

New Game Animal Councillors appointed

The Minister of Conservation has appointed five new councillors and a new Chair to the New Zealand Game Animal Council.

“Grant Dodson has been appointed Chair of the Game Animal Council and takes over from Don Hammond who has been Chair since the Council was first formed back in 2014,” says Game Animal Council General Manager Tim Gale.

Grant is the Chief Executive of City Forests Limited, current Chairman of the Southern Wood Council and is a member of the Forest Owners Association Executive and a Board member of Forest Growers Research Ltd. He has an extensive background in land management and recreational hunting in New Zealand and Australia and shares a passion for the outdoors as well as for future generations of New Zealanders.

The other new councillors are:

- Erin Garrick - Southland Fish and Game Officer with a background in wildlife management and over 20 years of hunting experience.
- Don Patterson - Governing Director of Manuka Point Station in Canterbury, professional hunting guide and game estate manager.
- John Cook - President of the Central North Island Sika Foundation and Waikato dairy farmer.
- Bruce Warburton - science team leader of the Wildlife, Ecology and Management team at Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research.

Stephen Hall, Sharon Salmons, Rachael Dean and Steve McFall remain on Council while Carol Watson, Richard Burdon, Roger Duxfield and Don Hammond’s terms have ended.

“We just cannot thank our retiring councillors enough,” says Gale. “The time and effort they have put in over the years, in what are unpaid positions, is a testament to what hunting, conservation and New Zealand’s backcountry heritage mean to them.”

“It is appropriate that we particularly acknowledge Don Hammond’s contribution. As the inaugural Chair with very little in the way of resources Don navigated the Council through some very challenging early years and developed it into a well-established organisation that works to ensure game animals are valued, but managed within the constraints of the habitat they live in.”

“The Game Animal Council has taken major strides in recent times and is now very much part of the hunting landscape in New Zealand,” says new Chair Grant Dodson. “Its statutory status means it plays an important role working with the Department of Conservation and other government agencies to advance the interests of the hunting community and contribute to the responsible management of game animals and good conservation outcomes.”

“While there are many challenges ahead, including how we support our valuable tourist hunting industry in the wake of COVID-19 and the ongoing preservation of recreational and commercial hunting opportunities, I am excited to take on this role and look forward to working with stakeholders from across the hunting, conservation and recreation sectors. I believe there is much we can achieve through greater cooperation and dialogue.”

The NZ Game Animal Council is a statutory organisation responsible for the sustainable management of game animals and hunting for recreation, commerce and conservation.

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