**FISH & GAME NZ – WEST COAST REGION**

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21st October 2015**

**AT HOKITIKA AT 7PM**

Meeting commenced at 7.00pm with a welcome to members.

**PRESENT:** Jan Derks, Rob Roney, Dean Phibbs, Mark Smith, Bruce Erickson, Andy Harris, Dave Heine, Owen Smith, Jean Willis

*In attendance:* Dean Kelly (Manager), Lee Crosswell (Officer), Kim McPherson (Administration Officer), Sean Climo (Ngai Tahu)

**APOLOGIES:**

***No apologies were received.***

**First Meeting of West Coast Fish and Game Council**

Mr Kelly provided an overview of council functions, legislation and current issues. He also reminded councillors to read the Councillor Guide circulated prior to the meeting.

Mr Roney noted that Fish and Game Councils are Public Entity’s as opposed to Crown Entity’s. Mr Phibbs reminded the council that all communications are subject to the Official Information Act. Mr Erickson Bruce stated that as a statutory agency the government cannot disregard or ignore Fish and Game opinion of Sportsfish and Game management.

Mr Kelly then called for nominations for Council Chair

Harris Nomination for Chair: (R Roney/D Heine)

*Phibbs Nomination for Chair:* (A Harris)

***Mr Phibbs withdrew his offer to stand for Chair with Mr Harris appointed Chair unanimously.***

Mr Harris took the Chair.

Mr Harris noted that the past council had appointed a Deputy Chair. Mr Kelly stated that this is useful in the event of the Chair being unavailable.

*Roney nomination for Deputy Chair: (A Harris/M Smith)*

***Mr Roney was appointed Deputy Chair unanimously.***

Mr Harris asked Mr Willis to update the council on the NZ Council appointee status. Mr Willis stated that he is an elected member of Nelson F&G council and still sits on the NZ Council as the West Coast appointee until March 2016.

Mr Phibbs noted his interest in the appointment but has work commitments preventing him from fulfilling the role. Mr Roney offered to stand if no one else was willing to.

*Harris nomination for NZ Council appointment: (M Smith/R Roney).*

***Mr Harris was appointed to the NZ council unanimously.***

Mr Harris then proposed the re-establishment of the Managers Remuneration Committee. Messr’s Harris, Derks, Roney and Phibbs offered to stand on this committee.

Mr Harris asked the council to set a meeting schedule for the term of council with a suggestion of 2 meetings in Westport, Grey and Hokitika each. Discussion ensued with a proposal from Mr Phibbs to have the APM in Reefton and Mr Smith enquiring about the joint meeting with the N/M Fish and Game Council.

*Resolved: (J Derks/B Erickson), carried*

***That regular meetings are to be held on the 3rd Wednesday of every second month alternating between Westport, Greymouth and Hokitika. The APM is to be held on the 2nd Wednesday of December with Reefton as the venue for 2015.***

Mr Kelly stated that councillors conflicts of interest with sportfish and game management should be noted. Mr Derks stated that this would be a declaration of interests with Mr Roney and Mr Phibbs stating that this is common in most councils. Mr Kelly was instructed to circulate a form for councillors and staff to declare their interests.

Mr Harris noted that an Oath of Office had been circulated and asked if councillors were willing to ratify this. All councillors signed an Oath of Office.

**MINUTES – as circulated**

Resolved: (M Smiths/B Erickson), carried

**That the Minutes of the August 2015 meeting, as circulated, be approved as a true and correct record of that meeting.**

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:**

Mr Erickson enquired about the timing of the council meeting mentioned in the minutes. Mr Kelly stated that he had decided to change the meeting date to align with the regular council meeting date.

Mr Harris asked Mr Kelly if he wanted council input into the consenting issues surround lowland stream diversions. Mr Kelly stated that at the time he was making the council aware of the issue.

Mr Erickson enquired about the status of the Heaphy Road Environment court case. Mr Kelly stated that it was set down for court facilitated mediation in November and that the office had received a number of positive comments arising from the TV article on the issue. and have had good feedback, only downside was the hunting stance. Mr Harris asked if the Commissioner can make a decision. Mr Kelly stated that it would be up to the interested parties to arrive at a compromise. Mr Erickson commented on the positive effect of the TV coverage.

# CORRESPONDENCE: (as per pre-circulated schedule)

*Resolved: (D Phibbs/J Derks), carried*

***That the inwards correspondence be received.***

# MANAGERS REPORT

Mr Kelly presented the pre-circulated bimonthly operational report, expanding on;

* No worthwhile figures for a financial report at this early stage in the year.
* Mr Roney’s enquiry regarding DoC and backcountry huts. Mr Kelly noted that Tim Shaw was to advise us on DoC’s stance but unfortunately has had a family bereavement so has not been able to provide this information.
* The Heaphy Road stopping. Mr Kelly informed the council that the Alpine Club have also joined, leaving 3 opposing parties still involved of the 12 parties that submitted. Mr Roney stated that he may be available to provide evidence regarding the significance of the fishery.
* Surveillance for compliance purposes. Fish and Game are trialling surveillance cameras in known ‘high-use’ areas. Fish and Game are also observing duck ponds as well. These camera’s send instantaneous images to rangers phones for immediate action.
* Agent liaison and new licence categories. Mr Kelly noted there had been a significant amount of time spent between ironing out issues as they arose.
* Audit and Financial reporting. Mr Kelly asked that the council thank the NZ Council for Carmel Vietch’s help in this process. She has assisted the West Coast region immensely.

*Resolved: (R Roney/J Derks), carried*

***That the West Coast Fish and Game Council write to the NZ Council thanking them for Carmel Veitch’s help in the transition to the new Audit Office reporting standards.***

* Office premises and lease renewal. Mr Kelly updated the council onm this process stating that the Westland District Council had been unsatisfactorily slow in this process. Mr Kelly further stated that planned office maintenance had been deferred until this process was complete.

*Resolved: (B Erickson/J Derks), carried*

***That the Managers report be received.***

Mr Kelly presented the Sports Fisheries Spawning Surveys report on behalf of Rhys Adams. Mr Crosswell provided an overview. MR Phibbs noted that there was not any relevant correlation between spawning numbers and subsequent years returns. Mr Roney noted that planned Otolith analysis may provide more insight into salmon population dynamics. Mr Smith noted some ‘cut and paste’ errors, that will require fixing. Mr Crosswell will sort these issues before public release. Mr Heine noted the interaction between Perch and Trout in the lake. Discussion ensued.

*Resolved: (B Erickson/D Phibbs), carried*

***That the Sportsfish Spawning Surveys report be received and the recommendations adopted.***

# GENERAL BUSINESS

Backcountry Fisheries Management

Mr Kelly provided a summary of a meeting himself and Mr Phibbs had attended in Nelson regarding backcountry fisheries management. Fishing Guides and Fish and Game representatives attended and discussed back countries fisheries issues and options for management. Niall Watson from Otago Fish and Game gave a presentation on backcountry fisheries management in their region.

One issue that was highlighted was the fishing ethics and conduct by non-resident anglers in the backcountry. A survey of a more representative sample of river users has been drafted and the N/M region are wanting to include the Karamea River in the survey. A general discussion ensued with the following points raised;

* Fish and Game have conducted a few ranging exercises in the area and have not noted any issues.
* The fishing skills of the users are not sufficient to catch wary fish and therefore they need to stay longer. Just seeing the fish is enough to keep some anglers happy.
* The West Coast regions supports the survey but request a few changes. Mr Kelly to discuss these with the N/M Manager.
* Mokihinui could receive more pressure due to ease of access in the future.
* People staying for long periods will exclude other anglers from opportunities to catch fish.
* The duration of the anglers stay is important to perception of success.
* Natural events could have as much to play in the quality of the fishery as angling pressure.
* Unrealistic expectation of guided anglers may not be the same as recreational anglers.
* The Karamea River is considered an Internationally Significant Fishery.
* Increased monitoring is required in the Karamea.

West Coast Fish and Game Council and Public Awareness Opportunities – Bruce Erickson

Mr Erickson proposed that Fish and Game provide a series of events for councillors to be involved in. He suggested guest speakers and DVD’s. He stated that his would provide an opportunity to explain what Fish and Game does. A discussion regarding Public Awareness and Instructional events ensued. Mr Smith recommended surveying anglers and hunter to see what demand was there. Mr Harris recommended coming up with some concrete ideas by the next meeting. Mr Erickson proposed that it remain councillor oriented therefore leaving staff to achieve outcomes in the operational workplan. Mr Roney emphasised that there may not be much organisation required and that many areas of the expertise required were held by councillors.

Meeting closed at 9:03 pm.

Chairman……………………………………… Date…………………….