

NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting Held on Wednesday 17th June 2015 At the DoC offices, 31 Ngai Mahi Place, Sockburn Commencing at 6.30 p.m.

Prior to commencing meeting business, R Cullinane, who introduced the meeting, stated the need to elect a Chairman due to the absence of Cr Clements.

"That Cr Brooks be elected as Chairman"

Moved: Cr Bonnafoux

Seconded: Cr Robinson

CARRIED

1. Present:

Councillors: Peter Robinson, Trevor Isitt, Garth Free, Serge Bonnafoux, Jonathan Brooks, Bruce Kelly, Cavan O'Connell, Malcolm Gilbert

Staff: Rod Cullinane, Steve Terry, Tony Hawker, Dirk Barr, Debbie Ambler

Public: Ron Stuart, Fred Van Slooten, Pete Johnson, Grant Radford, Gerald Wilson, David Melhuish, Paul Lewis, Craydon Rowe

2. Apologies:

Councillors: Martin Clements, Paul Farrow, Ken Lee (lateness)

Staff: Scott Pearson, Emily Moore, Andrew Currie (lateness)

"That the apologies be accepted"

Moved: Cr Isitt

Seconded: Cr Bonnafoux

CARRIED

3. General Business:

a. Trout Salmon Sub Committee – Cr Free

b. Youth Programme – Cr Isitt – dealt with in conjunction with the Youth Report

4a. Minutes from Previous Meeting(s):

"That the minutes from 15 April 2015 meeting be accepted"

Moved: Cr Bonnafoux

Seconded: Cr Kelly

CARRIED

It was noted that the first motion should read February and the second motion, December.

Clarification was sought relating to council approval of minutes and motions if a quorum was not present. Decisions and minutes taken could be ratified at a subsequent council meeting.

"That the minutes from the 4 May 2015 meeting be accepted"

Moved: Cr Isitt

Seconded: Cr Kelly

CARRIED

4b. Matters Arising/Action Sheet:

From Minutes dated 15th April 2015

Under 9f (General Business) – Remote Cameras -T Hawker stated there was no cell phone reception to enable operation of remote cameras in areas of the Rakaia River but would work well on the Waimakariri River .

From Minutes dated 4 May 2015

That in paragraph one, replace “He” with R Cullinane.

That formal recognition be made for Cr Isitt, Cr Bonnafoux and Cr Free be seconded to the Building Sub-Committee.

Action Sheet

The following items have been deleted from the Action Sheet as being completed.

Under – New Matters dated 20th August 2014

No 2 – Lake Coleridge Chinook Salmon Spawning Survey; No 4 – Decline of Aquatic Life Kaiapoi, Styx and Otukaikino Rivers; No 6 – Avon River; No 8 – Good new stories; No 12 – Lake Pearson Water Samples.

Under – New Matters dated 15th October 2014

No 4 – Youth Programme

Under – New Matters dated 17 December 2014

No 4 – Letter to Sunrise Rotary; No 6 – Northern Pegasus By-law Review

Under – New Matters dated 18th February 2015

No 1 – Gamebird Sub-Committee; No 4 – Budget for Swan Hunt; No 7 – Letter to E Russ regarding Youth Programme; No 8 – Northern Pegasus By-law Review; No 9 – ECAN Commissioners Meeting

Under – New Matters dated 15th April 2015

No 3 – Recognition of Service P Gollan; No 4 – Environment Excellence Awards; No 6 – Yarrs Lagoon

5. Public Session:

Wheelchair Platform – R Stuart reported the wheelchair platform would be officially opened on Sunday 21st June at 10am at McIntosh’s area of the Waimakariri River. He appreciated the assistance given by Fish and Game with media releases and the release of fry into the river. 50 keys would be held at Blackwells Department Store for vehicle gate access.

R Stuart stated that ECAN would assume responsibility for the platform after opening. They have set up a web page for the site and would be annotating the relevant maps for the area to reflect disabled vehicle parking.

He also suggested that consideration be given for dispensation for licenses for wheelchair users at the Groynes fishing lakes.

Council extended their thanks and appreciation to R Stuart for his work over the past five years in getting the platform completed.

7. Meeting Business:

7i. Regulations Review to the Sports Fishing Regulations 2015 – 2017 Season

1. Salmon Fishing in the Western Zone

There were a numbers of attendees at the meeting who supported the submission to reopen Western Zone salmon fishing. The opportunities that this would open up for anglers were elaborated upon. When concerns regarding the protection of the fishery were raised there were some mitigation measures that were mentioned including:

- *Close the season at the end of February*
- *Only allow fishing in the Western Zone on weekends*
- *Limit the use of boats*
- *Reduce the bag limit to one for the whole fishery*
- *Introduce a slot size limit*

Staff recommendation: *Staff recommend that this issue be discussed by Council for consideration.*

Grant Radford and Fred Van Slooten supported and Grant spoke to a recommendation submitted on behalf of his brother Mike Radford who was unable to attend this meeting.

Initially discussion focused on the season length on Western Zone rivers extending to the end of February.

A suggestion that the regulations review process be changed as follows; recommendations put to Council; Council notify their thoughts to stakeholders; then in a year's time, notify stakeholders for review and recommendation for the next Regulations Review Meeting.

General points made in discussion:

- Difficult to accept closing off the season would affect stocks and impact of opening to catch;
- Managing a declining resource. Need a balance. Most fish arrive after the end of February, question of compliance management was raised;
- Possibility of a 1 bag limit;
- Could look at closing resource off for a year to see what happens. Data is not conclusive as it had not been recorded since 2000;
- Opening all Western Zone rivers a concern. Consider not including Waiau and Hurunui Rivers as this could destroy spawning grounds in these areas;
- Congestion a problem already on Rakaia. Could move pressure from one area of the river to another;
- Fishery is self regulating, once in decline, anglers would find another area;
- Worried poachers would return
- Currently around levels to sustain the fishery, need to restore fishery to previous levels.

"That Council give consideration to opening the Western Zone salmon fishery until the end of February."

Moved: Cr Isitt

Seconded: Cr Kelly

FAILED

2. Avon River

Two submitters put in written submissions opposing F&G's proposed change to close the Avon above Barbadoes St. from 1 May to 30 September. The basis of their submission was that the Avon provides good sited fly fishing in winter with little wind and the proposed closure will not make much difference to spawning recruitment as the habitat has been severely degraded since the earthquake and there is probably an over supply of fish.

Staff recommendation: ***Reject** – The Avon River is a spawning stream and it is not good fisheries management to allow angling and harvest of spawning fish.*

Staff recommend that we also change the season for the Heathcote River to include a closure for the upper river during the spawning season.

“That the staff recommendation be accepted.”

Moved: Cr Robinson

Seconded: Cr Free

CARRIED

3. Kaiapoi River

Submissions were made in opposition to the bag limit reducing to 1 salmon in the Kaiapoi River. The reasons expressed were centred around angler opportunity and consistency with rules for Waimakariri salmon anglers. When staff explained the effect of harvest in the Kaiapoi River and the returning salmon to Silverstream, no viable alternatives to limiting the harvest were put forward other than limiting catch on the Waimakariri main stem.

Staff recommendation: *Reject and retain the 1 bag limit in the Kaiapoi.*

“That the staff recommendation be accepted.”

Moved: Cr Isitt

Seconded: Cr Lee

CARRIED

4. Rakaia River

There were two written submissions on the Rakaia River. They covered:

- *Closing the winter season*
- *Close salmon fishing above the gorge at the end of February*
- *Reduce bag limits*

The submitter did not attend the meeting to elaborate on the brief written submissions. No one at the meeting spoke in support of these submissions.

Staff recommendation: *Reject and retain current regulations for the Rakaia River.*

“That the staff recommendation be accepted.”

Moved: Cr Bonnafoux

Seconded: Cr Free

CARRIED

5. Use of boats on Lakes

5.1 One written submission wanted motorised boats banned from all **SMALLER** lakes. (Word added) The submitter did not attend the meeting to elaborate and no one else spoke in support of this submission.

Staff recommendation: *Reject and maintain current wording.*

“That the staff recommendation be accepted.”

Moved: Cr Free

Seconded: Cr Lee

CARRIED

5.2 One submitter wanted there to be a stated distance kept between boat anglers and shore based anglers. After much discussion at the meeting it was decided this was best left up to angler etiquette and education rather than being stated in the regulations.

Staff recommendation: *Reject.*

"That the staff recommendation be accepted."

Moved: Cr Free

Seconded: Cr Robinson

CARRIED

5.3 Two submitters want to open Lake Coleridge in May and September as well as increase the **RAINBOW** (word added) trout winter season daily bag limit from 1 to 2.

Staff Recommendation: *Staff do not support changing the season for Coleridge but think that the winter daily bag limit should be discussed and decided by Council based on the trout spawning report attached for Council information.*

Discussion to increase the bag limit from four followed. T Hawker stated that the monitoring in the catchment was good and would detect early warning signs which can be reviewed at any time.

"That the status quo for current season at Lake Coleridge be kept."

Moved: Cr Lee

Seconded: Cr Isitt

CARRIED

"That the bag limit for trout be increased from one to two but the overall bag limit of four be retained."

Moved: Cr Bonnafoux

Seconded: Cr Isitt

CARRIED

T Hawker to reword regulations.

6. Visible licence

One submitter wanted the licence to have to be visible when anglers are fishing. This was so policing could be carried out by other anglers.

Staff recommendation : *Reject submission as it would mean a considerable change in legislation at a national level and the advice from National Council staff members is that it would not be practical and would not achieve the intended purpose of the submission.*

"That the staff recommendation be accepted."

Moved: Cr Kelly

Seconded: Cr Free

CARRIED

7. Kahawai fishing

There were various submissions on anglers fishing for kahawai also needing to have a licence, having designated areas for kahawai anglers and reducing the kahawai limit.

Staff recommendation: *Reject as the kahawai are under MPI jurisdiction and those anglers fishing for kahawai have the same rights as sports fish anglers when it comes to locations.*

"That the staff recommendation be accepted."

Moved: Cr Free

Seconded: Cr Lee

CARRIED

8. Bag Limits in lowland streams

There was one written submission suggesting that some lowland streams have a reduced bag limit to reflect the dwindling trout resource. This submitter did not attend the meeting to elaborate on this submission. The written submission contained many good points that were largely agreed with at the meeting. However, no one spoke in support of lowering bag limits and it was concluded that this was a habitat issue rather than angler harvest.

Staff recommendation: *Reject*

“That the staff recommendation be accepted.”

Moved: Cr Free

Seconded: Cr Lee

CARRIED

9. Other issues raised

- Definition of “take” needs to be defined in the First Schedule of the regulations booklet. R Cullinane to give legal opinion of “take”.
- Staff phone numbers need to be listed in the regulations booklet. Completed.

7ii. 2015 – 2016 Licence Fee Recommendation

Discussion was held on the NZC recommendation to increase the adult season sports fish licence to \$124.00 and the adult whole season game licence to \$92.00 (inclusive of a \$2.00 fee for the Game Bird Habitat Stamp and GST).

R Cullinane explained the flawed in-house calculations of reserves and of his concerns regarding the national financial review. He then explained the audit and internal reporting processes. R Cullinane to write to NZC reiterating concerns relating to calculations of reserves and flawed data.

Concern was raised on the timing of regional council meetings v national meetings and the requirement for decisions to be passed to NZC. D Ambler to record that future June NC Fish and Game Council meetings be brought forward one week to allow for decisions to be made and forwarded to NZC in a timely manner.

“That North Canterbury Fish and Game do not support the recommendation from NZC to increase the adult whole season fishing licence to \$124.00 and the adult whole season gamebird licence to \$92.00 inclusive of GST.”

Moved: Cr Free

Seconded: Cr Lee

CARRIED

7iii. Operational Work Plan – September 2015 – August 2016

Due to the time constraint the following was agreed:.

“That the discussion on the 2015/2016 Operational Work Plan and budget be postponed until the end of this meeting if time permits or moved to the next Council meeting.”

Moved: Cr Free

Seconded: Cr Robinson

CARRIED

7iv. Lake Coleridge Chinook Salmon Spawning Survey Report

Points raised in discussion;

- Management of the Lake a concern; water quality good, habitat not changed. Consider ova planting;
- Not one salmon was found in the Lake but still a lot of small salmon in Hennel Stream which was surveyed;

- Could be problems with genetics, mixing land locked with hatchery salmon;
- Staff to consult NIWA and Cawthron regarding any evidence of what is occurring in the Lake;
- Have a size limit on salmon;
- Staff to talk to Hydro management and NIWA to see if a bubble screen could be inserted at the top of the causeway.

“That the Council adopt the following recommendations allowing staff to continue to look into the Lake Coleridge issue.

To increase the number of times salmon spawning streams are counted, as well as monitoring the other Coleridge tributaries, to cover a possibly broader spawning period.

To increase angler liaison/harvest assessment during the fishing season in combination with ranging, to observe possible factors influencing the salmon fishery.

To review the stock program (in conjunction with the Salmon & Trout Committee), to find ways to mitigate reducing spawning numbers and the limited access to the Harper/Avoca catchment.”

Moved: Cr Isitt

Seconded: Cr Kelly

CARRIED

7v. Drift Dive Report

The need to carry out further studies on the Hurunui and Waiau Rivers tributaries to investigate spawning trends. It was suggested that staff come up with a projects and possibly have a five year plan put in place to come up with strategies to confront the problems arising.

“That Council accept the staff recommendation for staff to continue to monitor the Hope, Boyle, Waiau and Upper Hurunui drift dive sites to enable the monitoring of trends in fish populations at these sites. and that staff put forward a revised project to the next council meeting relating to drift dives and spawning counts”.

Moved: Cr Free

Seconded: Cr Isitt

CARRIED

7vi Non Resident Fishing Licence Revenue

The NZC asked Regional Councils to nominate waters within their region it wishes to designate for specific management from the non-resident "extra" revenue income. They recommended from their July 2014 meeting – “that for the purposes of fisheries management a back country fishery is taken to mean any New Zealand freshwater (river and or lake) that provide some truly spectacular angling experiences, are popular with non-resident anglers and are inherently sensitive and need careful management.

“In consultation with the Salmon & Trout Committee, staff are to make recommendations and bring back to the next Council meeting.”

7B 2015 Councillor Elections

The need for stakeholders to be informed and notified sooner relating to this year’s Council elections was discussed. It was suggested that at the first Council meeting held after the elections, that both the incoming and outgoing Councillors be invited to attend.

R Cullinane to consider the process for this year's elections and bring back to the next Council meeting.

8. Reports

The Staff Report, Financial and Eyede reports were briefly discussed with no issues.

8d. Youth Program

Discussion focused on the continuation of the Program. Points raised in discussion;

- Program could be contributing to increase in family and junior licence sales;
- Try to gain corporate sponsorship;
- Should NC reserves be put towards the Youth Program;
- Should NC take the Program back from NZC;

It was decided that A Currie, Cr Isitt and R Cullinane work together to seek sponsorship.

"That the committee of Cr Isitt, R Cullinane, A Currie, Cr Robinson and Cr Brooks be formed to look at funding of \$50,000.00 and seek sponsorship for the Youth Program".

Moved: Cr Free

Seconded: Cr Lee

Carried

Cr Robinson Abstained

8e. Building Update

R Cullinane stated that an application for "change of use" had not been lodged as the Christchurch City Council wanted further refinement to the building plan. There has been an offer made of mitigation from NZTA for reducing three gate entrances to one.

"That the Council accept \$10,000.00 in mitigation for loss of second (southern) entrance to 565 Johns Road."

Moved Cr Free

Seconded: Cr Bonnafoux

Carried

Cr Free asked if we had access to the scope of works carried out on the existing property relating to EQC repairs prior to purchase by F&G. This question was prompted by Cr Free noting a crack in the foundations and brick work of the dwelling. R Cullinane to check..

R Cullinane advised that further cost estimates had been given to the loss adjusters of the insurer and full and final settlement of the insurance money from Horatio Street should be offered shortly.

8f. Media and Awards

It was advised that the "Working the Nature" Award was near completion with changes to the wording in the certificate and the judging criteria. The Council acknowledged the input from M Gilbert towards the finalisation of this Award.

8g. Gamebird

Cr Lee notified the Gamebird sub-committee would convene on Tuesday 23rd June from 7.30pm at 595 Johns Road.

8h. Salmon & Trout

Two motions were received from the Committee. Points raised:

- Identify areas for habitat improvement
- Protection of One Tree Swamp
- Use other streams and rivers that constitutes as good habitat as an index

“That a staff member be tasked with exploring the possibility of creating a fish out pond and habitat creation for children in Eastern Christchurch Red Zone.

Moved: Cr Isitt

Seconded: Cr Free

Carried

T Hawker to follow up.

“That an application be made to the Fish and Game Research Fund for a university student to be offered a scholarship to carry out research to study invertebrate populations to determine the square metreage required to raise a salmon smolt”.

Moved: Cr Free

Seconded: Cr Isitt

Carried

S Terry and D Barr be tasked with completing a scope of works to bring back to next Council meeting.

9. Representation on New Zealand Council

R Cullinane gave background on why North Canterbury has no representation on the NZC. After discussion the following was decided;

“That North Canterbury Fish and Game Council continue to abstain from attending NZC meetings until a suitable answer is given to questions already raised.

If a suitable answer is given, then Cr Bonnafoux be appointed as the North Canterbury representative”.

Moved: Cr Kelly

Seconded: Cr Lee

Carried

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.30p.m.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

Next Meeting

Wednesday 19th August 2015

31 Ngai Mahi Place, Sockburn

6.30p.m.