

Agenda Item 10:

Operational Report – for the period ended May 2023

Prepared by: Dean Kelly – Manager

Introduction

The Council's adopted governance policies require the manager to provide an Operational Report, specific proposals for capital expenditure and acquisitions as well as major issues and opportunities for the Council. There are further requirements for the Manager to provide assurance that the Management Limitations are being observed. The format of this report is therefore to certify compliance with Governance Policies, Management Limitations and provide other material, responses, or assurance that Council objectives, strategies, plans, performance, risks, operation, resources, and structure are being met.

Notifications of intention to purchase unbudgeted capital items more than \$10,000.

The Council resolved to maintain and upgrade the Okuru hut as funds became available. The builder is progressing the flooring replacement, paint refresh, kitchen cabinetry and bathroom upgrades over the coming months. As the council was made aware at previous meetings there is ample budget set aside for the 2024 works but the majority of the costs may be due before the new financial year.

Matters for the information of Council.

Staff:

Staff holidays estimated (days): Manager, 19
Officer, 14
Admin, 5

Vehicles:

Managers Vehicle: (start) 17,600km (fin) 26,581km. Total private for period: 2,000km
Fish & Game Officer Vehicle PSM: (start) 1,416 km (fin.) 9,582 km. Total private for period: 1,628 km
Fish & Game Officer Vehicle MML: (start) 116,555 km (fin.) 120,456 km.

Bi-monthly report on outputs

1113 Spawning Surveys

Spawning counts completed on MacDonalDs and Windbag creeks, very limited salmon activity. Spawning surveys completed at known spawning sites in the Taramakau and Hokitika catchments. Only brown and rainbow trout observed.

1114 Trend Counts

Greyland and Pukeko counts completed. Reports completed.

1115 Sportsfishery Research

Mawheraiti research sites electric fished. Juvenile trout numbers were average for an April count despite having above average counts earlier in the season. A significant drop is typically observed in April and there were likely increased levels of migration downstream occurring with the low flows experienced this summer.

1116 Backcountry Fisheries Management

Trail camera monitoring occurred in the upper Grey River until the end of the fishing season. National working group discussions around consultation and implementation of 'Designated Waters' system. The Council will need to decide on which waters to Designate.

1121 National Hunter Survey

Game Harvest survey data received so far suggests the average West Coast hunter over opening weekend shot 8.4 game birds. Consisting of 3.7 grey/mallards, 4 paradise shelduck, 0.1 swan, 0.6 pukeko and 0.01 shoveler for 6.2 hours hunting. Opening weekend success rate is up on the previous two seasons but slightly below the 32-year average.

1161 Fisheries Enhancement

This year's salmon release was not achieved due an incident at the hatchery that resulted in the death of our wild mixed sex salmon smolt. The availability of salmon for next season is also proving extremely challenging due to no wild fish being available to produce this year's young.

1171 Regulations/Gazette Notices

The Council will make recommendation to the Minister regarding the 2024 fishing season at this meeting. Specifically, regarding Salmon Regulations and Designated Waters.

1181 Game Bird Control

Two crop predation complaints have been received for paradise shelduck. Both being during April, no permits were issued, instead advice was given, and hunters recommended in preparation for opening weekend.

1211 RMA Plans/Policy/Consents

Non-notified resource consents approved or consulting on as affected party.

Applicant	Area	Type	Nature of work	Comments
Avery Bros Ltd	Buller River	Mining Permit	Gravel Extraction	
Oceana Gold Ltd	Progress Creek tributary	Discharge Permit	Mine rehabilitation	
Westland Excavation Ltd	Hokitika River	Land use consent	Gravel Extraction	
Waerenga Southland Ltd	Totara Flat	Land use consent	Irrigate pasture	

Rough River Hydro is progressing their advocacy and seeking support from local authorities. We have discussed our information needs and are now planning to acquire the information to ensure this regionally significant fishery is not adversely affected.

1213 DoC

In reading the Conservation Board minutes we cannot expect any decision regarding the Stewardship Land Review until 2024.

1311 Access

Working with BDMA Revolution Ltd completing access mapping over the West Coast region. Dilapidated boundary signs are being replaced and planning is underway for designated waters signage.

1312 Assisted Hunting

Three organised hunts planned during the winter game bird season in areas where complaints have previously been received. All West Coast game bird licence holders with a valid email address received a hunting bulletin at the start of the season which included an organised hunts calendar.

1331 Website/Ezines/social media

All current council meeting minutes have been signed and uploaded to the website and the Sportfish and Gamebird Management Plan has been loaded to the site.

Relevant material has been posted on website. Facebook engagements have been done, focusing on game bird hunting opportunities and promoting both barrels. Reel life and both barrels completed.

1332 Fish & Game Magazine

2024 Sportsfish Supplement is being compiled.

1341 Sportsfisheries Guides

Agents regularly visited and stocked with guides.

1361 Clubs, Outdoor Recreation Groups

Ahaura Hunting and Fishing Competition attended. Good numbers of average trout entered, the largest overall being 1.9kg.

1371 Okuru Hut

Renovations are underway. Likely finish date is late June.

1411 Conservation Boards/Iwi/allied agencies

Swan, Canada geese and Pukeko collected for Runanga cultural groups.

1421 Media/Communication

Media releases before and after opening weekend as well as in the Top of the South Farming paper regarding game bird hunting.

1511 Compliance

Compliance completed around opening weekend in the Lake Brunner. One 'marginal' non-compliance detected, a lawful occupier unwittingly, slightly over his title boundary, due to it likely to not meet the prosecutions guidelines discretion was utilised with the landowner purchasing a licence on the day.

1521 Ranger Training

Ranger training underway for new honorary ranger.

1531 Prosecutions

One active case which we are working alongside the police who have their own charges in relation to the matter. The Fish & Game chargers are fishing without a licence and failing to provide personal information.

1611 Licence Production & Distribution

3 returned licenses for this period have been contacted, details updated and resent to the license holders. Less return licences are coming through. The database team have changed the prompt for mailing address to make it clearer that it is only required if different to physical.

1621 Agent Liaison

Regular visit to agents. Frequently stocked with access guides, how to guides, child licence pads and excess F&G magazine in the office.

1721 Council

Council servicing and reporting completed.

1811 Sportsfish and Game Management Plan

The draft plan was notified as stipulated in the Conservation Act at the start of the month. It will be open for submissions for 2 months.

1841 National Liaison

National budget meeting attended by Manager. Communication with other region regarding game bird monitoring, public relations, designated waters and compliance.

1927 Occupational Safety and Health.

See Health and Safety Report.

1940 Office Premises

Regularly cleaning and maintenance conducted.

1950 Office Equipment

Office equipment is regularly being upgraded and replaced where required as per budget.

1970 General

Financials are tracking as expected. Insurance premiums faced a big increase this year, in part due to higher replacement costs on the Hokitika Office and the Okuru hut. Talks with NZC and other regions about buying power and negotiation of better premiums will be held ahead of the next financial year and budget rounds.

1980 Equipment

Staff reviewed field equipment and safety gear and replaced/procured new gear where required. Boat received annual service.

Staff Recommendation:

That this report be received.