

## **Sounds Advisory Group Meeting Notes held at Mt Richmond Estate, Rai Valley on 20 March 2017 at 9.30 am**

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### **Present**

Clr Hook, Alan Johnson, Steve Ulrich, Steve Murrin, Alec McNeil, Ross Withell, Rob Schuckard, Linda Booth, Debbie Stone, Kristen Gerard, Tim Greenhough, Eric Jorgenson, Shelly Sidley (DOC), Raymond Smith, Poneke Rene and Ken Roush

### **In Attendance**

Rebecca Waldron (MDC Secretary)

### **Apologies**

Clr David Oddie, Clr Nadine Taylor, Clr Jenny Andrews, Monyeen Wedge, Ian Mitchell, Dave Hayes, Rachel Drake and Vic Koller

### **1. Salmon Working Group Report - Rob Schuckard and Eric Jorgensen**

- Rob expressed dissatisfaction and concern at the Salmon Working Group Review process. Please see the SAG MSWG Members Final Report link below for more details:



SAG MSWG member's  
final report to SAG [0

- Rob noted that in 2012 the Board of Enquiry had set a baseline for marine farming allowing for 10,000 tonnes of salmon feed to go ahead at Waitata Reach under careful adaptive management. The application for an additional 23,000 tonnes in Pelorus Sound/Te Hoiere is changing the baseline. He suggested reading the Ben Knight report from the Cawthron Institute. Link below:
- <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/document-vault/16135>
- Rob expressed interest in how the Councillors would proceed. He noted that at the time of the Board of Enquiry, the Council had said it would defend the division between Coastal Zone 1 and Coastal Zone 2 in perpetuity.
- Eric noted that the process had been very frustrating and that the Environmental Defence Society (EDS) intend to contest the application.
- Eric had been surprised to learn that Julie Hall (Sustainable Seas Science Challenge Programme Director) had been unaware that peace and quiet and the general amenity value of the Sounds were among the strongest values coming out of Marlborough.

### **Questions/Answers**

- It was clarified that greater monitoring coverage of marine farms may be a result of the process. Eric noted that quality is relative to what it is compared against.
- Raymond reinforced the other members of the Working Group's concerns on how the Ministry had supported the industry over the Marlborough Sounds Resource Management Plan and the proposed Marlborough Environment Plan (the Plan). He noted that there is some disagreement within Iwi and that there is a distrust of the process. He clarified that there will be no financial gain for the Iwi from the process.
- Ross noted that the proposal for research into the water column would be welcome; however having only six monitoring buoys would not be adequate.

- Trevor commented:
  - He had pushed for SAG members to be on the Panel with the understanding that the process would be run differently than it was.
  - Council were keen for a process to happen which would resolve some of the issues of low flow and non-performance. The power in this process has been taken away from the local authority.
  - Council will submit to the Panel and highlight the Plan. Legally the Plan has to be taken account of. The navigation of one of the sites will also be highlighted. This has not been ratified by Council yet.
- Discussion followed surrounding Council's position on this matter.
- It was noted that the Minister does not have to accept the recommendation of the Panel.
- Rob asked if the Council felt comfortable with the concerns that have been identified at Waitata Reach by the Board of Enquiry (additional 23,000 tonnes of feed). Trevor clarified that the Council did not have unlimited resources to deal with the specific issues but was going to work at a higher level rather than going into the details of each consent or water quality issue.
- Eric asked if Council would be submitting on the King Salmon Process. Trever clarified it would not. Eric also noted that there were some concerns around water quality monitoring and asked if they had been resolved, and if there were concerns around the modelling, would it be something that Council would submit on? Steve commented that MPI have modelled some permeations and are going to model what they believe are the preferred scenarios at the end of March.

It was noted that Steve has not seen the water quality data/models (unavailable at this point) and would be unable to give Councillors definitive advice. Steve has been consistent, in that MPI needs to model the preferred scenarios. He noted that if the Plan changes are accepted they would still have to follow the resource consent process. He noted there is some doubt about the mid-Waitata Reach.

- The three members were thanked for their participation in the Working Group and for their well written report.

## **2. Aquaculture Working Group**

- The Council led initiative – The Aquaculture Working Group will have its first meeting on 29 March 2017. Judy, Rob and Eric are representing SAG on the Group.
- Iwi representation has not yet been confirmed.
- It was noted that SAG members would appreciate receiving an agenda so that they will be able to provide some input into the meeting.
- How to communicate back to the wider community will be discussed at the meeting.

## **3. Climate Change – Rob Schuckard**

- Rob noted that the Marlborough Environment Plan (MEP) uses a model for climate change of 1°C by 2040 and 2°C by 2090. He asked what buffer is integrated into the PMEP and suggested that there is not much room for error using this model?

Alan noted that there is a new chapter in the MEP that deals specifically with climate change. Council is anticipating doing more modelling around sea level rise etc. There is an anticipated State of the Environment trigger (AER) in the MEP for Council to do high level work on climate change but this won't happen until the PMEP is operative. The engineering department has done some work with regard to long term effects on infrastructure issues.

- Alan clarified that the Council would have to be adaptive to results of modelling to mitigate hazards and that there is flexibility in the MEP to allow this.

#### 4. Roading Update – Steve Murrin

- There was between five and six million dollars of damage caused by the 14 November earthquake and storm.
- There have been teams working continually since then to repair the damage and this is nearly all completed now.
- There has been a big effort in the Kenepuru and new retaining walls have been built there. This includes new “living” retaining walls. These are earth walls with bunds filled with a fern and grass mix. There is also a wall which Marlborough Roads may use in the Sounds that is built out of sterile willow brush which is unable to spread, the root system binds the wall together and takes the moisture out of the road which works well in areas of high rainfall.
- Culverts are being inspected as there was a lot of damage to them in the earthquakes.
- Repair work will begin on Te Aumiti/French Pass/Tennyson Inlet roads when Kenepuru is finished. (End of March).
- Te Aumiti/French Pass seal extension is halfway through.
- Bylaws for stock crossings are out for consultation at the moment. Link below:

<http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/Council-Publications/Plans-Policies-and-Documents/~media/Files/MDC/Home/Your%20Council/Plan%20and%20Reports/Bylaws/2010/MDC%20Bylaw%202010%20Chapter%203%20Traffic.ash>

- Steve clarified that the new bylaw will give Council the ability to charge if there are issues with crossings. As the road is a place of work it is necessary to comply with the new Health and Safety Employment Act. The NZTA document covering this issue was circulated to the group and is attached below:



Section-I-stock-coptt  
m-4th-ed-april2015.p

#### Questions/Answers

- Marlborough Roads was thanked for the speed that the roads were cleared in the Kenepuru after the 14 November events and for using local contractors to do the work. Steve noted that Health and Safety is an issue when using local contractors and that HEB have employed a person to work with the smaller contractors to make sure they are complying - this seems to be working well.
- Steve was asked how work was progressing on State Highway 1 down to Kaikoura. Steve clarified that there is a huge push from Government to have the highway open by mid-December.
- Civil Defence infrastructure in the Sounds was discussed. It was confirmed that there are Civil Defence groups being formed in the Sounds which are community led and receive some assistance from Council.
- Concern was expressed about the sterile willow retaining walls. Steve has received assurance that the plants cannot spread.
- Concern was expressed that gravel coming in for road works may contain wattle seeds. Steve clarified that gravel supplies in the Sounds are in short supply and that if any wattle is seen - to let Marlborough Roads know so they can eradicate it.

## **5. Progress on the Kenepuru Barge Site – Ross Withell**

- There has been an additional budgetary provision passed through the Annual Plan process to be added on to the initial amount for the barge site.
- Council's Assets and Services Department will be the resource consent applicant.
- There is consultation happening between Council, the landowner, Forestry and the Residents Association.
- The timeframe is June 2018.

## **6. Road Reserve Spray Programme – Rob Schuckard**

- Rob outlined the background for the item: Halfway to Te Aumiti/French Pass, an area which had been logged was replanted, including an area of native bush on road reserve under power lines. A spraying operation took place resulting in the spraying of 6 kms including the buffer between the road and the forestry block, destroying native trees including beeches and 50 year old pungs.

Rob asked if Council was consulted by Marlborough Lines on this issue and if notice is being taken of water supplies when these types of operations are carried out?

Steve replied to Rob's question: Marlborough Roads only involvement was to close the road while the spraying took place. This is an issue in other areas as well and spraying is the only option as the cost to put gangs in to cut the wilding pines out is too expensive.

It was noted that a spray could be used which would eradicate the pines but leave the natives. Steve will take the suggestion from SAG –“that a different spraying regime should be looked at in these areas”, back to Marlborough Lines and Marlborough Roads.

- It was suggested that Marlborough Lines be invited to the next SAG meeting.

## **7. Septic Tank Inspections – Tim Greenhough**

- There is a clause in the MEP which allows for Council to inspect septic tanks. Tim suggests most septic tanks would fail and that in a community such as Okiwi Bay where there are two hundred households – there would be approximately 100 failures and it would cost \$2.5-3 million in the Bay to upgrade the sewage. The community there feel it would be better for the Council to put in a public sewage system if this were the case. There has been a submission lodged with regard to this by Okiwi Bay Ratepayers Association Inc. They would like other Sounds communities to be aware of this issue.
- Cllr Hook clarified that Council will be reactive rather than proactive about inspections. However; if there is a complaint or failure then inspections will be carried out.

## **8. Integrated Management Trust Update - Eric Jorgensen**

- Funding which was allocated from Council has not yet been accessed.
- There have been no signals from Central Government, agencies or politicians that they will support the Trust's collaborative management processes for the Sounds.
- The Marine Protected Area (MPA) has stalled.
- Fisheries consultation last year - included discussion on fine scale management of fisheries.
- Scallop fisheries are closed.

- The Trust, with strong backing from Council does not intend to wait for Central Government and are looking at what they can achieve in the next 12 months:
  - Fisheries – deal with the whole, not species by species.
  - Identify opportunities to get stakeholders together to protect, restore and utilise the environment. This touches on points in the MPA. The Trust is aware that there are obligations to Tangata Whenua and have talked about including Mataitai, as the inclusion of Mataitai could take care of some of the issues around recreational and commercial fisheries management.
  - Julie Hall spoke to Council on the Sustainable Seas Science Challenge last week. In the next two years, two more focus areas need to be chosen and the Trust would like Marlborough to be chosen as one of them. The Trust will take the lead in identifying how to apply leverage to the Sustainable Seas Science Challenge to get research focussed on Marlborough.
  - Working with Council on the Coastal Research Strategy.
  - Sustainable Seas have \$5 million available every two years for discretionary projects.
  - How to make research programmes aware of each other.
  - Identify opportunities – protection utilisation, restoration.

### Questions/Answers

- What are the research priorities?

Eric suggested that research priorities are being driven by the scientists. Clr Hook mentioned that research is often opportunistic and is driven by the funding that is available.

- Rob noted that the last SOE report from Council (page 150) (link below), states that biodiversity is declining in the Sounds and asks how this is being dealt with?

[http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/Environment/~/\\_media/Files/MDC/Home/Environment/State%20of%20the%20Environment/2015/SER\\_Coastal.pdf](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/Environment/~/_media/Files/MDC/Home/Environment/State%20of%20the%20Environment/2015/SER_Coastal.pdf)

Steve Ulrich answered that he has been leveraging funding from LINZ, MPI, Marine Farms Association, Forestry and that broader discussions on priorities are just beginning. The money from Coastal Occupancy Charges will be spent in the same area.

It was clarified that Coastal Occupancy Charges are subject to the MEP hearing process and that if implemented, fees will then be subject to a consultation process.

- Raymond noted that from an Iwi perspective the MPA process floundered when the Crown tried to take the Kermedec Islands.
  - Mataitai applications will increase in the Marlborough Sounds.
  - Sustainable Seas – Iwi have some reservations about the philosophy of maximising value and understanding environmental limits.

### 9. Doc Update - Shelly Sidley

- Shelly circulated the DOC report and the Sounds Foreshore Reserve factsheet. Links below:



SAG 20 March 2017 -  
DOC-2997026.pdf



Sounds Foreshore  
Reserve factsheet - I

## Questions/Answers

- Shelly noted that if issues on the Sounds Foreshore Reserve are drawn to DOC's attention they will deal with them on a case by case basis and that DOC are trying to establish clear policies to enable transparency, consistency and fairness.
- Shelly clarified that a Planner is employed by DOC to oversee all resource consent applications in Marlborough. Local DOC employees will make comment to the Planner where they see concerns. If communities would like DOC to know their concerns about resource consent they can approach Shelly who will pass the information on.
- DOC is striving to make integrated, collaborative approaches to planning. Te Tau Ihu Project is an example; DOC, Marlborough District Council, Nelson City Council, Tasman District Council and Iwi are involved, looking at conservation strategies for the whole top of the south.

## 10. Waste and Recycling Issues Update – Alec McNeil (MDC), Ross Withell

- Ross Withell noted that there are a high proportion of glass bottles in the coin skips which are going to landfill instead of being recycled. Alec noted that it is worthwhile recycling glass – it goes by train to Auckland where it is remade into glass bottles.

Cross contamination will happen if there is free glass recycling beside the coin skips. The challenge is to change people's behaviour

- The Skip Sorting Centre is now open. This is currently diverting 45% of skip waste from the landfill and the target is to divert 60%.
- The Marlborough Litter Project is a two year funded project by Ministry of the Environment and ratepayers. This project is the information gathering phase. Follow the link below to participate:  
<http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/Services/Refuse/Marlborough-Litter-Project.aspx>
- The Picton Marina trial litter collection and recycling bins have started to be abused, and have become an issue for local tourist accommodation. This service is being withdrawn and replaced with a wheelie bin service at the public boating ramp and Fishermans Wharf.
- The Council has been working with a company on a pyrolysis plant (low heat timber treatment facility) which will process timber from the waste sorting centre and the viticulture industry. The charcoal product produced will be sold to industrial markets. This facility will be subject to the resource consent process.
- Climate change – the Government is sending signals that it will be withdrawing carbon credit. This will result in a dramatic increase of the cost of disposal to landfill in the next three years. This could affect the carbon price which will make tree planting more attractive. Since 2009, Council has been modifying the gas extraction system at the landfill to make it as efficient as possible and the next stage is to find a use for the gas.
- There is a flat rate for tyre disposal of approximately \$5.75 per tyre.

**The meeting adjourned for a 30 minute lunch break at 12.15 pm, recommencing at 12.45 pm.**

## 11. Policy Update (MEP, Annual Plan) – Alan Johnson, Trevor Hook

### Marlborough Environment Plan

- There is an in-committee paper being presented to the Planning, Finance and Community Committee on Thursday 23 March 2017 to suggest the appointment of an independent commissioner for the Hearing of Submissions to the Marlborough Environment Plan. There will be one Iwi Independent Commissioner and one general Independent Commissioner. Councillors will appoint the committee.

- It is still expected that submission hearings will begin in August. They will possibly last between 13 and 16 weeks. The four Councillors on the Hearings Panel are Councillors; Jamie Arbuckle, Larissa Shenfield, David Oddie and Trevor Hook.
- It was clarified that the submitter's original submission and any further submissions will be dealt with at the one hearing session.
- There will be a two week period for further submissions.
- It was noted that the two week period for further submissions may not be long enough if it were to clash with the New Zealand King Salmon Hearings period.
- No decision has been made on whether submitters will automatically receive the Submission Summary and Decisions Requested Report in hard copy.

### Annual Plan

- It has been decided that the Annual Plan will be going out for consultation. Submissions open on 6 April and closes on 10 May. There is no significant variation to the Long Term Plan. Proposals include:
  - \$80,000 per year for marine biosecurity to develop a small scale management programme to manage the Mediterranean fan worm.
  - Additional resources for a Land Management Scientist.
- Trevor noted that the Long Term Plan will be reassessed next year (third year in three yearly cycle) and that it is important for communities to engage in the process.
- Due to lack of time the Science and Monitoring Update will be held over to the next SAG meeting.

### 12. General Discussion (other items)

- Updates on the FENZ Transition and the state of the rivers in Marlborough were suggested as items for the next agenda.
- It was suggested that two SAG meetings per year be held out in the community.

### 13. Positive Feedback

- Thanks to SAG reps on the Salmon Working Group.
- Thanks to Marlborough Roads for their response to the events of 14 November.

The date of the next SAG meeting is 19 June 2017.

The meeting closed at 1.00 pm.

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