

MINUTES OF THE GAME ANIMAL COUNCIL MEETING 20 MAY 2019

The Thorndon Hotel, 24 Hawkestone Street, Thorndon, Wellington

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

Also in attendance: Rod Treder (DOC), Ben Reddiex (DOC), Caroline Wahid, Nick Hancox, Garry Ottmann (contractor), Hayden Cox

Apologies: Hon Eugenie Sage, Minister of Conservation

1. **Welcome, Agenda, Health & Safety:** Don Hammond welcomed councillors and visitors and provided a health & safety briefing.
2. **Agenda:** Fallow deer culling (Auckland) and attendance at CIC meeting in Namibia added to agenda. Apologies from Roger Duxfield who has to leave the meeting at 2pm.

Motion 23/1: Moved Roger Duxfield/Geoff Kerr: that the agenda be confirmed.	CARRIED
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3. **Minutes of previous meeting 25 February 2019** were taken as read with minor alterations.

Motion 23/2: Moved Roger Duxfield/Alec Mclver: that the Minutes of the 25 February 2019 Meeting be accepted as a true and correct record of the meeting.	CARRIED
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4. Matters arising – Minutes 25 February 2019:

- a. **Parliamentary Hunt** – likely to take around 7 to 11 October 2019. Details to be confirmed. Councillors encouraged to attend.
- b. **Hunting Permit system, Action 18/7** – the GAC has continued gaining information about the nationality of hunters through the permit system, but privacy issues are preventing progress. The NZPHGA is also doing some work around this and seeking to capture information as part of the permit information. This is related to the project Mark Beardsley is working on (see DOC report). Roger Duxfield, Richard Burdon and Rod Treder to discuss and resolve issues.
- c. **Website** – the contractor reported on progress of new website which is expected to be finalised in a couple of weeks – **Action item 23/1** Councillors to send email addresses for contacts in their networks to Garry Ottmann. An advanced option on the website could be the ability for hunters to make a donation. Contractor to look into this and report back to Council **Action item 23/2**.
- d. **Bowhunters** – the GAC has continued to liaise with the Bowhunting Society on the Code of Ethics and Rules of Fair Chase. Their AGM will be held in June after which the amended document will be forwarded to the GAC.

Motion 23/3 Moved Rachael Dean/Don Hammond that the Council go into committee.	CARRIED
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Motion 23/4 Moved Rachael Dean/Alec Mclver that the Council go out of committee.	CARRIED
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5. Management Report:

- a. **Communications** - The Council's communications have improved significantly with the new contractor on board. Councillors were unanimously in favour of supporting the hunting sector in its conservation projects through the expertise of our communications contractor.
- b. **2019/2020 Workplan and Budget** –The strategic plan has been updated with new dates. The GAC will also address any requirements to the Minister's letter of expectation. Development of a

hunter training program module is a priority along with engagement with iwi and progressing sika, wapiti and Te Urewera deer as herds of particular interest.

The GAC will re-examine the need for an office in Rotorua.

The Council will roll over the current work plan with the deletion of completed projects and the addition of training and education projects as resources permit. The contractors will reassess the need for the Rotorua office

The Council agreed there was a need to progress a replacement for the current head contractor.

Action item 23/3 Stephen Hall & Garry Ottmann to prepare a draft position description and councillors will socialise the concept to see if people are interested.

Motion 23/5: Moved Don Hammond/Roger Duxfield: that the Council engage an 'understudy' to the management team leader, with a view to becoming Council's preferred service provider. CARRIED

Motion 23/6: Moved Don Hammond/Roger Duxfield: that the Council readopts the current Strategic Plan pushed forward to 2019-2024. CARRIED

- 6. DOC's Biodiversity Strategy:** Caroline Wahid, DOC, spoke about the Department's proposed new Biodiversity Strategy and how the GAC could be involved. Lillian Fougere from DOC is working on the National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity.

The Biodiversity Collaborative Group delivered a draft National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPSIB) and recommendations for complementary measures to Minister Mahuta on 1 October 2018 <https://www.biodiversitynz.org/>.

Caroline Wahid will be in touch with the GAC again when the discussion document is released. Stephen Hall will liaise with Caroline on this **Action item 23/4** and Councillors will attend regional consultation meetings, where possible.

- 7. Tahr Control Update** – Ben Reddiex provided a verbal update on the 2018-2019 tahr control operational plan. The Council expressed a desire for the Department to provide information and maps on their website so that hunters could plan their hunting trips and not end up in an area that had already been heavily culled by DOC and find only carcasses.

Ben Reddiex has appreciated the input and leadership of Geoff Kerr and acknowledged the Council for co-hosting the recent Tahr Science Workshop at Lincoln University.

The GAC questioned suitability of data for comparisons between DOC and contractors in the blocks chosen for tender to private contractors.

DOC is developing an app for recording recreational kills.

- 8. Nick Hancox OSPRI** – Nick Hancox presented a report on current operations and trials of the new deer repellent. Geoff Kerr will liaise with Nick Hancox to set up a regular interface. **Action item 23/5.**
- 9. DOC Update** – see attached Report. The incorporation of the AATH Code of Practice into new permits and concessions continues to move slowly and with revised timelines. GAC queried the reference in the DOC report "supporting the prospective cross agency working group to develop a comprehensive hunter safety and education plan" and asked Rod Treder to follow up with Mark Beardsley.

Rod Treder was asked to confirm the role of Neil Bolton with regard to oversight of deer management nationally and to seek his early engagement with the GAC so we can help.

Access easement – Rod Treder has been liaising with relevant staff on this and will get further information to the GAC as it becomes available. This is linked to the Minister’s recent announcements on changes to tenure review.

GAC appointments – Rod Treder advised that the Appointments Committee meets on 29 May with letters expected to go to individuals at the end of May with two weeks to respond. New council appointments are anticipated mid-June.

10. Financial Matters/Budget:

- a. Several finance and budget streamlining and simplifications were discussed. The management team will provide a monthly report on achievements and budget. **Action item 23/6** Garry Ottmann to prepare a one-page outline by the end of next week and include recommendations as to what reports the GAC accountant and the what the GAC itself will be required to prepare for future meetings.

Motion 23/7: Moved Stephen Hall/Richard Burdon that Rachael Dean resumes the position as Chair of the Finance and Admin Subcommittee. CARRIED

- b. A simplified cashflow forecast was circulated, and has been provided to DOC.

Motion 23/8: Moved Stephen Hall/Richard Burdon that financial reports be accepted and approved. CARRIED

- c. A draft financial delegations paper was circulated for discussion and adoption. Amendments to be made as agreed and recirculated.

Motion 23/9: Moved Rachael Dean/Stephen Hall that, subject to those amendments being made, the financial policy document and financial delegations are approved and adopted. CARRIED

Motion 23/10: Moved Stephen Hall/Geoff Kerr that Racheal Dean be re added as a signatory to the Council’s bank account. CARRIED

Stephen Hall to provide a letter to Kiwibank approving Rachael Dean’s signatory to the account.

11. Chairman’s Update

- a. Don Hammond reported on; the new firearms legislation, the GAC continuing to push for specific rules for semis, frustration around not being able to apply for exemptions, the good rapport that exists around BfoB, the wide reach of the new GAC social media, the Council’s disappointment over delayed new Councillor appointments, GAC funding, the role of Deputy Chair, how the GAC can bring new expertise and the younger generation onto the council and management team.
- b. Don Hammond reported on the CIC Conference in Namibia, which he attended as the guest of CIC. Membership of CIC is something the Council may consider in the future.

Motion 23/11: Moved Alec McIver/Rachael Dean that Stephen Hall be appointed as Deputy Chair when Geoff Kerr leaves the Council. CARRIED

- c. Discussion: it was agreed that consideration of the implications a possible future ban of lead bullets, should be on the GAC agenda. **Action item 23/7.**

12.Tahr Update – See Geoff Kerr’s report.

13.Battle for our Birds – The DDG Operations has signed off the deer repellent plan developed by GAC, NZDA and DOC.

14.Tuhoe & Te Urewera –The GAC approved Alec McIver as its representative for future engagement with Tuhoe and Te Urewera, and to help them develop management plans. Alec McIver will provide the Council with a written outline of what is envisaged in this work and how it will operate (as per previous Action item 22/1).

15.Fallow deer – discussion about the Auckland Council’s Pest Management Plan. **Action item 23/8**
Geoff Kerr will assess the Auckland City Council Pest Management Plan to identify whether there are any grounds for action.

16.Correspondence - Correspondence was presented and discussed.

<p>Motion 23/12: Moved Geoff Kerr/Don Hammond: That inward correspondence be accepted, and outward correspondence be approved.</p>	<p>CARRIED</p>
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17.General Business - nil

Next meeting will be on 28 August 2019 (location TBA but may be Christchurch).

Meeting closed 4.30pm.

DOC Report – GAC Meeting, 20 May 2019

Tahr programme

Ben Reddiex (as DOC programme lead of the Tahr Control) has initiated a range of work covering the details of the 2019 programme and the process for developing a longer-term collaborative plan for tahr control.

Ben will be available to provide an update at the Council meeting.

WARO permitting 2019

DOC is currently summarising submissions from both the first and second consultation stage.

Those who provided comment during the second June/July 2018 consultation had until 15 February 2019 to mainly comment on the revised land recommendations. Feedback was also sought on a proposal to move South Island WARO Roar closure dates for 'Permitted' (green) areas a week later, to better align with the actual Roar.

No firm date is targeted for making final decisions on the 2019 national WARO permits -but hopefully it is in the near future.

WARO Operators may continue operating under their previous permits indefinitely while this decision-making process is continuing.

AATH code and permits

Since the GAC's November meeting, some work has been done on drafting proposed new AATH permit conditions in line with proposed new WARO permit conditions to ensure these are consistent. A revised timeline is to have these ready for consideration by the decision maker in late June.

Further work has also been done on the stakeholder engagement and communication plan for the permitting process.

Predator Free 2050 and Tiakina Nga Manu (Battle for our Birds)

DOC's work on an overall Predator Free 2050 Strategy is nearing completion and should be available in October. This process has involved extensive engagement with the public, other agencies and iwi.

The 'Tools to Market' project was set up to fund the production of new tools and technologies from the private sector, to achieve the PF2050 goal.

The project is funding the development of aerial PAPP (a carnivore specific toxin). An encapsulated PAPP formulation has been developed that will be effective on stoats, ferrets and wild cats. It is ready for field trials in bait stations. Successful development would open up the possibility of a bait that targets stoats, ferrets and feral cats at the landscape scale and also enable eradication of feral cats from the sub-Antarctic Auckland Island. The product should be available for use in bait stations during 2020.

Artificial long-life rat lures have been developed. The lure offers significant advantages over perishable food-based lures that degrade over time, reducing their attractiveness and therefore requiring more frequent replenishment. The long-life lure provides greater in-field longevity without deterioration in lure performance, as well as other benefits such as being cost-effective and easy to handle and store. The lure is currently being commercialised and should be available for sale by early 2020.

Zero Invasive Predators (ZIP) is working with DOC to scale up the “1080 to Zero” research project. This follows the successful conclusion of smaller-scale trials in South Westland and Taranaki. The project is developing a modified 1080 methodology to completely remove predators. If successful, this research opens the door for predator eradication using existing tools at mainland sites. ZIP will treat a 20,000ha area in South Westland.

The Tiakina Nga Manu programme is due to start in the next week (weather dependant) with operations scheduled for Kahurangi, Arawhata, Arthurs Pass, Wet Jacket (FNP), Able Tasman and Maud Island (mouse eradication). There are another 26 operations scheduled later in the year. There are also a few non-DOC operations on PCL pending – the Whataroa / Perth Valley ZIP trial and within the Taranaki Mouna project.

DOC’s beech mast computer model prediction results have just become available – no mast predicted for 2020. The focus in 2020 will shift to areas that urgently need predator control that are not part of the beech mast response programme. These sites have yet to be finalised.

The use of deer repellent at key sites has been approved. Deer repellent will be used at Whirinaki, Kahurangi, Dart / Caples, Blue Mts. and Arthurs Pass (approximately 45,000ha total).

Deer repellent developments

It was reported at the last meeting that both 1080 bait manufacturers (PCR in Christchurch and Orillion in Whanganui) are continuing to work with the Ministry of Primary Industries to obtain registration of their new deer repellent 1080 baits.

Most recent advice from Orillion is that they have provided MPI with all the necessary information for final registration. While hoping for a positive response, nothing (including timing) is guaranteed.

We understand that PCR are doing some additional trials prior to seeking final registration.

Hunter safety, education, and licences

Mark Beardsley (Service Designer) in DOC’s Heritage and Visitors Unit is currently working on a plan for 2019-20, and is expecting it to include:

- Resolving all the bowhunting communications inconsistencies, and installing the various updates around messaging, permits, DOC website etc
- Improving DOC’s online hunting permit system - ensuring it is sustainable, maintained, and that updates for the online app are completed.
- Unscheduled maintenance of the online hunting permit is being undertaken from the 11th to 17th May 2019. Hunters will still be able to apply online through the hunting@doc.govt.nz email address.
- Improving the information on the DOC website - to remove inconsistencies across regions, lift to one agreed standard, high quality, user friendly interface with hunters.
- Supporting the prospective cross agency working group to develop a comprehensive hunter safety and education plan – e.g. collaboration with the Game Animal Council.

Mark is seeking a key contact(s) in the Council to support the above work program

Kaweka Forest Park deer management

No further update on the DOC work to develop a collaborative approach to deer management in the Kaweka forest.

Access easement Information in WAMS

Rod advised separately that the current pathway for having the access easement information displayed on WAMS, is for DOC to periodically refresh the relevant layer of information from DOC's Geospatial information system, NaPALIS.

The more fundamental matter is that neither DOC nor LINZ databases have sufficient information in digital form to adequately update WAMS.

There is an interagency project that will eventually have the LINZ database (Landonline) at the repository and source of all such data for DOC, WAMS and the public. The project has been given additional impetus recently as a result of a Ministerial request to speed up the process of having all covenant data related to the McKenzie Basin (Dryland Park) recorded in Landonline.

Rather than relying on DOC's Geospatial Team to improve and update the data within NaPALIS and feed that to WAMS, Landonline will eventually be the more complete data source for WAMS.

DOC's resources are being directed at assisting LINZ with the priorities set by its Minister.

Game Animal Council nominations

The Minister of Conservation currently has DOC's recommendations to the Council.

Rod can provide a verbal update at the meeting.

Natalie Bowie, Rod Treder et al

DOC May 2019