

FISH AND GAME NEW ZEALAND
AUCKLAND/WAIKATO REGION

SPORTS FISH AND GAME BIRD MANAGEMENT PLAN

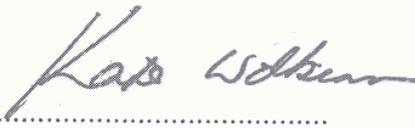
To manage, maintain and enhance the sports
fish and game bird resource in the recreational
interests of anglers and hunters



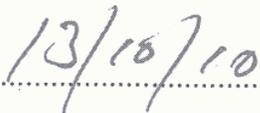
156 BRYMER ROAD, R.D. 9

HAMILTON

Pursuant to section 17M(2)(g) of the Conservation Act 1987,
I hereby approve the Sports Fish and Game Management Plan for
2010-2020 (approved by the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game
Council for public notification on 3 October 2009) for the
Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Region,
administered by the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council.

Signed.....

Hon Kate Wilkinson
Minister of Conservation

Date.....

FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I am pleased to present the Auckland/Waikato sports fish and game bird management plan.

Auckland/Waikato was the first Fish and Game Council to prepare a plan, which was approved by the Minister of Conservation on 18th August 1994. This plan builds upon its predecessor and, as with such, will be put to good use in guiding Council over the next decade.

The preparation of this plan reflects the significant responsibility entrusted to the Council to prepare a management plan for sports fish and game birds and their habitat in this region and to provide quality angling and hunting opportunities for licence holders.

The plan has again involved consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. We appreciate the input these people have made, which will make the plan more enduring.



Murray Young
Chairman

13 October 2010

SPORTS FISH AND GAME BIRD MANAGEMENT PLAN

To manage, maintain and enhance the sports fish and game bird resource in
the recreational interests of anglers and hunters

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council (the Council) is charged to manage, maintain and enhance the sports fish and game bird resource in the recreational interests of anglers and hunters in its region. This plan sets out the policies which will guide the Council in meeting its statutory responsibilities over the next 10 year time frame.

In particular, the plan summarises the issues which the Council is obliged to address and the methods it will use to achieve its primary function. The plan also provides summary information on the nature of the sports fish and game bird resource in the region and their relative importance.

PART ONE

THIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Section 26Q(1)(e)(iii) of the Conservation Act 1987 (the Act) requires each regional Fish and Game Council to prepare a sports fish and game bird management plan. According to the Act, the council in devising the plan should have regard to:

- the sustainability of sports fish and game birds in a fish and game region
- the impact that the management of fish and game bird resources will have on other resources and users of the environment
- provisions which maximise recreational opportunities for anglers and hunters.

It is also intended that the goals and objectives set out in this plan will allow the Auckland/ Waikato Fish and Game Council to meet its statutory requirements under section 17L(3) of the Conservation Act – to maximise the opportunities for sustainable use of the region’s sports fish and game bird resource by anglers and hunters.

The Conservation Act 1987 also requires that nothing in this plan “shall derogate from”:

- any provision of the Act or any other Act; or
- any policy approved under the Act or any other Act in respect of the region
- any provision in any conservation management strategy or conservation management plan or freshwater fisheries management plan.

The overall intent however, is to produce a plan that addresses the management of fish and game resources within the region while taking into consideration the reasonable views of all stakeholders. In this context, there are essentially four target audiences:

1. The councillors and staff of the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council who will use the plan to direct the management of sports fish and game bird resources and their recreational use in the Auckland/Waikato Region.
2. Statutory authorities such as the local authorities and central government agencies in the region must have regard to this plan once approved and recognise the priorities and intentions set out in the plan.
3. Fish and Game licence holders.
4. Other user groups of sports fish and game bird habitats.

This plan sets out to improve fish and game management in the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Region by:

- involving stakeholders in the management process

- reducing conflict among user groups
- improving the methods used in fish and game management efforts
- improving communication over fish and game management
- maximising angling and hunting opportunity in the region.

The plan promotes goals and objectives, but does not give specific detail about outputs or implementation. More specific projects will come from the Council's Annual Operational Work Plan and other specific implementation plans.

The Plan is divided into five parts. Part One introduces the Plan, Part Two sets out the goals, objectives and outputs, Part Three describes the processes and responsibilities, Part Four provides an overview of the region's resources and Part Five contains supportive material.

INTRODUCTION

Nationally some 250,000 hunting and fishing licences are sold annually making freshwater angling and game bird hunting one of the major recreational pursuits in New Zealand (sourced from Hillary Commission). Licence holders, both local and overseas, benefit from some of the finest fishing and hunting in the world, and so does a wide range of businesses with millions of dollars being expended by anglers and hunters on their sport, ie. petrol and oil (the largest single item), boats, motors, sporting goods and clothing, accommodation, vehicles and the like.

Hunting and fishing provides several important social aspects lacking in today's society, namely – self reliance, pride in achievement, tolerance and patience and a genuine respect for the environment learnt from practical hands-on experience.

The companionship of fellow sports people, the intrinsic beauty of the outdoors, fresh air and exercise, the closeness to nature, the escape from the modern world, the anticipation of the experience, the early morning breakfasts over camp fires and then the later recounting of the day's exploits in the evening, the satisfaction of introducing the younger generation to an appreciation of what is our natural heritage in New Zealand – all aspects of the hunting/angling experience, of which the actual taking of game and fish is only one aspect.

In 1990 the management of New Zealand's sports fish and game bird resources was restructured by an amendment to the Conservation Act 1987. The former Acclimatisation Societies were replaced by twelve Fish and Game Councils and one national council – the New Zealand Fish and Game Council. These Fish and Game Councils became Crown Entities (and later Public Entities under Schedule 4 of the Crown Entities Act 2004) with specific functions, responsibilities and powers as specified in the Conservation and Wildlife Acts to manage sports fish and game birds, and to represent the interests of anglers and hunters.

'Fish and Game New Zealand' is the operating name of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council (NZ Council) and the regional Fish and Game Councils. Fish and Game councils are the statutory managers of sports fish and game bird resources and their sustainable recreational use by anglers and hunters New Zealand wide, except for the sports fisheries in the Lake Taupo catchment, where that trout fishery is managed by the Department of Conservation and similarly for game birds in the Chatham Islands.

Fish and Game Councils receive no government funding to undertake their statutory purposes and their activity is financed mainly through the sale of sports fish and game bird licenses.

The Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Region (the region) is one of the twelve Fish and Game regions in New Zealand. The Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council (the Council) is the major seller of game bird licenses in New Zealand with these forming approximately 60% of Council's licence income. Anglers and hunters purchase licences to fish or hunt and in return have input to the sports fish and game bird management in their region.

The Auckland/Waikato Council is unique in that the population it serves is far greater than that of any other Fish and Game Council. With the bulk of the population centred north of the Bombay hills and the major resource located southwards, considerable travel and associated expense is incurred by the majority of game bird hunters and freshwater anglers in

the region. The composition of the population is also unique in that the bulk of such is urban, which unlike other regions (with the exception of Wellington) has not had a close association with either the land or traditional field sports.

The region (see Figure 1) encompasses that area contained within a line in the north of the North Island running coast to coast from the middle of the Kaipara Harbour west to Te Aira Point, east down the East Coast to just below Waihi to above the beach, and then inland south along the summits of the Kaimai and Mamaku ranges just below Kinleith, crossing the Waikato River at Maratai and continuing along the summit of the Hauhungaroa Range to Mounts Tongariro, Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu then east to National Park, out to Mokau and up the West Coast back to the middle of the Kaipara Harbour.

The main purpose of the Council, as set out in Section 26Q(1) of the Act is to:

“Manage, maintain and enhance the sports fish and game bird resource in the recreational interests of anglers and hunters.”

In fulfilling this purpose, the primary functions of the Council as set out in Section 26Q of the Act are to:

- assess and monitor sports fish and game bird populations, habitats and harvests
- assess and monitor angler and hunter satisfaction
- maintain and improve the sports fish and game bird resource
- provide information and promote angling and hunting
- represent the interests of anglers and hunters in the statutory planning process.

Since the early 1950's as funds have been available the Society/Council has purchased some 1600 hectares of wetlands with a government value as at August 2009 of \$1.2 million. Besides protecting threatened wetland habitat the blocks purchased over the years have been developed and enhanced to provide hunter opportunity, and currently hold some 120 constructed ponds providing hunting opportunities for some 300 hunters on any one day. In addition to the 235 pondholders, some 500 permits are issued each season to itinerant hunters to hunt on Council land. With many hunters coming from suburban Auckland, the Council wetlands provide an excellent opportunity for novice hunters to get started, and indeed contain separate ponds set aside especially for novice hunters. It is Council's intention to continue to purchase and develop properties for habitat and hunting as opportunities become available.

It should be noted that the works undertaken by the Council, funded exclusively by hunters and anglers licence fees, provide equal, and on occasions greater benefits to non-hunted and protected species. This gives rise to a situation where game bird hunters and freshwater anglers are subsidising conservation work for the public benefit, despite hunters and anglers only utilising the resource for a relatively short period of the year.

Council maintains an office and workshop/storeroom situated on land on the outskirts of Hamilton City. Hamilton being chosen as it is virtually in the centre of Council's region, close to the main resource areas, and also the base for government departments and local authorities that Council regularly deals with.

Council employs a fulltime Chief Executive, two Wildlife Managers, a Fisheries Manager, an Office Manager and part time staff as funds, work subsidies and circumstances provide. The staff are supplemented by the voluntary assistance provided by some 70 honorary rangers, fish and game associations, and other user groups who seek to put something back into their sport. Furthermore, Councillors receive no fees or remuneration whatsoever for their contribution. Without this voluntary support Council would have difficulty in functioning effectively.

The Council cannot consist of more than 12 elected members. Only those who hold a current adult whole season licence to fish for sports fish or hunt for game birds are eligible to become members of the Council through the election process. Six of the elected councillors are from the six sub-regions (Auckland North, Auckland South, Northern Waikato, Central Waikato, Southern Waikato, and Hauraki/Coromandel) and six are elected from the region at large as the next highest polling candidates. Elections are held every three years, at which time all seats on the council are up for re-election. The election process is democratic and prescribed in the Fish and Game Council Election Regulations 1990. In any given year, the region represents the interests of around 5000 anglers and 7000 hunters.

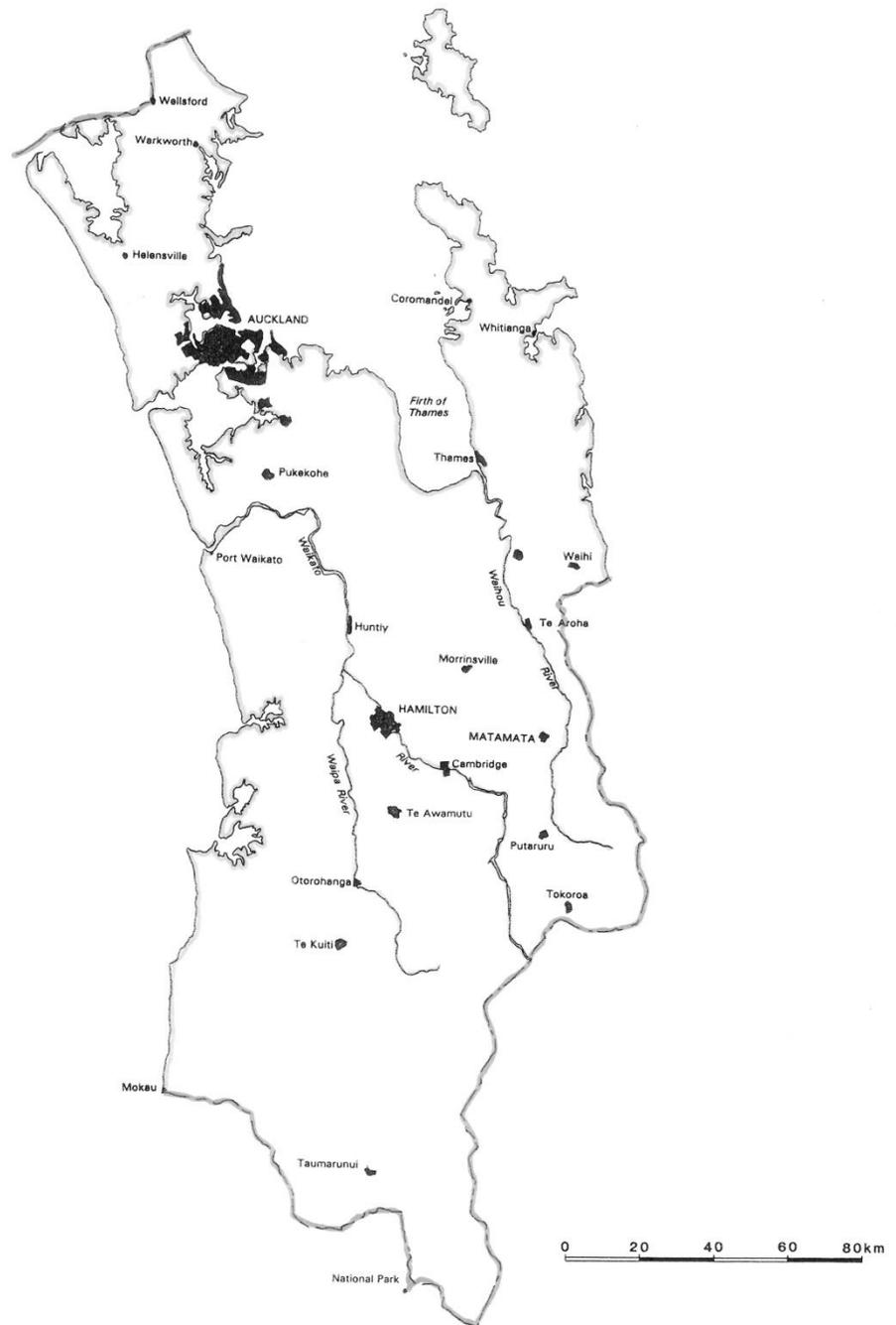


Figure 1 Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Region

PART TWO

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives presented in this plan have been developed around two goals that reflect the general mission of the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council, derived from the statutory purpose outlined in the previous section.

1. Manage, maintain and enhance the sports fish and game resource.
2. Maximise recreational angling and hunting opportunity.

The objectives associated with each goal are not prioritised, but managing, maintaining and enhancing the resource must take priority over maximising recreational angling and hunting opportunity considerations, if conflicts occur.

In promoting these two goals, the Conservation Act 1987 also requires sports fish and game bird management plans to have regard to the impact that the management proposed is likely to have on other natural resources and other users of the habitat concerned.

GOAL 1: MANAGE, MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE SPORTS FISH AND GAME RESOURCE

Most species management in the Auckland/Waikato Region is undertaken through habitat protection. While many species are monitored, there is minimal direct intervention to increase the numbers of fish and game species other than a limited number of releases of hatchery-reared trout into waters where natural recruitment is insufficient. In managing habitat, maintaining it is more effective than trying to restore it after it is damaged or destroyed. The Council recognises the direct relationship between the abundance of sports fish and game bird species and the quality and quantity of habitat available to them through the course of their life cycle. Populations of the region's sports fish and game bird species are generally sufficiently well established to sustain a recreational harvest. This means it is possible to manage populations through the management of habitat, the species themselves and the extent of the recreational harvest.

Key objectives for sports fish and game bird management are to:

1. Maintain sustainable populations of harvestable sports fish and game bird species.
2. Protect and increase habitat for sports fish and game birds.
3. Ensure a sustainable harvest of the resource by enforcing fishing and hunting regulations.
4. Have regard to the effects of fish and game management activities on other natural resources and resource users.

GOAL 2: MAXIMISE RECREATIONAL ANGLING AND HUNTING OPPORTUNITY

Managing recreational opportunity is only an element of the broader sphere of sports fish and game bird management. Anglers and hunters comprise a diverse group with a broad spectrum of experience, skill, leisure time, financial means and fishing or hunting preferences. In attempting to maximise their fishing and hunting opportunity, the Council is required to have regard to the impacts of its management on other natural resources and other users of the resource.

Key objectives for maximising recreational angling and hunting opportunity are to:

1. Encourage maximum angler and hunter participation, access to the fishing and hunting resource and maintain the quality of the recreational experience.
2. To gain and maintain acceptance of the recreation of sports fishing and game bird hunting in the wider community.
3. Maximise the sale of angling and hunting licences in the region commiserate with the resource available.
4. Provide for the governance of the fish and game system by fish and game licence holders.
5. Ensure the planned and coordinated management of the sports fish and game bird resource.
6. Maintain liaison with those landowners/resource managers which provide sports fish and game bird habitat and/or angling and hunting opportunities.

POLICY AND METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The objectives listed above will be achieved through the Council's annual operational work plans. The structure of this section of the Management Plan follows the eight functional areas (output classes) used in Fish and Game New Zealand's annual operational work plans. These output classes are used for management purposes in all Fish and Game regions and at a national level.

OUTPUT CLASS 1: SPECIES

The Council manages a range of sports fish and game bird species to ensure that populations remain healthy and that there is sufficient annual surplus to enable sustainable harvest by anglers and hunters. The availability of sports fish and game birds is the most fundamental component of angling and hunting making it a core activity for the Council.

Monitoring of populations and their trends over time and maintaining this information in up to date databases is critical. Sports fish monitoring techniques include drift dive surveys, netting surveys, tagging surveys, spawning surveys, electro-fishing and angler surveys. Game monitoring techniques include annual aerial counts, banding, brood counts, annual harvest surveys and hunter surveys. Funding of species specific research is also an important management tool. Collection of baseline data must be maintained, but reviewed from time to time and changes to monitoring programmes made as required.

Objective: To maintain sustainable populations of harvestable sports fish and game bird species

Achievement of this objective requires:

- *assessing and monitoring populations of sports fish and game bird species*
- *assessing and monitoring harvest levels*
- *setting and enforcing regulations for sustainable harvest*
- *mitigating any adverse impacts on sports fish and game bird species and their habitats*
- *mitigating the impact of sports fish and game bird species on other users and uses of the habitat*
- *releases of hatchery-reared trout where required due to insufficient natural recruitment*
- *recognition that aviation safety in the vicinity of airports is paramount and care must be taken to ensure that hunter interests do not compromise such.*

Issues

1. Without sustainable management of sports fish and game birds and their habitats these resources will become depleted and less available for sustainable harvest
2. Without information about the status and trends of sports fish and game bird populations, good management decisions cannot be made
3. Without monitoring information involvement in Resource Management Act 1991 processes may not be effective
4. Monitoring must be cost-effective and produce useful and useable information
5. Future information requirements can be difficult to identify
6. It would not be in the long-term interests of recreational hunting to allow gamebird management to compromise aviation safety in the vicinity of airports.

OUTPUT CLASS 2: HABITAT PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

There is a direct relationship between the abundance of sports fish and game birds and the quality and quantity of habitat available to them. Natural habitat is for all practical purposes finite in nature and changes to the elements of it are often sought by other uses and users. Therefore, ensuring that sufficient habitat is available to maintain self-sustaining populations of sports fish and game birds and angling and hunting opportunities is a major activity for the Council.

The Council's validating legislation the Conservation Act 1987 26Q(b)(v) provides for the specific function of "undertaking such works as may be necessary to maintain and enhance the habitat of sports fish and game".

Council has had a long and vigorous involvement in habitat protection, enhancement and rehabilitation as funds have allowed. Council has since the early 1950's to the present day purchased wetlands and is now holding some 1600 hectares, of which 700 lies within the internationally recognised Whangamarino Wetland. Council has an ongoing commitment to continued procurement of wetland as appropriate and the maintenance of the existing properties it owns. Council has also assisted in the management of similar areas of Crown land that have been restored to wetland at Council's own expense. Furthermore, Council has been a partner with the Department of Conservation in the \$½million rehabilitation of some 1700 hectares of degraded wetland in the Whangamarino Wetland by the establishment of a weir on the Whangamarino River and continues to commit funds and energies in this direction. Council regularly tenders and will continue to tender advice to individuals and organisations for habitat protection and enhancement with provision of grants for such where appropriate.

Intensification of agriculture, discharges to waterways, hydro power development, damage to riparian margins, surface water abstraction, vegetation clearance, wetland drainage and river control works have negatively impacted on sports fish and game bird habitats in the region in the past. Today development activities continue to reduce the quality and quantity of available habitat. Therefore, Council is a particularly strong advocate on habitat issues and has spent ten of thousands of dollars on legal fees contesting inappropriate wetland drainage, pollution issues and the degradation of waterways and will continue to spend monies in this area where necessary. Council also expends considerable time and effort in submitting on plans and policies where their content affects wetlands.

Non-statutory processes may also be used to achieve protection of sports fish and game bird habitat. Proactive cooperation with other resource management organisations, land owners and managers, iwi, interest groups and individuals in the wider community can be used to realise positive outcomes for fish and game management.

Riparian plantings which restore and enhance waterways are an essential part of Council's activities that will continue to be afforded a high priority by Council. An example is Council's partnership with Environment Waikato in the restoration of the trout fishery in the Mangatutu Stream. Council has also distributed food bearing trees for wildlife and is committed to the continuation of this.

The Council and its staff are founding Trustees in the National Wetland Habitat Trust, Waikato Ecological Enhancement Trust, Waipa Peat Lakes and Wetland Accord, Lower

Waikato River Enhancement Society, South Waikato Environmental Initiatives Group, Lakes Rotokauri, D and Cameron Management Groups, and regularly attend wetland forums, biodiversity forums, LandCare and RiverCare meetings, local and regional council sector liaison meetings, and other like group meetings that have a focus on safeguarding wetlands and waterways.

The long term effects of didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*) on the aquatic ecosystem and sports fishery is unknown and remains a major concern. In the future Fish and Game New Zealand may have a substantial role to play in the management and control of this and similar invasive organisms and with any ongoing research of its effects on the environment. Council is an active member of the Central North Island Didymo Regional Partner Group.

The spread of pest fish, including coarse fish from illegal liberations, has led to the loss of valued trout fisheries in the region including the collapse of a significant fishery in Lake Ototoa. The impacts have been due to direct competition for food and/or impacts on habitat. Council will continue to liaise with other agencies in regards to the spread and control of pest fish. Council is a member of the Northland/Auckland Regional Freshwater Pests Partners Group.

Habitat protection is the specific responsibility of local authorities (Resource Management Act 1991) and the Department of Conservation (Conservation Act 1987). The Council will continue to seek the implementation of these statutory responsibilities and encourage other habitat users to accept responsibility for avoiding, remedying or mitigating its adverse environmental effects.

Objective To protect and increase suitable habitat for sports fish and game bird species

Achievement of this objective requires:

- *assessing and monitoring the condition and trend of sports fish and game bird habitat in the region*
- *advocating for the protection and increase of sports fish and game bird habitats through statutory planning and non-statutory processes*
- *advocating for the exclusion, eradication or effective management of risks posed by pests and diseases to sports fish and game bird habitats*
- *managing, maintaining and enhancing sports fish and game bird habitats owned, managed or supported by the Council.*

Issues

1. Modification of rivers, particularly in lowlands, is adversely affecting trout habitat and angling values.
2. Decisions made by other statutory bodies, such as environmental flow setting, may sometimes have detrimental effects on sports fish and game bird habitat.
3. There has been extensive loss of wetlands, game bird habitat and hunting opportunities through land development in the region, especially dairy conversion, urban sprawl, and lifestyle block development.
4. Management of sports fish and game bird habitat on private land is difficult.
5. There is relatively low public awareness of the importance of many ecosystems and habitats, or the degraded state of some of these.

6. Intensification of agriculture has negatively affected water quality, sports fish and game bird habitat.
7. The spread of pest fish has led to the collapse of trout fisheries in some lakes and rivers.
8. Hydro power development has impacted on fish and wildlife habitat, migration and angling opportunities.
9. The potential for new biosecurity threats, including didymo.

OUTPUT CLASS 3: PARTICIPATION

The Council has a statutory requirement to promote recreation based on sports fish and game bird resources. With its revenue base for all its activities dependent on licence sales, it is also in the Council's interest to encourage potential anglers and hunters to take up these recreational activities. It is equally important that current anglers and hunters enjoy and can afford these activities and the factors that may limit participation are minimised. At the same time the Council must ensure that increased use of the sports fish and game bird resource does not compromise their sustainability or the quality of the experience.

Protection of the quality of the angling experience, which in some areas includes feelings of solitude, remoteness and appreciation of natural surroundings and high water quality, must remain a priority for the Council. Too much angling pressure can diminish the perceived value of the back country fishery. Similar pressures also impact on hunting.

The maintenance of a positive and mutually supportive relationship with licence holders, including prospective, present and past participants, is critical for the ongoing success of the Council to enable anglers and hunters to maximise opportunities in the region.

The availability of access to sports fishing and game bird hunting has been identified as a significant factor in limiting participation. This is especially important for public land. Maintenance and enhancement of access opportunities to the region's sports fish and game bird resource is a key responsibility for the Council.

Legal and physical access to water and land for angling and hunting is an issue for parts of the region. But it is also important that licence holders are aware of the opportunities that already exist. Anglers and hunters need to be informed of the areas open to them, how to reach these areas, and where public access points are located.

In addition to its statutory requirement to promote recreation based on sports fish and game bird resources, the Council also has a role in promoting ethical standards of behaviour.

Ethical standards of behaviour include:

- a desire to have others enjoy their hunting and angling opportunities
- acknowledgment that anglers and hunters often have no audience to ensure they behave ethically and that such behaviour is self motivated and regulated
- an individual concern for the well-being of the environment
- promotion of uses which preserve the diversity, integrity, and beauty of ecosystems and the disapproval of those which do not

- acknowledgment and use of the accepted rural code of ethics and the importance of maintaining the traditional landowner-recreationalist relationship
- an acceptance that the health of the sports fish and game resource should not be measured by production of game birds and fish alone, but also by its ability to provide intangible values such as an appreciation of the wilderness, rivers, lakes and wetlands.

Objective To encourage maximum angler and hunter participation while maintaining the quality of the recreational experience

Achievement of this objective requires:

- *assessing the success rate and degree of satisfaction of users of the sports fish and game bird resource*
- *maintaining and improving angler and hunter access to the resource*
- *providing opportunities for new anglers and hunters to participate in sports fishing and game bird hunting*
- *publicising matters of interest to licence holders and other users of sports fish and game bird habitats*
- *defining and promoting ethical standards of behaviour to be followed by anglers and hunters.*

Issues

1. There is increasing competition for recreational time and money.
2. Young anglers and hunters are an important market and are the future of the sports. They may need assistance to learn about sports fishing and game bird hunting.
3. Anglers and hunters require regular updated information on the sports fish and game bird resources and the recreational opportunities available within the constraint of maintaining the resource quality.
4. Restrictions on legal access to fishing and hunting opportunities may lead to the creation of exclusive rights to sports fish and game bird populations.
5. Undesirable angler or hunter behaviour may lead to access restrictions.

OUTPUT CLASS 4: PUBLIC AWARENESS

The protection of sports fish and game birds and their habitat is dependent on the support of Government, local authorities and the wider community. This requires community appreciation and support for the Fish and Game system.

Management responsibility of the sports fish and game bird resource involves relationships with many other stakeholders, including statutory organisations, iwi, interest groups and members of the wider community. The level of support from these other stakeholders impacts upon the Council's capacity to successfully achieve its purpose and functions. Public awareness of Council's role and activities, and the contribution it makes to environmental enhancement is important to achieving an acceptability of Fish and Game activities.

The Council is entering a future that involves changing demographics, changing land ownership practices (an increase in overseas, corporate and life-style owners), increasing commercialisation of recreation, and changing attitudes of a growing urban population to practices within the rural sector.

Objective To gain and maintain acceptance of the recreation of sports fishing and game bird hunting in the wider community

Achievement of this objective requires:

- *having regard to other users of the sports fish and game bird habitat*
- *promoting recreation based on sports fish and game birds, include involvement in educational programmes encouraging participation*
- *liaising with the:*
 - land owners or land managers*
 - local Conservation Board and other statutory authorities*
 - local iwi on matters of potential common interest*
 - angler and hunter clubs and other environmental interest groups*
 - media, politicians and wider public and respond to approaches from them*
 - on Fish and Game activities and views of current issues.*

Issues

1. There is relatively low public awareness of the Council's role in sports fish and game bird management, conservation work and environmental enhancement.
2. The functions and goals of other organisations may affect the interests of the Council and vice versa.
3. The physical, social and educational benefits of hunting and fishing are not widely recognised.

OUTPUT CLASS 5: COMPLIANCE

Maintaining compliance with the region's fishing and hunting regulations is important to ensure that all anglers and hunters contribute to the costs of fish and game management by purchasing a licence and adhering to the method restrictions, season lengths and bag limits to ensure the sustainable management of the sports fish and game resource.

Illegal activities are not condoned by licence holders. Increasing numbers of anglers and hunters and members of the community report illegal activities to the Council, especially involving immigrants who are not familiar with hunting and fishing methods or ethics. One of the strengths of the Fish and Game system is the ability for users of the resource to police their own system.

The size of the region and the isolated nature of many of the fishing and hunting areas mean that significant coverage by staff is not possible. Honorary Fish and Game Rangers make a large contribution to enforcement and compliance efforts in the region. Fish and Game Rangers are warranted by the Director (Chief Executive) of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council and trained and administered by the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council. They are often the front line contact between licence holders and the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council.

It is important that Council effectively encourages reporting of offences and makes use of the assistance of licence holders and the general public to achieve a high level of compliance.

Objective To ensure a sustainable harvest of the resource by enforcing fishing and hunting regulations

Achievement of this objective requires:

- *ensuring that there are sufficient resources to enforce fishing and hunting regulations*
- *ensuring licence holders and the community are aware of the need for compliance with sports fish and game bird regulations*
- *achieving an annual 10% coverage of licence holders and seeking a 95% rate of compliance from those licence holders checked*
- *undertaking legal action for breaches of regulations and seeking publicity of these as a deterrent to others*
- *recording and monitoring all offences, seizures and court verdicts, ranger register and training programmes.*

Issues:

1. Often members of the community (especially new immigrants) are not aware of the need for fishing and hunting regulations
2. Poaching and non-compliance threaten the sustainability of the sports fish and game bird resource and the Council.
3. Spawning streams and game bird moulting and feeding sites are particularly susceptible to poaching activities and game bird poisoning

OUTPUT CLASS 6: LICENSING

The sale of fishing and hunting licences by regions provides the core revenue for Fish and Game New Zealand. Licences purchased in the Auckland/Waikato Region are able to be used nationwide, apart from sports fishing in the Taupo Fishing District.

Part of Fish and Game New Zealand's commitment to improve the services offered to licence holders is to ensure that anglers and hunters can easily purchase a licence. The sale of licences through retail outlets remains the most popular means for anglers and hunters to purchase a licence. However, in recent times, implementation of electronic databases and the internet have meant licenses can now also be purchased online or over the phone from home or outside work hours.

Objective To maximise the sale of angling and hunting licences in the region

Achievement of this objective requires:

- *ensuring licences are readily available for purchase*
- *maintaining an effective and efficient relationship with the licence administrator, agent and purchaser.*

Issues

1. The ease of purchasing a licence often determines the willingness to do so.

2. To achieve the objective of fully inter-available licences throughout New Zealand this Council holds the view that the Taupo fishing district should be incorporated into the Fish and Game model.

OUTPUT CLASS 7: COUNCIL

Licence holder ownership of fish and game management and involvement is based upon an elected Council system. The Council is made up of not more than 12 council members elected for a three year term. The Council is required to meet at least six times each year. The Council is subject to the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987. All Council meetings are open to licence holders and interested parties to attend. The Council's role, according to the Governance Procedures of Fish and Game Councils generally, is to approve regulations and budgets, set policies and appoint a Manager (Chief Executive).

Each Fish and Game Council appoints a Chief Executive for the efficient and economic administration of the affairs of the Council. Preparation of agendas, meeting reports and minutes are part of the Chief Executive's requirement to the Council. These papers associated with meetings are available to licence holders and the general public. Any organisation or individual may contact the Council for consideration of agenda items for discussion at meetings.

Objective To provide for the governance of the fish and game system by fish and game licence holders

Achievement of this objective requires:

- *providing for the administration and effective operation of the Council.*

Issues

1. Council needs to be effectively serviced to carry out its governance role.

OUTPUT CLASS 8: PLANNING AND REPORTING

The Council requires planning and reporting systems that enable it to establish and maintain clear direction and to provide accountability to licence holders. The Council is expected to show competence and compliance with public sector guidelines and reporting requirements.

In addition to standard business planning practices the Conservation Act 1987 places a number of statutory requirements on Fish and Game Councils. The responsibilities to be met by Council include:

1. Preparation of a Sports Fish and Game Bird Management Plan. The plan is to set out the ways a council will manage the fish and game resource for the following 10 years.

2. Approval of an Operational Work Plan. The Operational Work Plan (OWP) describes projects to be completed for the year, staff time and costs involved and budgetary requirements. The OWP should consider, and where appropriate, address the objectives defined in the Management Plan.
3. Preparation of an Annual Report, including a Statement of Service Performance, which is a reflection of the extent to which the Operational Work Plan has been achieved for the financial year. This annual report is presented to the Minister of Conservation to lay before Parliament as soon as practicable after the end of each financial year. It documents activities undertaken for the year and the degree to which objectives are being met by the Council.
4. The Audit Report is to be audited by the Office of the Auditor General or their agent.

The Council must also prepare each annual Angler's and Game Notice which regulates sports fishing and game bird hunting in the region. These notices, which are approved by the Minister of Conservation, set out the conditions under which a current licence holder may fish or hunt in the Auckland/Waikato Region. Each notice sets any bag limits for each species and season length plus any restrictions on methods and hours of angling or hunting.

An important aspect of effectively managing fish and game is liaison with other regional Fish and Game Councils and the New Zealand Fish and Game Council. Fish and Game regions can work cooperatively on a regional basis to improve the regional and national management of the resource. Opportunities also exist for Councils to work collectively on nationally important issues. Each Council elects one of its members to the New Zealand Fish and Game Council to achieve the NZ Council's functions to advocate the national requirements of Fish and Game New Zealand and coordinate the management of sports fish and game by regional Fish and Game Councils.

Objective To ensure the planned and coordinated management of the sports fish and game resource

Achievement of this objective requires:

- *preparing and adopting:*
a Sports Fish and Game Bird Management Plan
an annual operational work plan
an annual report, including a Statement of Service Performance
annual recommendations to the Minister of Conservation of hunting and fishing regulations.
- *identifying and recommending to the New Zealand Fish and Game Council the region's sports fish and game requirements for research*
- *liaising and coordinating activity with the New Zealand Fish and Game Council and other regional Fish and Game Councils.*

Issues

1. Without capable planning, management of the fish and game resource in the Auckland/Waikato Region may not be cost effective or statutory obligations met.

PART THREE

ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The Fish and Game management system is based on twelve regional councils with coordination assistance provided by the NZ Council. With inter-availability of fishing and hunting between regions, funding of all 13 councils is linked through a national budget system which includes the setting of levies and payment of grants to redistribute revenue between all 13 councils. This means all councils must operate within the financial and human resources available to them. Therefore resources will be allocated according to priorities established annually and will be affected by national priorities.

The resources being managed by each regional Fish and Game Council belong to all New Zealanders, and all licence holders have a right to access those resources. When buying a licence, the licence purchaser is contributing to the management of the resource nation-wide – not just a particular region. This plan, however, is directed entirely at the medium to long-term management of the Auckland/Waikato Region by the Council, within the context of the legislation.

METHODS TO BE USED

An important feature of the changes brought in by the Conservation Act was to ensure the public have a say in how resources are managed. The emphasis is on public input, not just input by licence holders alone. One of the basic reasons behind requiring Fish and Game Councils to prepare Sports Fish and Game Management Plans is to ensure that decision-making is in accordance with policies approved through a public consultation process.

A management plan can provide guidance and a statutory basis for decision-making by the Council and other decision makers. In addition to the Sports Fish and Game Management Plan, there is a hierarchy that derives from the provisions of the legislation. A Sports Fish and Game Management Plan cannot derogate from a Conservation Management Strategy (CMS). A CMS cannot derogate from any General Policy and a CMS implements General Policies. General Policy implements and cannot derogate from legislation.

Apart from the Annual Meeting, there are other times when some public input into fish and game decisions can occur. The setting of angling and hunting regulations can often become a two-way process with anglers and hunters giving their views and the Council providing some of the background information on the state of the resource and the reasons behind the decisions. Council meetings are public meetings. A time for public comment is always set aside during a meeting to allow people to speak on particular matters. Councillors and staff can be approached by licence holders or members of the public seeking consideration of their views on particular topics.

The Council's practice is to invite participation in decision making with affected parties. In addition, the Council is required each year to produce and circulate an annual report which is presented to interested parties at an annual meeting.

NON-STATUTORY PROCESSES

Proactive cooperation with other resource management organisations, iwi, interest groups and the wider community will be used to realise outcomes for sports fish and game bird management. It is also recognised that anglers and hunters make major contributions to habitat protection and enhancement work.

Considerable areas of sports fish and game bird habitat are on, adjacent to, or flow through, private land. It is important for the Auckland/Waikato Region to encourage landowners and managers to create, maintain and enhance sports fish and game bird habitats on their land.

The Council provides advice to landowners on wetland, upland game and fisheries habitat. It will actively seek to encourage the protection and enhancement of freshwater habitats for sports fish and game birds on private and public land.

FORMAL STATUTORY PLANNING PROCESS

The Council will provide for and recognise Fish and Game interests in all appropriate statutory planning matters. This will involve:

- consultation under the First Schedule of the Resource Management Act 1991 with the appropriate local authorities on all relevant planning documents
- submissions in relevant resource and other consent processes to advocate for decisions and conditions that promote sports fish and game bird interests and the interests of anglers and hunters
- solutions of remediation or mitigation, where adverse effects of activities on sports fish and game bird habitat or recreational values cannot be avoided
- development of effective protocols with other resource management authorities to manage key environmental impacts
- liaison with the Department of Conservation and Auckland and Waikato Conservation Boards on their planning processes as required.

OPERATIONAL WORK PLANS

Operational work plans are prepared annually. They set out the projects/work to be undertaken and money available for the coming financial year and must give effect to the policies contained in an approved management plan.

The Council begins to draft its operational work plan around February each year. Although there is no statutory requirement to do so or formal process undertaken, an important part of this process is responding to public/licence holder inputs through the political process in the development of priorities for the year. Once a draft plan has been

completed it becomes part of the national budget round in May/June. Usually the operational work plans of the regions are reviewed at meetings of regional managers and their recommendations are considered by the NZ Council. It is the responsibility of the NZ Council, following consultation with the regions, to recommend to the Minister of Conservation a licence fee based on the cost of carrying out essential operating functions nationwide for that year. This means that in any one year there may be some projects that have to be cut from regional work plans. However, once the licence fee has approved by the Minister around July, each region can finalise its annual Operational Work Plan ready for the start of the new financial year in September.

The Council's annual operational work plan will show the outputs and activities necessary to implement the goals and objectives of this management plan as determined each year by the Council.

FISHING AND HUNTING REGULATIONS

Many anglers and hunters at times pursue their sport in regions other than where they purchase a licence. With nationwide licences, the rules and regulations should be as similar as possible across all regions, or at least framed on a common basis, where practical.

Although some regulations are nationally applicable, the legislation is set up to provide for regional management and regional regulation through Game and Angler's Notices, published annually in the Gazette. The main purpose of the regulations is to ensure sustainability of the resource and equitable access to it by anglers and hunters.

The Council will draft and approve regional regulations which will:

- manage angler and hunter harvest at levels which the resource can sustain
- maximise participation and opportunities for success, while providing a range of fishing and hunting opportunities
- encourage ethical behaviour
- enable all licence-holders fair and equitable access to the resource.

CROSS BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT

Fish and Game management in the Auckland/Waikato Region will have impacts beyond its boundary. Therefore, in meeting its responsibilities, the Council will consider the interests of all fish and game users and those of the wider community.

From an administrative point of view, the Council interacts with a number of agencies in managing sports fish and game birds and their habitats. The obvious and most critical of these are the wider Fish and Game organisation and the Department of Conservation.

NEW ZEALAND FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

The New Zealand Fish and Game Council (NZ Council) was established under Section 26B of the Conservation Act 1987 to represent nationally the interests of anglers and hunters and provide coordination of the management, enhancement and maintenance of the sports fish and game bird resource. The key functions of the NZ Council relevant to this plan are:

- to develop national policies in consultation with regional Fish and Game Councils.
- to audit the activities of Fish and Game Councils.
- to collect and redistribute financial resources nationally via an income levy to meet the statutory responsibilities of the organisation.

Even though the NZ Council is a separate body with its own staff, its councillors are all appointed from each of the 12 regional councils. It is through the NZ Council that the organisation as a whole makes decisions. For decisions such as new national policy or setting the cost of a fishing or hunting licence or determining research requirements, a formal consultation process ensures that every council has the opportunity to have a say.

ADJOINING FISH AND GAME COUNCILS (NORTHLAND, EASTERN, TARANAKI)

Political or administrative boundaries are not necessarily the best management units for species populations. Each species tends to lend itself to “geographic management units”. For game birds, this means adjoining councils need to manage species in a consistent and coordinated fashion.

The Auckland/Waikato region works cooperatively with adjoining regions in the exchange of species data, ranging/compliance and other day to day aspects of fish and game operations as required.

NEW ZEALAND GAME BIRD HABITAT TRUST BOARD

The Trust Board was established under the Conservation Act 1987 primarily to improve New Zealand’s game bird habitat and secondarily to improve the habitat of other wildlife. It is serviced by the NZ Council and its main function is to disperse funds by way of grants to any landowner or organisation that satisfies the Trust Board’s criteria for the protection, restoration, improvement, creation or procurement of game bird habitat. The income used for this purpose is received from the proceeds of the Game Bird Habitat Stamp programme administered by Fish and Game Councils. The Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council has applied for (and received) grants to assist in important wetland restoration projects in its region and will continue to do so. It also promotes this fund to landowners and acts as a referee for applications to the Trust Board from this region. As a referee it provides progress reports to the Trust Board and signs off the authorisation that work has been completed for the Trust Board to make its payments to land owners.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

The Council’s relationship with the Department of Conservation involves close liaison between the two agencies with responsibilities under the same legislation – the Conservation Act 1987 and Wildlife Act 1953 and their associated regulations. There is some overlap in

functions due to Section 6 (ab) of the Conservation Act 1987 which gives the Department the task of preserving all indigenous freshwater fisheries and protecting recreational freshwater fisheries and freshwater habitats. This includes freshwater sports fish and habitats. The Department also has the responsibility under Section 53(3)(d) to ‘advocate the protection of [freshwater] aquatic life’.

The Director General of the Department of Conservation or his nominee is entitled to attend and speak at Council meetings. For this Council as required, this function is normally performed by Auckland and/or Waikato Conservator or their delegate.

AUCKLAND, WAIKATO, WHANGANUI AND EAST COAST-BAY OF PLENTY CONSERVATION BOARDS

The functions of the Conservation Board are set out in Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987 and in the National Parks and Reserves Acts. The Conservation Boards’ focus on providing advice, planning and strategic direction, but not the day-to-day operational details of the Department of Conservation's work. One of a Conservation Board’s specific functions is to liaise with Fish and Game Councils (Conservation Act Section 6M(1)f).

A major responsibility for the Conservation Boards is overseeing the Auckland, Waikato, Whanganui and East Coast-Bay of Plenty CMS. A CMS is 10-year plans setting out how the Department will manage public conservation lands and waters and species within the respective conservancy. Once a CMS has been approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority, the Conservation Board advises on its implementation. As mentioned previously, a Sports Fish and Game Management Plan shall not derogate from a CMS (Conservation Act 1987 Section 17L(3)) so that it is important that the objectives and policies in this plan are consistent with the relevant CMS’s.

The Council will maintain regular liaison with the Conservation Boards and ensure that the Conservation Boards recognises and provides for Fish and Game, angling and hunting interests in their work. The Council will also recognise and provide for Conservation Board interests where these are relevant, particularly in the development of management plans for lands administered by the Department in which Fish and Game, or anglers and hunters, have an interest.

REGIONAL IWI

There are a considerable number of iwi and hapu based organisations within the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Region who have strong ties with the land and water resources and are often involved in resource management issues common to them and Council, which Council seeks to work with to further mutual interests.

Council made formal submissions in full support of Waikato-Tainui’s claims and aspirations relevant to the Deed of Settlement on the Waikato River and looks forward to continuing to work closely with Tainui-Waikato and other iwi in continuance of shared interests.

SECTION 4 RESPONSIBILITY

The Treaty of Waitangi establishes a partnership between the Crown and iwi. Sports fish and game bird resources are managed on behalf of the Crown by Fish and Game Councils.

Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 states that “this act shall be so interpreted and administered as to give effect to the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi”. This places a statutory responsibility on the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council to give effect to these principles, unless the principles are clearly inconsistent with the legislation (*Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board V Director-General of Conservation*, 1995 3 NZLR553).

When exercising its powers and functions under the Conservation Act the Council must give effect to the principles of the Treaty. It is only if those principles are clearly inconsistent with the legislation that the Council would be justified in departing from them; but such departure should be only to the extent necessary to apply the legislation and no further. Any decision by the Council under the Act must demonstrate how and to what extent the principles have been given effect to and, if not, why not. A decision not to give effect to the principle must be based on clear and compelling inconsistency. Where the inconsistency is minor or not clear-cut there is an obligation to apply the Act and the principles to the extent possible.

The Council and iwi have a common interest in maintaining clean water and protecting the natural character of rivers, lakes and wetlands. The Council and iwi also have a common cause in seeking to manage wild populations of species for sustainable harvests. The bulk of the 1600ha of endangered wetlands owned by the Council are situated in the Whangamarino Wetland or are adjacent to the lower Waikato River, wherein habitat restoration, protection and enhancement which enables sustainable harvest of sportfish and game birds for licence holders, also enables sustainable harvest of cultural resources of interest to iwi, such as eels, whitebait and flax.

Consultation between the Council and iwi should occur on matters of potential common interest, including matters arising from the Waikato-Tainui Deed of Settlement or any other Treaty of Waitangi claim settlements, should they occur. This will enable informed decision to be made.

Since the days of its predecessor the Auckland Acclimatisation Society, the Council has enjoyed an excellent working relationship with Waikato-Tainui having joined with them in opposing activities that would have had a detrimental effect upon the environment – the Council being invited to the formal signing of the Deed of Settlement on the Waikato River as one of the VIP guests. The Council shares precisely the same concerns as Waikato-Tainui relative to clean waters and pristine wetlands and fully supported Waikato-Tainui’s claims and aspirations relevant to the settlement. It looks forward to continuing to work closely with Tainui-Waikato and continuance of our shared interests.

The Council recognises that the Treaty encourages the partners to afford each other reasonable cooperation and act towards each other responsibly and with outmost good faith. This includes an obligation to consult and have respect for the other’s point of view.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This plan is to be reviewed within ten years of receiving Ministerial approval. Amendments within this period can involve the whole or part of this plan during this ten year period.

The implementation of the plan will be reviewed annually and if necessary amended subject to Section 17M of the Conservation Act 1987.

The purpose of monitoring and reviews is to ensure that the plan is implemented effectively, that the provisions are current and that they best serve the interests of sports fish and game birds, their habitats and the licensed anglers and hunters of the region.

The Council will continuously monitor the implementation of this plan and review it as necessary, with a complete review to be undertaken at the end of the 10 year period.

PART FOUR

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The area managed as the Auckland/Waikato Region of Fish and Game New Zealand is described in Gazette No. 83 of 24 May 1990 at page 1861.

The Auckland/Waikato Region is divided into six electoral wards. These six wards are:

- Auckland North; being that area generally within the Rodney District Council, Waitakere and North Shore cities
- Auckland South; being that area generally within the Auckland and Manukau Cities, Papakura District Council and the Franklin District Council east of a line from Ramarama to Mercer.
- North Waikato; being that area generally within the Franklin District Council west of a line from Ramarama to Meremere and the Waikato District Council north of a line east west at Taupiri
- Hauraki-Coromandel; being that area generally within the Hauraki and Thames/Coromandel District Councils and the Matamata-Piako District Council north of a line east west at Walton
- Central Waikato; being that area generally within Hamilton City, Waikato District Council south of a line east at Taupiri, Waipa District Council north of a line east west at Ohaupo, Matamata-Piako District Council south of a line east west at Walton and South Waikato District Council north of a line east west at Tirau
- South Waikato; being an area generally within the Otorohanga and Waitomo District Councils, the South Waikato District Council south of a line east west at Tirau, the Waipa District Council south of a line east west at Ohaupo and all that part of the Ruapehu District Council within the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council district.

The region is very diverse, with dramatic landscapes and considerable variation in climate and land use. This is also recognised in the diversity of habitats and fishing and hunting opportunities in the region. The region includes 19 District Councils and 4 Regional Councils.

The District Councils are: Kaipara District, Rodney District, North Shore City, Auckland City, Waitakere City, Manukau City, Papakura District, Franklin District, Thames-Coromandel District, Hauraki District, Hamilton City, Waikato District, Matamata-Piako District, Otorohanga District, Waipa District, South Waikato District, Taupo District, Waitomo District, Ruapehu District.

The Regional Councils are: Auckland, Waikato, Manawatu/Wanganui and Bay of Plenty.

Based on the 2006 provisional census data the wider Auckland areas of Kaipara (18,132), Rodney (89,559), North Shore (205,608), Waitakere (186,444), Auckland City (404,658), Manukau (328,968), Papakura (45,183) and Franklin (58,932) Districts have a total of 1,337,484. The Waikato areas of Thames-Coromandel (25,941), Hauraki (17,190), Waikato (43,959),

Matamata-Piako (30,483), Hamilton City (129,249), Waipa (42,501), Otorohanga (9,075), South Waikato (22,641), Waitomo ((9,441), and Ruapehu (13,569) total 344,049.

So the total area population for Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game is 1,681,533.

Topography

The Auckland/Waikato region is very diverse ranging from flat plains in Hauraki/Thames region, and rolling hills with richly fertile soils through the greater Waikato region to mountain ranges, notably the Kaimai, Coromandel and Mamaku Ranges. There is extensive coastline from Auckland down to Mokau on the west coast, and also the Hauraki Gulf, with many estuaries and bays with expansive sand beaches on both the west and east coasts.

Climate

The Auckland/Waikato climate varies from north to south. The north, ie. Auckland and North Waikato, enjoy warm humid summers with cool, damp and often foggy winters, while further south the winters tend to be much colder with elevated inland places experiencing extremes of hot and cold. Winds tend to be westerly and south westerly from the Tasman Sea. High levels of rainfall occur year round in all regions but can have dry spells January - February. Rainfall varies from 800mm - 4,500mm, with higher rainfall in the Coromandel Peninsula area with averages of 3,000mm. North Central Waikato average about 1240mm. Alpine areas around Tongariro National Park experience high rainfall and very cold temperatures. The Lower Waikato and Hauraki Plain are sheltered by the Kaimai and Coromandel ranges and have the least rainfall.

HISTORY

Fish and Game Councils in New Zealand owe their origins to acclimatisation societies that began to form during the 1860s. The Auckland/Waikato society was the first with rules and objects dated 1861. The Societies were initially established for both acclimatisation of species and also regulation of angling and hunting in a way which enabled access to all, unlike the situation prevailing in the United Kingdom at the time. By about 1900 the number of societies had spread so that virtually the whole country was covered. The number rose to as many as 40 societies.

Upon the formation of Fish and Game Councils in 1990 Auckland/Waikato absorbed much of the old Waimarino Society area on its southern boundary which afforded more coherent catchment management in the area.

HABITATS PRESENT WITHIN THE REGION

Since most of the region's sports fish and game species have self-sustaining populations, maintenance of harvestable populations depends upon maintenance of habitat. Therefore, the bulk of the Auckland/Waikato Council's efforts go into habitat protection, either directly by

maintenance of habitat on Council owned or administered areas, which approximates some 1600ha, or indirectly by statutory advocacy through the Resource Management Act 1991, Conservation Act 1987 or other similar legislation. Since the advent of the Council in 1990, statutory advocacy has become increasingly important as pressures on habitat due to changes in land use and development increase.

SPORTS FISH HABITAT

The sporting ethic and the relevant legislation holds that sports fish are a public resource managed by Fish and Game on behalf of licence holders. Sports fisheries are publicly owned and managed irrespective of their location. In addition, territorial authorities are required under the purpose and principles section of the Resource Management Act 1991 to have particular regard to the habitats of trout and salmon and to recognise and provide for the protection of significant habitats of indigenous species. Some game birds are indigenous species and many habitats of trout and salmon are also significant native fish habitats.

Sports fish habitat is predominantly a public resource consisting of lakes and rivers, administered by a variety of public bodies according to various legislation. This plan therefore lists as an appendix the various rivers and lakes and major wetlands in the region, and their sports fish and game values. Some habitats, like small wetlands and smaller trout spawning and nursery rivers are not included in this list as not all are known or even recognised. While these might be less important individually, all are extremely important as a whole and policy is required to protect them. Identification of habitats in this plan ensures local authorities give due recognition to sports fish and game bird resources and habitats in their planning. The Department of Conservation is also required under Section 6(ab) of the Conservation Act 1987 as one of its functions, to “preserve so far as is practicable all indigenous freshwater fisheries”, and “protect recreational freshwater fisheries and freshwater fish habitats”. Section 53(3) (d) of the same Act also states that the Director-General “shall advocate the conservation of aquatic life and freshwater fisheries generally”. Similarly, a function of the Department of Conservation under the Wildlife Act 1953 is to protect all absolutely protected wildlife throughout the country. Outside the hunting season defined by statute and Game Notices, all game species have the status of protected species. The Department’s statutory oversight of these species exists irrespective of whether they are native or not. The status of these species has been determined by statute, not their origin.

GAME BIRD HABITAT

In the case of game birds, there are different pressures operating on the provision of habitat. For waterfowl, much of the habitat is on public land, but a high proportion of suitable habitat, particularly smaller wetlands and water bodies, are on private land. Alteration of water levels in wetlands should require consent or rules in regional plans to ensure that activities in wetlands do not adversely affect their value as wildlife habitat.

The Council can also manage public land or acquire an interest in private land, or purchase land to protect or enhance game bird habitat and hunting opportunities. While ownership or management of land is relatively costly, it provides greater certainty of ensuring habitat retention. Where there is resource input to private land from the Council, it may be appropriate to safeguard that by way of covenant on the title. Often, at the most minimal level, the Council can offer advice to landowners which can assist management of their private land to provide habitat. Fish and Game expertise in this field is now sought by landowners

and other parties. There are opportunities to seek funding support to facilitate this process. A large proportion of game bird hunting opportunity exists on private land (see below). The Council works to promote or enhance positive contact with landowners to facilitate game bird habitat and hunting opportunities.

REGIONAL FISHING AND HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES

Fishing and hunting opportunities in each of the sub-regions can be summarised as follows.

Hunting

Auckland North: Hunting opportunities are limited in the upper Waitemata Harbour due to extensive settlement, though mallards are quite numerous. Significant hunting opportunities on Kaipara Harbour, especially estuary zones and contributory rivers such as Kaipara and Kaukapakapa. Few opportunities on South Kaipara lakes due to low game numbers, though some, (such as Lake Kareta), used by shelduck as moulting area in summer. The Kaipara Harbour also contains swans by the thousands. Farm ponds, especially larger ones, drains, streams and rivers provide waterfowling opportunities in the hinterland. Forests provide pheasant hunting and a few quail in Woodhill, Riverhead, Tomarata, etc, as do farms with rough cover, especially in cropped areas, on private land.

Auckland South: Manukau Harbour provides numerous opportunities especially around Karaka's inlets. There are some opportunities in other parts of the harbour but limited due to dense housing to the waters edge. Waterfowling opportunities around Clevedon coast and inland on Wairoa River, especially estuarine areas. Some hunting occurs on the Waiuku Peninsula on lakes, (but not on Lake Pokorua, which is a refuge), farm ponds, drains, natural swamps, etc. Formerly fair to average pheasant hunting has been reduced by a die-off of lupin in Waiuku coastal areas.

North Waikato: Willows along the Waikato River edge provide drift shooting opportunities particularly when water levels are right. Further down the Waikato, at the Delta, this area is intensely hunted. Many lakes in the North Waikato provide opportunities for waterfowl hunting. The re-flooding of the Whangamarino has recreated a large opportunity for waterfowl to live and breed in the area, such as black swan and grey duck. NZ shoveler also have responded to the improved water levels with many hundreds present in pre-spring staging flocks. Maize growing also exerts a large population influence in the sense that birds follow the harvester for spilled grain.

Hauraki-Coromandel: Harbours in Coromandel still generally provide a good waterfowling experience for local hunters with bush edges and scrubby farms providing some reasonable upland game shooting for those willing to look for it.

The ravages of past flood control schemes, (and more recent efforts too), has been felt in the Hauraki area with drains the only waterfowl habitat left in many areas. However, maize growing has compensated mallards for this and hunters with access to recently harvested maize in the game season do very well indeed. The few remaining vestiges of wetland such as the Flax Blocks are popular waterfowling spots that hold a good many birds when conditions are right. The main rivers, Piako, Waihou etc, also attract both hunters and ducks, including increasingly paradise shelducks. Large numbers of waterfowl sit in rafts on the Firth of

Thames until driven inland by poor weather conditions. Some hunters utilise specially designed boats to set up where these birds trade along the tide-line in these locations.

Central Waikato: The rough farms around Raglan and Kawhia support a good number of upland game birds and the harbours many ducks. There are also increasing numbers of Canada geese in this area. Swan numbers too are significant here.

South Waikato: While this area lacks the large wetlands typical of the lower Waikato, it does have a mosaic of streams, rivers and farm dams that attract wild duck. Shelduck are much more common here and the general lack of ready water supplies have led many farmers to put in relatively large farm dams with all the coincidental sport that they provide. Pheasants are not now so numerous in this area though some landowners claim that possum poisoning operations, which have a by-kill of wild cats and ferrets, have increased pheasant numbers as a consequence. Quail survive in better numbers than elsewhere in the region especially around forest edges where one of their principal foods grow; broom; similarly around other “waste” areas, such as railway tracks and other idle land.

Hydro dams provide waterfowling opportunities especially in sheltered bays, islands and other features. However, excessive fluctuating of water levels has lowered the feeding value of riparian wetlands which can be flooded, then completely dried out in a short period to best suit power demand.

Fishing

Auckland North: Trout fishing opportunities are limited to put-and-take fisheries in Lakes Tomarata, and Pupuke. There are also many waters offering excellent coarse fishing opportunities.

Auckland South: Trout fisheries are limited to the Hunua Ranges including the Wairoa River, Mangatangi Reservoir and Mangatawhiri Reservoir.

North Waikato: Trout fishing opportunities are limited, although the lower Waikato does offer winter habitat for brown trout from the Waipa headwaters. Two small dune lakes near Waiuku are stocked annually with trout.

Hauraki/Coromandel: Many streams and rivers in the Coromandel and Kaimai Ranges hold good trout populations. The Ohinemuri River is the most popular and attracts many anglers from throughout the region.

Central Waikato: The Waikato River flows through both Cambridge and Hamilton providing good fishing for local residents. The Karapiro Dam tailrace is easily accessible and is a significant fishery.

South Waikato: Spring-fed rivers are common throughout the South Waikato District offering abundant rainbow trout populations in generally clear water. Three Waikato River hydro lakes are in the Auckland/Waikato region, and all hold rainbow and brown trout as well as rudd (which are a sportfish in this region). However supplementary stocking of rainbow trout is required in Lakes Arapuni and Karapiro. Lake Arapuni is the most popular fishery in the region due to a reputation of consistently producing large trout. Further west, the headwaters of the Waipa River contain many excellent fisheries including the upper Waipa

River, Puniu River and Mangatutu Stream. On the west coast the relatively isolated Awakino River offers superb fishing in spectacular scenery. In the south of the region, the Whanganui headwaters provide extensive fishing waters including highly regarded trout fisheries in the Ongarue River, Whakapapa River and the Whanganui River upstream of Taumarunui.

SPECIES PRESENT WITHIN THE REGION

Sports fish and game birds in New Zealand are a public resource. This is one of the underlying principles of the angling and hunting tradition in New Zealand.

The Auckland/Waikato Region offers abundant populations of sports fish and game birds in the many wetlands, lakes and rivers present throughout the region. In general the northern waters are dominated by coarse fish, while further south both rainbow and brown trout are present in the extensive Waihou, Waikato and Whanganui river systems.

SPORTS FISH

RAINBOW TROUT

Rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) are easily the most important sports fish in the region. Not only are rainbow trout abundant throughout the region but they also occur in a wide variety of habitats that provide many different angling opportunities.

Water quality is probably the most significant factor that affects distribution, as rainbow trout are absent from waterways with poor water quality including the Waitoa, Piako, Kumeu and Hoteo rivers. Rainbows are also present in only low numbers in the lower Waikato River below Huntly, again most likely due to low water quality. Water temperature is probably not a limiting factor as self-recruiting populations of rainbow trout are present near Auckland (eg. Wairoa River) and on the Coromandel Peninsula (eg. Waiwawa and Tairua rivers).

Rainbow trout are usually the only trout species present in the smaller river systems and in catchments above waterfalls (eg. upper reaches of the Waihou, Tawarau, Ongarue, and Whakapapa rivers).

The average size of rainbow trout appears to be directly related to water clarity with large trophy trout present in rivers with very clear water (eg. Whakapapa). By contrast, rainbow trout are rarely larger than 1.5kg in waters affected by agricultural runoff.

The riverine rainbow fisheries are all self-recruiting, although limited supplementary stocking does occur in the lower Waikato River. Rainbow trout are also stocked in lakes throughout the region including regional and national significant fisheries in the Waikato hydro-lakes.

BROWN TROUT

Brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) are present in the larger river systems but are usually not as common as rainbows. However brown trout are often considerably larger than their rainbow counterparts, and their large size is one of the main attractions to anglers.

Riverine brown trout are usually migratory, spending their summer months in cool headwater streams but moving downstream after spawning in autumn to spend the winter months in the lower reaches. This migratory movement allows brown trout to take advantage of the highly productive waters present in the lower reaches of the major river systems over the winter months.

Brown trout are limited to the southern waters of the region because of high water temperatures. They need water that is 2-3 °C cooler than that required by rainbow trout to successfully spawn, and are thus only found spawning in waters south of Paeroa in the Waihou catchment and Huntly in the lower Waikato/Waipā catchment. Self-sustaining populations of brown trout are absent from the Auckland Region and the Coromandel Peninsula.

Brown trout are present in the Waikato hydro-lakes but represent less than 2% of the angler catch. Nevertheless these fish are often of very large size and are targeted by some anglers. Brown trout are occasionally stocked in the Waikato hydro-lakes and the dune lakes near Waiuku.

COARSE FISH

Rudd (*Scardinius erythrophthalmus*), perch (*Perca fluviatilis*), and tench (*Tinca tinca*) are abundant in many waters, especially in the Auckland Region. Rudd are also abundant throughout the Waikato River and hydro-lakes. Coarse fishing attracts a small but dedicated number of anglers, many of whom are recent immigrants from England and east Asia.

GAME BIRDS

DABBLING DUCKS

Mallard ducks (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and grey ducks (*Anas superciliosa*) are Council's major game birds providing approximately 77% of the total game bird harvest. They are widespread throughout the region in abundant numbers, with stable populations and large concentrations in the Waikato and Hauraki Plains. For management purpose they are now classified as greylards due to the large degree of hybridisation between them and the difficulty to differentiate the two. The introduction of mallards was an inspired move as without them waterfowl hunting could not remain a viable recreational pastime. Mallards' advantage over native waterfowl is that they can tolerate a high level of human interference and are usually the only species seen on city ponds and streams. They are tolerant of stock and readily accept a domestic situation. Stemming from northern hemisphere stock the mallard has largely evolved from a heavily populated environment and thus has a ready ability to adapt well to New Zealand's highly modified landscape.

Banding studies show that the current greylard population has fluctuated around a mean of 630,000 in the past eight years but appears to be holding steady. The continued degradation of habitat, coupled with the competition from aquatic pests, such as koi carp and mosquitofish,

will test the greylards resilience in the future and new ways to maximise productivity and increase populations will continue to be sought.

Native NZ shoveler ducks (*Anas rhynchos*) are often the waterfowl hunter's most admired species and are totally dependent on highly fertile wetlands for their survival. Large numbers of shoveler are observed on the Firth of Thames during the hunting season, and moult counts in the region indicate their population to be stable with their harvest forming 0.6% of the waterfowl bag.

PARADISE SHELDUCK

Paradise shelduck (*Tadorna variegata*) were once a rare species in the North Island until about 1945 when they first appeared in the King Country and began to acclimatise. Before the colonisation of New Zealand paradise shelduck habitat was lowland tussock grasslands, swamplands and around estuaries which were scarce native habitats with the species accordingly uncommon. The conversion of forest to pasture and native grasses to succulent clovers and ryes, along with stocks ponds on hill country farmland allowed paradise shelduck numbers to increase. This makes it one of the few native birds to benefit from colonisation, thus the species is now widespread and numerous. Paradise shelduck numbers in the King Country have increased to the extent where browsing by the species on emerging grass has necessitated the holding of a "special season" in March, before the game bird season to alleviate the problem.

In the Auckland/Waikato region the paradise shelduck range and numbers continue to increase significantly with the bird representing approximately 9% of the total game bird harvest.

BLACK SWAN

Although the native black swan was once widespread and common throughout the country, as with the moa they had become extinct before European colonisation. Around the mid 1860's the early Acclimatisation Societies released hundreds of the same species of black swan (*Cygnus atratus*) from Australia right across New Zealand. These soon spread rapidly and widely throughout the country and by the turn of the century had occupied all the former habitats of the extinct New Zealand native.

As with grey duck and shoveler, man's intervention on the landscape has had a similarly negative effect on black swan. In the Auckland/Waikato region, Lakes Waikare, Waahi and Whangape which up to the early 1990s's produced and supported thousands of black swan, are now almost bereft of the species. This has been attributed to the eutrophication and subsequent macrophyte collapse in these large shallow lakes which is closely linked to surrounding land-use practices.

Although greatly reduced from former years at the moment the population is perceived to be stable accounting for approximately 1% of the total game bird harvest.

CANADA GOOSE

Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*) are the waterfowl hunters' premier game bird.

Although present in the Waikato region at Te Kauwhata since the turn of the century, it was not until the 1960's that goose numbers started to rise reaching some 400 by 1985 when they were placed on the game licence for the 1986 season with a limit of two. Since then regular trend counts have shown geese populations rising to a peak of around 4000 in 2007 with subsequent drop to around half that number in the last two years.

Similarly to paradise shelduck, geese have created conflict with other landuse patterns, namely farming and cropping in localised areas, usually surrounding large lakes and wildlife refuges. In the past special geese seasons have been held to decrease numbers and disperse them from certain areas where they are being a nuisance. There are a number of methods which can be implemented to control geese and with cooperation from local land users, Council is confident of its ability to effectively manage the species, which currently forms approximately 1% of the total game bird harvest. It should be noted that harvest for this species is increasing rapidly as more hunters begin to target and become proficient in hunting them.

PUKEKO

Pukeko (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) have proven highly adaptable, exploiting newly established pastures for the abundance of their nutritious foods, to the point where they are considered by many farmers, market gardeners and horticulturists to be a pest, with Council receiving frequent requests for their control. As with paradise shelduck, pukeko numbers are on the increase with the population forming approximately 7% of the total game bird harvest.

The pukeko, despite being a native species is one that has plagued cultivations since before European arrival and continues to be extremely destructive to grassland, cropping and horticultural interests. They will destroy birds' eggs and kills the young of many species including ducks, although generally they don't eat them. A carefully managed harvest to ensure there are not too many pukeko, but also not too few, turns out to be the secret to minimising such conflicts.

CALIFORNIAN QUAIL

As with the pheasant, the lack of reliable banding information does not allow accurate assessment of the California quail's (*Callipepla californica*) population. Although it is a popular game bird to a number of hunters, it contributes less than 0.5% of the total harvest.

California quail thrive in pine forests, but changing forestry practices and the planned biological control of broom (a major component of quail diet), along with the same threats posed to pheasant, suggest an overall decline in population.

PHEASANT

The place of runner-up premier game bird would have to go to the pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*), the hunting of which attains almost a cult status amongst certain hunters.

No accurate assessment of population numbers is available; however, from the Council's 1993 hunter harvest survey the bird forms approximately 4% of the total harvest.

With modern farming practices utilising intensified spray usage (especially insecticides) and the increased use of clean farming techniques destroying rough cover and shrubby gullies

which form prize pheasant habitat, the population is perceived as declining in intensively farmed areas.

RED LEGGED PARTRIDGE

In order to try and fill the niche caused by the decline in pheasant and quail populations, resulting from the decline in habitat brought about by farming practices, in 1977 the Auckland Acclimatisation Society resolved to import red legged partridge (*Alectoris rufa*). From 1981 – 1991 the Society released over 12,000 birds, and the Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council over 1,000 from 1991 – 1992. In 1992 as the species had not established a viable wild bred population, and in light of high rearing costs, Council reduced the number of breeding birds held to 25 pairs. In May 1994 Council's breeder ceased operations and the breeding pairs were distributed to private pen rearers who had shown an interest in the species. Council will continue to monitor red legged partridge in the wild with the view to resurrecting the programme if significant numbers of wild bred birds are observed.

RECREATIONAL USE

SIGNIFICANCE OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL AREAS

The major accessible habitats in the regions have been assessed as to their relative recreational significance and the extent to which they contribute to the provision of a range of opportunities to undertake angling and hunting across the region. It should be noted that the majority of recreational hunting occurs on private land mainly farm ponds and small natural lakes (Figure 2). Moreover, landowners can hunt on their own properties without requiring a licence and the numbers of landowners who use this opportunity is unknown but is likely to be significant. Many hunters also utilise Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council owned wetlands (Figure 3).

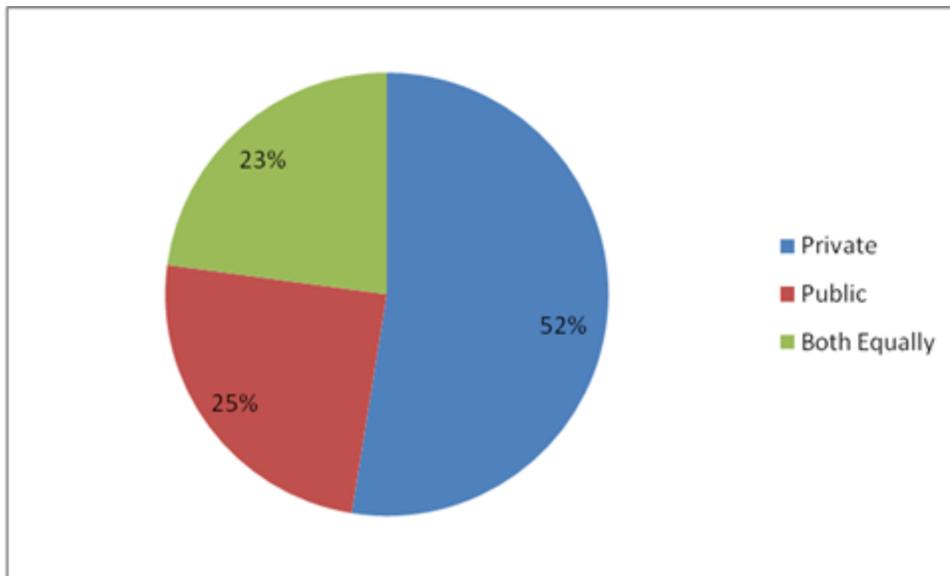


Figure 2. The relative significance of public and private land for recreational game bird hunting by Auckland/Waikato region licence holders (data obtained from the 2009 game bird harvest survey).

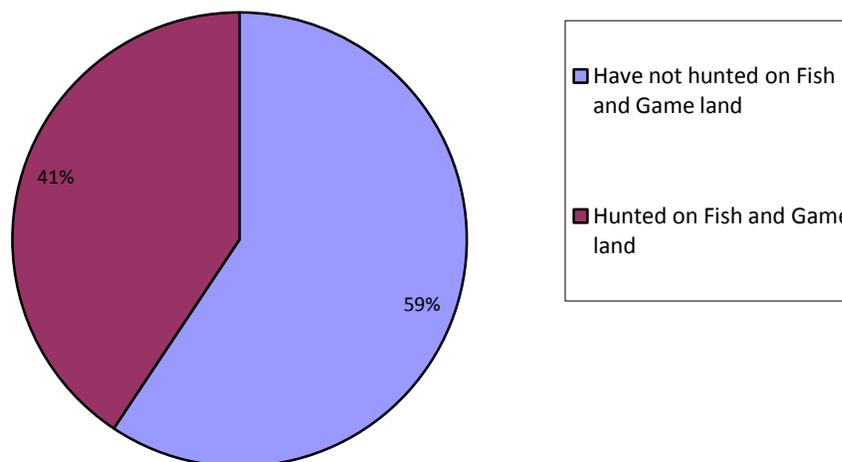


Figure 3. The percentage of licence holders who have hunted on property owned by Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council (data obtained from the 2001 game bird harvest survey).

As background to preparing this plan, the main recreational sites used by anglers and hunters have been listed and included as an appendix. These are based largely upon those water bodies identified by anglers during the National Angler's Surveys (Unwin and Brown, 1998; Unwin and Image, 2003) but have been extended to include wetlands and any other major areas accessible to upland game or waterfowl hunting. As part of the list, each site was assessed as to its relative size, significance, recreational opportunity spectrum category and the species present which would support recreation.

The appendix lists both the main sites and the species available to the angler or hunter. The data can be summarised in the following pie graphs, however, to illustrate and summarise the range of types of recreation available in the region.

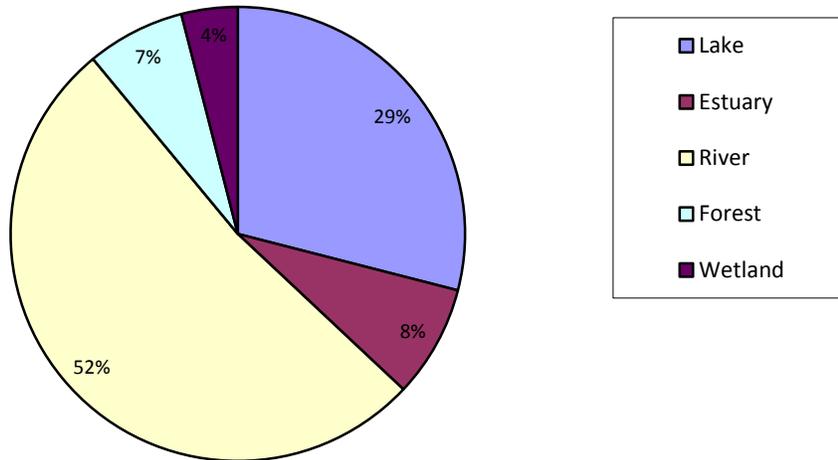


Figure 4. Types of recreational opportunities in the Auckland/Waikato Region

The wide range of recreational opportunities available in the Region is shown in Figure 4. It is evident from this chart that there are a large number of rivers which are available, particularly for the anglers, in the region. In addition, a large proportion of the public hunting opportunity is on lakes, while the region also has a significant number of estuaries, forests and wetlands.

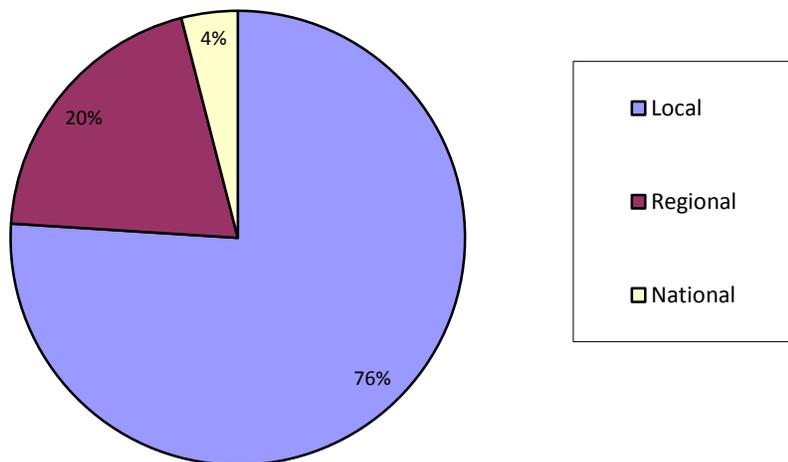


Figure 5. Relative significance of different public angling and hunting recreational opportunities in the Auckland/Waikato Region

The relative significance of different angling and hunting recreational opportunities in the Region is shown in Figure 5. Significance was determined against criteria which have subsequently been applied to the whole National Angler's Survey dataset (Deans, 2005), as below. Use data were taken from NAS data or regional surveys, while the origin of anglers is taken from regional surveys or staff experience based upon compliance or other Fish and Game management activity. A user day is taken as being an occasion when an angler fished at a particular water body on a given day, without any minimum or maximum fishing time. The Region has relatively few areas of national significance, mainly large wetland areas, with relatively few waters receiving high angler usage or attracting anglers from other regions.

Local

The majority of participants in this activity are from the immediate locality and/or fewer than 1000 user days occur each year.

Regional

The majority (over 50%) of participants in this activity are from the wider region or beyond rather than just the immediate locality and/or more than 1000 but fewer than 5000 user days occur each year.

National

*At least 20% of the participants in this activity have come from areas **outside** the region **specifically** to participate in the activity in this location and/or more than 5000 user days per annum.*

Each site was also assigned into a Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Category. This approach is used extensively in the USA and now in New Zealand by the Department of Conservation to maintain a range of settings in which recreation can take place. These enable managers to ensure that a wide range of settings is maintained and manage the sites to maintain the full range of recreational opportunities. It was sometimes difficult to assign an estuary or wetland to a particular category as although surrounded by mainly rural land, they were considered to have high natural values and were thus assigned accordingly.

Table 1 Auckland/Waikato Angling and Hunting Recreational Opportunity Spectrum Categories

ROS Category	Urban	Rural	Natural	Remote
Setting	In or near urban area	Rural	Little modified or largely protected land	Usually unmodified public land
Duration of activity	Usually short	Short or long	Usually longer than 4 hours	Usually a day or more
Access	Easy, by road	Road or sometimes boat	Road (often unsealed), track, boat or aircraft	Point access only, walking, boat or aircraft
Travel Distance for most anglers	Short	Medium	Medium to distant	Distant from main centres
Use levels	Often high	Low to high	Low to medium	Very low to medium
Tolerated User Encounter Rates	High	High to medium	Moderate to low	Low to very low
Ideal Numbers/Type of Fishing	Many fish	Many fish	Fewer, larger fish, usually sight fishing, chance of trophy	Trophy Fish potential, sight fishing
Frequency of visits by individual	Either frequent or never	Frequent to common	Common to occasional	Rare
Fishery Stocked?	Possibly	Possibly	Not usually	No
Catch Rate	Low to high	Medium	Medium to low	Usually relatively low
Angling Methods available?	All	All	Usually artificial bait, sometimes fly only	Artificial bait or fly only
Species Available	All, incl. coarse spp	All, depending upon region	Usually salmonids	Brown or Rainbow Trout
Social Experience	Close to home	Family/Away from home	Attractive landscape, clear water, often associated with camping, overnight stay, getting away	Scenic beauty and feelings of solitude, no human influence

The regional distribution of ROS categories are summarised in Figure 6. Clearly much of the recreational opportunity occurs across the rural environment, while there are few opportunities in the remote area. The comparatively high proportion of natural sites is due to the large number of wetlands and estuaries available to game bird hunters in the Auckland/Waikato Region.

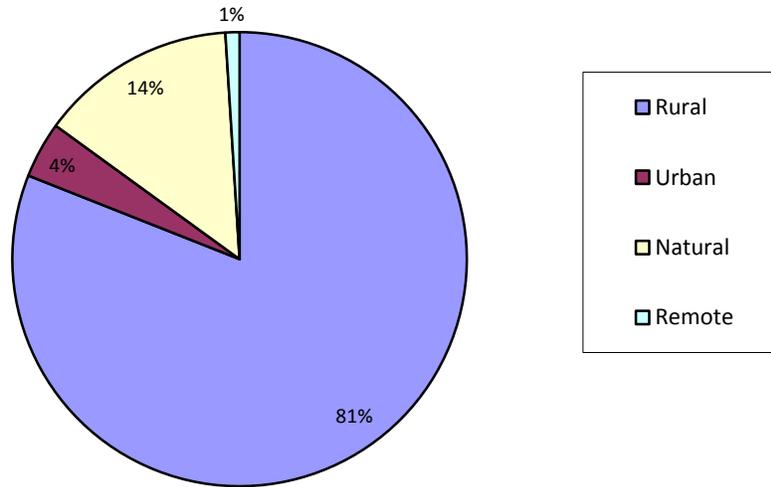


Figure 6. Distribution of different ROS categories in the Auckland/Waikato Region

PART FIVE

INTERPRETATION

Coarse fish	family of non-salmonid sports fish often found in still or slow moving waters. They are named after the 'coarse' feel of their scales. Perch, rudd and tench are the three coarse fish classified as sports fish in the region
Dabbling duck	typically waterfowl of fresh, shallow wetland, ponds and rivers. They usually feed in water by dabbling or tipping rather than submerging.
Game birds	those species listed as such in the First Schedule of the Wildlife Act 1953
Habitat	environment in which a particular species or group of species lives. It includes the physical and biotic characteristics that are relevant to the species concerned
Fish and Game Ranger	any person appointed, or deemed to be appointed as such pursuant to section 26FA of the Conservation Act 1987
Sports fish	those species listed as sports fish in the First Schedule of the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983
Sustainability	used in an ecological sense in this plan. The use of the components of an ecosystem in ways that allow for the perpetuation of the character and natural processes of that ecosystem
Upland Game	those non-waterbird species listed as game birds in the First Schedule of the Wildlife Act 1953, specifically pheasant, brown quail, Californian quail, chukar and red legged partridge.
Waterfowl	those species listed as game birds in the First Schedule of the Wildlife Act 1953, specifically mallard duck, grey duck, NZ shoveler, paradise shelduck, pukeko, black swan and Canada goose

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

The Council operates under its two principle acts – the Conservation Act 1987 and Wildlife Act 1953 - and within a number of other statutes.

CONSERVATION ACT 1987

The Council is established under the Conservation Act, which contains the legal authority for Fish and Game Councils to manage the country's sports fish and game bird resources. The act also contains provisions that are relevant to public access, freshwater fisheries management, controls on fish and game recreation and the requirement for Fish and Game Councils to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. Anglers Notices are promulgated under this Act. The Conservation General Policy was approved by the Minister of Conservation in 2005 under section 17C of this Act and provides guidance for the Council to use in its management of fish and game.

WILDLIFE ACT 1953

The Wildlife Act 1953 establishes how the legal authority to manage sports fish and game birds can be exercised. It establishes the right to control hunting through a licensing process, designates those species that are considered game birds, designates powers of Fish and Game rangers for the purposes of this Act and sets out penalties for offences under this Act. Game Notices are promulgated under this Act.

FRESHWATER FISHERIES REGULATIONS 1983

The Freshwater Fisheries Regulations are promulgated under the Conservation Act 1987. These regulations provide for controls on licensing, controls on fish tagging, use of electric fishing machines, protection of fish passage, regulation on fish transfer and the management of indigenous and noxious fish species.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) provides for the management of New Zealand's natural and physical resources, including sports fish and game bird habitat, access to waterways and their margins and wilderness, natural character and recreational values. The RMA allows Fish and Game New Zealand input to development decisions made by regional and territorial authorities. All activities of the Council are bound by the provisions of the RMA, the regional policy statements and regional and district plans. At the same time, it requires regional and territorial councils to have regard to any management plans and strategies prepared under other acts. These Councils therefore need to have regard to the Sports Fish and Game Bird Management Plan when preparing or reviewing their plans and strategies.

BIOSECURITY ACT 1993

The Biosecurity Act 1993 includes provisions which the Council must follow in its operations. Fish and Game Councils must also obtain approval under this Act if new species of sports fish or game birds are introduced to the country. The Biosecurity Act also includes provision for trying to prevent new pests and diseases from arriving in New Zealand and eradicating or controlling those already present.

The Council has worked closely with Biosecurity New Zealand over the arrival of the unwanted species including gudgeon, marron and didymo.

RESERVES ACT 1977

The Reserves Act 1977 provides for the acquisition of land for reserves, and the classification and management of reserves (including leases and licences). Reserves may be administered by the Department of Conservation or by other ministers of the Crown, boards, trustees, local authorities, societies and other organisations appointed to control and manage the reserve, or in whom reserves are vested.

Under section 2 of the Reserves Act 1977, Fish and Game Councils have been appointed to be local authorities for the purposes of this Act (*New Zealand Gazette 29 November 2001 Page 3949*). This enables them to exercise the powers and functions of a local authority under the Reserves Act.

The Auckland/Waikato Region of Fish and Game New Zealand is recognised as a covenanting body under the Reserves Act. Reserves established by other authorities may also provide protection for sports fish and game bird habitat.

FISH AND GAME COUNCIL ELECTIONS REGULATIONS 1990

These regulations prescribe the procedure for the election of members of Fish and Game Councils and the appointment by such Councils of members to constitute the New Zealand Fish and Game Council.

LOCAL BODIES OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT 1987

The Council is subject to the Local Bodies Official Information and Meetings Act 1987. Its meetings are open to the public and must be advertised. All meetings must be transacted openly unless criteria defined in the Act have been met.

CROWN ENTITIES 2004, PUBLIC FINANCE ACT 1989 AND PUBLIC AUDIT ACT 2001

All Fish and Game councils are subject to the provisions of the Crown Entities Act, the Public Finance Act and Public Audit Act. This requires them to be audited annually by the Audit Office and to provide an annual report including a statement of objectives and a comparative statement of service performance. The report must be presented to a publicly advertised annual general meeting and to Parliament. Councils are Public Entities in terms of these Acts.

NOTIFYING THE PLAN

The procedure for preparing and gaining approval of sports fish and game bird management plans is set out in section 17M of the Conservation Act 1987. In summary it requires a council to:

Publish a notice of the draft plan in the newspaper

Give notice of the draft plan to

- the Director-General
- representatives of the appropriate iwi authorities
- regional councils and territorial authorities

Give such further notice of the plan as the Fish and Game Council thinks fit.

Invite persons or organisations to send to the Fish and Game Council written submissions on the proposal before a date not less than 40 working days after the publication of the notice.

Consult with such other persons or organisations, in such manner, as the Fish and Game Council considers practicable and appropriate.

Give full consideration to any submissions and opinion make known to the Fish and Game Council.

It also requires:

Every notice to state that the draft plan is available for inspection at the places and times specified in the notice.

From the date of public notification until public opinion has been made known to the Fish and Game Council, the draft plan to be made available for public inspection during normal office hours and in such places and quantities as are likely to encourage public participation.

The Fish and Game Council to give every person or organisation in making any submission a chance to be heard in support of the submission.

The Fish and Game Council to prepare a summary of the submissions received on the draft.

The Fish and Game Council to send the draft to the Minister with the summary of the submissions and a written statement of any matters of content on which the Director-General and the Council are unable to agree.

The Minister shall approve the draft or send it back to the Fish and Game Council for further consideration before approval.

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APPENDIX

Table of recreational sites of interest to anglers and hunters in the Auckland/Waikato Region

	Water type or Forest	Size	ROS Category	Recreational significance	Rainbow trout	Brown trout	Coarse fish	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Lake A	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Aotea Harbour	Estuary	Large	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lake Arapuni	Lake	Large	Rural	National	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lake Are Are	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Awakino River	River	Medium	Rural	National	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Awaroa River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Lake Kaituna	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Bombay Pond	Lake	Small	Rural	Local			Yes					
Lake Komakorau	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Chelsea Sugar Works	Lake	Small	Urban	Local			Yes					
Lake Kainui	Lake	Small	Rural	Local			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lake E	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Firth of Thames	Estuary	Large	Natural	Regional				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lake Hakanoa	Lake	Small	Urban	Local			Yes					
Hikutaia River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Lake Hotoananga	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Kaiarau Gravel Pits	Lake	Small	Rural	Local			Yes					
Kaipara Harbour	Estuary	Large	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Kaipara River	River	Medium	Rural	Local			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Kakahu Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local		Yes		Yes				
Kaniwhaniwha Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Lake Karapiro	Lake	Large	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		
Kauaeranga River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes							
Kawhia Harbour	Estuary	Large	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Komata River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Kopuatai Peat Dome	Wetland	Large	Rural	National				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Little Waipa Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes				

Mahurangi Forest	Forest	Large	Rural	Local						Yes	Yes
Mangaohae Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes						
Mangaokewa Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes			
Mangaotaki River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes			
Mangapehi Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes						
Mangatangi Reservoir	Lake	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes						
Mangatawhiri Reservoir	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes						
Mangatawhiri River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	
Mangatawhiri Wetland	Wetland	Medium	Natural	Regional				Yes	Yes	Yes	
Mangatepopo Stream	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes	Yes					
Mangatutu Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes		Yes			
Mangauika Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes					
Mangawara Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes					
Mangawhai Forest	Forest	Large	Rural	Local						Yes	Yes
Mangawhio Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes					
Manukau Harbour	Estuary	Large	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes	
Maramarua Forest	Forest	Large	Rural	Regional						Yes	Yes
Maramatata River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes	Yes					
Maratoto Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes					
Marokopa River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes			
Matarawa Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes					
Lake Moananui	Lake	Small	Urban	Local	Yes	Yes					
Moakurarua Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes			
Mokau River	River	Large	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes			
Ngakoahia Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes			
Lake Ngaroto	Lake	Small	Rural	Local			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Ngutunui Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes					
Ohinemuri River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes		Yes			
Lake Ohinewai	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes	
Ohura River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes			
Lake Okaihau	Lake	Small	Rural	Local			Yes				
Ongarue River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes		Yes			
Opuatia Wetland	Wetland	Medium	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes	

Oraka Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Lake Ototoa	Lake	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes		Yes					
Parkinsons Lake	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Penewaka Lagoon	Wetland	Small	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Piako River	River	Medium	Rural	Local				Yes				
Lake Pikopiko	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Piopiotea Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Pokaiwhenua Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Puniu River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Lake Pupuke	Lake	Medium	Urban	Local	Yes	Yes						
Raglan Harbour	Estuary	Large	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Rangiriri Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Local		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Rapurapu Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Riverhead Forest	Forest	Large	Rural	Regional							Yes	Yes
Lake Rotokauri	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lake Rotokawau	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lake Rotomanuka	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lake Rotongaro	Lake	Medium	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lake Rotoroa	Lake	Medium	Urban	Regional			Yes					
Lake Rotopataka	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lake Serpentine	Lake	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Tairua Forest	Forest	Large	Rural	Local							Yes	Yes
Tairua Harbour	Estuary	Medium	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Tairua River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Taringamotu River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Tawarau River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Tokoroa Forest	Forest	Large	Rural	Regional							Yes	Yes
Lake Tomarata	Lake	Small	Rural	Local	Yes		Yes	Yes				
Lake Waahi	Lake	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Waihou Forest	Forest	Large	Rural	Local							Yes	Yes
Waihou River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lake Waikare	Lake	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Waikato Delta	Wetland	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes	Yes	Yes		

Waikato River	River	Large	Rural	National	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Waimakariri Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes		Yes					
Waimiha Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Waiomou River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Waione Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Waipa River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Waipapa River	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes							
Lake Waipapa	Lake	Large	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes	Yes				Yes	
Waipari Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Waitawheta River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Waitekauri River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Whitianga Harbour	Estuary	Medium	Natural	Local			Yes					
Waiwawa River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes							
Whakapapa River	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes	Yes						
Whakauru Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Whangamarino River	River	Medium	Rural	Local			Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Whangamarino Wetland	Wetland	Large	Rural	National			Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Whangapoua Harbour	Estuary	Medium	Rural				Yes	Yes				
Whanganui River (above Whakapapa confluence)	River	Large	Remote	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Whanganui River (below Whakapapa confluence)	River	Large	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Lake Whangape	Lake	Large	Rural	Regional			Yes	Yes	Yes			
Woodhill Forest	Forest	Large	Rural	Regional							Yes	Yes