

MINUTES OF THE GAME ANIMAL COUNCIL MEETING 17 MAY 2018

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, Richard Burdon, Rachael Dean, Stephen Hall, Alec McIver, Jenny Wotten (Executive Officer)

Also in attendance: Rod Treder (DOC), Brent Beaven (DOC)

Apologies: Minister Eugenie Sage, Lou Sanson, Mike Slater, Keith Briden.

1. **Welcome, Agenda, Health & Safety:** Don Hammond welcomed Councillors and visitors. Don Hammond provided a Health & Safety Induction for the building.
2. **Agenda:** a number of extra items were added to the agenda: discussion about OSPRI, export certificates, GAC funding, visiting hunters firearms, Conservation (Infringement System) Bill, update from Te Urewera Board and the submission process on firearms in schools (Minister of Education).

Motion 19/1: Moved Don Hammond/Garry Ottmann: that the agenda be confirmed.	CARRIED
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3. Activities since last meeting:

- a. **ZIP Work in Perth Valley** – Garry Ottmann & Geoff Kerr summarised their activities related to this project – see Attached Report by Geoff Kerr, page 10.

4. Minutes of previous meeting 19 February 2018: were taken as read.

Motion 19/2: Moved Geoff Kerr/Carol Watson: that the Minutes of the 19 February 2018 Meeting be accepted as a true and correct record of the meeting.	CARRIED
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5. Matters arising not on agenda:

- a. **Shot Show** - Councillors reiterated the benefits to the GAC of having a stand at the Shot Show. Thank you letters have been sent and we have asked the organisers to include the GAC in their communications for future shows.
- b. **Tahr Project** -An update on the Tahr Project was provided.
- c. **CWD** - Discussion about various articles and instances of CWD education material in circulation.
- d. **GAC website** - to be updated with message that the GAC does not recommend the use of lures.
- e. **OSPRI** - An update on the Kaimanawas, Kawekas and Molesworth TB Free operations was provided. The Central Kaweka aerial operation initially planned for Winter 2018 has now been postponed. GAC and key hunting groups including the CNIHC, LNIRDF and Kaweka Hunter Liaison Group, have met with OSPRI on several occasion to express their concerns about the lack of science, neighbouring landowner approvals, agreements, vision etc.

OSPRI have undertaken to come back to the group with a more comprehensive plan. A proposal to consolidate Central and Northern Kaweka operations and the surrounding private land will be summarized in the OSPRI National Consultation Document scheduled for release in August 2018. OSPRI have undertaken to minimise impact on land users and owners, complete further investigation into deer repellent applications for proposed operations for mitigating deer by-kill risk in the Kaweka area and consult further within the region.

Similarly, the May 2018 Molesworth aerial 1080 application for the Bush Gully and Tarndale blocks, has been postponed pending consultation and technical review. By delaying the operation OSPRI will have more time to explore other options which include the availability of a new cost

effective deer repellent. The GAC appreciates OSPRI's decision to postpone operations and will continue to work with them on measures that eradicate TB without significantly adversely affecting hunting resources.

- f. A proposal to develop a discussion paper for the Minister and for the general hunting population outlining the various negotiations the GAC has been involved in, situations where the GAC has reduced conflict and projects it is involved with was discussed.
- g. **Feral Range** - The feral range of tahr is a conversation worth having with the Department – what is the actual range? It was supposed to be a flexible range relating to where tahr are located but has become a rigid range enforced by DOC. The problem is that the tahr and sika don't stay within a defined range - this needs to be a subject for wider later discussion.
- h. **Department of Conservation easement** – the GAC is working with DOC and the NZ Walking Access Commission (WAC) to improve communication of access easement information to the public (e.g. restrictions on dogs, vehicles, carriage of firearms, or for annual periods of closure). The Statutory Processes Report covers the conversation with DOC around this. Rod Treder undertook to have a discussion within DOC to progress this further. Geoff Kerr has also caught up with the Walking Access Commission (who publishes the data gathered by DOC on their Walking Access Mapping System website) and will report on this at an upcoming meeting.
- i. **ZIP Update:** The GAC is working with ZIP, NZDA, DOC, Landcare Research, a local helicopter company and the Hunting Guides Association to implement a monitoring program to assess the effects of the ZIP pest control operation on tahr. There are now 21 tahr fitted with tracking collars. They will be checked for their location prior to the prefeed and poison drop to see if any have died. The results from this will be invaluable for better understanding how predator control can be carried out while minimising adverse effects on game animals, and should also inform what future work is required. Garry Ottmann said it was a good effort by the team to get it all done and thanked Landcare, DOC et al for their assistance. Don Hammond said he really appreciates the time everyone has put in and the cooperation shown by all parties working together for good hunting outcomes and good conservation outcomes. An article on the project is to be written for the NZ Hunter Magazine. Garry Ottmann to ask the publisher if the GAC can put a link to it on the GAC website **Action Garry 19/1**.
- j. **AATH** – the AATH COP prepared by GAC will be incorporated as part of new concession practice. It is anticipated that by the end of this calendar year, a deed of variation to AATH permits will be completed to implement the COP, as per previous advice from the Department.
- k. **GAC appointments** – Don Hammond noted the Minister will need to appoint new members to GAC. Geoff Kerr, Garry Ottmann, Alec McIver, Roger Duxfield and Carol Watson were appointed on 17 April 2014 and their term will expire on 30 November 2018. Rachael Dean, Stephen Hall and Richard Burdon were appointed on 5 June 2017 and their term will expire on 31 May 2020, similarly Don Hammond's term as Chair will expire on 31 May 2020. In accordance with the GAC Act 2013, the Minister must appoint no fewer than 9, and no more than 11, persons as members of the Council.
- l. **MSC 2 year agreement with NZ Police** - the NZ Police have signed a 2 year contract with MSC to deliver the practical component of training for new firearms licences for new applicants, managed by the NZ Police. The new practical element will be complemented by an initial theory test and delivered by a small team of regionally based paid instructors. There is some concern that this will make licences and training less affordable and accessible. The NZDA and Rural Women NZ are concerned that:

- a large number of volunteer trainers with significant hunting and shooting experience have been told their services are no longer required; and
- the reduction in firearms instructors will increase the travel time for people in rural areas, resulting in an inequity of access to services as well as ease of compliance.

There are also concerns about access to fast broadband and computers for firearms users in rural and remote communities. Not being able to access the systems could result in an increase in non-compliance in these areas. The GAC will keep a watching brief on this for now.

m. Firearms licence for visitors – In his Guides Association capacity, Roger Duxfield has been working with the NZ Police on this issue for the past year. There are several aspects to his discussions with the Police:

- The NZ Police Information Sheet produced for the NZ Professional Hunting Guides Association states that overseas customers are encouraged to apply for a NZ visitor firearms licence and firearm import permit via the NZ Police website at least one month prior to their travel to NZ. The GAC sought clarification from the Police who have advised: If a visitor arrives without a licence or permit they will be directed by the airport staff to the closest Arms Officer for an in-person application and the Arms Officer will decide if a licence is issued. In the event that the visitor arrives at an airport without a licence and in possession of firearms then the firearms will be held by Police until the visitor has been to see the local Arms Officer.
- Visiting hunters still have to bring NZ\$25 cash which is considered to be archaic in our cashless society.

Roger Duxfield will organise a meeting with the Police to discuss the main issues in more detail **Action 19/2**. Don Hammond thanked Roger Duxfield for his work in this area, noting we need sensible procedures and consistency of application for both locals and visitors. Rachael Dean undertook to circulate a one-page fact sheet on Owning a Firearm in NZ sent to all MPs by Sporting Shooters New Zealand in 2016. The document will be put on the GAC website with a link to the Police website **Action 19/3**.

- n. CPTPPA** - Don Hammond asked for an update on departmental advice regarding America's position on possibly re-entering CPTPPA negotiations. Previous advice from the MFAT indicated that a game trophy export levy could be established while remaining consistent with NZ's obligations under existing trade agreements however the levy funding source will be severely impacted should the United States become a party to the CPTPPA. Rod Treder advised there was no new official information.
- o. Parliamentary Hunt** - Garry Ottmann to talk to Todd McClay about the upcoming Parliamentary Hunt and a 'save the date' email. Garry Ottmann and Jenny Wotten to progress this further. The 2018 Annual Parliamentary Hunt is set to take place this year from 8 to 13 October 2018, during Parliament recess and the school holidays.
- p. Iwi engagement** – Alec McIver has recently been in communication with Tamati Kruger who has reiterated that Te Urewera Tuhoe want to further their relationship with the GAC and have asked for a meeting in the near future. They want to pursue a HOSI like management plan at Te Urewera and intend to open their own deer processing plant as a resource for their people. They advised they are still very much opposed to the use of 1080 though they have a good relationship with DOC and want to pursue alternatives to 1080.

6. Action items from Previous Meetings

- 13/10 DOC Easement Provisions: Rod Treder to progress within DOC.
- 17/11 NZPHA COP – The GAC agreed to endorse the Pig Hunters Code of Conduct.

Motion 19/3: Moved Geoff Kerr/Rachael Dean: That the GAC endorses the Pig Hunting Association's Code of Conduct, with a requirement to advise the GAC when it is modified.	CARRIED
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Garry Ottmann abstained from voting as he had some input into the development of the Code of Conduct through his membership of the NZ Pig Hunting Association. The GAC commended the NZPHA for its comprehensive, clear and concise resource for its members and for the way it supports the SPCA, MPI and the Animal Welfare Act's stance on currently acceptable hunting practices in NZ.

- c. 18/1 Roger Duxfield and Garry Ottmann to make notes in preparation for the Shot Show 2019
- d. 18/2 Thank you letters have been sent re the Shot Show
- e. 18/3 Geoff Kerr will write something for the GAC website about CWD
- f. 18/4 Geoff Kerr to follow up interpretation as to whether a non-assembled firearm is considered a firearm for the purposes of carrying it over an easement.
- g. 18/5 Brent Beaven invited to make a presentation to GAC at this meeting.
- h. 18/6 Don Hammond has not had an opportunity to catch up with the NZCA yet about the National Parks General Policy Review (including, potentially, the future of Molesworth). There is now a new Chair of the NZCA, who Don Hammond will seek a meeting with. It was also noted that nominations for Conservation Boards are now being called for.
- i. 18/7 Carol Watson liaising with her contact at DOC re current hunting permit system
- j. 18/8 Stephen Hall to coordinate a scoping report or similar with timelines around alternative funding options.

7. Correspondence and Feedback: There was discussion about the OIA and agreement that if the GAC received another OIA that was as time consuming as the recent one then we would be charging for the time involved. Don Hammond raised the issue with the Ombudsman as some of the information requested was already in the public domain (GAC Minutes). Part of the rationale for sending the requested Minutes was to show open and transparent process. The GAC acknowledges it needs to engage with WARO operators more but it hasn't had the resources to-date.

Motion 19/4: Moved Roger Duxfield/Stephen Hall: That inward correspondence be accepted and outward correspondence be approved.	CARRIED
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8. Financial Report – May 2018

- a. The Finance & Administration Committee's Report and GAC financial accounts were presented. Discussion included:
 - the assumptions that underpin the budget and recommended we code costs to the front-line activity.
 - the GAC's draft cash forecast which shows there will be a need for additional funding in the near future and recommended the GAC request a release of funding from DOC, following a review of the final cashflow forecast.
 - Rod Treder advised the request will need to be specific about the period it covers, what work will be undertaken and recommended the GAC invoice DOC on a thirdly basis **Action 19/4**. As the funding agency for the GAC, DOC release funds with reference to the work program and actual/projected cash flow statement provided and maintained by Council and on receipt on an invoice from Council.
 - a recommendation that the GAC put out a Request for Quote: Provision of accounting services for the GAC, for accounting services for the 2018/19 year and beyond **Action 19/5**.
 - A recommendation that the GAC switch to Xero, the cost of the new system and training on its use, be approved **Action 19/6**. Rachael Dean, Carol Watson and Jenny Wotten were tasked with investigating options for website development and email system.

- the Audit findings of the 2016 accounts, suggesting the GAC should have in place, several financial policies. Rachael has looked for existing policies from other organisations that can be adapted for the GAC's use.
 - Purchase of a new laptop for the Executive Officer was approved.
 - Status of agreements/commitments going forward, for provision of services by our accountant, auditor and website administrator and formalising & quantifying these types of arrangements.
 - Councillors providing invoices in a timely manner what activity their claims relate to and for any expenditure relating to 2017/18 year to be provided by 5 July 2018.
- b.** The work program for the next 12 months was discussed. Work on development of the Levy has largely been completed and a recommendation was made to the Minister in August 2017, but subsequently withdrawn. Further work to be completed includes:
- communications strategy
 - strategic relationships & liaison;
 - operational work plan (iwi, HOSI, WARO, OSPRI pest control, hunter access, tahr, statutory process, research);
 - funding options;
 - hunter safety & education; and
 - employing staff or contractors.
- c.** Employment of a fixed term contractor to do operational type work will allow the Councillors to focus on governance. The draft operational plan will align to the Strategic Plan categories and broken down to projects and then prioritised. A Conference Call will be held to determine which Councillor will take responsibility for this, prioritise tasks, discuss KPIs etc. Engagement of a contractor from about 1 July **Action 19/7**. It is hoped that by late August we will have developed a draft communications strategy to be discussed at the GAC Meeting in Wellington **Action 19/8**.

Balance of Accounts at 30 April 2018	\$	
Online Call Account	40,943.92	
Business Edge Account	7,715.40	
Credit Card Account	-53.52	
Cash on hand		\$48,605.80
Expected outgoings from May to June 2018	\$31,138.50	
Estimated cash remaining as at 30 June 2018		\$17,467.30

Motion 19/4: Moved Rachael Dean/Richard Burdon: That the financial report be accepted and that payments made be approved.	CARRIED
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Motion 19/5: Moved Stephen/Alec McIver: that the Council commits to expenditure for engaging services to support the Councils operational activities subject to approval of a work plan and a letter of expectation.	CARRIED
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Motion 19/6: Moved Rachael Dean/Richard Burdon: that the GAC put out a Request for Quote: Provision of accounting services for the GAC, to a number of accountants, including the existing supplier, for accounting services for the 2018/19 year and beyond and that the GAC moves to the Xero accounting system from 1 July 2018.	CARRIED
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- 8. Predator Free 2050:** Brent Beaven presented to the Council about Predator Free 2050 and its ambitious aim to rid NZ of its most damaging predators (possums, rats & stoats). The work focuses on landscapes, communities, science, research, new techniques and a coordinated team effort across

communities, iwi, and the public and private sectors. There are a few different elements to Predator Free NZ: Predator Free NZ Trust; Predator Free 2050 and the government and community agencies that deliver the program.

New funding of \$20 million allocated in 2016/17 across 4 years, in addition to the \$70 million the government already spends on managing rats, stoats & possums, will allow the program to develop and progress. Some of the new funding will also go towards protecting bird species from an increase in predators caused by heavy seeding (or masting) of beech forests. Communities can also apply for funding under the Kiwibank Predator Free Community Programme which provides subsidies for traps, tunnels and building materials.

DOC delivers Predator Free 2050 and coordinates the different agencies involved. Predator Free 2050 Ltd is a company set up by the government to invest in large landscape scale projects and breakthrough research. Other significant players include National Science Challenge Biological Heritage, Local Government, Ministry for Primary Industries, OSPRI, NEXT Foundation and many NGOs. It is expected the initiative will also attract additional contributions from business, local government and philanthropists.

There is a clear movement towards development of a pathway to consistent management plans with a final Strategic Plan expected around September 2018 following a period of community engagement. Brent Beaven said he is keen to engage with the GAC while the document is still in the design stage to get our feedback. Brent took questions following his presentation.

Brent said he appreciated the opportunity to engage with the GAC and that it has a good perspective on pest management. Don Hammond replied that the GAC is happy to support and work with agencies to ensure the message gets out to recreational and commercial hunters and welcomes the opportunity to be involved further. Garry Ottmann offered to pass on contacts and Brent welcomed the offer to help make the right connections.

- 8. DOC Update:** Rod Treder provided a DOC update which is attached to these Minutes. Geoff Kerr provided an update on the negotiations around the Wilberforce 1080 operation scheduled for August 2018. Don Hammond asked Rod Treder to convey Council's appreciation to departmental staff working on the negotiations and acknowledged the large amount of volunteer hours Geoff Kerr had put into it so far.

Rod Treder was asked if there was anything the GAC could do to help DOC to grow funding for conservation and show how HOSI can improve conservation outcomes and suggested working with DOC staff on a one-page document pointing to objectives of HOSI rather than using the tools of the WAC Act. NZ hunters are beginning to wonder when the first HOSI is going to be approved and pointed to its prominence in the GAC Act. Rod Treder advised there has been no advancement on HOSI thus far.

9. Sub Committee Working Group reports: all reports were taken as read

- a. **Statutory Processes** –See attached report from Geoff Kerr providing an update on:
- Conservation Management Strategies
 - National Park Management Plans
 - Molesworth Station
 - DOC easements
 - DOC Aerial 1080 mitigation
 - Lake Sumner RHA
 - Herds of Special Interest

- DOC Fire Policy
- ZIP trial, Perth River, South Westland
- Ruahine Deer Management Working Group

Geoff Kerr spoke to his report. He acknowledged that the proposal for WARO access to Lake Sumner RHA was off the agenda for now, pending further research.

There is some concern about DOC's new policy which restricts the use of cooking and warming fires within one hour's walk of vehicle access and specifying where fires can be lit. This new policy has potential to significantly affect traditional hunting behaviour. Rod Treder will work with Geoff to clarify the policy and its implications, and if necessary, ensure it is well publicised. The policy is also flawed in that one hour is not a measurable quantity as different people/groups move at different speeds.

There was a discussion about the tahr plan. Geoff Kerr advised he has an article coming out soon in the NZ Hunting & Wildlife magazine and this issue is covered in the article. The size of the current feral population is estimated by some observers to be between 30,000 to 35,000 which is well in excess of the maximum stated in the Himalayan Thar Control Plan, of about 10,000. DOC is working with the GAC, NZDA, the Tahr Liaison Group & commercial operators to achieve a reduction in numbers. From a GAC perspective it would be better if these culling operations targeted the nannies not the bulls. Andy Roberts, DOC Operations Manager, Eastern South Island, has been tasked with managing the operation. It is hoped that recruitment of new DOC staff will mean better liaison with hunting groups and GAC & better communications to discuss issues.

- b. Education, Safety & Training** - Carol Watson spoke about her discussions with Fiona Hall, Technical Advisor Recreation and Tourism DOC. Garry Ottmann would like us to identify and formalise our key relationship advisors within DOC. Rod Treder will send a list of key contacts to the GAC. It was also suggested we invite both someone from DOC to our next GAC meeting to talk about this issue **Action 19/9 Jenny/Carol**.
- c. Bowhunters code of ethics** – prior to the meeting, Carol Watson circulated a Bowhunters Code of Ethics for consideration of endorsement. After discussion it was suggested the Bowhunters have another look at the wording at number 3 to see if it needs to be updated, number 4 in light of DOC's new policy on the use of fires and look at the Hunting Guides wording on bowhunting – Roger Duxfield to send this document to Carol. Carol Watson had also circulated a separate document "NZBS Rules of Fair Chase – Big Game Animals". It was noted that these relate specifically to the NZBS rules regarding claiming animals for recognition within the society and are not all relevant to the wider bowhunting community. The Code was originally written in 1955 and little has changed since. Matt Willis from the NZBS was present at a meeting regarding the development of the Animal Welfare Act where each organisation was encouraged to look at their Code and ensure it complied with the overarching principles of animal welfare and acceptable hunting practice. *(This is an example of an NZBS rule relating to claiming animals – not relevant to the wider community.)* Don Hammond congratulated the Bowhunters on their initiative to progress the development of an updated Code of Ethics.

11. General Business:

- a. Hunting NGO memo** - Stephen Hall recirculated an email he had previously sent regarding additional income scoping. Don Hammond recapped the level of interest in the GAC from people who have contacted him with ideas such as a Give a Little Page, GAC Membership etc. Whoever the GAC recruits to do the other operational work will also have a brief to develop funding options.
- b. Don Hammond meeting with Minister** – Don Hammond referred to his meeting with the Minister, Mervyn English and Geoff Woodhouse. The discussion was wide ranging covering RHAs, GAC

funding, training & education, recreational and commercial sector hunting, the upcoming appointment of new Councillors, tahr numbers and the protection of indigenous biodiversity. It is hoped the Minister will be able to attend a meeting of the Game Animal Council in the near future.

- c. **Firearms in schools** – The GAC made a submission to the Ministry of Education, NZ School Trustees Association Sector Reference Group regarding Consultation on Draft Guidelines for Schools Developing a Firearms Policy. We have been advised that submissions were received from 86 individuals and 22 organisations. Student wellbeing (emotional and physical), lead poisoning and the need for engagement with parents/whanau community were some of the issues raised by submitters. Rachael Dean attended the submissions hearing and advised it was well attended by key organisations. Each BOT will make its own decision after consulting the final guidelines.
 - d. **Conservation (Infringement System) Bill** – Garry Ottmann has done some preparatory work on wording proposed to be sent from GAC as a submission to the Environment Select Committee deliberating on the Conservation (Infringement System) Bill. The GAC’s main interest in the Bill is ensuring consistency with legislation applying to offences and so a recommendation will be made that the Conservation (infringement system) Bill should accordingly amend the Game Animal Council Act in a similar manner to other legislation being amended **Action 19/10**.
 - e. **Export Certificates** – Roger Duxfield spoke to his paper on Export Certificates. He will continue liaising with DOC about their decision to phase out the Certificates of Export service in July 2018 and how the process can best be managed to ensure a smooth transition. Up to now, DOC has issued Certificates of Export for a range of non-CITES species including deer, tahr and chamois that have been legally hunted and farmed in NZ to provide assurance to border authorities in importing countries that products from these animals have been exported legally.
- It is intended to replace these Certificates with a generic signed letter listing the species approved for export. Exporters will download the letter themselves from the DOC website. It is concerning that this is happening at the peak of the trophy export season and has already caused confusion and delays with shipments being held up pending documentation. Rod Treder undertook to come back to the GAC with more information **Action 19/11 Rod Treder**.
- f. **Deer Repellent** - Don Hammond sought an update from Rod Treder concerning companies that are developing deer repellent and 1080 alternatives. Rod Treder will get back to Don Hammond by email **Action 19/12 Rod Treder**.
 - g. **WARO Review** – Since the last GAC Meeting we have had advice from Mike Slater that he doesn’t see the need for an extensive WARO Review and that “many aspects of the current WARO permits are working well”. The Director of Planning, Permissions and Land has been tasked with leading a land assessment and review of the permit conditions. We have since received a letter from Marie Long advising that the Department has begun the National WARO Permit review process and expect to have a new National Permit ready to offer WARO operators by 30 September 2018. She has further advised that, as the current National WARO Permits expire on 30 June 2018 the Department intends to issue an interim authorisation to current permit holders to allow for continuity of operations on the same terms and conditions as the current permit.
 - h. **Official Information Act Request** – Don Hammond thanked Jenny Wotten for the time and effort she put into compiling a comprehensive response.

12. Next Meeting planning: Thursday 23 August in Wellington. Then either the Monday following Sika Show ie 1 October 2018 or 29 October 2018. The meeting closed at 4.30pm.

NZ Game Animal Council

COUNCIL PAPER



DATE:	13 May 2018	FROM:	Geoff Kerr
TOPIC	Activity update		
PURPOSE	Information & Discussion		
RECOMMENDATION	Accept		

Conservation Management Strategies.

- The Wellington CMS went to the April 2018 NZCA meeting for approval.
- Notification of the East Coast/Hawkes Bay CMS is expected in June 2018.

National Park management plans.

- Aoraki/Mt Cook & Westland/Tai Poutini: Draft plans expected in mid-2018.
- Fiordland & Mt Aspiring: Due to commence.
- The NZ Conservation Authority earlier notified its intent to review the General Policy National Parks. The Minister has cancelled this review.

Molesworth Station

- The May 2017 OSPRI operation is cancelled for one year with the hope that new, cheaper deer repellent will be available for this operation in May 2019.
- DOC is consulting on the future management of Molesworth Station.
 - NZDA is well informed and is engaging in this.

Department of Conservation easements:

- This project, initiated by the GAC, is a collaboration between DOC and the Walking Access Commission to trial a case study incorporating Central South Island easements in the Walking Access Commission's WAMS mapping system.
- I received feedback from Geoff Holgate (WAC) in March reporting that the WAC GIS people agree that the concept is feasible. WAC is liaising with DOC about how to operationalise real time delivery of DOC information into the WAMS system.

Department of Conservation Aerial 1080 mitigation

- The focus of DOC/NZDA/GAC liaison has been the Wilberforce/Mathias operation.
- A private contractor is undertaking ground control in the upper Wilberforce. If RTCs are low enough after ground control there will be no 1080 in the Upper Wilberforce in 2018.
- Deer repellent will be applied to the rest of the operational area.
- There will not be a beech mast in 2018, but a massive mast is predicted for 2019, so expect a significant increase in predator control operations in 2019/2020.
- On 12th May the Minister announced budget provisions for an additional \$84m over four years for predator control.

Lake Sumner RHA

- WARO operators are seeking DOC North Canterbury approval to undertake WARO operations in the Lake Sumner Recreational Hunting Area.
- The basis is that deer numbers are too high.
- DOC is considering the proposal and assessing how they can confirm deer numbers.
- While Section 27 of the Wild Animal Control Act 1977 empowers the Director-General to approve WARO within RHAs, doing so would create an important precedent.
- WAC Act Section 28, which includes provisions for notification and submissions on wild animal control plans in RHAs is relevant. There are, to my understanding, no wild animal control plans, having been subsumed into relevant CMSs. Consequently, notification and submission requirements are unclear.
- I have informed DOC head office via Rod Treder.

Herds of Special Interest

- The proposed procedures have been with DOC since February 2018.
- At the February 2018 GAC meeting Ben Reddix reported that the Department was undertaking final checks and receiving drafting advice. On completion the GAC will receive:
 - Draft advice guide (not in a published format);
 - Draft template documents;
 - Draft process documents;
 - And a list of next steps required by both DOC and GAC before the process becomes operational.
- The GAC awaits the Department's feedback.

DOC fire policy

- New policy [National Policy for Fire Control Operations (30/08/2017)], *inter alia*, restricting cooking and warming fires within one hour's walk of vehicle access and specifying where fires can be lit.
- This policy has potential to significantly affect much traditional hunting behaviour.
- It appears that PCL users are unaware of this policy, creating the risk of unknowing violations.
- Rod Treder is clarifying the policy and its implications and, if necessary, will arrange to publicise it amongst PCL users.

ZIP trial, Perth River, South Westland

- Zero Invasive Predators (ZIP) is funding a GAC-led trial to assess tahr mortality during ZIP's 2018 possum eradication trial in the Perth catchment. This is the operation that ZIP's Al Bradley talked about at the February 2018 GAC meeting.
- The GAC has received excellent support from ZIP, DOC, Lincoln University, and Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research.
- ZIP's pre-feeding and toxic bait application is scheduled to commence in May.
- Garry Ottmann and Geoff Kerr radio-collared 21 nanny and juvenile tahr on 25th April 2018.
- There is some potential impact of the tahr monitoring on recreational hunters. Garry Ottmann has been in contact with all potentially affected parties in affected ballot blocks.
- The tahr will be monitored via ZIP's Sky Ranger system before and after pre-feeding and toxic bait applications.
- The GAC will publicise tahr mortality trial results.

Ruahine Deer Management Working Group

- There was an extremely productive meeting in Masterton April 30th 2018.

- There had been a long gap since the previous meeting in September 2017. However, there was a notable increase in enthusiasm in the group and a determination for more rapid progress.
- Meeting frequency will be increased.
- The Department has committed significant resource for improved monitoring vegetation and deer.

DOC Report – GAC Meeting – 17 May 2018

Herds of Special Interest

- Well-advanced drafts of three sets of documents completed.
- Status of each draft is;
 - Advice Guide to Proposers – v3 20/02/18
 - Process Steps for HOSI – v10 05/02/18 (including comments from Geoff Kerr and Nigel Scott)
 - Templates for the 4 stages (Idea, Full Proposal, Management Plan, Consultation) – v3 12/02/18
- All DOC work is on-hold pending clarification of Minister’s attitude to HOSI and likelihood of her designating any herds. We anticipate that will be in the form of a Ministerial letter of expectations to GAC.

AATH Code of Practice (COP)

- Decision made to not issue a variation of the AATH 2014 permit for concessionaires to sign and return (no value at this late stage – season finishing in Aug and permits expiring in Feb 2019)
- Focus is now on including the revised COP and other changes (acknowledging possibility of HOSI designations, and rewording around activity fee)

WARO permitting 2018

- Existing national permit extended to 30 September 2018
- Process for issuing the 2018 permit is being managed by DOC Permissions team, as a standard regulatory process (not a publicly notified concession process);
- Land assessments are currently being undertaken by DOC to inform the land schedule/scope of the 2018 national permit
- Targeted feedback/consultation will be undertaken during June on the proposed (draft) land schedule to ensure that all relevant matters have been considered when preparing it
- Permit conditions are being reviewed for the 2018 permit.
- The permit will not include any gazetted herds of special interest

See attached “WARO Key Fact Sheet” May 2011 and information for applicants on:

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/national-wild-animal-recovery-operations/>

Predator Free 2050 programme update

- The programme has four components – landscape, communities, science and governance. Landscape scale initiatives (e.g. 1080 operations) and science, are most relevant to hunting.
- PF2050 Limited’s prospective joint investments in landscape scale projects are expected to cover some large areas of land of high conservation value.
- Minister’s pre-budget announcement is on <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/backing-nature-%E2%80%93-funding-future-native-species>

ZIP '1080 to Zero' prescription trials

Perth Valley

ZIP has just published the latest update on the Perth project on the ZIP website:
<http://zip.org.nz/updates/2018/5/update-on-perth-valley-project-may-2018>

Egmont National Park

Consideration is being given to a further trial of the prescription at Kaitaki - considered the most readily defensible location within the Egmont National Park. The trial would be part of an expected 1080 operation in the park and wider Taranaki area in 2019.

Battle for our Birds Update

DOC 1080 operations in 2018

Little change from what was reported to the Council in Feb 2018.

There are 6 aerial 1080 operations scheduled to run in the coming winter; Eyre Mountains, Hope Cascade, ZIP research in South Westland, Wilberforce, Moki Makino and Russell Forest.

We are very close to starting bait application at Eyre and ZIP, but no flying has been possible to date.

DOC considers that it is very close to concluding an agreement with GAC and NZDA regarding Wilberforce – acknowledged as a very significant site for hunters.

Planning for future predator control

DOC has done some preliminary work on the likelihood of a 2019 beech seedfall. Early indications are that rodent and stoat plagues are likely in all beech forests in NZ from mid-2019.

See the report "Beech seedfall predictions for 2019" attached.

DOC will continue to liaise with GAC and NZDA to seek their advice on how to mitigate the effects of this predator control work on hunters' interests. We will have a draft work programme available in July for GAC and NZDA input.

Rod Treder et al

DOC May 2018

NZ Game Animal Council

COUNCIL PAPER



DATE:	17/5/18	FROM:	Roger Duxfield
TOPIC	Export Certificates		
PURPOSE	Questioning DoC on unannounced policy change		
RECOMMENDATION	Discuss		

In the unlikely event of there being changes to “Certificate of Export” documents for exports of Hunting Trophies from New Zealand, what processes would be undertaken by DOC to engage with GAC or stakeholders involved in the export of Hunting Trophies from New Zealand?

What Salutory obligations do DOC have to research implications at foreign boarders of changes made to processes here or documents issued? Do they discuss with MFAT, MPI or anyone to see what Overseas Market Access Requirements are applicable?

If an exporter had trouble with a Foreign Border control agency regarding a document issued by DOC. What mechanisms do DOC have to engage with that agency? I.E. USDA (Drug & food Administration) – USF&W (US Fish & Wildlife) – Canadian Food Inspections Administration(CFIA). AQIS (Australian equivalent of MPI).

All the above agencies are CITES Administration Agencies for their country as is DOC.

DOC are now the “**Competent Government Management Authority**” that USF&W accept as issuing these forms to confirm these species are not listed in the Convention.

The real question is when will DOC involves a discussion of relinquishing this status and hand over to GAC and who will negotiate those changes with each Government agency overseas?

DOC want to drop the Certificate of Export immediately.

The Environmental Defence Society publication last year “Last Line of Defence” was an independent study of all (8) of our Environmental protection agencies (ECAN, Fish & Game, DOC and 5 others).

This is a summary of the questions being asked by various operators who are experiencing or have experienced delays at the US border with trophies since the 7th May change in documentation.