and regional managers before then seek support from other organisations and then taking it to the Minister for the Environment.

The NES-FW and effects on F&G wetland restoration activities

Whilst the intent of the NES-FW may be noble, by trying to ensure wetlands are preserved and no longer destroyed it has had some unintended consequences to our planned wetland enhancement and creation projects. The new definition of a 'natural wetland' at least as it is being applied currently is problematic as is our inability to conduct earthworks works within 10m of such designations even if permitted under the WRP. The failure of the NES-FW to differentiate between pest plants and other vegetation when setting arbitrary size and scale restrictions is even more restrictive with a maximum 500m² or 10% of the total wetland area

whichever is lesser being the new benchmark. The regional council have agreed to free up some resourcing to help facilitate discussion conduct site visits. The upshot has been that we have had to modify one of our projects this year to ensure we maintain a 10m buffer around the periphery of the area of flooded paddock that is considered to be a natural wetland. One of the other projects has been put on hold as we will now need a consent to complete it.

I have discussed our concerns with the NES-FW with the new Chairman of NZF&GC, Ray Grubb, and followed it up with an email detailing the practical difficulties of this new legislation when carrying our wetland restorations.

Open Country Dairy

We have just received a revised application to be lodged with the Environment Court. In general, it is a substantive improvement moving back to the current dual land and river discharge regime. There are still some issues that remain to be resolved but we are hopeful that this can be done without requiring an environment court hearing.

Thames WWTP

We have finally signed off on this consent with the 11th and final iteration of consent conditions. We managed to get N and P limits reduced substantially from those originally proposed but believe this could have gone further, based on recent plant performance. The botulism management plan condition requires our feedback into consideration, and we have worked with TCDC to draft up a plan which should now be being implemented. We also managed to get a condition inserted prohibiting any future land fill leachate, as the removal of this 3 years ago appears to have led to substantial improvements in contaminant levels. Once again, we were the only submitter for the biggest single point source discharge into the Firth and whilst the outcome may not be perfect, it was the best we could do without a potentially lengthy and expensive legal battle.

Max Birt

This consenting process has been going for nearly 5 years now. A revised application was sent though early in the New Year. Again, it reflects a big improvement on what was previously provided although we still have some questions relating to proposed consent limits and how they were derived. There are also still some noncompliance issues in one of the drains that need to be addressed.

Hauraki Drought Response

After last year's disaster on the Plains with widespread fish and bird deaths, DOC, Councils, Iwi and F&G got together to develop an action plan to deal with a similar event should it recur. Up until the end of October we were on track for another extreme drought but some much needed summer rain has helped mitigate the risk in some areas. Agencies have ramped up their surveillance and at present bird mortalities appear top be constrained to WWTPS.

Whangamarino Weir Meeting

We met with representatives of DOC and ICM for an informal catch up to see if there is a way, we can progress the current review and achieve a mutually agreeable outcome that meets the objectives of all organisations.

Lake Waikare S128 Review Liaison Group Meeting

David attended the latest meeting where we received updates regarding the sediment reduction conditions on Consent 101727.

Project 5221: Fish & Game land. **Consents for Council's wetlands**

Clare has visited most of our wetlands to obtain an appreciation of what is required for the consent application to carry out maintenance work. Adam has been advised by regional council staff on their expectations for surveying the wetland's fish population. Edna was suggested and kits were ordered to start the field sampling that will consist of 27 Edna kits, to do 3 replicate samples from 10 sites in each wetland for a total of 270 water samples. The Edna can cover nearly all fish, plants, and animals from single cellular organisms up to humans.

With these results, along with information provided by David Cocks and John Dyer, the consents are underway with continued work carried out by Clare to include the maintenance requirements and schedule along with the Assessment of Environmental Effects.

North Shepherd Wetland.

On a positive note, one of the native creepers which tends to thrive in un-grazed or lightly grazed areas, (such as our F&G wetlands and also around lake edges where grazing is fenced off), is thriving in the North Shepherd. This plant called *Muehlenbeckia australis*, (or Pohuehue), which is food for the Glade Copper Butterfly, (*Lycaena feredayi*). In an industrial agricultural landscape, it is likely our F&G wetlands are refuge to a significant number of rare and uncommon species, something that might be useful to document in future.

On a negative note, golden dodder is demonstrating what a serious weed it could potentially be by persisting even after DoC have sprayed it in this wetland. John Dyer will extend the sprayed area shortly to include all of a certain plant-host nearby called *Alternanthera nahui*, (a relative of alligator weed). Our thanks to Dr Paula Reeves who identified this small host plant.

Alligator weed is also flourishing in this wetland in the supply drain from the inlet by Island Block Road bridge to the causeway entrance, also large amounts in Pond 2 and additionally in a small wet area by the weir, (since sprayed). Staff will further attend to this as soon as we have a free-calm day. Because the crude crossing over this drain is not accessible by 4WD, or perhaps not safe even by a quad-based sprayer, John has obtained a small 4-wheeled garden trolley to safely get a sprayer, battery and large quantities of spray along the 650m long affected drain area. A new culvert at some stage would fix this access issue. Pond 2 will need spray to be boated in and a narrow punt and some chainsaw work is required to get through this restricted entrance.

Illegal dumping is an ongoing problem at F&G wetlands, in particular, the North and Central Shepherd. John inspected a recent trailer-load of material dumped here and found the name of a Huntly resident on several items. Waikato District Council staff were contacted and made

aware of exactly where to find the persons identification. They have since also removed this rubbish. Ironically, the Huntly address found had a council rubbish bin in their front yard.

Piggott Wetland:

In the past we have solicited Watercare's help to use a contractor to spray the eastern margin of Parker Stream of pampas, yellow flag and alligator weed that could otherwise infect our own property. However, a promised follow up spray never arrived. Councillors may recall we had to do an Alligator Weed Control Plan for just a single incursion in the Piggott Wetland. By chance, it has since been discovered that our property boundary actually includes all the eastern side of Parker Stream from Watercare's pond outlet to the Waikato River, roughly 1km in length. This means that we can, during suitable tides, enter this creek by boat and do all the spraying ourselves.

It is a moot question if whitebait spawn in this creek, though it is tidal. However, replacing rampant and very unsuitable, (for spawning), pampas and Glyceria with grass species such as tall fescue, Yorkshire fog and creeping bent as well as flax bushes and rush bases will make a far more suitable spawning site if it is used. Whitebait are certainly found in this stream as are sometimes large schools of mullet and also koi carp.

Large amounts of pampas in the Piggott Wetland are now history, though alligator weed continues to persist. A large and rampant patch of *Elaeagnus* was included in the last staff spray here. A pondholder working bee onsite is planned shortly.

Williamson Wetland.

A number of new DoC traps from an Auckland supplier have been collected by staff and delivered to Williamson Wetland users to assist with predator control. Also, Fenn traps from a Hamilton-based supplier.

A follow-up check of all the pampas spraying in this block revealed dead and dying plants everywhere nearly 3-months after the "sprayathon" pondholder working bee held early November 2020.

Blythen Wetland:

Other user-groups might like to take note: predator trappers in the Blythen Wetland have been experimenting with Mustelid and Cat Lure from <https://www.traps.co.nz/lures> Gary there writes: "We caught 8 mustelids in the space of 3 weeks, 5 of which were caught in one week which is the most ever caught in such a short time".

OUTPUT 3: PARTICIPATION

Project 5311: Access negotiation

Adam contacted the landowner regarding access on the Waione Stream and will follow up in January, but early indications are that walking access will continue to be granted to anglers.

Adam has been exploring fishing locations near the now popular timber trail after several calls from the public. Most areas are hard to get to, but the Blackfern Lodge offers great fishing. The Okauaka has potential but has some large waterfalls and is very hard to access. Adam explored streams near Ongarue and found Mangakahu and Mangatukutuku Stream were explored but neither can offer provide easy access.

Adam and Roslyn continue to revamp the online access material and are currently working on the Whakapapa and Whanganui information.

Adam contacted the trust that has locked the Waimiha Valley Road, providing access to the Waimiha Stream, and will follow up with a meeting in February.

Project 5312: User Group Costs

John Dyer delivered a signed F&G Merit Certificate to Auckland resident Peter Nola (senior) who, along with his wife Kay, were very much appreciative. This is in recognition for his countless hours of work supervising and/or directly restoring numerous new wetlands, planting upland game areas, raising pheasants, building and servicing dozens of predator traps and also manufacturing many hundreds of grey teal nest boxes at both Tony Flexman's and Peter Buckley's properties. Peter also encouraged other hunters to copy this successful formula with a well-read article in one of the popular Hunting and Fishing publications, extolling the virtues of small syndicates of hunters pooling their labour and modest resources together to improve their gamebird hunting prospects.

Project 5331: F&G Newspapers

John has assisted the F&G National Office publicity staff with an inventory of all F&G owned wetlands open to hunting in all 12 regions. This to compile a database of "where to go" on our national F&G website for the travelling hunter.

There are clearly plenty of pheasant hunting opportunities in our region and lots of potential for more people to utilize the 4-month long season. John solicited advice and photos from a number of expert pheasant hunters in our region to draft an article for the national F&G magazine to give newer hunters a good steer toward initial pheasant and quail hunting success.

Project 5341: Other publications

Mr Dyer authored a short article with photos on duck banding history in NZ, (since 1911), and comparing it to current duck banding work. This for the Ducks Unlimited NZ magazine Flight due to be published shortly.

OUTPUT 4: PUBLIC PROMOTIONS

Project 5431: liaison advocacy

In December I met with Paul Le Miere, the regional policy manager for Federated Farmers to discuss potential areas of cooperation, especially access and wetlands. Access is a significant issue for AWFG with many properties closed to anglers in recent years, so we agreed that this

was an area where we could work together. The properties were closed in reaction to the dirty dairying publicity, at least that is the reason generally given by landowners. Paul offered to discuss with his Waikato president, Jacque Hamn, possible solutions. Wetland creation was another area, and we discussed the Feds approaching their members for potential projects. Neither organisation has much direct involvement with catchment groups. We also discussed potential areas of conflict including Healthy Rivers, Whangamarino Weir consent review, district plans. We agree to keep talking on these issues but clearly there's limits. Overall a productive first meeting.

Mr Dyer liaised with Hunting & Fishing HO and it seems that the Swamp Comp predator competition is on again this year. User groups and individuals might like to take note.

Mangaotama Catchment Project

David and Councillor Shaw attended a meeting to discuss the formation of a restoration group to focus on the Mangaotama Catchment which includes several streams, Lakes Ngaroto, Mangakaware, Ruatuna, Ngarotoiti and the Mangaotama Wetland. Discussions included how we could better coordinate work streams and secure funding.
5441 Displays/promotions.

Project 5441: Displays/promotions/PR

Adam is continuing to participate in the national PR group.

OUTPUT 5: LAW ENFORCEMENT

Project 5541: Ranging training

Complaints were received about a sudden disappearance of 70-90 ducks at a private address in Coatesville. Suspected was that Alpha-chloralose had been used. The site was inspected, nothing untoward was found but the landowners spoken to anyway, which satisfied the complainant. On a national level, Mr Dyer approached MPI about the lack of warning on the NZ alpha-chloralose product label of the \$100,000 - \$200,000 fines if this product is misused to poison wildlife other than declared pests such as sparrows. There is a review of all such poisons planned shortly by MPI and we have been assured we will be notified and consulted about this then. Bird Rescue have also been tipped off.

Project 5841: National liaison.

Adam took part in the Freshwater Biosecurity Partnership meeting with MPI.

Healthy Rivers PC1

On the 8th of July we filed our appeal against the decision of the Waikato Regional Council on Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Waikato Regional Plan. Our appeal was prepared by our legal counsel Sarah Ongley with input from our staff and external expert planner Helen Marr.

We submitted a Legal Pool Fund application to the National Council and have had \$110,000 approved which will cover the financial year 2020/21 for the engagement of legal and technical expertise to complete the Environment Court process. We will not be able to afford to continue with the appeal without this funding. The appeal process will be lengthy and include many days of attending mediation.

On the 29th of October we filed our s274 of the Resource Management Act 1991 notices to join 13 other parties appeals that address matters we are concerned about but did not appeal specifically on ourselves. Correspondingly we have had all 24 appellants' join our own appeal. This sounds like a lot but is not uncommon for this type of plan change appeal, especially when we are in the minority in terms of what we are seeking/appealing in the council's decision.

We have so far presented a strong scientific, legal, and planning case, which has had partial success in the hearing processes. We believe that strategic alignment with DOC and other parties with similar concerns, where possible, through the mediation process will result in a robust case with moderate to high chances of success.

A meeting took place on the 26th of January between the Waikato Regional Council and Clare and Sarah Ongley which went over the reasons behind our appeals. This was done without prejudice. WRC pointed out appeals which they wanted to know why these were of particular concern and have requested us to provide further information on a selected few. Once they have completed all the interviews and appellants have exchanged any further material following this meeting the WRC are to create working groups which are groups of similar appeals and likeminded parties, where key topics will be pulled apart to hopefully resolve as much possible before moving into mediation.

**B. Wilson,
Chief Executive**

Financial Report for February 2021 Meeting

Income during November-December

Fish licence sales are similar to last year but there are large changes in the various categories. As you would expect, overseas angler numbers are well down, some 200 Adult and 170 Daily licences. This has been compensated for by an increase in Family (100), Adult (148) and Senior (27) licences.

However, last season 27% of licences (LEQ) sold from February onwards were to non-residents (compared to 16% for the total season). So I expect that our sales will be down 2-5% by the end of the year (inclusive of non-resident levy).

Other income came from prosecutions (fines and diversion), and zongun hire.

An email was sent to Australian anglers asking for donations (or at least buy a licence) with no response.

Expenditure during November-December

Audit fees were the largest expense (\$9,000). Our fees are similar to that of other regions, but I'll reassess once the contract comes up for renewal in 2 years. The only significant asset purchase was a new mobile phone (\$712).

Much of the expenditure is typical for the beginning of summer with field equipment maintenance, maize for banding, and working bees contributing to the expenses.

There are also expenses for Adam's Edna survey of the Council's wetlands.

Term deposits

We currently have the following term deposits and 350k in bank accounts. At present, I am reluctant to place any more funds in term deposits because of the potential impact of Covid-19 on the gamebird season.

Interest rates have been plummeting, so the budgeted income from interest is likely to be well down. Current interest rates on offer are 0.8%.

		<u>Term</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Matures</u>
0072	\$62,040.00	2.65%	12 Feb 20	12 Feb 21
0074	\$300,000.00	1.60%	24 Jul 20	22 Mar 21
0075	\$300,000.00	1.55%	7 Sep 20	4 Jun 21
0076	\$200,000.00	0.85%	13 Nov 20	13 Jul 21

Ben Wilson
Chief Executive

Fish Licence Sales to 31 December 2020

2020-2021

Channel	FWF	FWA	FWNA	FSLA	FLAA	FWIA	FLBA	FSBA	FDA	FDNA	FWJ	FWNJ	FWIJ	FDJ	FDNJ	FWC	FWNC	FDC	FDNC	Fish LEQ	Fish \$
Agency Onli	207	581	23	107	22	0	4	52	95	0	58	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eyede Calli	8	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mail Order	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public Onlin	380	912	37	142	69	0	4	54	231	18	94	1	0	30	0	0	6	0	0	0	0
Retail Book	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	595	1,497	60	253	91	0	8	106	327	18	152	1	0	39	0	0	6	0	0	2,749	368,919

2019-2020

Channel	FWF	FWA	FWNA	FSLA	FLAA	FWIA	FLBA	FSBA	FDA	FDNA	FWJ	FWNJ	FWIJ	FDJ	FDNJ	FWC	FWNC	FDC	FDNC	Fish LEQ	Fish \$
Agency Onli	237	674	58	111	35	0	5	48	94	16	55	7	0	14	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Eyede Calli	2	6	0	8	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mail Order	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public Onlin	255	713	147	105	87	0	2	51	258	137	75	1	0	23	2	0	4	0	0	1	0
Retail Book	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	494	1,393	205	224	122	0	7	99	353	153	130	8	0	37	2	0	6	0	1	2,678	368,124

BUDGET 2020/21							ACTUAL 2020/21 (as of 31/12/2020)						
Project	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost	Variance	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost	Variance		
SPECIES MANAGEMENT													
POPULATION MONITORING													
Drift diving	3,520	3,500	20				(20)						
Banding/shoveler study/wetlands stud	9,500		9,500	2,547		2,547	(6,953)						
Aerial transects	2,000		2,000				(2,000)						
Trend counts	3,000		3,000				(3,000)						
Fish surveys	1,000		1,000	1,006		1,006	6						
Gamebird Research				-									
HARVEST ASSESSMENT													
Gamebirds				188		188	188						
RELEASES													
Fish	17,000	10,000	7,000	6,693		6,693	(307)						
CONTROL													
Gamebirds (zon guns)	2,500	2,500			70	(70)	(70)						
HABITAT PROTECTION/MANAGEMENT													
RESOURCE MAN. ACT													
R. M.A	52,000	50,000	2,000	792		792	(1,208)						
FISH & GAME PROPERTIES													
Council Land-maint,grass,fence,spray	21,000	11,000	10,000	1,796		1,796	(8,204)						
Rates	1,000		1,000	491		491	(509)						
NON COUNCIL LAND													
Non Council Land	50,000	50,000		11,162	11,162								
MRP & Genesis mitigation monies	60,000	60,000		14,375	14,375		(14,375)						
Trees	5,000		5,000	2,843			(5,000)						
ASSESSING & MONITORING													
Assessment & Monitoring	5,000	5,000		-		-	-						
PARTICIPATION													
ACCESS													
Access negotiation				8		8	8						
Signs/tracks etc	500		500				(500)						
NEWSLETTERS													
Magazine/Newsletters	17,000		17,000	45		45	(16,955)						
OTHER PUBLICATIONS													
Pamphlets	200		200				(200)						
PUBLIC PROMOTIONS													
Displays/promotions/PR	500		500	\$ -		-	(500)						

BUDGET 2020/21		ACTUAL 2020/21 (as of 31/12/2020)					
Project	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost	Variance
COMPLIANCE							
RANGING							
Ranging	500		500	42		42	(458)
RANGER TRAINING							
Training	500	500					
COMPLIANCE							
Legal	20,000	6,000	14,000	2,222	1,999	223	(13,777)
COUNCILS							
COUNCIL MEETINGS							
Meeting costs	2,000		2,000	580		580	(1,420)
PLANNING/REPORTING							
REPORTING/AUDIT							
Annual Report/Audit	15,000		15,000	16,300		16,300	1,300
NATIONAL LIAISON							
National Liason							
ADMINISTRATION							
SALARIES							
Salaries	574,680		574,680	166,628		166,628	(408,052)
STAFF EXPENSES							
ACC Levy	2,300		2,300	1,309	1,309		(2,300)
Super/KS	19,442		19,442	2,879		2,879	(16,563)
Fringe Benefit Tax	13,600		13,600	1,044		1,044	(12,556)
Staff Training	500		500				(500)
Clothing	500		500				(500)
Reimb allowances	10,000		10,000				
OFFICE PREMISES							
Rates	1,200		1,200	678		678	(522)
Maintenance	13,000		13,000	613		613	(12,387)
Insurance (includes off equipment)	2,700		2,700				(2,700)
Power	2,800		2,800	716		716	(2,084)
OFFICE EQUIPMENT							
Purchases (Under \$2,000)	2,000		2,000	1,450			(2,000)
Asset Replacement Funding							
Eqpmt Maintenance	5,000		5,000	307		307	(4,693)
COMMUNICATIONS/CONSUMABLES							
Telephone/fax	12,000		12,000	3,919		3,919	(8,081)
Postage	1,200		1,200	37			(1,200)
Courier							
Stationery	3,000		3,000	548		548	(2,452)
Photocopying	2,000		2,000	426		426	(1,574)

Budget without hours

BUDGET 2020/21		ACTUAL 2020/21 (as of 31/12/2020)					
Project	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost	Variance
GENERAL							
Donations				150		150	150
Bank Charges (Interest calc by NZC)						969	(531)
General Office expenses	1,500		1,500	969			
Insurance - General							
Legal - General	1,350		1,350	2,300		2,300	950
Public Liability insurance	1,200		1,200	1,619		1,619	419
GENERAL EQUIPMENT							
Purchases (Under \$2,000)	3,000		3,000			-	(3,000)
Asset Replacement Funding							
Equipment Maintenance	2,000		2,000	261		261	(1,739)
Equipment Insurance	900		900				(900)
Equipment Hire/rental/running expenses				275		275	275
VEHICLES							
Vehicle Maintenance	13,000		13,000	2,091		2,091	(10,909)
Vehicle Insurance	5,500		5,500				(5,500)
Vehicle Registration	1,000		1,000	28		28	(972)
Vehicle Fuel	22,000		22,000	6,607		6,607	(15,393)
	1,006,092		198,500	241,569		28,915	(594,938)

Account Transactions

For the period 1 November 2020 to 31 December 2020

<u>Description</u>	<u>Debit</u>	<u>Credit</u>
Annual Report/Audit		
Owen McLeod & Co Ltd - Audit of financial statements	9,000	
Banding/Shovler Study		
Glencore Grain - Maize	1,710	
Bank Charges		
Westpac - Merchant Fee	20	
Westpac - Merchant Fee	20	
Westpac Mastercard	50	
Commission on Sales Fish		
Eyede Solutions - Commission - Fish	558	
Eyede Solutions - Commission - Fish	718	
Council Meeting Expenses		
Lunch - Council Meeting - 12th Dec 2020	248	
HCS Hamilton Limited - Delivery	15	
New World - New World	4	
Field Equipment Maintenance		
John Dyer - Western Auto Electrical - Sprayer repair	7	
John Dyer - South Auckland Marine - Oil for boat	63	
John Dyer - Marcgraig Enterprises - Chainsaw repair	39	
Marcgraig Enterprises - Chainsaw repair	90	
Yuneec Drones Australia Props	56	
Field Equipment Running Exps		
Pivotel - D Klee - Satellite M2M - 2940352	23	
Pivotel - A Daniel - Satellite M2M - 2940340	23	
Pivotel - J Dyer - Satellite M2m - 2940348	23	
Pivotel - J Dyer - Satellite M2m - 2958388	23	
Pivotel - A Daniel - Satellite M2M - 2958380	23	
Pivotel - D Klee - Satellite M2M - 2958392	23	
Fish Licence 20/21 Agents/Internet/Office Sales		
M Duncan - Loyal Senior Fishing 20/21		98
Eyede Solutions - Fish Licences 20/21		11,137
Eyede Solutions - Fish Licences 20/21		27,194
Eyede Solutions - Senior fishing licence - Murray Duncan	93	
Eyede Solutions - Fish Licences 20/21		31,647
Eyede Solutions - Fish Licences 20/21		14,259
Game Bird Control (Zon guns)		
Ben Meehan		18
Stephen Long		36
Stephen Long - Courier costs		11

022

Habitat Works F & G Land

Rainbow & Brown - Glyphosate 360 - 5 Litres	50
John Dyer - CMI Springs - DOC Traps/safety clip	398
John Dyer - PGG Wrightson Ltd - Spray	41
Working bee expenses	1,107
Wilderlab NZ Ltd - eDNA V2 mini kit with 1.2 micron CA filter and PP prefil	405
Wilderlab NZ Ltd - Freight charges	10

Interest Income

Westpac	18
Westpac	3
Westpac	3
Westpac	14

Legal/Court Prosecutions

Paul Bayer - Donation	870
Jonathan Bayer - Donation	652
Stainton Chellew - Paul Bayer/Jono Bayer - Piako boat ramp	3,743

Non Resident Licence Revenue 2020/21

Eyede Solutions - Non Residential Levy 20/21	117
Eyede Solutions - Non Residential Levy 20/21	402
Eyede Solutions - Non Residential Levy 20/21	367
Eyede Solutions - Non Residential Levy 20/21	117

Office General

Countdown - Office supplies	15
Adobe Systems Software -	22
Adobe Systems Software	18
Stuff Ltd - Waikato Times	50
Eastern Fish and Game Council - Xero Package October	57
Eastern Fish and Game Council - Xero Package November	57
Allied Security - Alarm Monitoring	35
Coffee	17
Countdown - Office supplies	15
Department of Internal Affairs - Lead Agency Fees	10
Allied Security - Alarm attendance	60
Adobe Systems Software	22
Roslyn Simmonds - Car parking	11
Roslyn Simmonds - Countdown - Office supplies	24
Adobe Systems Software	19
Adobe Systems Software	16
Allied Security - Alarm Monitoring - INV132238	35
Eastern Fish and Game Council - Xero Package December	57
Stuff Ltd - Waikato Times sub	47

Office Maintenance

Green Acres - Lawn mowing	70
Green Acres - Lawn mowing	70
Bunnings	40
Bunnings	41
Bunnings - Inv - 947400243430	4
Wholesale & Industrial Supplies: Plastic mower wheel	14
Mitre 10 - Anchor Alligator - Screw	7
Green Acres - Lawn mowing	70

Bunnings - Office maintenance	19
Office Power	
Meridian - Power - Inv 635665783	158
Meridian - Power - Inv 635927955	170
Office Purchases (Under 2,000)	
Noel Leeming - Microphone/Speakers	43
Mobile phone	712
Photocopier	
Canon - Photocopier	48
Canon - Photocopier	214
Postage	
New Zealand Post - Courier costs	4
New Zealand Post - Courier costs	4
New Zealand Post - Courier costs	7
New Zealand Post - Courier costs	7
New Zealand Post - Courier	4
Prosecutions Fines	
Ministry of Justice - Brown/Hamish	144
Ministry of Justice - Lockley/Nathan/Daniel/Burgess	108
Ministry of Justice - Barron/Jessie/Lee	90
Ministry of Justice - Marr/Patrick/John	72
Ministry of Justice - Green/Simon/Trevor	136
Ministry of Justice - Brown/Hamish	180
Ministry of Justice - Lockley/Nathan/Daniel/Burgess	135
Ministry of Justice - Barron/Jessie/Lee	113
Ministry of Justice - Marr/Patrick/John	90
Public Online Sales Fees Excl GST	
Eyede Solutions - Licence Bank Fees	642
Eyede Solutions - Licence Bank Fees	716
Public Online Sales Fees Incl GST	
Eyede Solutions - Licence DPS Fee	79
Eyede Solutions - Licence DPS Fee	107
Rates - F & G Land	
Auckland Council - 147 Bethells Road Bethells	124
RMA	
Clare Robertson - Travel costs	204
Stationery	
Warehouse Stationery - Stationary	36
John Dyer - Briscoes - Picture frame for certificate	4
John Dyer - Warehouse Stationary	43
Warehouse Stationery - Stationary	36
OfficeMax - Stationery	54
Warehouse Stationery - Stationary	64
Warehouse Stationery - Stationary	16

Telephone/fax/internet	
Spark - B Wilson	118
Vodafone - Broadband - Fixed line and broadband	386
Spark - 0800	20
Wireless Nation Limited - Internet	87
Vodafone - A Daniel -	95
Vodafone - Mobiles - Mobile phones	241
Spark - J Dyer	104
Vodafone - Broadband - Fixed line & Broadband	382
Spark - B Wilson	118
Spark - 0800	20
Vodafone - A Daniel	95
Wireless Nation Limited - Internet - David Klee	87
Spark - J Dyer	105

Vehicle Fuel & RUC

NZ Transport Agency - Road User Charge	1,326
BP Oil New Zealand Limited	238
BP Oil New Zealand Limited	201
BP Oil New Zealand Limited	152
BP Oil New Zealand Limited	207
NZ Transport Agency - Toll payment	6
NZ Transport Agency - RUC - MWT840	1,656
BP Oil New Zealand Limited - Diesel	260
BP Oil New Zealand Limited	279
BP Oil New Zealand Limited	134
BP Oil New Zealand Limited	189
Z Energy Limited - Diesel	63
Z Energy Limited	71
Z Energy Limited	64

Vehicle Maintenance

John Dyer - Western Auto Electrical - Boat repair	311
Fairview Motors Limited - LJK556 - Service	466
John Andrew Ford & Mazda - General service	612

Comments on the Resource Allocation Project report

Councillors: Please note that the report for the Resource Allocation Project was sent out with the agenda for the December 2020 meeting.

Ben Wilson

1. Introduction

The objective of the Resource Allocation Project, as given in the Terms of Reference (attached), was to provide the New Zealand Fish and Game Council with some mechanism for vetting the annual funding applications from the regions. The Council required some way of assessing the relative needs of the regions based on the expenditure required to service licence holders and to manage, maintain and enhance the fish and game resource.

Previous funding models based were based on simple regression analysis, for example of licence sales verses core budgets (a regression analysis is simply a graph that shows the relationship between two variables). However, these funding models were considered to be grossly inadequate by the previous NZ Chief Executive.

The Project was carried out by Concept Consulting, a specialist economics *consultancy*.

2. Concerns with the data used.

I cannot reconcile the data used in the report with the annual Performance Reports for each council (Page 5). The figure for “other” income for the regions is overvalued by \$0.2m presumably because national legal funding has been included (which shouldn’t be considered as it is funded from internal levies rather than from external sources). The figure for levies also appears to be wrong, \$3.8m rather than \$3.1. The data on licence sales appears suspect, especially for the larger regions. For example, the total licence sales for Auckland/Waikato in the 2019 year were \$977,494 (and \$937,972 after commission). However, the graph on page 7 suggests that total sales were some \$1.1m.

The analysis is based on total expenditure rather than on core budgets. Therefore, despite what the report implies, the graphs reflect not only the relative needs of the regions but also whether individual regions were successful in obtaining external funding or funded projects from reserves. Consequently, the graphs do not distinguish between activities which are funded from the core budget and those funded from external sources. For example, Auckland/Waikato has generally funded much of its habitat work from external funds, but this expenditure is still considered in the report to be an expense to the system.

There is an attempt to address the drawbacks of using total expenditure in the analysis by removing one-off costs and any expenditure funded from “other revenue”.

One-off costs are excluded by deducting “Other Costs”, which are reputedly given in the “financial statements”. I can’t find any description of “Other Costs” in the regional financial statements but

there are “Other expenses”, which related to the costs of running an office (rent, equipment, consumables), field equipment, and vehicles. All of which are clearly core costs and shouldn’t be excluded.

Expenditure from one-off sources of revenue is excluded by deducting “Other revenue”, which is listed in the regional financial statements. Other revenue includes items such as income from prosecutions consultancy fees reimbursements from the national office. However, other revenue does not include grants, mitigation income, national fishing game legal funding, and donations. There is a fair bit of variation between regions as to whether “other revenue” covers all external income other than interest (e.g. North Canterbury), the majority of external income (e.g. Eastern), or a minority of external income (e.g. Nelson/Marlborough, Auckland/Waikato).

There is also the issue of spending from reserves, which complicates matters further, especially for Otago, Southland, North Canterbury and CSI. I don’t know whether this expenditure was one-off, from restricted reserves, or an ongoing commitment but I’m uncomfortable with it being included in this analysis.

Therefore, significant levels of external income have not been excluded from the analysis. Expenditure from this revenue is considered to be an expense contributing to an increase in the “Average expense per day of activity (\$/DEQ). This is disappointing and contributes to the high average expenses for some regions (for example, Auckland/Waikato and Nelson/Marlborough).

3. The use of “activity” rather than licence sales as the primary measure

The report recommends that the best primary measure of the financial needs for a region is the level of “activity” of licence holders rather than other attributes such as licence sales (or indeed any of the measures suggested in the Terms of Reference).

My concern is that this recommendation changes the incentive for regional F&G councils from selling licenses to increasing activity. This may be acceptable in the South Island where there are underutilized resources but is undesirable for the North Island, especially for game hunting, because the level of activity is easily manipulated by changing the regulations. For example, moving to a 2-month season would increase activity by 50% in Eastern and Auckland/Waikato but will have a negligible impact on licence sales and be counterproductive in the longer term. For example, the graph on page 10 shows the impact of the decision in 2012 to reduce the season length on game bird hunting activity in the Auckland/Waikato and Eastern regions. When setting regulations, it is not desirable for councils to have to consider the impacts on activity if it’s going to directly affect income.

It could also be argued that there needs to be some incentive for all North Island regions to increase licence sales in the Eastern Region’s lakes – the only significantly underutilized F&G resource in the North Island.

Nevertheless, there is a strong relationship between activity in a region and licence sales, especially once the outliers of Northland and CSI are removed.

4. Report's "Key findings"

Page 3 of the report provides a summary of the "Key findings". My comments on these are:

- I disagree with the use of "activity" as the starting point for allocating resources among the regions, for the reasons given above.
- I believe the analysis of "*costs after adjusting for DEQ in each region*" was flawed. Nevertheless, there is clearly a wide disparity in the costs for maintaining the same level of activity among the four smallest regions. This disparity needs to be examined in more detail, and perhaps a minimum core budget set for these regions. But I don't understand how this analysis led to the suggestion that there may be benefits from reducing fixed costs.
- Except for the obvious outlier of CSI, I do not believe the analysis has shown a wide variation in the costs for maintaining the same level of activity among the other regions because all external income and the use of reserves were not taken into consideration. This is not to say that such a disparity does not exist, just that it has not been clearly shown.
- The report states that "resource allocation decisions seem to have lagged behind shifts in activity". I cannot see how the report can derive this conclusion when it didn't consider "resource allocation" just expenditure. My own analysis suggests that activity is more closely tied to core budgets than licence sales, once the outlier of CSI is excluded.

5. Report recommendations

The analyses were based on "total expenditure", but the recommendations are based on "core budgets" – this reinforces my concerns that basing the analyses on "total expenditure" is flawed.

The recommendations are based on "core existing budgets", with the primary recommendation that "*Using existing budgets as a starting point – but with a flex factor (e.g. -10%) applied to all budgets to create a common pool available for reallocation*". The difficulty with this recommendation is that it assumes that there are discretionary funds available in regional budgets to provide a "flex factor". I believe that this misconception was arrived at by the failure to take into consideration that external revenue substantially funds discretionary spending. The "core budget" costs are typically inflexible, especially for the larger councils, and thus any dramatic decrease in core budgets would result in redundancies as there would be no guarantee of funding via the contestable pool.

Subsequent recommendations are based on allocation of the "*contestable pool*" based on "*operational needs and degree of linkage to strategic priorities*". So we are basically back to square one! We are no further along to ascertaining the operational needs of the regions or indeed of establishing what objective measures can be used to assess needs. I would also argue that it is up to the regions to determine their operational needs and strategic priorities, and it is not the role of the NZ Council. The misinformed views of the relationship between the NZ Council and the regions blights most of the subsequent recommendations.

The report recommends "*that Fish and Game NZ use the 'flex' pool to shift funding to activities with the greatest strategic priority*". I don't believe that a "flex pool" is required, and of course you would expect the NZ Council to be regularly assessing its spending against strategic priorities.

The report recommends a peer review system of regional and national budgets by the managers. An annual peer review system was used to assess budgets and expenditure until 2017, upon when this process was effectively obliterated by the NZ Council and NZ CE because the process “never made any recommendations” (more accurately recommendations were made but they were ignored by the NZ Council). I have no concerns with this peer review system being reinstated.

Draft Terms of Reference – Resource Allocation Project

In undertaking the Project the Project team should consider:

1. **The physical regional resources:** The number of lakes, rivers and wetlands within each region that, when totalled, define the potential opportunity for licence holders in each region.
2. **The utilisation of physical regional resources:** The number of angler/hunter hours employed within a region that, when totalled define the actual licence holder activity within a region.
3. **The management of physical regional resources:** Consideration should be given to pressure sensitive resources such as backcountry fisheries and the differing resource demands they entail (also relative to income). Similarly, consideration should be given to the variability associated with game bird monitoring from region to region.
4. **The regional/national resources:** The number of staff and their functions by region, a catalogue of the physical assets of each region and a catalogue of the contingent liabilities of each region. The last refers, for example, to high maintenance wetlands against low maintenance fisheries.
5. **Licence sales per region:** While not a direct indicator of resource allocation, licence sales are indicative of where licence holders can be reached.
6. **Base level of regional resource to meet statutory responsibility:** This is unlikely to vary from region to region. New Zealand Council, while presenting a different set of criteria, should also be analysed to determine the base level of resourcing to meet its statutory national responsibilities.
7. **The balance between regionally based resources and nationally available resources:** While it may not optimise resource utilisation to have an RMA specialist in each region, it may be efficient to group RMA specialists by island or some other parameter such as similarity of RMA challenges.

The outputs of the project should include:

1. A national template of minimum resources by Region and National Office to meet current statutory responsibilities.
2. Recommendations, based on risk analysis, of where additional resources could best be applied immediately. For example, best deployment of RMA specialists.
3. Recommend a formula for periodic reassessment of resource allocation across the organisation.
4. Identify the policy, statutory and regulatory changes necessary to optimise the outcomes.
5. Recommend a set of guiding principles for setting operational budgets for regions and national office.
6. Recommend a governance structure to oversee periodic reviews of resource allocation.
7. Recommend a regime for migration from current state to future state.
8. Consideration should be given if, during the project, efficiencies come to light that indicate regional amalgamation or regional boundary changes would improve resource application.

Guiding on Public Land

Nigel Juby

Fish and Game is justifiably proud of its origins. European immigrants, tired of trout, salmon and gamebirds being the exclusive property of the wealthy had a vision. Anyone who could pay a license fee and follow a few rules should be able to hunt and fish. Acclimatisation societies were formed, sportfish and gamebirds introduced and legislation created to support their dream.

Private fishing and hunting were made illegal as was the sale, dead or alive, of sportfish and gamebirds. The "Queen's chain" was supposedly established to preserve access.

100 years on, the dream is looking tattered. The "Queen's chain" turned out to be more notional than real. Live gamebirds and (live and dead) salmon can be bought and sold. Trout farming is likely to be legalised.... We are all aware of the issues.

So what exactly remains of the dream? Yes, we can hunt and fish on public land and private land if we get permission but, with lowland habitat largely degraded and access to private land becoming more restricted, the premium fisheries remaining are on public land.

While DOC estate appears to be the last remaining bastion of the original dream, in many parts of the country, this has also effectively been privatised. This has occurred through various means.

Sometimes private interests can control access to public land. The most well known example of this may be the upper Rangatiki river. Helicopter access is restricted to a small, private plot near the river. Unguided anglers can walk a couple of days to access this public water but really, what is the point when helicopters are dropping wealthy guided anglers ahead of you. Oio station is another example where rafts are deployed from private land but most of the fishing is on DOC estate.

But perhaps the more offensive issue is that DOC is essentially selling access rights to guides on our publicly owned land, facilitating both the exclusion of the public and severely diminishing the experience of the fishing public. This works quite simply. Nobody can carry out a commercial activity on DOC land without a concession. The NZ Professional Fishing Guides Association purchases this concession from DOC every year. Without this concession, commercial guiding on the conservation estate would be illegal.

DOC is selling fishing rights to commercial operators!

Even where guides and unguided anglers have equal access, guiding still diminishes the experience for unguided anglers by increasing pressure on rivers that may not be able to handle it.

I would like our council to request staff to investigate the potential of getting some or all of the conservation estate removed from the guide's concession within our region.

Some questions that I have

- Is it illegal for DOC to charge for access via the concession system?
- Given the impact that guides have on other users, is it appropriate that DOC gets to decide where and how they operate? Does this undermine our role around managing the resource for the benefit of license holders.
- Is there anything in the notes around the conservation act that say that concessions must take into account the effect that commercial activity has on recreational users?
- What other laws or principles may be being broken by uncontrolled guiding on public land.

In the end, it seems that fish and game should manage the commercial activity of guides on public land, not DOC.

26 January 2020

Dear Regional Chairs,

Re: Game Bird Guide's Licence Latent Provisions

The Department of Conservation has sought Fish and Game's view on the retention of the latent provisions for game bird guide's licencing under the Wildlife Amendment Act 1996 (see attached). Each year Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO) reviews latent legislation with an eye to revoking superfluous latent legislation. As part of this process they seek DOC's comment on latent legislation within DOC's legislative framework, and DOC has in turn asked for our views.

In 1996, via s24 of the Conservation Amendment Act 1996 and s6 of the Wildlife Amendment Act 1996, latent provisions were inserted into the Conservation Act 1987 and the Wildlife Act 1953 to facilitate licencing schemes for sports fishing guides and game bird guides. There has been a significant amount of work done on a proposal to licence sports fishing guides since 1996, including the currently active proposal. However, to my knowledge there has been no substantial proposal put to DOC on licencing game bird guides in the past 25 years.

DOC have informed us that they intend to advise PCO to retain the latent legislation relating to sports fishing guide's licences but, unless Fish and Game provide them with adequate reason, they intend to advise PCO that they do not see any reason to retain the latent provisions relating to game bird guide's licences. We are, therefore, seeking feedback from regional Fish and Game councils on:

- Whether your council thinks the game bird guide licence provisions should be retained?
- And, if so, what your reasons for retaining the provisions are?

Note that it is unlikely to be sufficient for us to simply state that Fish and Game would like the option to licence game bird guides at some stage in the future. Rather, to retain the provisions there would need to be some intention to put forward a proposal or undertake work in this field shortly.

Yours sincerely,

Rainsford Grubb
NZC Chair



New Zealand Legislation Wildlife Amendment Act 1996

1 Short Title and commencement

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Wildlife Amendment Act 1996, and shall be read together with and deemed part of the Wildlife Act 1953 (hereinafter referred to as the principal Act).
- (2) Sections 2(1), 3, and 8 of this Act shall come into force on the 1st day of July 1996.
- (3) Section 6 of this Act shall come into force on a date to be fixed by the Governor-General by Order in Council.
- (4) Except as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of this section, this Act shall come into force on the day on which it receives the Royal assent.

6 Game hunting guides to be licensed

The principal Act is hereby amended by inserting, after section 22, the following section:

“**22A** Every person commits an offence against this Act and is liable on conviction to the penalty set out in section 67E(1) who acts as a game hunting guide without holding a game hunting guide licence issued under this Act.”

Section 22A: amended, on 15 October 2000, by section 8 of the Wildlife (Penalties and Related Matters) Amendment Act 2000 (2000 No 43).

Section 6: not yet in force.

Hon Kiritapu Allan

MP for East Coast
Minister of Conservation
Minister for Emergency Management
Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
Associate Minister for the Environment



2 FEB 2021

Ref: CORM-89

Grant Annan
Fish and Game New Zealand

BWilson@fishandgame.org.nz

Dear Mr Annan

Thank you for your letter of 14 December 2020, concerning the claim by Ward Ranch Ltd against the Minister of Conservation and the Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Council.

I note your view of the terms of the arrangement entered by between the Department and the Council. I also note your view that the Department is acting unreasonably and inconsistently with that arrangement in refusing to allow the Council to be released from the proceedings. As a result, you have asked that I direct the Department to facilitate the proposed discontinuance of your Council from the above proceedings.

I am advised that discussions between counsel acting for the Department and your Council about the proposed discontinuance have occurred and that the Department has received a letter from Susan Hughes QC, requesting that the Department reconsider its position. I am further advised that the Department will agree to the discontinuance on the condition that it can adopt and rely on the evidence that the Council has filed.

Please note, I do not express a view on the arrangement as I have not sighted it.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'K. Allan', written over a horizontal line.

Hon Kiri Allan
Minister of Conservation

OSH Report for February 2021 Council Meeting

No OSH incidents occurred over the last reporting period.

Office renovations: Due to Covid not all the office renovations planned for the previous financial year were carried out. We're currently getting quotes for replacing the outside desk, which is a hazard due to cracked and missing tiles, rotten boards etc.

The city council has removed our hawthorn hedge and several trees, when they took back some 5m of land that was outside of our boundary. They are planning to build a footpath on the land connecting the adjacent suburb with the Hamilton Zoo. Thankfully, they have constructed a plank fence along the boundary, and have made no changes to the existing entrance gate. We'll probably plant a Griselinia hedge along the fence to maintain privacy (mainly because we get courier packages dropped off outside of office hours).

Kayak OSH guidelines : The OSH guide for the inflatable kayaks were reviewed and updated by Dr Daniel.

Ben Wilson
Chief Executive

25/01/2021