

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 156th MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT THE ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW
ZEALAND ON THURSDAY 18th FEBRUARY 2016 AT 12.00PM**

Present

Murray Ferris, Lindsay Lyons, Barry Roderick, Neal Hawes, Peter Storey, Steve Scragg, Laurance Tamati, David Woolner, Ken Coombes, and Sandy Bull.

IN ATTENDANCE

Andy Garrick, Kate Thompson, Eben Herbert, Matthew McDougall, John Meikle, Lloyd Gledhill, Mark Sherburn, Anthony van Dorp, Matt Osborne, Nigel Simpson, Lynne Sands, Carmel Veitch (Eastern Fish & Game); Colin Paton (Tongariro-Taupo Conservation Board); and Ray Bushell.

1.0 WELCOME

1.1 Cr Murray Ferris opened the meeting at 12.00pm and welcomed all present to the first full meeting of the newly elected Council for 2016.

2.0 APOLOGIES

2.1 Apologies were received from Crs Annaka Davis and Alan Baird; and Ken Raureti (Bay of Plenty Conservation Board).

2.2 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Sandy Bull) that the apologies for the 156th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [16/02/2.2]*

3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (18 NOVEMBER 2015)

3.1 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Steve Scragg) that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2015 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [16/02/3.1]*

3.2 There were no resolutions identified for inclusion in Council Policy.

4.0 MATTERS ARISING

Cr Barry Roderick wished to congratulate staff on another successful audit.

5.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS

- Andy Garrick – Update on Hawke's Bay Fish & Game.

6.0 OATH OF OFFICE

6.1 Council briefly discussed the "Oath of Office" and declaration forms were distributed.

7.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER

7.1 No conflict of interest items were identified. Andy Garrick raised a proposal for Councillors to complete a detailed annual declaration of interest which is something that had recently been adopted by the New Zealand Council. He said that the proposed annual declaration would detail any general and/or potential conflicts of interest and that he could present this for consideration at the next meeting of Council. Cr David Woolner queried whether the Conflict of Interest register should be signed to

confirm "No conflicts", and Cr Laurance Tamati suggested that this declaration should be included within the papers for the meeting.

8.0 CHANGES TO AGENDA ORDER

8.0 Cr Murray Ferris recommended that Items 11 "Governance Induction Presentation" and 12 "2015 Fish and Game Election Process" which had been scheduled for later in the meeting be considered prior to Item 7 "Council Priorities". No opposition was expressed to this occurring.

9.0 GOVERNANCE INDUCTION PRESENTATION

9.1 Andy Garrick introduced Robert Sowman (New Zealand Fish & Game Policy and Planning Manager) to the meeting commenting briefly on his role within the New Zealand Fish & Game Council and his involvement with the development of the Fish & Game Governance Manual and Standing Orders.

9.2 Robert Sowman delivered his presentation on the principles of governance and provided an overview of Fish and Game's Governance Policies and the Standing Orders that Fish & Game operates under.

10.0 2015 FISH AND GAME ELECTION PROCESS

10.1 Council discussed the report provided by the Returning Officer for the 2015 Fish & Game Elections, Warwick Lampp, in addition to considering the following points:

- Should the tick box within the online licence sales system be retained every year rather than in the year immediately preceding the election only? Robert Sowman noted that agents tend to get frustrated with the need to tick various boxes so do not always ask the question, but there is a need to be able to produce an electoral roll outside of the 3 year cycle.
- Should the secondary licence holder on a family licence be eligible to vote? This item was put to the vote and lost the reasoning being that it could mean one licence holder would effectively have two votes.
- Should there be a default position in the tick box that means all season licence holders are registered to vote unless they choose not to? Robert Sowman advised that the Privacy Act requires that the licence holder is given the right to decide. He added that the need to tick a box was an historical decision, and based on (i) the considerable cost associated with providing voting papers to all licence holders, and (ii) our knowledge from return rates over the years that the greater proportion of eligible licence holders don't vote. If there was a move to electronic voting the cost would no longer be prohibitive, but under the current legislation we were required to post out voting packs.
- Should the candidates disclose potential conflicts of interest on their candidate profiles and should staff who have recently resigned or been dismissed be entitled to stand for Council? Robert Sowman confirmed that these had been identified as issues in the recent election, and said that while the legislation is silent on this, national policy relating to these matters could be developed though any policy would require buy in from all regions.

- The ability for licence holders in one region to enrol and vote in another region if an election is not required in the region in which they purchased their licence, or potentially, to vote in every region, are matters that have previously been identified. General support was expressed for limiting licence holders to casting one vote per licence in the region in which they purchased that licence only.
 - The lack of knowledge/interest by licence holders in the makeup and role of Council and the importance of the Council election process was identified as an ongoing issue.
- 10.2 In conclusion Council supported the recommendations put forward by Warwick Lampp but also suggested that licence holders be given the option to choose to receive voting papers by electronic means.
- 10.3 ***Agreed (Peter Storey/Lindsay Lyons) that Council supports Recommendations 2 through to 7 as noted in the Returning Officer's Report for Fish and Game New Zealand's 2015 Regional Council Elections subject to an amendment to Recommendation 2 wording from "or allow registration up to the close of voting date" to "and allow registration up to the close of voting date". Council also suggested that licence holders be provided with the opportunity to choose whether they wish to receive voting packs by electronic means or by the current postal method. [16/02/10.3]***
- 11.0 **COUNCIL PRIORITIES**
- 11.1 Andy Garrick opened the Council priorities discussion and informed Council that this was an opportunity to review progress on current priorities, and review the priorities themselves as a first step towards developing the 2016-17 operational work plan. Andy sought an indication from Council whether it wished to retain all existing priorities as is or amend some, or whether there were changes it wanted to work areas or projects for incorporation into the 2016-17 OWP. Andy advised that Council feedback from this meeting will be used in the drafting of a preliminary OWP which will be presented for further consideration at Council's April meeting.
- 11.2 ***Enhancing Habitat for Greylard Production:*** Cr Barry Roderick spoke briefly about the mallard work currently being undertaken, and would like to see more effort directed to the Reporoa/Broadlands area. He suggested that releasing of captive reared mallards should be provided for in the new work plan. He also advised that the Regional Council was intending to undertake planting along drains at Kaituna and that it would be worthwhile for Fish & Game to be involved in this. Andy Garrick confirmed that Fish & Game was currently involved in discussions relating to this initiative and would continue to be. Barry had attended a presentation on mallard research in the Waikato and Southland by Jenn Sheppard and suggested that it would be useful to have her and/or David Klee present this to our Council. Andy Garrick informed Council of an additional research programme getting under way which he had been having input to, this being a MSc by Katie Gibb looking at heavy metal accumulation in mallards (cadmium, arsenic, zinc, selenium, mercury, lead).
- 11.3 ***Water Quality and Quantity:*** Cr Lindsay Lyons reiterated his concerns over the water quality in the Rangitaiki river and felt that this "Blue Ribbon" river should continue to be a priority for Council. Matt Osborne provided a brief overview of the current drift dive programme and of the monitoring being undertaken by the Regional Council at

- two sites on the river. Lindsay would like to see greater effort being directed towards this in 2016-17.
- 11.4 Cr Sandy Bull reiterated concerns about the state/collapse of the Motu fishery and was advised that staff have this in their sights and have been endeavouring to undertake drift dive surveys there and in the Takaputahi.
- 11.5 *Angler and hunter access:* Cr Laurance Tamati expressed his concern over the lack of access to areas such as Lake Rotomahana and the Kaingaroa Forest, and the permit fees being charged. He questioned why are these areas gazetted if they are not able to be accessed? Andy Garrick spoke briefly of a recent and productive meeting with Timberlands that he and Anthony van Dorp had attended, adding that he hoped staff would have more detail to share at the next meeting of Council.
- 11.6 Cr David Woolner queried how staff and Council prioritised access work particularly decisions around what is to be maintained or developed. An example provided was the access work undertaken on the Rangitaiki and whether emphasis should shift to waters that have year round access. Anthony van Dorp advised that access tracks on the Rangitaiki were well established and he felt that this fishery was too important to anglers to let the current maintenance programme lapse. He said that Kaingaroa Timberlands currently allow six months of weekend access and Fish & Game was hopeful this could be extended in the future. Anthony noted that Timberlands also makes a financial contribution towards the maintenance of these tracks. Anthony welcomed suggestions for improvements or new opportunities but also reminded Council that resources and funding for access work were already very stretched.
- 11.7 *Maximising Fishery Opportunities:* Cr Peter Storey spoke to Council about his concerns, and those of anglers he has spoken to, over the management of the Tarawera Selective Breeding Programme and their perception that Eastern Fish & Game favours quantity over quality. He requested that Council clearly redefines what the TSBP's aim is in 2016 and how these aims will be achieved. He said that he would like to see each Rotorua lake managed to provide the most logical angling opportunity it can provide.
- 11.8 Considerable discussion followed, topics including:
- What interest there was in managing different lakes for different purposes?
 - That passionate anglers favour trophies over quantity.
 - Fish & Game's requirement to monitor angler success and satisfaction.
 - Past attempts to manipulate fish size at Okataina.
 - Environmental factors play a significant role in the performance of fisheries e.g. Lake Aniwhenua in the 90s.
 - Fish & Game should always be looking for ways to improve opportunities and maybe the only way to find out is to try something. Is it appropriate for Council to do this and make dramatic changes with so many unknown factors?
 - Should we take another look at a matrix approach as suggested by ex Councillor Richard Montgomery?
 - A high number of small fish were taken on opening day last year.
 - The Rotorua lakes are predominantly boat based fisheries.
 - Trophy fish are generally 4 years plus, but current angling pressure on the lakes allows few fish to get to this age.
 - What are the effects of reduced bag limits?
 - Reduced pressure on Okataina due to its inaccessibility may have resulted in larger fish.

- Myths/misconceptions associated with the so called "R strain".
- 11.9 In conclusion Murray Ferris said that Council needed to provide direction, but it should be left with staff to review the issues and options for Council to consider. If Council agrees to a particular course of action it will need to accept the resulting outcomes, not all of which may be positive. Andy Garrick reviewed the questions staff need to consider, these being;
- (i) What are the factors that make a big fish?
 - (ii) Can we influence these, and what means do we have at our disposal?
 - (iii) What are the likely and/or potential implications, both positive and negative, of these options?

Andy advised that staff would prepare a paper addressing these questions for consideration at Council's next meeting.

- 11.10 Cr Laurance Tamati requested that consideration be given to reviewing the Okawa Bay fishery on Lake Rotoiti noting concerns within the local community over trout numbers in the area. Matt Osborne advised that he was not aware of any historic data that was available that comparisons could be made with, but commented on the release a year ago of 500 tagged trout at the western end of Rotoiti. He said that early indications had shown movement of these fish to the Hinehopu/Gisborne Point end of the lake and that this was likely to be a result of food availability. More information would be available when these fish returned as 2-3 year olds. Mark Sherburn agreed Okawa Bay did not appear to be as productive as it has been in the past but noted that most information to hand is anecdotal. Andy Garrick suggested that staff would discuss with a view to identifying if there was anything practical that we could do to investigate this further, and that we would report this back to Council in due course.
- 11.11 In light of the success of the Red Tag Trout promotion for the opening of the 2015-16 season Cr Lindsay Lyons requested that this be considered for inclusion in the plan for the 2016-17 operational year.

12.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- 12.1 Council discussed timing of the election of officers, and questioned the need to repeat the process in the February following the inaugural meeting of Council in November. Council was in favour of those officers elected at the inaugural meeting held in November being carried through to the following November.
- 12.2 *Agreed (Steve Scragg/Neal Hawes) that the incumbent officers elected at the inaugural meeting in November 2015 shall remain in place until the November 2016 meeting at which time the election of officers will be revisited. [16/02/12.2]*

13.0 2016 MEETING SCHEDULE

- 13.1 Council considered the proposed 2016 Meeting dates and in particular the importance of timing in relation to setting of Game Season conditions in January.
- 13.2 *Agreed (Laurance Tamati/Steve Scragg) that meeting dates for 2016 will be as set out below:*

Confirmed 2016 meeting dates

	Date	Venue	Issues
1	<i>18 February 2016</i>	Rotorua	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council Priorities• Anglers Notice
2	<i>7 April 2016</i>	Rotorua	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OWP (initial draft)
3	<i>16 June 2016</i>	Rotorua	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Licence Fees• OWP (2nd draft)• Finalise Anglers Notice
4	<i>11 August 2016</i>	Rotorua	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalise OWP
5	<i>20 October 2016</i>	East Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Game Conditions (initial consideration)• Draft Annual Report
6	<i>1 December 2016</i>	Rotorua	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalise Game Conditions
Public AGM	<i>1 December 2016</i>	Rotorua	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual Report

[16/02/13.2]

14.0 ANGLERS NOTICE REVIEW

- 14.1 Matt Osborne briefly outlined the process and timeline for the review of the Anglers Notice for the 2016-2017 season. Matt noted that this meeting was to identify matters that would be included in the first round of options to be put out for consultation with other interested parties. Matt provided background as to why the Eastern Council had moved to a biennial review of the Anglers Notice but advised that an annual review is also possible if circumstances required it.

15.0 EXTENSION TO MEETING TIME

- 15.1 Cr Murray Ferris asked that the Council agree to extend the meeting by 30 minutes. Cr Steve Scragg advised that he would need to leave the meeting at 3.30pm due to other commitments.
- 15.2 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Lindsay Lyons) that the meeting be allowed to proceed over the 3 hour time limit by an extra 30 minutes. [16/02/15.2]*

16.0 LIAISON OFFICER REPORTS

16.1 Tongariro -Taupo Conservation Board

Colin Paton informed Council that he would only be attending two further meetings with the Conservation Board as was not eligible to re-stand having served two terms already. Colin was keen to see Fish & Game representation on the board and understood that Cr Annaka Davis had put her name forward. He said the current issue causing consternation around Taupo was around the carp project and felt that the public needed to be better informed.

16.2 Bay of Plenty Conservation Board

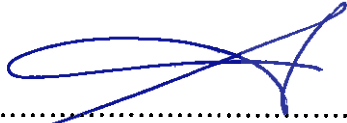
Not represented and no report available.

- 16.3 **East Coast/Hawke's Bay Conservation Board**
Not represented and no report received.
- 16.4 **Department of Conservation, Central and Lower North Island Regions**
Not represented and no report received.
- 16.5 **Report from the New Zealand Council**
Lindsay Lyons' report had been pre-circulated. Lindsay advised that there were 5 new members to the New Zealand Council and he was positive about the way in which the last meeting had gone. Lindsay advised that the key focus of the New Zealand Council's next meeting next week would be around governance.
- 17.0 MANAGEMENT REPORT**
- 17.1 Cr Lindsay Lyons queried the pheasant call counts graph which suggests a nearly 50% decline in counts over the past five years and whether this reflected an actual decline in pheasant numbers in Kaingaroa or whether it might be due to other factors. Eben Herbert advised we don't have sufficient information to say whether populations have declined but we suspect low counts recorded on some of the transects are likely to have been due to harvesting operations and other disturbances taking place within the vicinity.
- 17.2 Cr Sandy Bull spoke to Council on behalf of the Federation of Freshwater Anglers about the large concern within the angling community over an application to farm grass and silver carp near Taupo. He said the consensus of the angling community was that they could not believe that consideration would be given to allowing this farm to be set up within the world class Taupo and Rotorua lakes fisheries.
- 17.3 Matt Osborne advised that Adam Daniel from the Auckland-Waikato region had been more closely involved with this proposal than anyone else within Fish & Game due to his greater knowledge and experience of the species concerned. Adam had worked for two years with the US Army Corps of Engineers on the design of barriers to prevent the spread of silver carp along the Mississippi River and had reviewed the risks of the proposed farm in conjunction with Michel Dedual, DOC's Taupo fisheries scientist. Matt proceeded with a power point presentation outlining the background to the application and the reasoning behind Fish & Game's position which was to not oppose the application subject to certain conditions being met. Council discussed the various concerns that had been raised, the perceived effects, and noted that there had been a great deal of emotive information being circulated much of which had no science underlying it.
- 17.4 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Laurance Tamati) that Council receives the Management, Finance, and Licence Sales Reports, and approves the payments for October, November, and December 2015 totalling \$489,939.27. [16/02/17.4]*
- 17.5 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Neal Hawes) that Council approves the proposed budget figures for the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Financial Performance and Cash flow for the 2015-2016 financial year. [16/02/17.5]*
- 18.0 GENERAL BUSINESS**
- 18.1 Andy Garrick provided an update on the Hawke's Bay staffing situation advising that two very well qualified staff had been appointed as senior field officers. They were Nathan Burkepile from Northland Fish & Game, and Mark Venman from the DOC fisheries team at Turangi. He commented that these appointments were not only exceptionally good news for Hawke's Bay, but having them as close neighbours would be great for the Eastern Region as well. Andy took the opportunity to acknowledge

the efforts of his Eastern Region team and the contribution and personal sacrifices they had made to keep Hawke's Bay Fish & Game going over the past six months or so.

19.0 MEETING CLOSED

19.1 The meeting was closed at 3.55pm.



.....
Murray Ferris,
Chairman

7/4/16

.....
Date

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

2.0 APOLOGIES

2.2 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Sandy Bull) that the apologies for the 156th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [16/02/2.2]*

3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (18 NOVEMBER 2015)

3.1 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Steve Scragg) that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2015 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [16/02/3.1]*

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<i>5</i>	<i>20 October 2016</i>	<i>East Coast</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Game Conditions (initial consideration)</i> • <i>Draft Annual Report</i>
<i>6</i>	<i>1 December 2016</i>	<i>Rotorua</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Finalise Game Conditions</i>
<i>Public AGM</i>	<i>1 December 2016</i>	<i>Rotorua</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Annual Report</i>

[16/02/13.2]

15.0 EXTENSION TO MEETING TIME

15.2 *Agreed (Peter Storey/Lindsay Lyons) that the meeting be allowed to proceed over the 3 hour time limit by an extra 30 minutes. [16/02/15.2]*

17.0 OPERATIONS REPORTS

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