

## MINUTES OF THE GAME ANIMAL COUNCIL MEETING 27 APRIL 2016

### Held at DOC Head Office, Manners Street Wellington

**Present:** Don Hammond (Chair), Bill O’Leary, Garry Ottmann, Geoff Kerr, Mark Brough, Steve McFall, Terry Pierson, Carol Watson, Roger Duxfield, Alec McIver

Jenny Wotten (Executive Officer)

**Also in attendance:** Lou Sanson Director General DOC, Mervyn English Deputy Director-General Strategy and Innovation DOC, John Brinsley-Pirie Private Secretary Office of Hon Peter Dunne, Ben Reddix Director Community Engagement DOC, Peter Morton DOC, Harry Maher Director Health & Safety DOC, Mike Daisley CEO MSC, Matthew Gibson Hunting Partnership Advisor MSC, Don Adams Chairman Wellington Conservation Board, Rick McGovern-Wilson NZCA.

**1. Welcome and Introductions:** Don Hammond welcomed John Brinsley-Pirie, Don Adams, Councillors and DOC representatives Ben Reddix & Peter Morton. Lou Sanson, Mervyn English, Mike Daisley & Matthew Gibson, Harry Maher and Rick McGovern-Wilson joined the meeting later.

**Apologies:** Minister Dunne, Mike Slater, Martin Kessick

<b>Motion 10/1:</b> Moved Roger Duxfield/Terry Pierson: That apologies be accepted.	CARRIED
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**2. Minutes of previous meeting 17 February 2016:** with minor typographic alterations, were taken as read.

<b>Motion 10/2:</b> Moved Terry Pierson/Geoff Kerr: that the Minutes of the 17 February 2016 Meeting be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.	CARRIED
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### 3. Matters arising from Minutes not on agenda

- a. John Brinsley-Pirie spoke about the Associate Minister of Conservation’s two Reviews: Illegal Hunting; and Hunter Safety. The Minister believes the Illegal Hunting Review is within the Game Animal Council’s mandate. Minister Collins’ Office has begun a Firearms Review which may overlap with the other two reviews. John Brinsley-Pirie will try to get a copy of the Firearms Review Terms of Reference to see proposed changes of legislation impacting on firearms.
- b. Bill O’Leary said there are also two reviews going on within the firearms area: a criminal/police review and another review that predated that looking at firearms licence holders and administration. COLFO and Police Firearms Advisory Forum (including Customs) are the two groups currently responsible. GAC could seek representation on COLFO or make a submission to them or the NZDA if necessary. Don Hammond stated he is conscious of the heavy workload already on Council and the need to manage expectations within available resources.
- c. The Judge’s notes from the last SPCA case have been circulated. Councillors to provide expert witness in another case coming up in May.
- d. Feedback provided on the Te Kawa O Te Urewera Framework document. Confirmation since received and final document on Te Urewera’s website.
- e. Garry Ottmann and Geoff Kerr to liaise with Ben Reddix to formulate questions and ask for written response **Action item 10/1**. Some CMSs haven’t been updated for years, focus heavily on animal control by helicopters and don’t address recreational hunting as a management tool. GAC will support sector groups in their quest to have recreational hunting recognised as part of the overall management strategy during the review of any CMS document.
- f. Geoff Kerr responded to Karl Bridges Re: introduction & request to meet, research project into mistaken identity hunting accidents and seeking financial assistance with research paper
- g. Bowhunter’s course online, Press Release issued 1 April 2016 to NZ Outdoor, Rod & Rifle and Hunting & Wildlife magazine.

- h. Roy Sloan has resigned as at 11 April 2016 and his resignation has been referred to the Minister.
- i. Appointment of Deputy Chair of the GAC.

**Motion 10/3:** Moved Roger Duxfield/Terry Pierson: Geoff Kerr be appointed as Deputy Chair of GAC.

CARRIED

### 3. ACTION ITEMS TABLE

- a. Action 3/11 NZ Professional Hunting Guides Association training program has been developed and is in the process of being finalised (Roger Duxfield)
- b. Action 4/5 to be split as Researching bait types is a separate item. Ben Reddiex said there is a real need to be clear about this and engage early with information sharing used in context within operational team, needs leadership.
- c. Action 5/10 Martin Kessick's team now has Terms of Reference to advance this Review process
- d. Action 7/10 Council to identify stakeholders.
- e. Action 8/2 draft policy on 1080: Garry Ottmann said he has three other policies, NZDA, Sika and NZPHA and he's looking for commonalities and liaison with stakeholders to develop a draft as we don't want our policy to be inconsistent with theirs although ours may be broader. Councillors to send information to Garry Ottmann and Mark Brough regarding toxins in general **Action Item 10/2**.
- f. Action 8/5 John Brinsley-Pirie spoke about GAC Act Review – review due 3 years after Act was established.
- g. Action 8/9 Don Hammond unable to get his diary to align with NZCA thus far
- h. Garry Ottmann spoke about Japanese delegation visit, varied interest, management control, genetics, look around deer farm and deer estate, got letters of appreciation which have been passed on to James Guild.

### 4. **Matt Gibson, Partnership Advisor, Mountain Safety Council address to Council** – Chair Don Hammond welcomed Mike Daisley (Chair MSC) and Matt Gibson and thanked them for the documents they have sent to the GAC on Hunter Safety and Matt Gibson's role and background.

Matthew Gibson said it's encouraging to see positive changes occurring within the MSC and see more interest in hunter safety education with the development of their hunter safety training modules, a new Facebook page and hunter safety videos. MSC's Hunter Guide is due to be released in May and uses data provided by ACC, NZ Police, NZ Sports & Sports Clubs (eg mountain bike accidents), Chief Coroner, Statistics NZ, Search & Rescue and Metservice (interpreted through a specialised data access company) but not analysed by MSC.

Their next project will be specifically around hunter related accidents, need to test questions to ask of the data and have conversations with GAC about what causes accidents. The GAC doesn't want hunting portrayed negatively. Matthew Gibson said trends actually suggest less hunting accidents are occurring.

The GAC has endorsed the NZDA Hunts Program to teach firearm safety. Weaknesses in recreational data analysis and assumptions cause problems. Geoff Kerr talked about the personalisation of situation vs statistics, people can identify recreational incidences/accidents by description of area, region, duck shooting, shotguns, etc. Roger Duxfield requested formal advice as to who the MSC spokesperson is for dealing with Media on fatalities. Mike Daisley commented he wanted to work on some collective messages that all can agree on. Don Hammond thanked them for their attendance and presentation and said it was of considerable interest to the GAC.

### 5. Peter Morton of DOC provided a confidential address to the GAC in regard to 1080 and Beech Mast events spanning the period 2014 to 2016, details of which have yet to be released publicly. As soon

as details are released they will seek further consultation with the GAC. DOC's main goals are to protect birds, long tailed bats, whio and Powelliphanta snails. Don Hammond thanked Peter Morton for his presentation and commented that the GAC wishes to seek the best overall outcome taking into account seasons, timing and recurring events amongst other considerations and ensuring that consultation and engagement with stakeholders has occurred.

6. Mervyn English Deputy Director-General Strategy and Innovation DOC, addressed the possibility of future government funding. Mervyn English will be ready to discuss and take advice from Don Hammond after any Budget announcement.
7. Lou Sanson Director General DOC, addressed Council and commented on the work being done on the Ruahines and other issues of mutual interest. Lou Sanson introduced Harry Maher, Director Health & Safety DOC who spoke about health and safety issues and the need to withdraw DOC staff from forests during the main part of the hunting season for their safety.

In relation to the Health and Safety discussion, Bill O'Leary spoke about hunters wearing hi viz clothing and stated that the NZDA want police who are involved in investigating hunting accidents to capture information at the scene as to what clothing was worn by the people involved. Jenny Wotten to send Lou Sanson copies of the Minister's letters on Illegal Hunting and the Hunter Safety Review **Action item 10/3**.

8. **Correspondence:** Don Hammond presented the correspondence. Carol Watson and Terry Pierson to draft a response to Alex Gale **Action item 10/4**. Mark Brough and Steve McFall to respond to James Blyth re: his website query **Action item 10/5**.

**Motion 10/4:** Moved Carol Watson /Alec Mclver: That inward correspondence be accepted and outward correspondence be approved. CARRIED

## 9. Financial Matters

### Account Balances - 15 February 2016

Investment – On Call	\$52,328.87
Current Account	<u>\$ 4,964.77</u>
	<b>\$57,293.64</b>

### Plus Income:

GST Refunds	\$ 1171.59
Interest on Investment Account	<u>\$ 128.47</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 1300.06</b>

**Less Expenses** **\$12994.49**

### Balances - 25 April 2016

Investment – On Call	\$32457.34
Current Account	<u>\$13141.87</u>
	<b>\$45599.21</b>

**Motion 10/5:** Moved Terry Pierson/Alec Mclver: That the financial report be accepted and that payments made be approved. CARRIED

10. **Hunter Safety Review** – Last year Minister Dunne sought the assistance of the GAC on (1) the collation of relevant data relating to reported accidents regarding hunters as well as data on hunter safety programmes or actions undertaken in New Zealand and (2) reports on illegal hunting and poaching incidents in New Zealand. The review will seek to deliver an analysis of these issues and

provide recommendations on how to address them. Issues pertaining to the Arms Act 1983 and the Arms Regulations 1992 will be outside the scope of the review. Minister Dunne sought guidance from the GAC on the draft terms of reference, suggestions on priority areas to be addressed and views on the review process. Don Hammond advised the Minister that the GAC is keen to see this Review progressed as soon as possible as the results should inform much of the work of Council over the coming years and in addition, hunter safety is a statutory requirement of the GAC in its Act. Don Hammond commented that in order to progress the work, there is a need to identify the necessary resources (including people) required and agree to deliverables for completion. The GAC is prepared to oversee and manage the Review provided the resources are available to collate and analyse the information.

In his letter to the GAC dated 11 April 2016, Minister Dunne advised that since he initiated the Hunter Safety Review, he has learned that the Mountain Safety Council (MSC) is already someway into the collection and analysis of data into injuries and fatalities in the outdoor recreation sector of New Zealand. Minister Dunne has asked MSC to liaise with his office to produce a targeted review into hunter-safety in New Zealand and to provide a timeline for the work they are undertaking, the method by which data is being collected and analysed, the process and what if any avenues for feedback they envisage for stakeholders. He also made it clear to the MSC that the GAC were to be consulted and have the opportunity to provide feedback on the process. Minister Dunne asked the GAC to work with the MSC to provide expertise in the area of hunter safety and keep him advised of any GAC involvement.

The GAC is concerned that Hunter Safety is a specific issue that could get lost in the MSC's wider review focussing on broader safety issues such as river crossings, hiking etc. The GAC believes there is the potential for the important issue of hunter safety and gun safety to be overlooked in such a broad review and the opportunity for something more substantive will be lost.

**11. Illegal Hunting Review:** In his letter dated 5 April 2016, Minister Dunne suggested the GAC initiate a preliminary working group to contact relevant government agencies about what information they hold in regards to illegal hunting and to collect that information if possible. He has also asked that the GAC initiate a stakeholder feedback system where relevant non-government groups are consulted on their views on the issue of illegal hunting plus a public feedback system to allow members of the public to submit their experiences of illegal hunting.

The Minister wishes to ascertain GAC's ability to implement any of these initiatives and asked GAC to advise him what level of resourcing might be required. The Minister is clear that the GAC is the best placed body to initiate and lead any review into illegal hunting. Don Hammond addressed the Minister's letter speaking about the preliminary contact with agencies, the information gathering, police involvement and liaison with the hunting and farming sectors. It was noted for example, DOC has responsibility for illegal hunting on Conservation Land but not on Private land. The police have responsibilities around hunter firearm registration and education but not around other aspects of hunter safety such as falls, drowning and other risks. Don Hammond commented that it is difficult to separate illegal hunting from hunter safety but the key focus must be on illegal hunting and its implication for safety. The desirable outcome would be improved compliance with legal requirements related to hunting to protect both people and property.

In relation to the Minister's request to ascertain the extent of the problem, Bill O'Leary advised that the data is out there but no one has collected it. Often multiple offences occur relating to the Wild Animal Control Act, the Land Transport Act, GAC Act, or other Acts. Don Hammond will talk with Minister Dunne about his expectations and resourcing.

**12. Annual Work Plan and budget** – The GAC will wait and see what announcements are made in the Budget. Don Hammond thanked Councillors for all the effort they have put in to-date and asked them to think about priorities and goals should the GAC be successful in its Budget bid. Getting the export levy in place and progressing Herds of Special Interest (HOSI) have to be very high priorities. Some GAC goals such as HOSI are time bound as prescribed by the GAC Act.

**13. New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA)** - Rick McGovern-Wilson from the New Zealand Conservation Authority addressed the Council and said that the GAC and NZCA should have a closer working relationship and that the GAC would be invited to future NZCA meetings. Don Hammond said that the GAC looks forward to working with the NZCA in the future and our goals are remarkably well aligned.

**14. General Business:**

**a. Sika Show:** The Sika Show is to be held in Taupo on 24 & 25 September, (there will be no Tahr Show in 2016). GAC Councillors are asked to make themselves available to attend the show and run the GAC information stand. Councillors to advise Garry Ottmann of their availability **Action item 10/6**. This is a good opportunity to engage with hunters and the Minister usually attends also.

**b. Ruahine and Deer Monitoring Meeting** – Geoff Kerr reported on the meeting held on 4 March 2016, chaired by Don Adams in Wellington. Don Hammond, Geoff Kerr and Garry Ottmann attended the productive information sharing session, principally about Ruahine red deer monitoring. The participants sought a pathway to deer monitoring that is acceptable to all parties including: workable solutions, agreement on long term objectives, rights of hunters including having a resource to harvest, protection of conservation land, role of recreational and commercial hunting in game management and forest protection and above all, the need for good scientific data to underpin the decision making process.

Challenges identified included ensuring: vegetation is able to cope with animal pressure; management that can adapt appropriately to change; operations are financially and legislatively achievable; appropriate science base (including social science); agreement on animal limits; roles are understood, complementary and achievable; a common understanding of the role of recreational and commercial hunters; and what is important to recreational hunters and commercial hunters.

Future action items for this Working Group include: confirming current knowledge of the Ruahine area (use, animals, harvest levels, vegetation); confirm the desired recreational hunting experience; establishing a regime for deer population/relative abundance measurement (including trend and harvest level); developing an agreed working approach between recreational and commercial hunters; advising Wellington Conservation Board of this group; its intention and request to accommodate outcomes in the CMS; and provision of advice by DOC on legislative and financial information/restrictions as the process progresses.

Participants agreed that DOC would develop the project with the above agreed actions with input from the other represented stakeholders, iwi and other groups such as concessionaires/guides, non-affiliated hunters and landing concessionaires.

**c. OSPRI 1080 drop in Kaimanawas and Kaweka in May 2016** – The GAC is extremely concerned about decisions OSPRI has made regarding its proposed 1080 aerial drops in the Kaweka/Kaimanawa areas, the lack of consultation and engagement with affected parties. Apart from being advised that one part of the operation would be delayed a couple of months and that deer repellent would be used, they have had little else to

say. The GAC has mostly learnt about proposed OSPRI operations from third parties despite repeated direct requests to OSPRI for information. Their inability to provide evidence of consultation, scientific data to support the necessity of the 1080 drops and comply with their own protocol of providing at least 2 months' notice of operations to affected parties, resulted in the GAC asking for this information through an Official Information Act request. In addition to the OIA request, the GAC has asked OSPRI to postpone their operation until consultation has occurred, scientific data has been evaluated and a good strategy is put in place to ensure there is confidence in the process. Don Hammond has been engaging with both Minister Dunne and Hon Nathan Guy (Minister of Primary Industries) in relation to the less than satisfactory response from OSPRI to-date and will continue to pursue postponement and better engagement.

- d. **CEO Appointment** – discussion on this issue was constricted due to the lack of certainty of the Budget outcome. Don Hammond extended his thanks Garry Ottmann and Roger Duxfield for the work undertaken already.
- e. **Review of the Game Animal Act** – a brief discussion was held. Councillors should be looking to identify any items from the Act that need to be reviewed. The Minister has yet to determine who will undertake the Review and it has been suggested that rather than leading the review the GAC may just be asked for input.

#### 15. Working Group Updates:

- a. **Training matters** – The GAC discussed training opportunities and avenues and the need to ensure training is available as per the statutory requirement our the GAC Act 2013.
- b. **HOSI** – Wapiti Foundation President Roy Sloan has asked what was happening with the Wapiti proposal for a HOSI. Receipt of the letter has been acknowledged but before we can progress this we need to get together with DOC and agree on what needs to be presented to the Minister. DOC and the GAC are trying to develop a generic HOSI management template to assist proposers and ensure the greatest likelihood of success. A new Working Group comprising Garry Ottmann, Geoff Kerr, Roger Duxfield, Alec McIver will develop a draft strategy **Action 10/7**. Ben Reddiex will identify DOC staff involvement and obtain copies of relevant HOSI correspondence/criteria to-date. Jenny Wotten to send Ben Reddiex all the base material developed thus far **Action 10/8** cc to GAC sub-committee & other Councillors.

The GAC also needs to respond to Roy Sloan and the Wapiti Foundation. Don Hammond, Garry Ottmann and Geoff Kerr will draft a response **Action 10/9** noting that no timeframes can be specified as yet due to resource constraints, pending the Budget outcome.

- c. **Statutory Processes** – Geoff Kerr circulated his report and it was taken as read. The first bullet point is to be amended. The remainder of the report was taken as read.

<p><b>Motion 10/6:</b> Moved Geoff Kerr/Roger Duxfield: that GAC receive the Statutory Processes Update Report.</p>	<p>CARRIED</p>
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#### 16. Other General Business:

- a. **Bowhunting Course:** Carol Watson has had some positive and a little negative feedback on the online course. Carol Watson to respond to the feedback - it was suggested that she get one of the Councillors to Peer Review her responses prior to sending them out.

- b. GAC Website:** Steve McFall has had advice from the GAC Webmaster that we are running out of space on our email system. The 2014 emails and data has been archived and they are working on further issues to free up space.
- c.** The next meeting of the Game Animal Council will be held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2016 in Wellington – Jenny Wotten to email Ben Reddiex and the Minister’s Office. Then following meeting may be held on 26 Sept in Rotorua following the Sika Show. Don Hammond thanked the Department of Conservation and Ben Reddiex for hosting us again.

Meeting closed at 4.15pm.