

MINUTES OF THE GAME ANIMAL COUNCIL MEETING 4 NOVEMBER 2019

CONSERVATION HOUSE, 18-32 MANNERS STREET WELLINGTON

Present: Don Hammond (Chair), Carol Watson, Richard Burdon, Roger Duxfield, Rachael Dean, Stephen Hall, Steve McFall, Tim Gale, Sharon Salmons, Jenny Wotten (Executive Officer)

In attendance: Hon Eugenie Sage, Minister of Conservation, Mervyn English (DOC), Garry Ottmann, Hayden Cox (contractors) Rod Treder (DOC), Ben Reddix (DOC), Matthew Hall (OSPRI), Sarah Owen (from Minister's Office).

Apologies: Steve McFall for lateness, Lou Sanson

- 1. Welcome, Agenda, Health & Safety:** Don Hammond welcomed Councillors and visitors. Don Hammond noted the Minister would join us at 10.00am. Mervyn English will arrive with Minister for discussion about appointment of a General Manager.
- 2. Agenda:** Roger Duxfield requested to add voluntary Certification of Game Estates Hunting Guides to the agenda. Discussion about funding as per email sent to Councillors.

Motion 25/1: Moved Don Hammond/Roger Duxfield: that the agenda be confirmed.	CARRIED
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- 3. Minutes of previous meeting 28 August 2019** were taken as read with minor alterations.

Motion 25/2: Moved Roger Duxfield/Richard Burdon: that the Minutes of the 28 August 2019 Meeting be accepted as a true and correct record of the meeting.	CARRIED
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4. Matters arising: Minutes 28 August 2019:

- Action 21/3 – Hunter Permit System – question raised about what progress has occurred since Mark Beardsley provided the update at the last GAC meeting. Rod Treder to follow up and provide information to Council.
- Action 20/3 – Roger Duxfield advised that the AATH and Guides Concession Document are pivotal to the Hunting Permits System review and development. The GAC requested that a DOC representative responsible for overseeing this project, attend the next GAC meeting and give an update. In the immediate future, the GAC wants to be involved in this review and Rod Treder was asked to convey that request to the responsible DOC staff member asking them to get in touch.
- Action 23/4 – Garry Ottmann provided feedback on the Biodiversity Workshop he attended on 29 August 2019. The GAC has now made a Submission on this issue.
- Action 23/5 – Matthew Hall attending this meeting as noted below.
- There will be another Firearms Community Advisory Forum meeting in December – Roger Duxfield will circulate once he received the invitation.

5. Action table:

- Action item 21/1 –Tahr research was one suggested possibility.
- Action 22/1 - Don Hammond and Alec McIver have been invited to attend a hui regarding the future management of Te Urewera. Don Hammond has been interviewed by a Tuhoe representative and he confirmed that the GAC is available to assist Ngai Tuhoe as required.
- Action 24/1 - Access Easements - issue is around the requirements for carriage of firearms under different access arrangements. To be raised with the Minister to see if there can be more standardisation.
- Action 21/4 – Rachael Dean gave an update.

Motion 25/3: Moved Rachael Dean/Stephen Hall: that Sharon Salmons, Steve McFall and Richard Burdon be added as administrators and signatories to the Kiwibank bank account. CARRIED

Motion 25/4: Moved Steve McFall/Rachael Dean: that the Council go into committee. CARRIED

Motion 25/5: Moved Don Hammond/Steve McFall that the Council go out of committee. CARRIED

- 6. Appointment of new General Manager:** Don Hammond congratulated Tim Gale on his appointment as the new General Manager. He will resign his position as Councillor. The process to get new Councillors appointed as soon as possible, has been raised with the Minister and officials.
- 7. Minister Eugenie Sage** – The Minister thanked the Board for its response to her Letter of Expectation. Discussion topics included holding of tahr on game estates, appointment of new Councillors, goat & deer numbers and the role of recreational hunters in helping to bring down the numbers (though goats are not in the GAC remit), Council’s Firearms Submission, status of tahr cull, hunter safety and how to improve the culture, the fit & proper person test (which could work better than a register if it worked well), GAC finances, the levy proposal, free trade agreements and other proposed income streams.
- 8. Tahr Plan Update, Tahr App update** - Ben Reddiex gave a presentation on the tahr programme, 2019/20 tahr operational plan and the longer-term plan (including Ngāi Tahu) covering all aspects of the next 5-10 years. Much of this information is available on the DOC website <https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/things-to-do/hunting/what-to-hunt/tahr/tahr-control-operations/tahr-sightings-maps/>. Discussion about bull tahr sightings in various management units and the high-resolution photos captured by cameras mounted underneath the helicopters used in culling. DOC agreed to provide factsheet type information on how they are using cameras to ensure transparency of control operations available on their website.

DOC have received a lot of OIAs related to shooting bull tahr and there is a lot of uncertainty out there. It was suggested that the GAC could assist DOC in the investigation process for complaints with the aim of providing greater transparency and reducing any perceived bias with the hope of limiting the number of future complaints.

The GAC will be involved in the long-term plan for tahr and have started thinking about the key elements of research and monitoring that will be required going forward. James Holborow will liaise with the GAC. A discussion followed about the expected timing of this and what & who might be involved.

Tahr App - Garry Ottmann & Ben Reddiex discussed testing of the Tahr App. A lot of development has gone into this product which is now nearly ready to be used by the public. The GAC and DOC will jointly launch the Tahr Hunting App with shared PR and links to both websites.

- 9. Mervyn English** – discussed the process to get new Councillors appointed as soon as possible.

- 10. Financial and Administrative matters/Delegations:** The financial report was presented by Garry Ottmann. There was a discussion about Council’s financial policies. The 2019-20 budget & forecast was discussed and approved at the last GAC Meeting in August; it will be loaded into Xero to enable reporting against budget.

Motion 25/6: Moved Stephen Hall/Richard Burdon: that the financial reports be approved, and that expenditure to-date be approved. CARRIED

11. Management Report: the two contractor's reports included in the Board Pack were taken as read. Don Hammond thanked Garry Ottmann, Geoff Kerr and Hayden Cox for all their work on behalf of Council over the last 3 months.

- a. **2018-19 Annual Report** – the Council was pleased to receive an unqualified audit report. The GM will be tasked with finding an auditor for 2019/20.

Motion 25/7: Moved Don Hammond/Roger Duxfield: That Council moves the adoption of the 2018-19 Annual Report, including Financial Statement & Audit Report. CARRIED

- b. **Communications** – Four media releases have been issued and a Spring edition of The Stalk Newsletter. Interest in our social media continues to grow around topics posted. Once tabled, the Annual Report can be circulated to stakeholders and put on the website.
- c. Tahr on Game Estates – discussion around options now that the trial is finished.
- d. **ZIP Tahr Study**– ZIP have now finished in the study area. Garry Ottmann and Geoff Kerr to write up results and share with Council.
- e. **Firearms Submissions process** – A firearms workshop on 16 October was hosted by the GAC and F&G to inform submissions to the Select Committee. The GAC presented an oral submission to the Finance and Expenditure Select Committee on 23 October. Garry Ottmann, Roger Duxfield and Rachael Dean represented the Council.
- f. **Administrative & Statutory requirements** - Statement of Performance Expectations and Statement of Service Performance completed. Annual Report and audited financials also completed.
- g. **Funding** – Garry Ottmann spoke to the funding strategy as previously circulated, providing background information on where the GAC had previously got to with the implementation of a levy. The new funding proposal involves 3 funding components; viz the commercial hunting sector, recreational/wholesale sector (including potentially sponsorship, donations, memberships fees etc) and the Crown.

The NZPHGA AGM on 1 November provided unanimous support for a 'tag fee' per animal. Further work is required on the collection system and its implementation, charging of GST (if any, based on IRD advice) and agreements with other parties. The cost of collecting the levy must not significantly detract from the revenue collected and there is real urgency to get the system in place before the next trophy season commences.

The Council unanimously agreed to motion 25/8 and will now make a recommendation to the Minister for Cabinet approval before Christmas.

Motion 25/8: Moved Roger Duxfield/Richard Burdon the Council: (a) presents the GAC funding strategy to the Minister for endorsement; and (b) progresses the development of the levy with the cost being \$90 and the collection costs being less than 10% of the expected total revenue. CARRIED

12. Correspondence: The correspondence list was circulated.

Motion 25/9: Moved Roger Duxfield/Richard Burdon: that inward correspondence be accepted and outward be approved. CARRIED

13. Voluntary Certification of Game Estates: Roger Duxfield outlined this issue and how it is covered by the Game Animal Council Act. The Game Estates Association is seeking accreditation of their industry standards and wants to work with the GAC to progress this. Roger Duxfield will seek a proposal from the Game Estates Association setting out what input they want from the GAC which in turn will be discussed at the Strategy Meeting in February 2020 **Action item 25/1**, Roger Duxfield.

14. DOC Matters & Update: Rod Treder reported on governance issues, the GAC Annual Report and Statement of Performance Expectations.

15. Planning for 2020: The next meeting is to be a Strategy Meeting and is planned for 26 & 27 February 2020. Decisions will need to be made between now and February, so we develop a clear path forward, encompassing everything from short term priorities to the next 5 years to enable Council to set its Work Plan and Budget at the May Meeting. Councillors are to refamiliarize themselves with the current Strategic Plan and convey their ideas about anything that needs to change **Action item 25/2**. Tim Gale and Jenny Wotten to sort out a venue for the February Meeting.

16. Matthew Hall, OSPRI – took Council through the information available on the OSPRI website, including an overview of the TBfree pest control aims, key milestones, vector risk areas and upcoming pest control operations and the consultation strategy. The website contains detailed maps of each operation, dates and the status of each operation. Don Hammond suggested OSPRI seek early input from the GAC to help alleviate resistance from hunters through good communication. GAC can help OSPRI with joint media releases over the next 12 months.

Mathew confirmed he had received the GAC submission on proposed TBfree control operations. OSPRI and the GAC agreed on more frequent and less formal ongoing conversations and OSPRI are welcome to attend GAC meetings.

17. General Business:

Training opportunities – Further discussion on opportunities around training, confirmation that what was agreed at August meeting was appropriate for next steps.

A5 promo doc for levy – Hayden Cox and Garry Ottmann to develop a one-page information statement about the proposed levy to go on our website and be circulated.

Following interest by some stakeholders to provide donations to the GAC it was agreed to investigate the option of a donation function being provided on our website – Tim Gale to progress.

Acknowledgement of work – Don Hammond thanked Sharon Salmons, Stephen Hall, Clare Thomas from DOC and Rod Treder who all had a role to play in the GM selection process. He also thanked Garry Ottmann, Geoff Kerr, Gerald Telford & Greg Duley along with Richard Burdon and his family, for their contribution to the recent successful Parliamentary Hunt.

In closing, Don Hammond remarked on the networking the GAC has achieved over the past 3 months, the exciting progress made on the Tahr App and our role in ensuring hunters use it, the GAC's role in managing deer numbers over the next 12 months, our willingness to assist in Tuhoe once we are contacted again to do so. Don wished everyone a restful and safe festive season.

Next meeting 26 & 27 February 2020, location to be advised. Depending on where we meet in February will guide the location for the following meetings.

Meeting closed 4.14pm.