

MINUTES OF THE GAME ANIMAL COUNCIL MEETING 11 SEPTEMBER 2017

Held at Department of Conservation, Ōtautahi / Christchurch Office, Room 201, Level 2, 161 Cashel Street, Christchurch City Centre

Present: Don Hammond (Chair), Geoff Kerr, Garry Ottmann, Carol Watson, Roger Duxfield, Alec Mclver, Richard Burdon, Rachael Dean, Stephen Hall, Jenny Wotten (Executive Officer)

Also in attendance: Ben Reddiex (DOC), Hon Minister Dunne & John Brinsley-Pirie (Minister Dunne's Office), Geoff Olsen (GO DO NZ Ltd)

- 1. Welcome, Agenda, Health & Safety:** Don Hammond welcomed Councillors and visitors. Garry Ottmann asked to add the NZPHA Code of Conduct to the agenda. Ben Reddiex provided an overview of the Health & Safety and instructions for emergencies.

Motion 17/1: Moved Alec Mclver/Richard Burdon: that the agenda be amended.	CARRIED
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- 2. Minutes of previous meeting 3 July 2017:** were taken as read.

Motion 17/2: Moved Alec Mclver/Richard Burdon: that the Minutes of the 3 July 2017 Meeting be accepted as a true and correct record of the meeting.	CARRIED
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3. Matters arising not on agenda:

- a. Critical to Conservation (C2C)** – Roger Duxfield provided some background on C2C: In January 2017 over forty members of the international hunting community met for a second time. The meeting was hosted by Safari Club International (SCI). Those in attendance included leaders of pro-hunting NGOs, as well as guides and outfitters' associations from across the globe. The purpose of C2C is to unite efforts to change the negative perception of hunters in the mainstream media, help resolve global conflicts in hunting and get the general public to realise that hunters support conservation of wildlife. An Executive Summary was developed outlining the Coalition's proposed vision (mission, goals, strategy and initial steps). Roger Duxfield said that the C2C Coalition wants global support and financial contributions, including from NZ hunting organisations (GAC, NZPHGA etc). The meeting also successfully passed a motion to change the name of the organisation to International Conservation Coalition (ICC) which will better reflect what the organisation does. Councillors agreed that the GAC cannot, at this stage, provide monetary support due to its minimal budget but can provide as much support to the professional sector as possible and maybe pledge to support ICC at a later date. It would need to fit with the GAC's core mandate and be assessed against the reason for the introduction of the levy. Roger Duxfield to follow this up with SCI and NZPHGA, informing them that the GAC is supportive of the ICC Coalition **Action item 17/1.**

Motion 17/3: Moved Roger Duxfield/Garry Ottmann: that the GAC is supportive of the ICC (International Conservation Coalition) and will also support other entities wanting to be involved. The GAC will consider supporting the ICC once we have the resources available.	CARRIED
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- b. Te Kawa o Te Urewera Management Plan:** Alec Mclver advised that the GAC had made a submission on Te Kawa o Te Urewera Management Plan. This is in addition to in the GAC's February 2016 submission.
 - The GAC confirms its previous offer of sharing expertise & knowledge in matters arising relating to Red deer, Rusa deer, wild pigs and hunting dogs, in Te Urewera.

- GAC would like to continue their support for the management of Red deer, Rusa deer and wild pigs.
- GAC supports the Te Kawa o Te Urewera Management Plan.
- The GAC wish to continue their close relationship and friendship with the Te Urewera Board and Tuhoë people.

A copy of the GAC submission is to be put on the GAC website **Action Item 17/2**. Don Hammond and Alec Mclver have been invited to the Launch of Te Kawa o Te Urewera on 14 September and to meet again with Tamati Kruger and Kirsti Luke to discuss how the GAC could be of assistance. The GAC Act doesn't allow for a HOSI on non-conservation land, so the GAC can only work in an advisory capacity at this time.

- c. New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA):** Don Hammond met with the NZCA on 7 August 2017 and presented a summary of the GAC's goals, role and obligations. Don Hammond said it was very positive engagement and that it seems the GAC and NZCA's interests are pretty closely aligned. The NZCA was particularly interested in tahr, HOSIs in general and our relationship with iwi. Jenny Wotten to circulate Don Hammond's NZCA presentation to Councillors **Action Item 17/3**. The NZCA noted that feral ungulate populations remain high in parts of the NZ public conservation estate and there are challenges in determining the acceptable balance between protection and sustainable management for commercial and recreational hunters and non-hunter groups. NZCA agree there is a need for information on determining acceptable game animal population levels.
- d. Tahr Project** - Garry Ottmann provided an update to Council on this project. The DOC permit to keep tahr for Research Purposes at High Peak Station has been signed for a three-year period. Issues of outdated fencing standards, availability of bulls, reconfiguration of the GPS collars and the fee have been resolved.
- e. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD):** Roger Duxfield advised that an information piece on CWD prepared by the GAC has been sent to the United States for publication and several editors have been in touch with him regarding this issue. Richard Burdon attended seminars on CWD in the United States and he and Roger will share information and notes. Geoff Kerr advised that the GAC report in the June/July edition of the NZ Hunter magazine included an extensive item on CWD.
- f. Consultation on 2018 OSPRI TBfree Pest Control Operations:** Garry Ottmann attended a meeting in Taupo in August chaired by Dr Stu Hutchings. The meeting was productive and informative and is a significant improvement in the way OSPRI shares and disseminates information. Networking at the Sika Show was very valuable. The GAC hopes that OSPRI will continue to engage with hunting organisations at this level. Garry Ottmann has since drafted a GAC submission to OSPRI covering:

Strategic Issues	Operational Issues
Consultation	Current non-inclusion of private land
Communications	Timeframes
Responding to affected parties, listening to feedback	Boundaries
Planning in advance, next year and subsequent years	Methods, size and scope of operations
Science around the presence/absence of TB	Possible mitigation
Reporting on targets	Non-target by-kill outcomes & consequences
	Logistics & modelling
	Indicators such as sentinel pigs
	Surveillance
	Use of deer repellent
	Circulation of repellent trial information
	Timing and seasonal impact

The GAC will continue to work with OSPRI to improve the process at a strategic level and encourage them to communicate early with local hunting organisations to design the process around individual operations and, in particular, providing science-based evidence of TB rather than presumptions of TB. The GAC will also assist local hunting organisations at a high level, with expertise and coordination.

5. Export Trophy Levy Update

Motion 17/4: Moved Don Hammond/Alec McIver: that the meeting move in Committee. CARRIED

Motion 17/5: Moved Don Hammond/Alec McIver: that the meeting move out of Committee. CARRIED

Council will prepare a briefing for the incoming minister **Action item 17/4**. Council will put its binding ruling application to IRD on hold, noting there have been some costs incurred to-date. The information provided thus far by IRD will still be valid at a later date if we need to refer to it.

6. Correspondence and Feedback

The Health Protection Officer in Wanganui asked if the GAC had been consulted about an aerial 1080 operation at “Ngamutu National Park” (a peak in the Erua Forest) in August but none could be found. Jenny Wotten to formulate a reply **Action item 17/5**. Correspondence was taken as read.

Motion 17/6: Moved Roger Duxfield/Stephen Hall: That inward correspondence be accepted and outward correspondence be approved. CARRIED

7. Financial Report – Sept 2017

Balance of Accounts	1 July 2017
Investment Account	\$20745.47
Current Account	<u>\$13418.82</u>
Total Funds	\$34164.29

Income Received:	
Interest Investment Account	\$31.31
GST	<u>\$2070.08</u>
Total Income	\$2101.39

Expenses Paid: \$30606.87

Balance of Accounts	5 September 2017
Investment Account	\$ 776.78
Current Account	<u>\$4882.03</u>
Total Funds	\$5658.81

Motion 17/7: Moved Roger Duxfield/Geoff Kerr: That the financial report be accepted and that payments made be approved. CARRIED

- a. Garry Ottmann provided an update on the most recent tahr project expenses (mainly DOC application fee and purchase of Sirtrack collars). Don Hammond advised that the GAC has invoiced DOC for operating funds. Ben Reddiex spoke about the costs of setting up the export

levy collection system. Rachael Dean asked that we keep levy expenditure separate as much as possible.

8. DOC Update - Ben Reddiex provided a DOC update which is attached to these Minutes, covering the following issues:

- a. **HOSI** – DOC (in consultation with the GAC HOSI working group) have engaged a contractor to create a HOSI management plan template and advice guide.
- b. **WARO** – DOC's Deputy Director-General Operations has engaged with GAC on the WARO Review.
- c. **AATH** – The Minister will contact the GAC this week regarding implementation of the AATH Code of Practice.
- d. **Recap on Trophy Export Levy** – public consultation ran from 13 December 2016 to 13 February 2017 and 114 unique submissions were received. The GAC and DOC are considering the wide range of matters raised in these submissions.
- e. **Funding** – DOC will engage with the GAC to discuss funding for this financial year.
- f. **Access easement information** – A DOC partnerships manager recently met with Geoff Kerr to discuss improvements to communication about access easement conditions to members of the public, including hunters. See attached DOC Report for further information.
- g. **BFOB Update** – See attached report regarding BfOB, including information on: use of deer repellent for current and future specific areas/operations, rodent and possum monitoring and risk analysis details for specific areas/operations. The maps provided also show OSPRI operations.

Geoff Kerr to review the information provided and continue to liaise with DOC on operations of particular concern. Stephen Hall requested that an update be provided on Predator Free NZ at the next GAC meeting.

9. Action items from previous meetings:

- a. Trophy Export Levy - 1/14 & 1/15: Delete, ongoing
- b. Illegal Hunting Review - 2/13: New Minister to decide if the GAC will be provided with resources to undertake this task.
- c. Promotion & Sponsorship Policy – 3/12: In abeyance until we know funding source
- d. Consultation with Iwi – 8/8: In abeyance until we know funding source also
- e. Write to Conservation Boards – 8/9: Done
- f. HOSI – 10/7: Contractor working on HOSI strategy. Richard Burdon wants a better understanding of this (Garry Ottmann to email new councillors and provide background information **Action item 17/6**).
- g. Consultation with Te Urewera Board – 12/5: Alec McIver provided a brief update. See also Action 16/1 (GAC submission on Te Urewera Te Kawa o Te Urewera Management Plan).
- h. Online Hunter Education – 12/6: Carol Watson continuing discussions and pursuing ideas for future development/expansion of Hunter Ed program.
- i. Write to NZCA - 13/3: Done. Don Hammond to write to NZCA on an annual basis.
- j. DOC Easement Provisions - 13/10: Geoff Kerr is dealing with this (see also DOC report attached)
- k. Hikoi Productions offer of space on their website - 13/12: Alec McIver will deal with this, the GAC to work out details.
- l. NZAGE Standards - 14/1: Geoff Kerr reported on his communications with the NZ Association of Game Estates. He is awaiting a revised version from them.
- m. Te Urewera Board – 16/1: Alec McIver provided details of the GAC submission on Te Urewera Te Kawa o Te Urewera Management Plan.
- n. DOC's WARO Review - 16/2: Don Hammond to write to DOC again asking for definite details of when the full WARO Review is to start and details of how DOC plans to consult with stakeholders.
- o. GAC Operational Plan and Budget - 16/3: Budget to be updated and circulated to councillors.

- p. GAC Annual Report – 16/4: Rachael Dean is now chair of this subcommittee. She proposes to use the same format as previous years. Jenny Wotten to begin financial review process with the accountant.

10. Minister Dunne Address – Don welcomed the Minister and provided an introduction for GAC visitor Geoff Olsen. Minister Dunne welcomed new councillors, saying he regretted not being available to attend the last GAC meeting. The Minister spoke about the GAC appointment process, the structure of the Council, what the GAC has been able to achieve in the last 3 years and his hope that HOSI, funding and the WARO Review would still be on the table in the coming year. He said that with the credibility the GAC already established as a body of expertise, he was confident there would be a much better coordinated & strategic approach on issues, with the GAC being consulted early in the process. He went on to say that a year ago he was having to tell people who the GAC was and the issues they should be consulted on, whereas now they are asking whether they should consult GAC, as the GAC became more and more recognised. The Minister said he can look back on the GAC with considerable pride. It has been a long journey that started in 2002 and then got a burst after 2008 with the legislation written, and he is very pleased with the level of progress to-date. He thanked Don for his leadership, tenacity, patience and the big sacrifices he makes because he believes in the GAC and what it stands for, for hunters and their rights and responsibilities. He thanked Don and the councillors for keeping him in the loop and for their commitment and ability to bring the hunting community in from the cold. He gave examples of disputes along the way and the Ruahine WARO issue to highlight the positive role the GAC plays and added that the HOSI concept has been embraced by hunters who are keen to explore what can be achieved through this process.

Roger Duxfield asked Minister Dunne about where he was up to with our report regarding the Code of Practice regarding AATH. His reply was, after consideration by the policy team within DOC, they reported back to him that the Code of Practice, put forward by the GAC would be better placed within the AATH concession document, which incidentally is up for review in the near future. Minister Dunne then went on to say that he agreed with their reasoning and had subsequently instructed the department to insert the code into the revised concession document.

Don Hammond replied that it has been his pleasure to work with Minister Dunne, to be a part of the successes and results. Other councillors also thanked the Minister and he was presented with a framed photo of himself with the first GAC council.

Action item 17/7: Prepare a brief and a comprehensive budget for the incoming minister. Include high-level advice arising out of the levy proposal and other suggestions for core funding and mixed funding models (noting the potential impacts of free trade agreements) and taking into account short term and long-term implications and the possibility of seeking funding for specific projects. Don Hammond to write to the new minister seeking a meeting at the earliest opportunity.

Action item 17/8 GAC Levy Steering Group (including DOC staff members) to draft a feedback letter to levy submitters and put this information on the GAC website.

11. Working Group reports:

- a. **Statutory Processes** –See attached report from Geoff Kerr. There has been a positive response to issues raised by the GAC in the Ruahine planning process, hunting in general and terminology. DOC have taken on board suggestions for use of deer repellent for several operations. The GAC's relationship with DOC around BFOB continues to strengthen and science-based decisions have resulted in some operations being cancelled.
- b. **Ruahine Working Group:** Geoff Kerr provided a report on the activities of the Ruahine Deer Management Working Group which last met on 4th September 2017 and was able to make good progress with Reg Kemper in attendance along with new members from the Wellington Conservation Board and DOC. The GAC's recreational hunter survey results are finalised and will

feed into priority setting and go onto the GAC website and possibly the LNIRDF's website also. Plans for a DOC-funded pilot vegetation and ungulate faecal pellet monitoring programme are advancing.

- c. **Animal welfare** – Garry Ottmann spoke about animal welfare, codes of conduct for game estates, codes of conduct issued by NZDA and generally accepted hunting practices.
- d. **HOSI** – Garry Ottmann advised that the project to develop guidance templates for establishing HOSIs is well underway and is being led by Consultant Kerri-Anne Edge of Edge Effect. A lot of time has been invested in engaging with iwi and a second draft template and management plan has been developed and are currently being considered. It is important to finalise these documents asap as potential HOSI submitters are awaiting that information. Don Hammond thanked Geoff Kerr and Garry Ottmann for the tremendous amount of work they have done on this.
- e. **WARO** – There was discussion about a letter the GAC received from DOC Deputy Director-General Operations, dated 6 Sept 2017 and the history of consideration of WARO management going back to late 2014 when WARO permits were reissued by DOC in a non-notified process. DOC had decided to take a wider perspective and review future WARO management, saying it would initiate a wider conversation with WARO operators, processors, the guided hunting sector, the GAC and the recreational hunting sector to look at a more long term sustainable future for the management of wild animal recovery on public conservation land. The recent letter from DOC advising they are now embarking on a process for issuing new WARO permits despite not having carried out the agreed review is disappointing. The GAC does not agree with this approach and has informed DOC. This essentially delays any changes to the current method of operations. The GAC believes that WARO operators, processors, the guided hunting sector, the GAC, the recreational hunting sector and DOC all need to get together to identify the issues surrounding the sustainable commercial harvest of game animals on public conservation land and evaluate options for managing the harvest going forward. **Action item 17/9** Don Hammond to write to Mike Slater saying this was not our understanding of what was agreed in 2015 by DOC Director General. There could also be an opportunity for the Council to initiate an independent process, similar to what the GAC did with AATH and would fit well with our function of reducing conflict. DOC are talking simply about a concessions review process whereas the GAC is talking about a consultation process to address the broader management framework. It was noted that Peter Noble is now running the review instead of Martin Kessick.
- f. **Tahr recovery permit** - Garry Ottmann spoke about an email the GAC received from DOC. DOC had been approached by a processor and their nominated suppliers to harvest up to 2000 tahr carcasses before June 2018. DOC also contacted the Tahr Plan Implementation Liaison Group for comment. Garry Ottmann responded on behalf of the GAC, at short notice, outlining his concerns that DOC were seeking comments after the recovery process had already commenced, the inadequacy of the timeframe for providing comments (4 days), the fact that no assessment had been made of the applicant, their ability, experience and past record of carrying out WARO operations, the number of tahr approved under the permit, whether any monitoring or auditing would be taking place to ensure compliance with the permit (especially the bulls restriction), whether the permit was a one off, the areas where the animals were to be taken from, the potential to take out all the females, the permit period covering the spring of 2017 and the whole of the 2018 rut, the potential conflict with timing as AATH operators would most likely be in the area at the same time in February 2018, and asking what consultation was occurring with adjoining landowners and what notification procedures would be put in place. In summarising his response Garry Ottmann said that the people he had spoken to were not opposed to the recovery of tahr for meat and would rather see animals utilised than shot to waste but suggested that the issues he raised needed to be addressed and the permit amended accordingly. Geoff Kerr commented that the application is essentially for all of the DOC tahr range, which doesn't make sense from a conservation perspective. He thinks that concentration on northern and southern exclusion zones and in the national parks (where target density is zero) would make more sense in terms of maximising conservation benefits. DOC responded by

email on 5 September 2017 providing responses to the issues raised and advising that it had considered all the feedback that was received from TPLIG members and the GAC and decided to approve the permits. **Action item 17/10** Don Hammond to write to Andy Roberts about the process, the timing and the way the process was carried out.

- g. **Finance & Administration** – Rachael Dean circulated a paper she had prepared which included a relatively generic draft CEO job description for the GAC for discussion only at this stage as the GAC has more pressing issues at present.
- h. **Education, Training & Safety:** Carol Watson spoke to her report which explored options for hunter education and hunter registration and how the two are connected. There was some discussion led by Carol around anomalies that currently exist, some hunters' lack of training, how the GAC would make training available, certificates, incentives & rewards, what happens in the United States, Kalkomey's role, a future where hunters could log onto the Kalkomey website to undertake the training at a cost then print off their completion certificates, possible payment mechanisms, how this would aid in the collection of relevant hunting data, how it would differ from the NZDA Hunts program and the possibility of future GAC memberships. Carol is looking for a pathway ahead. Don Hammond said the GAC should be constantly looking to create opportunities for hunters to become better educated and we need to keep making connections with hunters and stakeholders.
- i. **Website, Communications & Annual Reporting:** There was limited discussion on this issue as the GAC does not presently have the funds to explore options.

12. Sika Show arrangements: The Sika Show is in Taupo on 30 September & 1 October 2017. The Sika Show is used to promote the GAC, listen to what hunters are saying and what the current issues are for them, generate discussion around HOSIs, and to answer questions around the proposed levy, use of deer repellent, 1080, mitigation, illegal hunting, amongst other issues. It was noted that the GAC has also put in an expression of interest to attend the Shot Show in Auckland in February 2018.

13. General Business:

- a. **Freedom Camping Act 2011:** the GAC received an email on 31 August 2017 from a constituent questioning the impact on hunters of a recent government announcement about 'cracking down on Freedom Campers'. The GAC discussed this correspondence, noting that the announcement by the government also said that the new rules would not affect trampers, campers and hunters who stay in back country areas – the crackdown is aimed at tourists without toilet facilities contained in their vehicles. Don Hammond advised that any changes to the Act could be dependent on the outcome of the upcoming election and so the Council will keep a watch on it for now and investigate further if necessary.
- b. **Hunting Guides** – Roger had a meeting with DOC about the NZPHGA concession document. He is seeking a decision from DOC about the perceived need for bow hunters to hold a current firearms licence to bow hunt on public land.
- c. **New Zealand Pig Hunting Association Code of Conduct for Pig Hunting** – Garry Ottmann circulated copies of the NZPHA code of conduct for pig hunting as the NZPHA has asked that the document be endorsed by the GAC. Garry Ottmann will go back to the NZPHA and ask if they have already adopted the policy or whether it is still a draft **Action item 17/11**.
- d. Don Hammond has had an approach from the NZ Pig Hunting Association about the latest round of appointments to the GAC and he responded that the decision was made by the Minister not the GAC. The NZPHA maintain they need representation on the GAC and Don Hammond undertook to take the matter up with the new minister when he can schedule a meeting.
- e. **GAC priorities and BIM** – Reflecting on issues raised by the Minister in his address, Don Hammond led a discussion about what the councillors think the GAC priorities should be. With or without the implementation of the levy and possibly high costs of funding a collection mechanism, the GAC needs to budget remaining funds against future needs and incorporating current monthly expenditure. Ben Reddix will support the GAC to work out a process for taking it forward. The GAC is to decide which are the key messages and outcomes it wants to deliver

on. It will also reflect on the challenges over the last 3 years, sustainability of Council, the GAC Act review, funding options going forward (and to support that, statements around the functions of Council and achievements to-date) and key elements of strategic plan.

- f. **Walking Access Commission:** Geoff Kerr to look at issues around DOC easements and the Walking Access Commission and report back to Council **Action item 17/12.**

- 14. Next Meeting planning: Wed 15 November in Wellington. Don Hammond thanked DOC for hosting us in Christchurch. The meeting closed at 4.40pm

DOC Report – Game Animal Council Meeting (11 September 2017) Herds of Special Interest

- Work continues to create a herd of special interest management plan template and accompanying advice guide.
- The GAC HOSI working group will provide a more detailed update.

WARO

- DOC's Deputy Director-General Operations has engaged directly with the GAC chair regarding an engagement process about WARO activity on public conservation land.

AATH Code of Practice

- The Minister will contact the GAC this week regarding implementation of the AATH Code of Practice.

Re-cap on the Game Trophy Export Levy Project

- Public consultation on the proposed structure and amount for a game trophy export levy (as jointly prepared by the Game Animal Council and Department of Conservation) ran from 13 December 2016 to 13 February 2017 and 114 unique submissions were received. These were analysed to identify key feedback and the resulting analysis made available on both the Department and Game Animal Council websites.
- The wide range of matters raised in submissions are being considered in determining whether, and how a game trophy export levy should be set by regulation. Decision making on this is progressing through the appropriate processes.

Funding

- DOC will engage with the GAC to discuss funding for this financial year.

Access Easement Information

- DOC Partnerships manager Jeremy Severinsen recently met with GAC's Geoff Kerr and NZ Walking Access Commission's (WAC) Geoff Holgate to discuss improvements to how the Crown conveys information about access easements to members of the public, particularly hunters.
- Some easements, particularly those arising as an outcome of tenure review, contain various restrictions to make them compatible with the farming use of the servient land. Such conditions could include restrictions on the carriage of firearms, or taking dogs. Vehicles can also be prohibited on easements, and often there are periods of the year when the easements are closed for lambing closure.
- Signage on the ground, or even the legal documents, can be confusing when members of the public are attempting to understand their rights and obligations for using an easement. This is complicated further by regional differences based on how the conservancies used to handle access matters.
- Currently DOC does not have a consistent view of these terms and conditions across the high country. It requires collation in each district into a spreadsheet or database. At this point the data has been gathered in the Twizel District.
- Geoff, Geoff, and Jeremy agreed on an information transfer method where DOC gathers and publishes the raw data in geospatial form and this data is then displayed by WAC on the Walking Access Mapping System website for the public to easily view and understand. The Twizel data will be used as a pilot for the system, while the base information is compiled across the balance of DOC's High Country districts.
- Rollout is expected to take six months.

Battle for our Birds Update

Background

The attached maps show DOC's 2017/18 Battle for our Birds work programme as currently planned. Known OSPRI aerial 1080 operations are also included for your reference.

Agreement has already been reached with GAC and NZDA to use deer repellent during the following 2017 BFOB operations;

- Dart Valley; all of the operational area (11,000 ha approx.).
- Kaimanawa Mountains – Umukarikari; all of the operational area (11,000 ha approx.).
- Whirinaki; a portion of the operational area, agreed through consultation with local hunters (11,000 ha approx.).
- Tongariro Kiwi; a portion of the operational area, agreed through consultation with local hunters (7,000 ha approx.).

In addition to this, DOC understands the proposed Wilberforce, Makarora and Arthurs Pass operations are of high interest to the GAC and NZDA. Consultation on potential deer repellent use for these operations is ongoing.

Progress to date across the programme is;

- We have completed predator control over 57,623 ha (Tongariro Kiwi, Whareorino and Aorangi).
- An additional 78,623 ha of aerial work has been pre fed, and will be completed as soon as weather allows (Abel Tasman, Paraninihi, Hutiwai, Whirinaki, Cleddau, Roaring Meg and Rotoehu).
- A further 92,944 ha of ground control is underway, and will continue through to autumn 2018.

Update since the last GAC meeting

Rodent monitoring through August has led to the following decisions being made on proposed BFOB aerial 1080 operations;

- The **Waitutu** operation has been cancelled. Rodent numbers have remained low enough to not require any control this spring.
- The scale of the proposed **Arthurs Pass** operation will be significantly reduced. A large operation was proposed (115,000 ha approx.), to protect both great spotted kiwi and orange fronted parakeets. Rodent levels are not high enough to justify control to protect great spotted kiwi, so this portion of the operation has been cancelled for 2017/18. However, we are still concerned about mouse and stoat levels within the range of the critically endangered orange fronted parakeet. For this reason, an aerial 1080 operation of roughly 30,000 ha approx. is planned. The reduced operation will target the same area of orange fronted parakeet range already covered by previous aerial 1080 operations, and by the ground trapping network installed to protect orange fronted parakeets. We are managing this last remaining mainland population of orange fronted parakeets extremely intensively in an attempt to reverse their decline into local extinction. Unfortunately we are not prepared to use deer repellent bait within orange fronted parakeet range, because of their precarious condition.
- The proposed **Dart** operation is now confirmed. Rodent numbers remain at unacceptably high levels for the mohua population present at this site. An aerial 1080 operation will be run as soon as deer repellent bait becomes available for it. Deer repellent will be used throughout this operation.
- The proposed **Southern Eyre Mountains** operation is now confirmed. This site has never received possum, rodent or mustelid control previously, and holds significant rock wren, snail and skink populations. Work will not commence at this site until 2018, due to competing work demands within the Murihiku District (e.g. Auckland Island eradication project).

Final decisions are yet to be made on the remaining proposed 1080 operations. The current status of these is;

- A decision on the **Makarora** operation will be made after November rodent monitoring results are known. The earliest control will occur at this site is February 2018.

- A decision on the **Project Kaka** operation will be made after November rodent monitoring results are known. The earliest control will occur at this site is February 2018.
- Possum monitoring has been completed at **Wilberforce**. The current RTC is 4.5%. An assessment is being made of how significant the risk from possum browse is to Mountain Cedar and Hall' Totara at this site. This will allow a decision on when possum control will occur. The earliest time proposed is winter 2018.

NZ Game Animal Council COUNCIL PAPER



DATE:	11 September 2017	FROM:	Geoff Kerr
TOPIC	Update on activities		
PURPOSE	Information		
RECOMMENDATION	Receive		

Statutory processes portfolios

Agency/issue	Councillor
Regional Councils, Ministry for the Environment, Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry for Primary Industries (biosecurity)	Stephen Hall
Ministry for Primary Industries (animal welfare), SPCA	Garry Ottmann
OSPRI	Don Hammond, Garry Ottmann
Herds of Special Interest (multiple agencies)	Garry Ottmann, Geoff Kerr
Police, Mountain Safety Council, Civil Aviation Authority	Richard Burdon
NZ Conservation Authority	Don Hammond
Department of Conservation, Walking Access Commission	Geoff Kerr

DOC Planning

- Wellington CMS is progressing. DOC are rewriting in response matters raised in submissions and the hearing. There has been an extremely positive response to issues raised by the GAC in terms of the Ruahine planning process, hunting in general, and terminology.
- We await draft national park management plans for Aoraki/Mt Cook and Tai Poutini/Westland. The process is starting for Fiordland.
- We await draft Conservation management Strategies for East Coast, Nelson/Marlborough, Bay of Plenty. These are all some way off.

Battle for our Birds

- There continues to be open exchange of information and informative, frank responses to questions raised by GAC and NZDA.
- DOC have been proactive in deploying deer repellent, and in consulting local hunters. This has reduced the need for advocacy from the hunting sector, but also constrains options.
- Despite being part of the 2016 BfoB operations, Dart River rodent counts are high and this operation will be repeated. Deer repellent will be used.
- The planned 115,000 ha operation for Arthur's Pass is cancelled (OFP programme will continue).
- Wilberforce is proceeding in 2018. Deer repellent will be used on all or part of the operation. We will work with DOC to prioritise areas.

Ruahine Deer Management Group

- Meeting 4th September made good progress. Helpful having Reg Kemper there.
- New members from the Wellington Conservation Board and DOC.

- The GAC's recreational hunter survey results are finalised (n=112) and will feed into priority setting.
- Plans for a DOC-funded pilot vegetation and ungulate faecal pellet monitoring programme are advancing.

DOC Easements

- Meeting between DOC (Jeremy Severinsen), the Walking Access commission 9Geoff Holgate) and GAC (Geoff Kerr) agreed to work towards integrating DOC's access information into the WAC's online Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS). DOC and WAC are working to trial this process in the eastern Central South Island.