

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME NEWSBRIEF

If you require further elaboration or clarification of items contained herein, or any other matters relating to F&G business, please don't hesitate to contact your local ward councillor or the office.

Matters arising from Council Meeting and AGM of 14 December 2019

1. Councillors were concerned over the decision by the NZ Council to survey licence holders on freshwater advocacy rather than directly consult with regional fish and game councils.
2. Councillors agreed that staff should make more effort on publicising local environmental issues including press releases and newsletter articles to educate the public on what was occurring, especially in regards to wastewater treatment plants.
3. Concern was expressed over the damage done by Transpower contractors coming onto F&G properties and damaging stopbanks. Mr Wilson was asked to investigate the rights of contractors regarding access and the potential to impose bonds.
4. GAME SEASON REMITS:

Mr Ian Bailey spoke in support of his submission requesting that the game hunting hours should be half an hour before sunrise and half an hour after sunset. Extensive discussion ensued with most councillors preferring set hours because they were concerned that licence holders would have difficulty, or not bother, following a table giving sunrise and sunset hours. It was agreed that:

- *the hunting hours be restricted to 6.30am – 6.00pm to increase hunting efficiency.*

Councillors agreed that more publicity and enforcement effort is spent on the ban on hunting from motorised vessels under power.

Councillors agreed that staff should liaise with the Hamilton City Council towards closing off the Hamilton City area for hunting in 2021.

After discussion, it was agreed that

- *the limit for black swan be increased to 2 birds per day from 1 bird per day in the "all other areas" section.*
- *the hunting of black swan is limited to the period of the dabbling duck season.*

After future discussion it was agreed that the remaining regulations remain the same.

5. Councillors received an oral report from Councillor Annan and a brief email from Councillor Juby on the recent F&G Governor's Meeting in Christchurch. At Councillor Annan's request Councillors reviewed the Power Point presentation by the Chairman of the North Canterbury F&G Council, Mr Alan Strong. Councillors were surprised and disappointed at the sentiments expressed by Mr Strong regarding the need for a review of Fish & Game's structure and function.
6. The 2020 meeting schedule was set as follows:
 - 29 February
 - 21 March
 - 6 June
 - 22 August
 - 17 October
 - 12 December

Matters Arising From Chief Executive's Report

- **Spawning Habitat map:** Adam Daniel has been conducting spawning surveys of Waikato streams to identify spawning areas to create a spawning habitat map that will be used to increase protection on spawning rivers. Going forward Adam will ultimately produce a series of maps that will be gazetted as trout spawning or trout habitat maps.
- **Trout releases:** 50 tagged fish were released in lake Moana-nui for the kids fishing day using the tanker and release pipe. The annual Lake Arapuni release was conducted with 2000 1-year-old rainbows released.
- **Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1 update:** Anna Sintenie prepared closing legal submissions. Commissioners have indicated their recommendations will be released this year, but we are unclear whether this will be influenced by the progress on the National Freshwater Action Package.
- **Waikato District Plan:** Ben Wilson gave the first of many presentations at the Hearing for the proposed Waikato District Plan. The hearings have been broken into approximately 25 Streams, with 6 of these being held this year. The bulk of the submissions relevant to Fish and Game earthworks and restoration will fall under hearings in the new year.
- **Thames Wastewater Treatment Plant:** The Thames Coromandel District Council are updating this plant without significant upgrades at this stage. Our concerns are ensuring that the contaminant output doesn't increase, and that they appropriately manage avian botulism. We lodged a general submission in opposition, effectively seeking to have some input on consent conditions as these are drafted with the WRC.
- **Kinleith discharge:** Consultation continues with Oji Fibre Solutions over their discharge from the Kinleith Pulp & Paper Mill.
- **Lake Waikare Section 128 feedback and liaison group meeting:** David Klee submitted feedback on the proposed Te Onetea gate consent conditions and implementation plan seeking some relatively minor changes to those proffered.
- **Open Country Dairy:** We lodged a submission opposing this application to discharge treated effluent into the Waitoa River, which was not consistent with our MOU with OCD earlier this year.
- **Avian Botulism Symposium:** David Klee was one of the keynote speakers at the inaugural avian botulism symposium which John Dyer also attended. David's talk focused on botulism management plans and practical interventions to help mitigate the size and scale of outbreaks. Most of the other presentations focused on bird recovery, handling and rehabilitation. There were a good mix of agencies present including most of the territorial authorities managing wastewater treatment plants in our region, many of whom David has already engaged with to develop plans for their plants. The symposium was organised and run by the SPCA, often not the biggest fan of duck shooting or hunting in general, but hopefully by highlighting the work we do through our RMA functions and field work to clean up botulism infected sites, we found some common ground. David did make the point to some individuals that if it weren't for hunting licence income, we couldn't do this work and that there were no other agencies working in the RMA realm pushing for botulism to be appropriately managed.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL
AND ALL THE BEST FOR 2020**