FISH & GAME NEW ZEALAND
NELSON/MARLBOROUGH REGION

SPORTS FISH AND GAME MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

Date Wednesday, 20 August 2008

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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I am pleased to present the Nelson/Marlborough sports fish and game management plan.

The preparation of this plan reflects the significant responsibility entrusted to the Nelson/Marlborough Fish and Game 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 without intruding unduly on other users of that habitat. Its preparation has involved extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

It is likely that management issues will change in the years to come as new information and new challenges are presented. The changing attitudes and methods used within the angling and hunting community and by other users of the habitat concerned may require this plan to be amended or reviewed. Therefore it should not be regarded as a static snap-shot from one point-in-time but a living and evolving document, designed for meeting and addressing changing requirements.

The Nelson/Marlborough Fish and Game Council looks forward to the ongoing input of views from anglers, hunters and other interested groups and users of sports fish and game bird habitat.

Bill McKenzie
Chairman

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Nelson Marlborough Fish and Game Council (Fish and Game (NM)) is obliged 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 Fish and Game (NM) to meet its statutory responsibilities over the next 10 year time frame.

In particular, the plan summarises the issues which Fish and Game (NM) 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 of its subcomponents.

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. In accord with section 17 L(4) of the Act, Fish and Game (NM) should have regard to:

- the sustainability of sports fish and game birds in its 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 Fish and Game (NM) 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
- 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 regional 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 Nelson/Marlborough 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 Nelson/Marlborough 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 Fish and Game (NM)'s Annual Operational Work Plan and other specific implementation plans.

Prior to submitting a draft of this management plan for approval by the Minister of Conservation, this plan has been prepared and notified according to the requirements of subsection (2) of section 17M of the Act to:

- daily newspapers circulating within the region –
    - The Nelson Mail
    - The Marlborough Express
    - The Press
- the Director General of Conservation, through the Nelson Marlborough Conservator
- Iwi Authorities, including, in alphabetical order –
    - Ngai Tahu
    - Ngati Apa
    - Ngati Koata
    - Ngati Kuia
    - Ngati Rarua
    - Ngati Tama
    - Ngati Toarangatira
    - Rangitane
    - Te Atiawa
- the Tasman, Marlborough, Buller and Hurunui District Councils, Nelson City Council and West Coast and Canterbury Regional Councils

- Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board

- Angling and hunting organisations, and landowner and public interest groups such as New Zealand Deerstalkers Association, Federated Farmers and the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.

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

The Nelson/Marlborough region [the region] is one of twelve Fish and Game regions in New Zealand.

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 Regional Councils and one National Council. Each of these Councils became Crown Entities and then Public Entities with the passing of the Crown Entities Act 2004. They have specific functions, responsibilities and powers to manage sports fish and game birds, as specified in Sections 26Q, 26R, and 26S of the Act.

'Fish & Game New Zealand' is the operating name of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council (the New Zealand Council) together with the 12 regional Fish and Game Councils established to represent the interests of anglers and hunters. 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 as though it was a Fish and Game Council.

The sports fish and game bird resource and income arising from it are the property of the Crown. Fish and Game Councils are empowered to administer these resources on the Crown's behalf.

Fish & Game New Zealand receives no government funding to undertake its statutory purpose and its activity is financed mainly through the sale of sports fish and game bird licences. 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. Councillors are anglers and or hunters elected through a democratic process by whole season licence holders.

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

> *"Manage, maintain and enhance the sports fish and game resource in the recreational interests of anglers and hunters."*

In fulfilling this purpose under Section 26Q of the Act, the primary functions of Fish and Game (NM) 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.

The Nelson/Marlborough Fish and Game region (see Figure 1) extends from Kahurangi Point in the northwest around the coast through the Nelson Bays and Marlborough Sounds and down the Kaikoura Coast to the Conway River catchment. It includes all the waters of the catchments and islands within this area and the upper Buller River catchment upstream of Lyell. This area includes

most of the former Nelson Acclimatisation District, all of the Marlborough Acclimatisation District

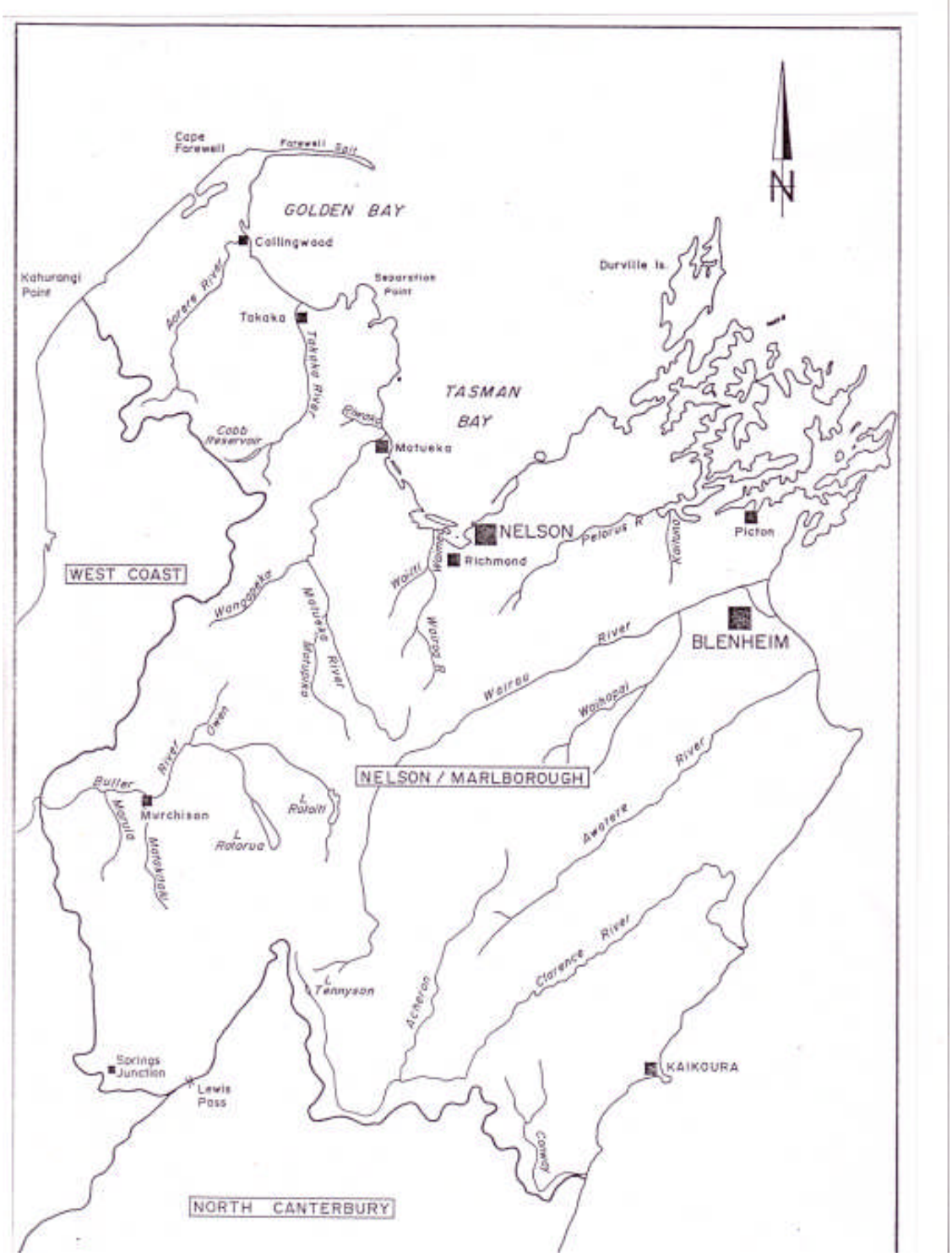

Figure 1 Nelson Marlborough Fish and Game Region

and some parts of the former North Canterbury District in the upper Clarence River catchment and West Coast District in the middle Buller River catchment.

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 (Wairau South, Wairau North, Blenheim, Waimea/Buller, Motueka/Golden Bay, Nelson) and six are elected from the region at large as the next highest polling candidates.

Fish and Game (NM) also has non-voting co-opted members, such as, at present, a representative from Ngai Tahu under the terms of the settlement Act for that iwi. In addition, the Director-General of Conservation or his nominee may attend Fish and Game (NM) meetings and speak, but not vote.

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.

Twenty thousand New Zealand residents purchased fish or game licences in the Nelson Marlborough region over the period 1996 to 2004[1]. In any given year, the region represents the interests of around 5500 anglers and 1000 hunters.

[1] Nelson Marlborough Fish and Game licenceholder database records.

PART TWO

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The objectives presented in this plan have been developed around two goals that reflect the general mission of the Fish and Game (NM), 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

Critical to the development of this plan and its subsequent implementation are overarching themes of communication and education, which are intertwined with the two goals. 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 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 Nelson/Marlborough region is undertaken through habitat protection. While many species are monitored, there is little direct intervention to increase the numbers of fish and game species, such as through hatcheries or game farms. In managing habitat, maintaining it is more effective than trying to restore it after it is damaged or destroyed. Fish and Game (NM) 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:

1.1 Maintain sustainable populations of harvestable sports fish and game bird species

1.2 Protect and increase habitat for sports fish and game birds

1.3 Ensure a sustainable harvest of the resource by enforcing fishing and hunting regulations.

1.4 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 merely 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, Fish and Game (NM) 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:

2.1 Encourage maximum angler and hunter participation, access to the fishing and hunting resource and maintain the quality of the recreational experience

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

2.3 Maximise the sale of angling and hunting licences in the region

2.4 Provide for the governance of the fish and game system by fish and game licence holders

2.5 Ensure the planned and coordinated management of the sports fish and game bird resource

2.6 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 Fish and Game (NM)'s annual operational work plans. The structure of this section of the Management Plan follows the eight functional areas (output classes) used in Fish & 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

Fish and Game (NM) manages a range of sports fish and game bird species in the Nelson/Marlborough region. Species management programmes are required for these species to ensure the populations remain healthy and to ensure 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 Fish and Game (NM).

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, spawning surveys, electro-fishing and angler surveys. Game monitoring techniques include annual aerial counts, 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 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 harvests*
- *Mitigating any adverse impacts on sports fish and game bird species*
- *Mitigating the impact of sports fish and game bird species on other species, habitat and users of that habitat*

Issues:

1. Without sustainable management of sports fish and game birds 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.

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.

Intensification of agriculture, discharges to waterways, 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. Development activities continue to reduce the quality and quantity of available habitat.

The long term effects of the introduced Didymo alga, *Didymosphenia geminata* on the aquatic ecosystem and sports fishery is unknown and remains a major concern. In the future Fish & Game New Zealand may have a substantial role to play in the management and control of this and similar invasive organisms in freshwater environments and with any ongoing research of their effects on the environment.

Habitat protection is the specific responsibility of local authorities (Resource Management Act 1991) and the Department of Conservation (Conservation Act 1987). Fish and Game (NM) 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.

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.

Habitat maintenance and enhancement is an important tool in the management of the sports fish and game bird resource. Ensuring that sufficient habitat is available to maintain self-sustaining

populations of sports fish and game birds and angling and hunting opportunities have become a major activity for Fish & Game New Zealand in recent years.

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 Fish and Game (NM)*

Issues:

1. Modification of rivers, particularly in lowlands, has adversely affected trout and salmon 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.
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. Government policies seeking renewable energy is putting pressure on riverine ecosystems due to hydro-electric power applications, diverting Fish and Game (NM) resources from fisheries, wildlife and recreational management.
7. New biosecurity threats arise from time to time and freshwater interests need to be vigilant to protect freshwaters generally

OUTPUT CLASS 3: PARTICIPATION

Fish & Game New Zealand 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 Fish and Game (NM)'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 Fish and Game (NM) 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 Fish and Game (NM). Too much angling pressure can diminish the perceived value of the back country fishery. Similar pressures have not yet had a major impact on hunting, but it is likely this will occur as the reputation of New Zealand as a hunting destination grows.

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 Fish & Game New Zealand 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 Fish and Game (NM).

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. Signposting of significant angling and hunting access points enable licence holders to easily identify opportunities.

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

Ethical standards of behaviour include:

(a) a desire to have others enjoy their hunting and angling opportunities as much as you.
(b) acknowledgment that anglers and hunters often have no audience to ensure they behave ethically and that such behaviour is self motivated and regulated.
(c) an individual concern for the well-being of the environment and for others also interested in and using that environment;
(d) promotion of uses which preserve the diversity, integrity, and beauty of ecosystems and the disapproval of those which do not;
(e) 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 and supporting opportunities for new anglers and hunters to receive training and 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. Where legal access is available, physical access may be impeded by vegetation or lack of tracks.
6. 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 Fish and Game (NM)'s capacity to successfully achieve its purpose and functions. To be effective, Fish and Game (NM) requires high public awareness of its role and activities, and the contribution it makes to environmental enhancement and an acceptability of Fish and Game activities.

Fish & Game New Zealand 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 Fish and Game (NM)'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 Fish and Game (NM) and vice versa.
3. Lack of consultation may result in unnecessary conflict or may miss opportunities.

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 Fish and Game (NM). One of the

strengths of the Fish and Game system is the ability for users of the resource to self-police their own system.

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

It is important that Fish and Game (NM) 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 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
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 & Game New Zealand. Licences purchased in the Nelson/Marlborough region are able to be used nationwide, apart from sports fishing in the Taupo Fishing District.

Part of Fish & 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. The licence categories do not necessarily meet the requirements of all anglers and hunters

OUTPUT CLASS 7: COUNCIL

Licence holder ownership of fish and game management and involvement is based upon an elected Council system. Fish and Game (NM) 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 therefore publicly notified and 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 staff for the administration of the Fish and Game resource in the region.

Each Fish and Game Council appoints a manager and other staff for the efficient and economic administration of the affairs of the Council. Preparation of agendas, meeting reports and minutes are part of the manager and staff'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. Councils need to be effectively serviced to carry out its governance role.

OUTPUT CLASS 8: PLANNING AND REPORTING

Fish and Game (NM) requires planning and reporting systems that enable it to establish and maintain clear direction and to provide accountability to licence holders. Fish and Game (NM) 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 Fish and Game (NM) include:

1. Preparation of a Sports Fish and Game 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 (s.26X Conservation Act). It documents activities undertaken for the year and the degree to which objectives are being met by Fish and Game (NM).

4. The financial statement is to be audited by the Office of the Auditor General or their agent.

Fish and Game (NM) must also prepare each annual Anglers and Game Notice which regulates sports fishing and game bird hunting in the region. These notices set out the conditions under which a current licence holder may fish or hunt in the Nelson/Marlborough 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 throughout New Zealand 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 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 its functions to advocate the national requirements of Fish & Game New Zealand and coordinate its regional functions.

It is necessary for councils to co-operate to ensure that the most effective use is made of every licence dollar. It is also necessary for the system to achieve excellence of fish and game management and services to anglers and hunters.

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 Management Plan*
  - *an annual operational work plan*
  - *an annual report, including a Statement of Service Performance*
- *Implementing national policy determined by the New Zealand Fish and Game Council*
- *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 Fish and Game regions*

Issues:

1. Without capable planning, management of the fish and game resource in the Nelson/Marlborough region will not be cost effective.
2. Some issues cannot be effectively dealt with in isolation from other Fish and Game regions

PART THREE

ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The Fish and Game management system is based on twelve regional councils coordinated by the New Zealand Council. With inter-availability of fishing and hunting between regions, funding of all thirteen 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 Fish & Game New Zealand administers are managed by each Fish and Game Council for all New Zealanders. When buying a licence, the licence purchaser is contributing to the management of the resource nation-wide – not only a particular region. This plan, however, is directed entirely at the medium to long term management of the Nelson/Marlborough region, within the context of the legislation and Fish and Game national policy.

METHODS TO BE USED

An important feature of the changes brought in by the Conservation Act was to ensure that 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.

Decisions by Fish and Game Councils can be challenged by the Ombudsman or by judicial review. A management plan can provide a statutory basis for decision-making and this is particularly the case when a Fish and Game Council wishes to turn down an application for an activity which it believes is inappropriate in its region.

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 Fish and Game (NM) providing some of the background information on the state of the resource and the reasons behind the decisions. Fish and Game (NM) meetings are public meetings. A time for public comment can be 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.

Fish and Game (NM)'s practice is to invite participation in decision making with affected parties. In addition, all Council meetings are publicly advertised with time set aside for public input or would be included on a meeting agenda if requested. In addition, Fish and Game (NM) is obliged 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.

A large area of sports fish and game bird habitat is on, adjacent to, or passes through, private land. It is important for the Nelson/Marlborough region to encourage land owners and managers to create, maintain and enhance sports fish and game bird habitats on their land. Many freshwater habitats are dynamic environments and respond rapidly to change. Riverine wetlands, for example, can be created after gravel extraction and within 5 years after their creation can be providing important wildlife and/or fisheries habitat.

Fish and Game (NM) 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. Advice on habitat protection or restoration will be provided to landowners most effectively in conjunction with funds sourced externally for biodiversity purposes. Fish and Game (NM) will seek support in the provision of advice wherever and whenever this is available. Where resources are required to undertake habitat enhancement, Fish and Game (NM) will seek external funds to assist if appropriate.

In addition to the provision of advice, Fish and Game (NM) reserves or leases a number of areas of land for the purpose of habitat enhancement. The major area is the Para Swamp, the largest freshwater swamp in Marlborough, of which about 80% of its 120 ha is owned or administered by Fish and Game for wetland habitat enhancement and game bird hunting. In addition Fish and Game (NM) administers a leasehold block at Botham's Bend in the lower Wairau, and the Top Valley Wildlife Management Reserve on the Wairau North bank.

FORMAL STATUTORY PLANNING PROCESS

Fish and Game (NM) will provide for and recognise Fish and Game (NM) and the New Zealand Council's interests in all appropriate statutory planning matters. This will involve:

1. consultation under the First Schedule of the Resource Management Act with the appropriate local authorities on all relevant planning documents.

2. 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

3. solutions of remediation or mitigation, where adverse effects of activities on sports fish and game bird habitat or recreational values cannot be avoided

4. development of effective protocols with other resource management authorities to manage key environmental impacts.

5. liaison with the Department of Conservation and Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board on their planning processes as required.

OPERATIONAL WORK PLANS

Operational work plans (OWPs) are prepared annually. If there is no sportsfish and game management plan for the time being in force for the area, the Minister of Conservation approves OWP's or provisions in them relating to the management of those species of sportsfish or game bird for which there is no management plan in force. OWP's 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.

Fish and Game (NM) begins to draft its OWP 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 OWPs of the regions are reviewed for consistency at meetings of regional managers and their recommendations are considered by the New Zealand Council. Ultimately it is the responsibility of the New Zealand 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 nation-wide 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 been set in early July, each region can finalise its annual OWP ready for the start of the new financial year in September. In developing its priorities and projects, Fish and Game (NM) will be mindful of any operative minimum operating standards or national policy developed for Fish and Game Councils by the New Zealand Council.

Fish and Game (NM)'s OWP will detail the outputs and activities necessary to implement the goals and objectives of this management plan as determined each year by Fish and Game (NM).

FISHING AND HUNTING REGULATIONS

Many anglers and hunters at times pursue their sport in regions other than where they purchase a licence. With nation-wide 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 Anglers 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. Fundamental to Fish and Game (NM)'s responsibility to promote angling and hunting is the avoidance of regulations, which would advance elitism or provide for exclusive use of the resource. It is especially important for newcomers to angling and hunting that regulations do not unnecessarily constrain the way they wish to pursue their chosen sport. In particular, Fish and Game (NM) takes the view that most regulations should be intended to maximise fishing and hunting opportunity. Restrictions should generally only exist for biological reasons and to ensure that sports fishing and game bird hunting remain as sporting activities, available to all who purchase the appropriate licence.

Fish and Game(NM) will draft and approve regional regulations which:

- 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 Nelson/Marlborough region will have impacts beyond its boundary. Therefore, in meeting its responsibilities, Fish and Game (NM) will consider the interests of all fish and game users and those of the wider community.

From an administrative point of view, Fish and Game (NM) 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 ("the New Zealand 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 New Zealand Council relevant to this plan are:

- to develop national policies in consultation with regional Fish and Game Councils. It is important that regional objectives and policies are not inconsistent with national policies and any national strategic direction.

- 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 nationally and regionally.

- To advocate in any statutory planning process its interests in the management of sports fish and game birds.

Even though the New Zealand Council is a separate body with its own staff, its councillors are all appointed; one from each of the 12 regional Fish and Game Councils. It is through the New Zealand 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.

Fish and Game (NM) nominates one of its councillors to sit on the New Zealand Council. The Director (Chief Executive or CE) of the New Zealand Council participates with fellow regional managers (CEs) in triennial managers' meetings with national office staff. A two-way liaison needs to be maintained with all levels – politically, managerially, technically and administratively.

ADJOINING FISH AND GAME COUNCILS (WELLINGTON, WEST COAST AND NORTH CANTERBURY) AND OTHER SOUTH ISLAND COUNCILS

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. For example, migratory species like Canada geese or Black Swan cross regional boundaries to the south and east respectively. The region works cooperatively with Wellington over the provision of swan trend count data and with South Island regions over Canada geese, drift diving, ranging/compliance and other staff training.

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. Its main function is to disperse funds by way of grants to any landowner or organisation that satisfies the 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 New Zealand Game Bird Habitat Stamp programme administered by the New Zealand Council. Fish and Game (NM) has applied for grants under this programme to purchase and restore the Para Wetlands. It also promotes this fund to land owners and acts as a referee for applications to the Trust Board from this region. As a referee it provides progress reports to the Board and signs off the authorisation that work has been completed for the Board to make its payments to land owners.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Fish and Game (NM)'s relationship with the Department of Conservation involves close liaison between the two agencies with responsibilities under the same legislation – the Conservation and Wildlife Acts 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 Department also administers more than 50% of the land area of the region in many parks and reserves, including part or all of three National Parks. Fish and Game (NM) works closely with the Department over its management of these resources on the public's behalf and according to the various statutues, where these affect Fish and Game (NM's) interests. In particular, Fish and Game (NM) has sought to ensure that the Conservancy's Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) and the National Park Management Plans allow for ongoing Fish and Game management of resources covered by these plans.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been developed and adopted at a national level between the Director-General and the Chief Executive of the New Zealand Council to guide the working relationship of the two organisations at a national level and specifies some agreed objectives.

The Director General of the Department of Conservation or his nominee is entitled to attend and speak but not vote at Fish and Game meetings. For Fish and Game (NM), this function is normally performed by a delegate of the Nelson/Marlborough Conservator.

NELSON/MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION BOARD

The functions of the Conservation Board are set out in Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987 and in the National Parks, Reserves and Walkways Acts. The Board focuses on providing advice, and contributing to the Department of Conservation in relation to any public conservation areas and in relation to species administered by the Department within the jurisdiction of the Board. One of the specific functions of a Conservation Board is to liaise with the relevant Fish and Game Council (Conservation Act Section 6M(1)(f) on matters relating to sportsfish and game within the area of jurisdiction of the Board..

A major responsibility for the board is overseeing the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Management Strategy (CMS). The CMS is a 10-year plan for managing and protecting the natural and historic features and wildlife of the region. Once a CMS has been approved by the New Zealand

Conservation Authority, boards advise on their implementation. A Sports Fish and Game Management Plan shall not derogate from a CMS (Conservation Act 1987 Section 17L(3)(c)).

Fish and Game (NM) will maintain regular liaison with the Conservation Board and seek for the Board to recognise and provide for Fish and Game (NM), angling and hunting interests in its work. Fish and Game (NM) will liaise with the Conservation Board on relevant matters, for instance in the development of management plans for lands administered by the Department in which Fish and Game (NM), or anglers and hunters, have an interest.

REGIONAL IWI

The Nelson/Marlborough Fish and Game region includes areas of interest to a number of different iwi. In the south east of the region and lower parts of the Buller catchment, the Ngai Tahu iwi has mana whenua. Te Runanga O Ngai Tahu, based in Christchurch, is the body representing the collective 18 runanga of Ngai Tahu. Two of the tribal runanga cover these parts of the region: Takahanga in the Kaikoura area and Te Runaka o Kati Waewae in the Murchison area.

The northern part of the region has interests held by a number of different iwi in different locations, including Rangitane, Ngati Rarua, Ngati Toa, Te Atiawa, Ngati Kuia, Ngati Koata, Ngati Apa, and Ngati Tama. The Treaty claims of these iwi have yet to be settled with the Crown.

Ngai Tahu has settled their Treaty claims with the Crown and the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 (NTCS Act 1998) defines those species that are taonga and recognised as native game birds. Fish and Game (NM) must have particular regard to advice provided by Ngai Tahu concerning the conditions for hunting seasons for native game birds and those parts of draft sportsfish and game management plans which relate to native game birds (NTCS Act 1998 s,279). The Claims Settlement has also resulted in each South Island Fish and Game Council being asked to co-opt a Ngai Tahu representative to advise on matters affecting native game birds. The Nelson/Marlborough region has agreed with this request, but has concerns that if all iwi were to seek such representation on the Fish and Game (NM) council it might become unworkable. The tribal boundary between Ngai Tahu and northern iwi remains in dispute.

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 Fish and Game (NM) to act in accordance with these principles, unless the principles are clearly inconsistent with the legislation (*Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board V Director-General of Conservation*, 1995 3 NZLR 553).

Generally speaking, Fish and Game (NM) and iwi have a common interest in maintaining clean water and protecting the natural character of rivers, lakes and wetlands. Fish and Game (NM) and iwi also have a common cause in seeking to manage wild populations of species for sustainable harvests.

Fish and Game (NM) has sought to work jointly with several iwi in management of land owned or administered by Fish and Game (NM) in the Para Swamp in Marlborough. The objective is to facilitate habitat development and enhancement which enables sustainable harvest of sports fish and

game birds for licence holders, but would also enable sustainable harvest of cultural resources of interest to iwi, such as eels and flax.

Fish and Game (NM) recognises that the Treaty encourages the partners to afford each other reasonable co operation and to act towards each other reasonably and with the utmost good faith. This includes an obligation to consult and have respect for the other's point of view.

Consultation between Fish and Game (NM) and iwi should occur on matters of potential common interest, including matters arising from the Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement or any other settlements, should they occur. This will enable informed decisions to be made.

MONITORING & 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.

Fish and Game (NM) 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 ten year period.

PART FOUR

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The area managed as the Nelson/Marlborough Fish and Game Region is described in Gazette No. 83 of 24 May 1990 at page 1861, and is shown on the map on page 9.

The Nelson/Marlborough region is divided into six electoral wards. These six wards are:

- Wairau South; being that part of Marlborough lying south of the Wairau River except for the Blenheim ward.
- Wairau North; being all of Marlborough lying north of the Wairau River
- Blenheim; being the area within the former Blenheim Borough Council boundary
- Waimea/Buller; being the Waimea and those parts of the Buller River catchment in the region
- Motueka/Golden Bay; being the Motueka and adjacent river catchments to the west, Golden Bay and western catchments to Kahurangi Point and Golden Bay
- Nelson; being the City of Nelson

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. It also lies at the centre of the country, being the northernmost area for salmon and chukar and the southernmost for substantial hunted pheasant populations.

The region includes the territorial councils of Tasman District, Nelson City, Marlborough District and Kaikoura District and small northern parts of the Buller and Hurunui Districts.

Based on the 2006 provisional census data, Nelson City (44 900) and Tasman District (47 700) have a total population of 92 600. The total Marlborough (45 700) and Kaikoura Districts (4810) population is 50 510. All four of these Districts are showing high rates of population growth. Small amounts of Buller and Hurunui Districts also lie in the Nelson Marlborough Fish and Game region, but their population would be substantially less, with light population densities.

Agriculture, horticulture (including viticulture), fishing, forestry and tourism are major sources of employment in the region.

Topography

The Nelson/Marlborough region comprises many mountain ranges, especially to the south, with relatively small areas of flat land associated with the major river valleys. The underlying geology is complex, particularly in Nelson. The coastline is extensive and varied, with the Marlborough Sounds to the northeast and a variety of estuaries and bays and rocky coastline in different areas.

Climate

Nelson/Marlborough's climate is warm and sunny. Annual rainfall varies from less than 600 millimetres to over 3000 millimetres, with higher rainfall to the west and in the major ranges. Lower rainfall is experienced in the lowlands in south-eastern Marlborough and around Nelson City. Dry periods often occur between January and March. Inland areas experience more 'continental' conditions, with hot summers (wet to the west and drier further east) with cold frosty or foggy winters. Snow conditions occur in winter in the mountains.

HISTORY

Fish and Game Councils in New Zealand owe their origins to acclimatisation societies that began to form during the 1860s. The Nelson society was one of the first with rules and objects dated 1863. 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. Societies such as Nelson, Marlborough and the two or three West coast societies flirted with merger but ultimately only the Buller and Grey societies united.

It was not until the formation of Fish and Game Councils in 1990 that Nelson and Marlborough became united as one of the 12 Fish and Game regions. The formation of Fish and Game (NM) resulted in the two operational centres of the Marlborough and Nelson Acclimatisation Societies with administrative functions being centralised in Richmond. Initially secretarial and accounting functions were let out to contract but then absorbed into the operations at Richmond in 1991.

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, much of Fish and Game (NM) efforts go into habitat protection, either directly by maintenance of habitat on Fish and Game (NM) owned or administered areas such as the Para Swamp, or indirectly by statutory advocacy through the Resource Management Act 1991, Conservation Act 1987 or other similar legislation. Since the advent of Fish and Game (NM) in 1990, statutory advocacy has become increasingly important as pressures on habitat due to changes in land use and development increase.

The sports fish and game bird habitat descriptions for the Nelson/Marlborough region are based on the six Fish and Game electoral wards.

SPORTS FISH HABITAT

Purchase or ownership of sports fish habitat is not desirable as this might signal ownership or exclusive use of the sports fish resource itself. The sporting ethic and the legislation holds that the sports fish resource is a public one, managed by Fish and Game Councils on behalf of licence holders who each contribute towards management. Sports fisheries and game birds are publicly owned and managed under New Zealand law, irrespective of their location. In addition, the environment in which sports fisheries are located is publicly administered and those administrative bodies 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 (see below) and many habitats of trout and salmon are also significant native fish habitats, for species such as whitebait (*Galaxias* spp.).

The habitat of sports fish is largely also a public resource 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 salmonid 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. An example is in Marlborough District, where that Council has recognised that all Marlborough waters should support fish life so has sought that all freshwaters have an underlying water quality standard that supports fishery habitat.

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 is to protect all wildlife under that Act.

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 is 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. Fish and Game (NM) has promoted and supported joint wetland inventories with the Department of Conservation and several local authorities in the region, which have shown that most lowland wetlands are in private ownership. 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. Fish and Game (NM) has objected to proposals by two local authorities to make wetland drainage a permitted activity.

Fish and Game (NM) 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 Fish and Game (NM), it may be appropriate to safeguard that by way of covenant on the title. Often, at the most minimal level, Fish and Game (NM) can offer advice to landowners which can assist management of their private land to provide habitat. Fish and Game (NM) 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). Fish and Game (NM) 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.

Wairau South

This includes the rugged South Marlborough mountain pastoral country, centred on New Zealand's largest farm, Molesworth. This provides back country angling and plenty of Canada goose hunting and habitat for chukar and Californian quail. To the east the Clarence River drains through dry gorges and the rocky Kaikoura Coast, providing the most reliable salmon fishing in the region at the mouth. Kaikoura provides limited freshwater fishing, but plenty of waterfowl hunting and the potential for more upland game. The north-western area of this sub-region is drained by the Wairau River, which provides a diversity of angling and hunting opportunities, with much of the best quail hunting opportunities available there. The Wairau or Vernon Lagoons at the river's mouth provide a tremendous wildlife resource and hunting opportunity.

Wairau North

This includes the North Bank of the Wairau, the Sounds and the Pelorus/Rai catchment, providing both excellent waterfowl and quail hunting and the best and most accessible rainbow trout fishing in the region.

Blenheim

Blenheim is largely noted as the second largest population centre in the region, with fishing opportunities in the adjacent rivers and streams.

Waimea/Buller

The Waimea is a regionally important fishery due to its proximity to the largest regional population centre of Nelson/Richmond, while the Waimea Inlet, as the largest estuary in the South Island, provides a significant hunting opportunity. Much of the region's pheasant hunting is undertaken on the Waimea River bermlands. The upper Buller provides superlative back country angling in the lakes

and rivers, recognised through the Water Conservation Order, as well as considerable waterfowl hunting.

Motueka/Golden Bay
The Motueka provides world renowned brown trout fishing, as recognised in the Water Conservation Order, with more limited waterfowl, quail and pheasant hunting opportunities. Golden Bay provides significant fisheries, largely in the Takaka and Aorere River catchments which are underutilised given the area's relative remoteness as well as locally important waterfowl hunting opportunities.

Nelson
Nelson provides the largest population base in the region, as well as small but attractive rivers such as the Maitai and Wakapuaka.

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 Nelson/Marlborough region offers the most diverse opportunities for angling and hunting of any single region in the country. Being located in the central part of the country, it straddles both the southern range of largely northern species such as pheasant, while being also the northern limit of southern species such as salmon. This region is also unique in its diversity of underlying geomorphology and climate, as its numerous mountain ranges crossing the prevailing winds result in some extremely dry parts of Marlborough, with wetter conditions in the western parts of Nelson. The region is also renowned as having some of the best weather in the country, so there is ample opportunity to enjoy the recreational opportunities.

SPORTS FISH

BROWN TROUT

The region is best known nationally and internationally for its diverse wild brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) fishery. This resource is recognised and enjoyed by discerning anglers from throughout New Zealand and visitors from other countries. A combination of a large number of variously sized but accessible rivers providing brown trout habitat and fishable water and a range of scenic settings with suitable access and good climate provide excellent angling opportunity. The Motueka River catchment has historically received the most use, at more than 13,000 estimated angler visits per annum (Unwin and Brown, 1998), closely followed by the Wairau River catchment of more than 11,000 estimated angler visits. At the other extreme are the numerous highly valued back country or wilderness fisheries that have good numbers of trophy-sized fish but relatively low usage by anglers. To recognise and protect these outstanding brown trout fisheries, Water Conservation Orders exist in the Motueka and Buller and there is protection for the Wairau in the Wairau Awatere regional water management plan.

RAINBOW TROUT

The most significant rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) fishery is the Pelorus catchment, particularly the Rai and its tributaries, which is regionally important and especially sought-after as a

contrast from the region's predominantly brown trout fisheries. Other rainbow fisheries include the Argyle Pond, which has been stocked by Marlborough Electric in mitigation for the effects of the Branch River hydro scheme. This is the only stocked water in the region in recent years, although the Nelson City Council has agreed to allow fishing in the Maitai Reservoir in mitigation for the effects of its water supply schemes on that river. Other rainbow trout fisheries include the Cobb Reservoir and upper Cobb River, Lake Daniells near Lewis Pass and the occasional fish in Lake Rotoroa, which now supports a small self sustaining rainbow stock following a major stocking programme during the 1970s.

CHINOOK SALMON

Chinook or quinnat salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) have been the subject of numerous efforts over many years to establish wild populations from the Buller River catchment, to Golden Bay, the Pelorus River catchment and Sounds to the Wairau, Clarence and several smaller catchments such as the Kahutara near Kaikoura. Of these, most have failed, especially in Golden Bay. Efforts in the Wairau and Clarence Rivers have seemed most likely to succeed, being most similar to the major salmon rivers of the eastern coast of the South Island. A hatchery in the Wairau for salmon was developed as early as the 1930s. Ova implantation and release of mixed sex stocks has occurred in most years during the late 1980s until 1996 and intermittently thereafter. Only the Clarence and Wairau have developed irregular small runs of salmon for the angler. These are likely now self sustaining at this level, with the Clarence having a more reliable, if brief, localised run. Ongoing investigations using genetic techniques are attempting to establish whether runs are wholly wild or supplemented by stocking. Latest information suggests salmon populations are naturally restricted by water temperatures at sea, which increase by several degrees at the subtropical convergence just south of Kaikoura and also increase steadily up the West Coast of the South Island.

COARSE SPORTS FISH AND NON-SPORTS FISH

Until recently, the region was not known to have any coarse fish species present. Recently there have been discoveries of populations of gambusia and the coarse fish koi carp in the region. Both are unwanted organisms under the Biosecurity Act and formerly considered as absent from the South Island. These, together with the noxious coarse fish rudd and the two coarse sports fish, tench (*Tinca tinca*) and perch (*Perca fluviatilis*) have been cause for concern for local authorities, the Department of Conservation and Fish and Game (NM) when they have appeared in areas where they had previously been absent. No other populations of coarse sports fish species are known within the region. The Department has embarked on a programme to eradicate koi and gambusia, which has coincidentally eliminated the populations of most of the other coarse species. The question remains open as to whether there should be an authorised coarse sports fishery in the region. Fish and Game (NM) has developed guidelines in respect of the exercise of its responsibilities under Section 59 of the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations for any sports fish introductions. This acknowledges that any requests for such introductions also need the separate approval of the Department of Conservation and/or the Minister of Conservation under Section 26ZM of the Conservation Act. The national policy of the New Zealand Council requires any introductions of new sports fish to be to artificial water bodies only, in areas accessible to the public, and should protect existing sports fisheries and native fisheries. While any applications to liberate new species of sports fish in the Nelson Marlborough Region would have to be considered on their merits, having regard to relevant statutory provisions Fish and Game (NM) is unlikely to support any such applications. In the meantime, as a measure intended to limit any incentive to unlawfully spread pest species, the region has closed the fishery to coarse sports fish angling. This is reviewed annually as part of the Anglers Notice.

GAME BIRDS

DABBLING DUCKS

Dabbling ducks are the mainstay of game bird hunting in New Zealand and this region is no exception. Mallard ducks (*Anas platyrynchos*) are widespread, after expanding their range and success greatly from the early 1950s until the mid 1960s, particularly in the more developed parts of the region. Grey ducks (*A. superciliosa*) remain more abundant in less developed rural areas, including the Marlborough high country and especially wooded country such as the Pelorus Sounds area, the upper Buller catchment, western parts of the Motueka catchment and much of Golden Bay. While these two species freely interbreed, more remote parts of the region provide good habitat for grey duck, with a greater proportion of grey ducks noted in the hunter's bag in such areas. Grey duck are defined as native game birds in the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998. Because of their interbreeding with mallards, Hitchmough (2002) considers grey duck to be a threatened species nationally, although there is no evidence cited by Williams that this is influenced by hunting or their status as a game bird.

The region generally lacks substantial freshwater wetlands suitable for ducks. Small wetlands, streams and drains provide good breeding habitat, especially in wet years, but a lack of open water in proximity to feeding areas means many areas lack large numbers of dabbling ducks. Drier parts of the region such as the Wairau Plains, Seddon/Ward area and the Moutere Hills and Motueka and Waimea Plains are very dependent upon adequate rainfall for duck survival until the hunting season. Changes to land use from cropping to viticulture in many areas, particularly Marlborough, in recent years have reduced food available to waterfowl, with corresponding reductions in the average hunter's bag. Dry summer and autumn conditions cause ducks to move towards the coast or inland away from these drier areas with a reduction in hunter success, unless they have developed suitable-sized wetland habitat. The huntable duck population fluctuates considerably from year to year depending on the weather over the previous 9 months. Good weather during the season appears also to affect success for many dabbling duck hunters. The extensive estuaries along much of the coastline, however, provide good cover and are utilised by both ducks and hunters.

Recent genetic analysis shows that many dabbling ducks are hybrids (Williams, 1999), even those appearing to be one of the two species, so the two nominal species must effectively be managed as one population for the purposes of wildlife management. The numbers of both species but particularly mallards increased dramatically during the late 1970s and early 1980s throughout the whole country, so the numbers of all dabbling ducks in the region are much greater than they were in the 1950s. Small (1953) estimated the entire Nelson Acclimatisation District had 1,800 grey ducks and 100 mallards. Such numbers are now routinely seen on the Bell's Island oxidation ponds alone, during the hunting season. The highest estimated harvest of mallard ducks in the region from 1992 to 2006, in the 1996 season, was 28,481; while for grey ducks the estimate was 4,143. Overall dabbling duck numbers are at least an order of magnitude higher than was the case 40 years ago.

New Zealand Shoveler ducks or spoonbill ducks (*A. rhynchotis*) were very uncommon in Nelson in the early 1950s and not recorded at all by Small in 1953. They are now known from a number of specific locations in the region with suitable habitat. Their speed of flight and seasonal migration to other parts of the country makes population estimates difficult. The 95% confidence interval for the estimated bag in 1996 was between 187 and 569 shoveler. Being small, fast flying and uncommonly seen in many areas, this species is targeted by few hunters. Fish & Game New Zealand is now undertaking a national shoveler trend count in August each year. Shoveler ducks are less common,

but can be locally abundant at certain times of year and are considered part of a national and highly mobile population.

PARADISE SHELDUCK

Once thought to be in decline, paradise shelduck (*Tadorna variegata*) have now adapted well to improved pasture, especially in cattle grazing country and have thrived in the last 20 years. Shelduck are a form of goose and feed upon pasture grasses. They frequent the high country where they are generally widespread but in low numbers, often in pairs or family groups. They can form nuisance flocks for farmers after the moult in January, when large numbers of hungry birds can descend upon green feed or crops. They can also feed on grain fed to deer in winter.

Although once not favoured by hunters, paradise shelduck (or parrie) have become more popular to hunt in recent years as the techniques to hunt them have become better known, such as decoying, calling and use of camouflage. As numbers have increased due to pasture improvement, there is both better opportunity for the hunter and a greater call for their control by landowners. Groups organised by Fish and Game Councils and others have undertaken special parrie hunts in places like the upper Buller, Tapawera, Matakitaki, Bainham, the Awatere and Kaikoura. As paradise shelduck have a slow breeding rate compared to mallard ducks, there is always a risk of over-harvest lowering populations for several years. For this reason, Fish and Game (NM) undertakes trend counts of parrie numbers during the moult in January to ensure the bag limits and seasons are appropriate. The 1996 estimated total harvest for the region was 11,948, indicating the relative numbers of parries and their importance for the hunter. Paradise Shelduck are defined as native game birds in the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.

BLACK SWAN

Farewell Spit maintains one of the largest populations of Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) in New Zealand, usually varying between six and fifteen thousand birds as recorded during trend counts in January. Smaller populations occur in the Westhaven Inlet, Lake Otuhie, the Waimea Inlet, several lagoons and estuaries in the Marlborough Sounds, the Wairau lagoons, Lake Grasmere and the Kaikoura Lakes. Occasional pairs are also noted in the Nelson Lakes and other locations within the region.

Black swans from this region breed here but many trade across to Lake Wairarapa where most hunter harvest occurs. Farewell Spit is a Nature Reserve and is not hunted. Some swans are harvested in Golden Bay, Havelock, the Wairau lagoons and Lake Grasmere but the total harvest for the region is estimated at 200-300. Black swan are not a favoured species by many hunters although swan drives are undertaken periodically in Golden Bay, where swans can become a nuisance to the harvest of cockles near Pakawau due to perceptions of their fouling areas intended for harvest.

CANADA GOOSE

Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) are a very mobile species best known in the high country, preferring grassland and improved pasture. Their wily nature makes them sought after by the hunter as a prime quarry, but cursed by high country farmers, where numbers can reach pest levels if not controlled. Pasture development in the high country has suited the geese, making the problem worse in recent years.

Canada geese in the region are centred on the south Marlborough high country from the Kaikoura Ranges north and west to the main divide, with an over-wintering population of less than 1,000 in this area. Many geese trade to this area from Lake Ellesmere to breed in October and November. There is also a population of some 500 resident birds in the lower Wairau lagoons area, with a further 300 to 500 birds in the mid Wairau Valley. A small population of several 100 lives in the middle Buller catchment, particularly in the upper Maruia and Matakitaki, with about 50 living between Marahau and the Takaka hill and around 100 in the Puponga area of Golden Bay. The numbers of geese have also been increasing on the eastern margins of the Marlborough high country towards the Kaikoura coast in recent years.

Canada Geese in the region are managed under the provisions of the South Island Canada Goose Management Plan. In this region all goose control is presently undertaken by hunters. Hunts organised by Fish and Game(NM) have been able to keep goose numbers below the threshold targets in the management plan. Three organised goose hunts are undertaken in late October, March and June each year, catering for between 120 and 250 hunters each and achieving tallies of between 300 and 2,450 geese harvested depending on the areas and times hunted. Since hunts commenced in 1983, the skills of hunters and knowledge of the area have improved, which is reflected in generally improving tallies despite the geese becoming more difficult to hunt and reducing in numbers. The hunts remain popular with hunters, with considerable interest from outside the region and are generally regarded as effective by run-holders. Other forms of goose control may need to be considered from time to time in accordance with the management plan, should goose numbers increase or their range spread.

PUKEKO

Pukeko (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) are an underrated and little harvested game bird, common in family groups in suitable habitat throughout the region. As a member of the rail family rather than a species of waterfowl, their behaviour is quite different from that of the other water-based game species. Their numbers vary in habitat due to climate and the type of land use. It appears their numbers in Nelson are higher now than they were reported in the 1950s by Small, although no quantities were given in his surveys.

Due to their highly territorial nature, prolific breeding under suitable conditions, willingness to live in close proximity with people and inquisitive nature, pukeko can create a considerable nuisance at times. More permits to disturb or control pukeko have been written in this region than any other single species in some years, particularly in coastal Tasman Bay. They can be particularly destructive in rural residential areas, especially to fruit trees and crops such as vegetables. The usual form of control is to allow hunting, although this is sometimes not possible, in which case noise control or more rarely capture and transfer can be effective. An extended season in the area around Tasman Bay has been trialled in recent years to enable hunting during the February/March period without a permit. Pukeko are defined as native game birds in the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.

CALIFORNIAN QUAIL

Drier parts of the region remain suitable for California quail (*Callipepla californica*), though populations accessible and available to the hunter are becoming rarer due to land use change, amongst other reasons. Quail hunting has fewer participants than waterfowl hunting, but is highly valued for those hunters dedicated to this high energy sport, requiring good teamwork and dog handling skills. Extensively farmed hill country in Marlborough is more suited to quail hunting than are many areas of Nelson and most keen upland game hunters are likely to do at least some of their hunting there. Almost no public areas are available for quail hunting - the largest such area being the

Wairau River berms, with some limited hunting available on some forestry land. Most hunting is undertaken on private land.

Quail numbers fluctuate greatly from year to year, depending upon the suitability of spring for breeding and the habitat changes which are steadily reducing many formerly suitable habitat areas. Periodic rabbit control has formerly been implicated in dramatic reductions in quail numbers, due either to direct feeding by quail on poison baits or indirect effects such as predators turning to quail as a source of food, or increased vegetation growth reducing habitat suitability for quail. Recent droughts in Marlborough and the advent of the rabbit calicivirus disease reducing the need to poison rabbits appear to have improved quail populations throughout the region. Quail populations also used to benefit from occasional burn-offs to open up habitat and increase the growth of suitable herb species and hunting opportunities, but such burn-offs are now rare. Little research has been undertaken into the effects of these activities on quail, so the relative importance of these different factors is hard to determine. Estimated total season bags for quail vary considerably from year to year, from less than 2,000 to more than 4,000.

PHEASANT

Ring necked pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) have been hunted in the Waimea/Motueka area since the early 1960s. Pheasant are the prime upland game species for the hunter and highly sought after by those hunters dedicated to this challenging sport. Nelson has had the longest history of pheasant hunting in the South Island, which brings a number of hunters from elsewhere in the region and further south.

Pheasant numbers are relatively constant, depending upon the habitat available. Habitat suitability for pheasant has been generally improving in recent years with the diversification and development of rural residential properties in the area. Hunting opportunities are being steadily reduced, however, as there are fewer and fewer areas large enough whose owners are willing to allow pheasant hunting.

In order to provide as many hunters as possible with the chance to hunt pheasant, Fish and Game (NM) has in recent years had a one cock bird limit and restricted the season to only 3 weekends each year. This is closely monitored using hunter surveys, harvest surveys and call counts and may be adjusted if either the population or hunting opportunity changes. Total estimated harvest is quite variable but is in the order of 100 to 300 cock birds per season, averaging about one cock bird per active pheasant hunter per year.

Given the popularity of pheasant hunting and the limited opportunity available, Fish and Game (NM) has been undertaking pheasant releases in the Clarence River mouth and intends to continue the programme in the Kaikoura area. Only wild captured birds are being released over a three year period in each area in an attempt to establish wild populations which may ultimately be available for hunting.

A small privately owned pheasant hunting preserve has recently been approved by Fish and Game (NM) under the New Zealand Council's national policy on upland game preserves in the Tadmor Valley near Tapawera. This provides a pheasant hunting opportunity for hunters using commercial guiding services at the preserve. A special hunting opportunity (without any charge for services) is also provided at the hunting preserve to junior hunters each season. It is possible that pheasants may also move to areas outside the boundaries of the preserve and provide some new local hunting opportunities.

CHUKAR

Chukar or Himalayan partridge (*Alectoris chukar*) is an alpine species, restricted to the high country centred on Marlborough, with scattered populations reported as far west as Mt Owen. Its numbers have declined to the point that it has not been targeted by hunters for a number of years. Fish and Game (NM) decided to close its hunting season in 1994 as its population is considered insufficient to sustain harvest. Coveys of more than 6 or 8 birds are now rare, with most of the infrequent observations just of pairs or family groups. The reasons for the decline of chukar are not clear but either inbreeding or rabbit control using pindone laced carrots have been some of the more likely explanations. The advent of rabbit calicivirus has stopped rabbit poisoning and this may improve chukar populations. Hunters have been monitoring chukar populations for Fish and Game (NM) during Molesworth goose hunts.

RED LEGGED PARTRIDGE

A breeding programme to establish the red legged partridge (*Alectoris rufa*) in Marlborough was undertaken from 1989 until 1994. In 1994 the programme was reviewed independently with Fish and Game (NM) deciding to terminate the programme and release the breeding stock in the driest parts of this country along the coastline from Rarangi to Cape Campbell. Sporadic monitoring has noted adult survival but there is little evidence of young being fledged. It now seems unlikely this species will become established in sufficient numbers to be viable as a game species.

RECREATIONAL USE

SIGNIFICANCE OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL AREAS

The major publicly accessible habitats in the region 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. This analysis has been confined to those areas which are publicly accessible, as changes to land use, public access and habitats on private lands can occur at any time on privately owned lands. The changes in land use in Marlborough particularly in the last two decades have been major, with consequent effects on game bird habitats and hunting opportunities (Rouse 2007). As a result relatively few areas used by hunters are recognised in this analysis, which reflects the extent to which hunting is undertaken on private land, often in or on many hundreds of small areas such as farm ponds, or scrub gullies in the case of upland game hunting. By contrast, angling is almost entirely undertaken on areas which are publicly accessible and are usually public waters.

As background to preparing this plan, the public 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 Surveys (Unwin and Brown, 1998; Unwin and Image, 2003) but have been extended to include wetlands and any public 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 the recreation.

The appendix lists both the public 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.

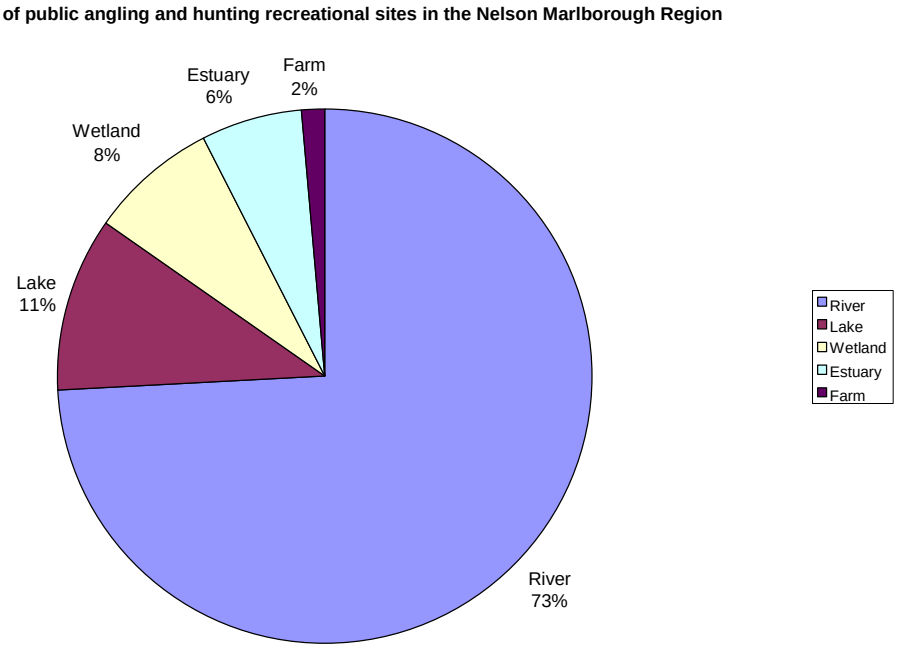

Figure 2 Type of public recreational opportunities in the Nelson Marlborough Region

It is evident from this chart that there are a large number of rivers which are available, particularly for the angler, in the region. A significant proportion of the public hunting opportunity is on estuaries, while the region overall has relatively few lakes in which fishing or hunting can occur.

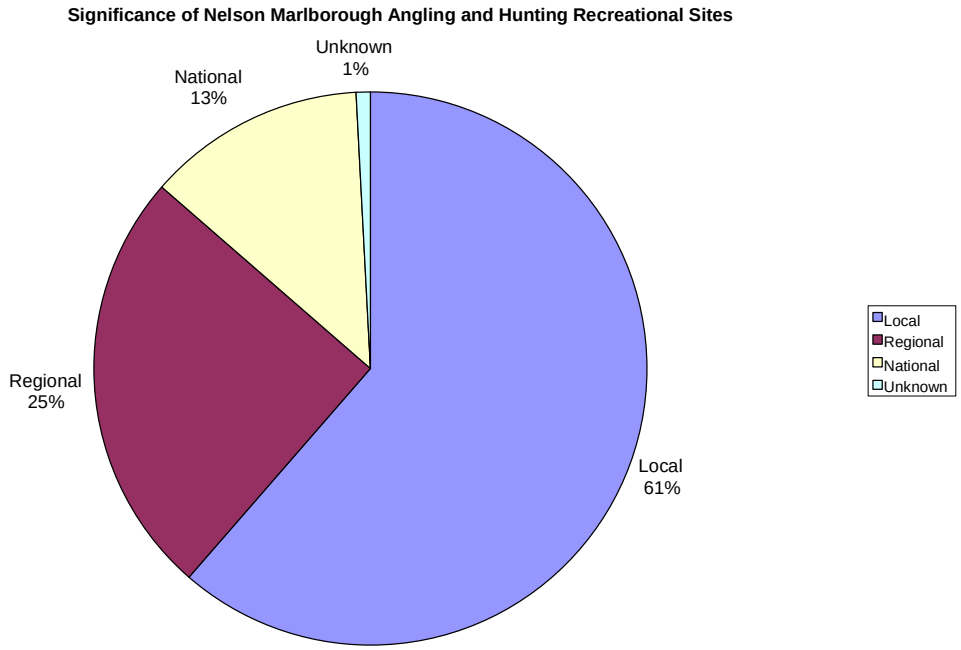

Figure 3 Relative significance of different public angling and hunting recreational opportunities in the Nelson Marlborough Region

Significance was determined against criteria which have subsequently been applied to the whole National Angler 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.

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 is sometimes difficult to assign the full length of a given river or large site such as Molesworth Station to a particular category. Some sites will vary in character in different parts; the predominant character was assigned in each case. The table used has

been modified from that used by the Otago Fish and Game Council in its Sports Fish and Game Management Plan and since applied for sports fisheries across the whole country.

Table 1 Nelson Marlborough 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	Salmonids	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 following pie chart summarises the regional distribution of ROS categories. Clearly much of the recreational opportunity occurs across the rural environment, while there are few opportunities in the urban area. The region has a high proportion of natural and remote sites, by comparison with many other parts of the country, however.

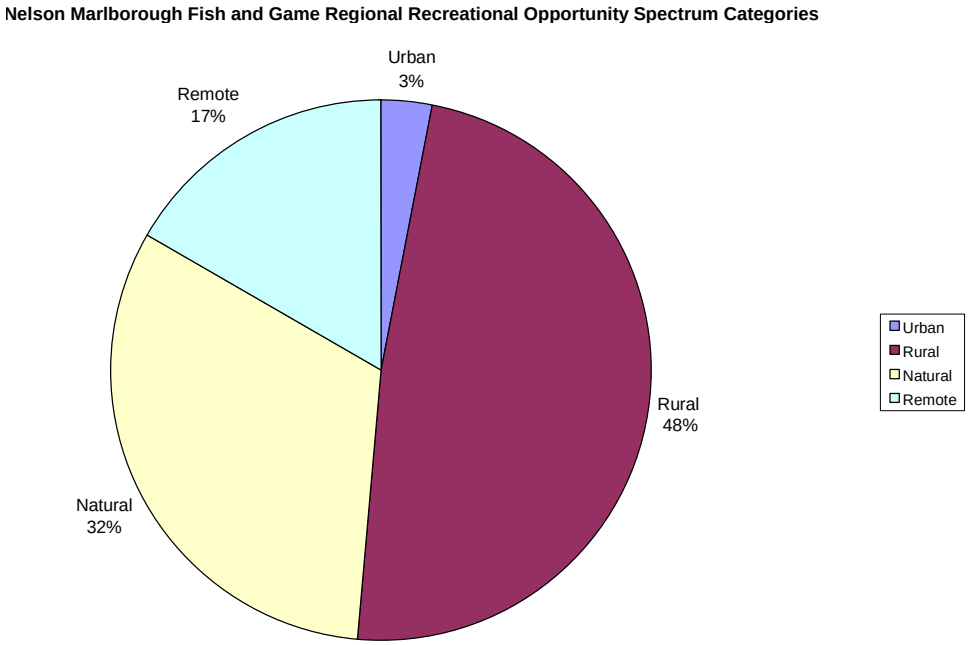

Figure 4 Distribution of different ROS categories in the Nelson Marlborough Region

Once again, the importance of the region's brown trout fishery and to a lesser extent for duck hunting is borne out by these data and, in contrast, the small number of public sites where upland game hunting can be undertaken.

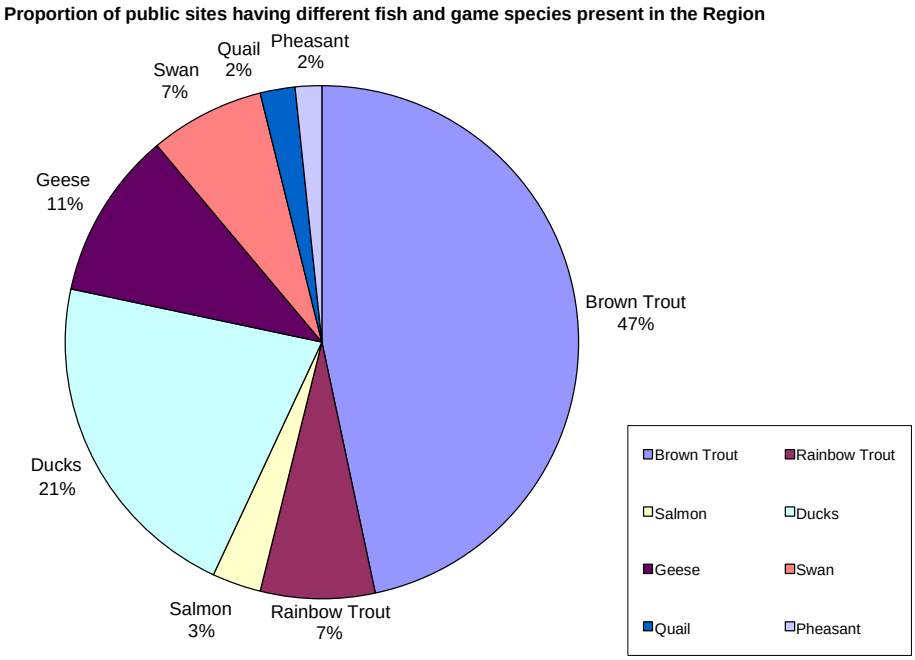

Figure 5 The proportion of all 132 sites having particular sports fish and game bird recreational opportunities

ISSUES FOR THE REGION

There are a number of significant national and regional issues of relevance to Fish and Game (NM)'s interests. Consistent with its statutory functions Fish and Game (NM) and the New Zealand Council seek to take an active role in the policy development processes underpinning many such issues and play an active advocacy role to protect its interests.

Some of Fish and Game (NM)'s most critical concerns relate to the implementation of the Resource Management Act 1991 by local authorities and permissions issued by them to undertake activities in or on, discharge contaminants into or to extract freshwater from water bodies, which may adversely affect sports fish and game birds and their habitats[2]. Many of Fish and Game (NM)'s and the New Zealand Council's concerns were confirmed in the November 2004 report by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE) entitled "Growing for Good – Intensive Farming, Sustainability and New Zealand's Environment". These concerns are also reflected in the recent OECD report (2007) on New Zealand environmental performance.

Fish and Game (NM) seeks to ensure public agencies with responsibilities for protecting ecosystems or habitat actively takes the lead role in tackling issues to safeguard those ecological systems. Issues identified by Fish and Game (NM) as critical to its interests include:

- water quality degradation, largely from land use intensification
- water extraction for irrigation
- loss of and modification to wetlands, including estuaries
- hydro development - impacting on fish and wildlife habitat, migration and angling opportunities
- local authority implementation of the Resource Management Act 1991
- recreational access to the outdoors - in particular access to rivers for fishing
- private commercial use of public fisheries, lands and game resources
- Treaty of Waitangi claims - impacting on the ownership and control of natural resources, rivers and lakes
- tenure review of the South Island high country - implications for public access to sports fish and game birds.
- biosecurity threats - eg. pest fish like koi carp or gambusia and aquatic weed species such as didymo or hornwort
- the protection of the wild trout fishery and the equity of access to all anglers
- management of public lands and access to these
- changing societal attitudes towards non-native species and the recreational pursuits of angling and hunting

Operational issues are listed in this Plan under the respective output areas described in Part One above.

[2] Section 7(h) Resource Management Act 1991

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 and tench are the two coarse fish classified as sports fish now known to occur in the region
Dabbling duck	typically birds 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 (see below under waterfowl and upland game)
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
Indigenous	native to the area or self-introduced, rather than introduced by human agency. A subset of indigenous species are those endemic species, which are found only in the particular area or country
Pest Fish	Includes noxious fish such as rudd as defined in the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations, unwanted organisms under the Biosecurity Act such as koi carp or gambusia or where defined by agreement with Fish and Game Councils in Regional Pest Management Strategies
Ranger	any person appointed as such pursuant to section 26FA(1) or (2) of the Conservation Act 1987 and having powers under the Conservation and Wildlife Acts
Salmonids	fish of the family Salmonidae. In New Zealand this family is represented by Chinook, sockeye and Atlantic salmon, rainbow and brown trout and brook char, lake trout and hybrids such as splake
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 upland game species listed as game birds in the First Schedule of the Wildlife Act 1953, specifically pheasant, brown quail, Californian quail, chukar, grey and red legged partridge.
Waterfowl	those waterfowl species listed as game birds in the First Schedule of the Wildlife Act 1953, specifically mallard duck, grey duck, shoveler duck, paradise shelduck, pukeko, black swan and Canada goose

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Fish and Game (NM) and the New Zealand Council operates under two principle acts – the Conservation Act 1987 and Wildlife Act 1953 - and within a number of other statutes.

CONSERVATION ACT 1987

Fish and Game Councils are established under the Conservation Act, which contains the legal authority for them 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. The Conservation Act also details the functions of the Department of Conservation and requires a ten year Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) to set the general direction for the management of all land administered by the Department in the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy and particularly areas held under the Conservation Act. Anglers Notices are promulgated under this Act.

FISH AND GAME COUNCIL ELECTIONS REGULATIONS 1990

These regulations are made under the Conservation Act and prescribe the procedure for the election of members of regional Fish and Game Councils and the appointment by such Councils of members of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council.

FRESHWATER FISHERIES REGULATIONS 1983

The Freshwater Fisheries Regulations are made 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.

WILDLIFE ACT 1953

The Wildlife Act 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 warranted officers for the purposes of this Act and sets out penalties for offences under this Act. Game Notices are promulgated under this Act.

WILDLIFE REGULATIONS 1955

These Wildlife Regulations are made under the Wildlife Act 1953. These regulations provide for game bird hunting licences, hunting methods and game bird liberations amongst other matters.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991

The Resource Management Act 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. Regional and territorial authorities must follow the processes set out in the Act for the making of development decisions and Fish and Game Councils may input into those processes. Fish and Game NM is bound by the provisions of the RMA, regional policy statements and regional and district plans. At the same time, the RMA 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 Management Plan when preparing or reviewing their plans and strategies.

A great deal of Fish and Game (NM) time and effort has gone into resource management advocacy to achieve habitat protection.

BIOSECURITY ACT 1993

The Biosecurity Act includes provisions on the treatment of animals, which Fish & Game New Zealand must follow in its operations. Fish & Game New Zealand must also obtain approval under this Act to introduce new species of sports fish or game birds to the country. The Biosecurity Act also includes provision to prevent new pests and diseases from arriving in New Zealand and eradicating or controlling those already present.

Fish and Game (NM) has worked closely with Biosecurity New Zealand concerning the unwanted organisms koi carp and gambusia and more recently the surveys and management of didymo.

NATIONAL PARKS ACT 1980

National Parks are of high national standing, being preserved in their natural state for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the public. Abel Tasman, Nelson Lakes and part of Kahurangi National Park all lie within the region. While Abel Tasman has no sports fish and few upland game birds without any history of angling or hunting, the other two parks both have nationally significant sports fishing opportunities recognised in the region's Water Conservation Orders or elsewhere, and significant game bird habitat, which predate those parks' existence by many decades.

The New Zealand Conservation Authority and the Department of Conservation through its Park management plans has recognised the value of these sports fish and game bird resources and their ongoing management by Fish and Game (NM). Fish and Game (NM) does not support liberations of sports fish into any areas outside the management area of existing stocks in National Parks.

RESERVES ACT 1977

The Reserves Act 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, 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. Wildlife Management Reserves are managed on a day-to-day basis by Fish and Game (NM) in the Para and Top Valley under these provisions, and the land on which the Fish and Game (NM) office is located in Richmond is a local purpose reserve for acclimatisation purposes.

Fish and Game (NM) 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 (NM) presently owns or manages several areas of land in the Para Swamp which have been covenanted.

The Reserves Act requires every reserve to have a management plan. A plan for the entire Para swamp is presently in draft form.

NGAI TAHU CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT 1998

The Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 provides for Fish and Game (NM) to invite Ngai Tahu to recommend a person to attend Fish and Game (NM) meetings as a statutory advisor. Ngai Tahu can also provide advice on the harvest of native game birds and the preparation of those parts of sports fish and game management plans which relate to native game birds. Fish and Game (NM) must have particular regard to that advice.

LOCAL BODIES OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT 1987

Fish and Game (NM) is subject to the Local Bodies Official Information and Meetings Act. 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 ENTITY ACT 2004, PUBLIC FINANCE ACT 1989 AND PUBLIC AUDIT ACT 2001

All Fish and Game councils are subject to the provisions of the Crown Entity 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. Fish and Game (NM) is a Public Entity 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 regional Fish and Game 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 regional Fish and Game Council thinks fit.

Invite persons or organisations to send to the regional 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 regional Fish and Game Council considers practicable and appropriate.

Give full consideration to any submissions and opinion make known to the regional 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 regional 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 regional 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 regional Fish and Game Council to prepare a summary of the submissions received on the draft.

The regional 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 regional Fish and Game Council for further consideration before approval.

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APPENDIX

Table of public recreational sites of interest to anglers and hunters in the Nelson Marlborough Region

Nelson Marlborough Water Bodies	Water Type	Size	ROS Category	Recreational Significance	Brown Trout	Rainbow Trout	Salmon	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Acheron River	River	Large	Remote	Regional	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes			
Alma River	River	Small	Remote	Regional	Yes		Yes		Yes			
Anatoki River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Anatori River	River	Small	Remote	Local	Yes							
Aorere River	River	Large	Natural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Argyle Pond	Lake	Small	Rural	Regional	Yes				Yes			
Awatere River	River	Large	Rural	Local	Yes						Yes	
Bankhouse	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes				
Bartletts Creek	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Baton River	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes							
Blind River	River	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Botham's Bend	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes				
Bowscale Tarn	Lake	Small	Remote	Regional	Yes			Yes	Yes			
Branch River	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Buller River (between Iron Bridge and Gowanbridge)	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes			Yes				
Buller River (upstream of Gowan bridge)	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes							
Clarence River (below Acheron confluence)	River	Large	Remote	Regional	Yes		Yes		Yes			
Clarence River (upstream of Acheron River confluence)	River	Large	Natural	Regional	Yes				Yes			
Cobb Reservoir	Lake	Large	Remote	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Cobb River	River	Medium	Remote	Regional	Yes	Yes						

Nelson Marlborough Water Bodies	Water Type	Size	ROS Category	Recreational Significance	Brown Trout	Rainbow Trout	Salmon	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Conway River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes				Yes			
D`Urville River	River	Medium	Remote	National	Yes	Yes						
Daniells Lake	Lake	Small	Remote	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Deepdale River	River	Medium	Remote	National	Yes							
Dove River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Druggan's/Appos Dams	Wetland	Small	Remote	Local				Yes				
Elterwater	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes		Yes		
Fish Lake	Lake	Small	Remote	Local	Yes			Yes	Yes			
Fyfe River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Gibsons Creek	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Glenroy River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes							
Goulter River	River	Medium	Remote	Regional	Yes							
Gowan River	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes	Yes						
Graham River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Grasmere	Estuary	Large	Rural	Local				Yes		Yes		
Grovetown Lagoon	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Havelock Estuary	Estuary	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes		Yes		
Hope River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Howard River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Island Lake	Lake	Small	Remote	Local	Yes				Yes			
Jasper Lake	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes				
Kahutara River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Kaihoka Lakes	Lake	Small	Natural	Local					Yes			
Kaikoura Lakes	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Kaituna River (Marlborough)	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Leatham River	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Lee River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes							
Lyell Creek (Buller)	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Lyell Creek (Kaikoura)	River	Small	Urban	Local	Yes			Yes				
Maitai River	River	Small	Urban	Local	Yes							
Mangles River	River	Medium	Rural	National	Yes							

Nelson Marlborough Water Bodies	Water Type	Size	ROS Category	Recreational Significance	Brown Trout	Rainbow Trout	Salmon	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Marahau River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Maruia River	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes			
Matakitaki River	River	Large	Natural	Regional	Yes			Yes	Geese			
Matiri River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes							
McRae Lake	Lake	Small	Remote	Unknown					Yes			
Middle Creek	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Molesworth Farm Park	Farm	Large	Remote	National	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes			
Motueka River (above Wangapeka confluence)	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Motueka River (below Wangapeka confluence)	River	Large	Rural	National	Yes			Yes				Yes
Motupiko River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Moutere River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Omaka River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Opawa River	River	Medium	Urban	Local	Yes			Yes				
Opouri River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Orinoco River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Otuhie Lake (D'Urville Is)	Lake	Small	Natural	Local				Yes		Yes		
Otuhie Lake (West Coast)	Lake	Small	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Owen River	River	Medium	Rural	National	Yes							
Pakawau/Puponga Coastline	Estuary	Large	Natural	Regional				Yes		Yes		
Para Swamp	Wetland	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes				
Paturau River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Pearse River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Pelorus River (above Pelorus Bridge)	River	Large	Natural	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Pelorus River (below Pelorus Bridge)	River	Large	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes		
Puponga Farm Park	Farm	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		

Nelson Marlborough Water Bodies	Water Type	Size	ROS Category	Recreational Significance	Brown Trout	Rainbow Trout	Salmon	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Rahu River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Rai River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Rainbow River	River	Medium	Remote	Local	Yes				Yes			
Rainy River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Riwaka River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Riwaka River N Branch	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Riwaka River S Branch	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Roding River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Rolling River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Ronga River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Roses Overflow	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Rotoiti (Nelson Lk) Lake	Lake	Large	Natural	National	Yes							
Rotoroa Lake	Lake	Large	Natural	National	Yes	Yes						
Ruataniwha Inlet	Estuary	Large	Natural	Local				Yes		Yes		
Sabine River	River	Medium	Remote	National	Yes	Yes						
Sedgemere	Lake	Small	Remote	Local	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes		
Severn River	River	Medium	Remote	Regional	Yes							
Speargrass Creek	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Spey Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes							
Spring Creek	River	Small	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Station Creek	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Tadmor River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Takaka Estuary	Estuary	Large	Rural	Local				Yes				
Takaka River (above Lindsay's bridge)	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes							
Takaka River (below Lindsay's bridge)	River	Large	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Taylor River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Tennyson Lake	Lake	Small	Remote	Local	Yes				Yes			
The Brook Stream	River	Small	Urban	Local	Yes							
Timms Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							

Nelson Marlborough Water Bodies	Water Type	Size	ROS Category	Recreational Significance	Brown Trout	Rainbow Trout	Salmon	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Tinline River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Top Valley Reserve	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes				
Top Valley Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Travers River	River	Medium	Remote	National	Yes							
Tuamarina River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Tunakino River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Tutaki River	River	Small	Rural	Regional	Yes							
Waihopai River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes							
Wai-iti River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes						Yes	Yes
Waikakaho River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Waikoropupu River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes		Yes					
Waimea Inlet	Estuary	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes				Yes
Waimea River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Waingaro River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes							
Wairau (Vernon) Lagoons	Estuary	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Wairau Diversion	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes		Yes	Yes				
Wairau River (above Wash Bridge)	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes				Yes			
Wairau River (below Wash Bridge)	River	Large	Rural	National	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Wairoa River	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes							
Wakamarina River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes							
Wakapuaka River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Wangapeka River	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes							
Warwick River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Westhaven Inlet	Estuary	Large	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Whangamoa River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Whatariki Lakes	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Woolley River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Totals					**109**	**16**	**17**	**48**	**24**	**15**	**5**	**4**

FISH & GAME NEW ZEALAND
NELSON/MARLBOROUGH REGION

SPORTS FISH AND GAME MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

Date Wednesday, 20 August 2008

66-74 CHAMPION ROAD
PO BOX 2173 STOKE
NELSON

FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I am pleased to present the Nelson/Marlborough sports fish and game management plan.

The preparation of this plan reflects the significant responsibility entrusted to the Nelson/Marlborough Fish and Game 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 without intruding unduly on other users of that habitat. Its preparation has involved extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

It is likely that management issues will change in the years to come as new information and new challenges are presented. The changing attitudes and methods used within the angling and hunting community and by other users of the habitat concerned may require this plan to be amended or reviewed. Therefore it should not be regarded as a static snap-shot from one point-in-time but a living and evolving document, designed for meeting and addressing changing requirements.

The Nelson/Marlborough Fish and Game Council looks forward to the ongoing input of views from anglers, hunters and other interested groups and users of sports fish and game bird habitat.

Bill McKenzie
Chairman

SPORTS FISH AND GAME MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Nelson Marlborough Fish and Game Council (Fish and Game (NM)) is obliged 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 Fish and Game (NM) to meet its statutory responsibilities over the next 10 year time frame.

In particular, the plan summarises the issues which Fish and Game (NM) 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 of its subcomponents.

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. In accord with section 17 L(4) of the Act, Fish and Game (NM) should have regard to:

- the sustainability of sports fish and game birds in its 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 Fish and Game (NM) 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
- 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 regional 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 Nelson/Marlborough 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 Nelson/Marlborough 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 Fish and Game (NM)'s Annual Operational Work Plan and other specific implementation plans.

Prior to submitting a draft of this management plan for approval by the Minister of Conservation, this plan has been prepared and notified according to the requirements of subsection (2) of section 17M of the Act to:

- daily newspapers circulating within the region –
    - The Nelson Mail
    - The Marlborough Express
    - The Press
- the Director General of Conservation, through the Nelson Marlborough Conservator
- Iwi Authorities, including, in alphabetical order –
    - Ngai Tahu
    - Ngati Apa
    - Ngati Koata
    - Ngati Kuia
    - Ngati Rarua
    - Ngati Tama
    - Ngati Toarangatira
    - Rangitane
    - Te Atiawa
- the Tasman, Marlborough, Buller and Hurunui District Councils, Nelson City Council and West Coast and Canterbury Regional Councils

- Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board

- Angling and hunting organisations, and landowner and public interest groups such as New Zealand Deerstalkers Association, Federated Farmers and the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.

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

The Nelson/Marlborough region [the region] is one of twelve Fish and Game regions in New Zealand.

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 Regional Councils and one National Council. Each of these Councils became Crown Entities and then Public Entities with the passing of the Crown Entities Act 2004. They have specific functions, responsibilities and powers to manage sports fish and game birds, as specified in Sections 26Q, 26R, and 26S of the Act.

'Fish & Game New Zealand' is the operating name of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council (the New Zealand Council) together with the 12 regional Fish and Game Councils established to represent the interests of anglers and hunters. 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 as though it was a Fish and Game Council.

The sports fish and game bird resource and income arising from it are the property of the Crown. Fish and Game Councils are empowered to administer these resources on the Crown's behalf.

Fish & Game New Zealand receives no government funding to undertake its statutory purpose and its activity is financed mainly through the sale of sports fish and game bird licences. 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. Councillors are anglers and or hunters elected through a democratic process by whole season licence holders.

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

> *"Manage, maintain and enhance the sports fish and game resource in the recreational interests of anglers and hunters."*

In fulfilling this purpose under Section 26Q of the Act, the primary functions of Fish and Game (NM) 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.

The Nelson/Marlborough Fish and Game region (see Figure 1) extends from Kahurangi Point in the northwest around the coast through the Nelson Bays and Marlborough Sounds and down the Kaikoura Coast to the Conway River catchment. It includes all the waters of the catchments and islands within this area and the upper Buller River catchment upstream of Lyell. This area includes

most of the former Nelson Acclimatisation District, all of the Marlborough Acclimatisation District

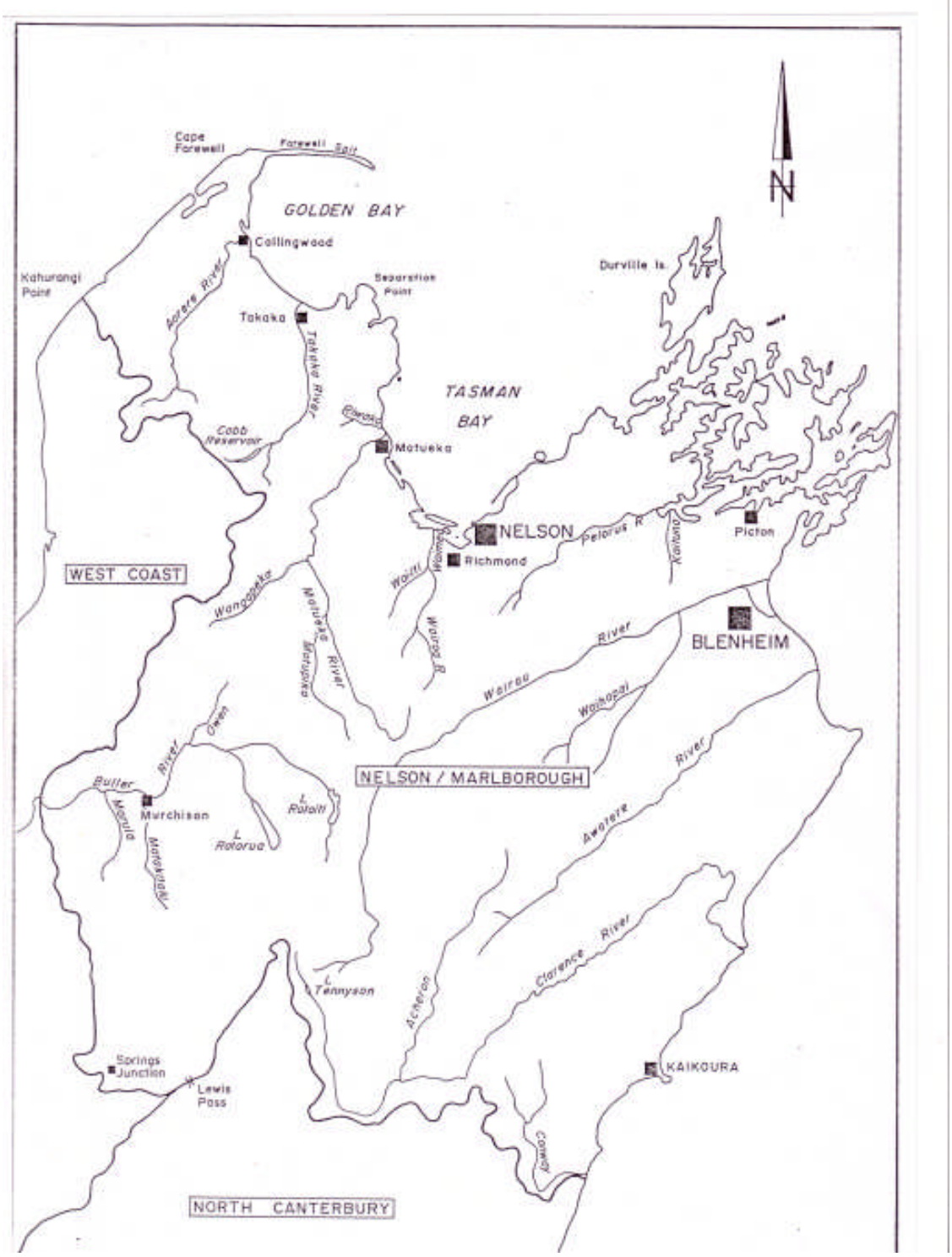

Figure 1 Nelson Marlborough Fish and Game Region

and some parts of the former North Canterbury District in the upper Clarence River catchment and West Coast District in the middle Buller River catchment.

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 (Wairau South, Wairau North, Blenheim, Waimea/Buller, Motueka/Golden Bay, Nelson) and six are elected from the region at large as the next highest polling candidates.

Fish and Game (NM) also has non-voting co-opted members, such as, at present, a representative from Ngai Tahu under the terms of the settlement Act for that iwi. In addition, the Director-General of Conservation or his nominee may attend Fish and Game (NM) meetings and speak, but not vote.

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.

Twenty thousand New Zealand residents purchased fish or game licences in the Nelson Marlborough region over the period 1996 to 2004[1]. In any given year, the region represents the interests of around 5500 anglers and 1000 hunters.

[1] Nelson Marlborough Fish and Game licenceholder database records.

PART TWO

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The objectives presented in this plan have been developed around two goals that reflect the general mission of the Fish and Game (NM), 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

Critical to the development of this plan and its subsequent implementation are overarching themes of communication and education, which are intertwined with the two goals. 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 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 Nelson/Marlborough region is undertaken through habitat protection. While many species are monitored, there is little direct intervention to increase the numbers of fish and game species, such as through hatcheries or game farms. In managing habitat, maintaining it is more effective than trying to restore it after it is damaged or destroyed. Fish and Game (NM) 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:

1.1 Maintain sustainable populations of harvestable sports fish and game bird species

1.2 Protect and increase habitat for sports fish and game birds

1.3 Ensure a sustainable harvest of the resource by enforcing fishing and hunting regulations.

1.4 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 merely 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, Fish and Game (NM) 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:

2.1 Encourage maximum angler and hunter participation, access to the fishing and hunting resource and maintain the quality of the recreational experience

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

2.3 Maximise the sale of angling and hunting licences in the region

2.4 Provide for the governance of the fish and game system by fish and game licence holders

2.5 Ensure the planned and coordinated management of the sports fish and game bird resource

2.6 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 Fish and Game (NM)'s annual operational work plans. The structure of this section of the Management Plan follows the eight functional areas (output classes) used in Fish & 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

Fish and Game (NM) manages a range of sports fish and game bird species in the Nelson/Marlborough region. Species management programmes are required for these species to ensure the populations remain healthy and to ensure 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 Fish and Game (NM).

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, spawning surveys, electro-fishing and angler surveys. Game monitoring techniques include annual aerial counts, 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 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 harvests*
- *Mitigating any adverse impacts on sports fish and game bird species*
- *Mitigating the impact of sports fish and game bird species on other species, habitat and users of that habitat*

Issues:

1. Without sustainable management of sports fish and game birds 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.

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.

Intensification of agriculture, discharges to waterways, 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. Development activities continue to reduce the quality and quantity of available habitat.

The long term effects of the introduced Didymo alga, *Didymosphenia geminata* on the aquatic ecosystem and sports fishery is unknown and remains a major concern. In the future Fish & Game New Zealand may have a substantial role to play in the management and control of this and similar invasive organisms in freshwater environments and with any ongoing research of their effects on the environment.

Habitat protection is the specific responsibility of local authorities (Resource Management Act 1991) and the Department of Conservation (Conservation Act 1987). Fish and Game (NM) 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.

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.

Habitat maintenance and enhancement is an important tool in the management of the sports fish and game bird resource. Ensuring that sufficient habitat is available to maintain self-sustaining

populations of sports fish and game birds and angling and hunting opportunities have become a major activity for Fish & Game New Zealand in recent years.

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 Fish and Game (NM)*

Issues:

1. Modification of rivers, particularly in lowlands, has adversely affected trout and salmon 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.
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. Government policies seeking renewable energy is putting pressure on riverine ecosystems due to hydro-electric power applications, diverting Fish and Game (NM) resources from fisheries, wildlife and recreational management.
7. New biosecurity threats arise from time to time and freshwater interests need to be vigilant to protect freshwaters generally

OUTPUT CLASS 3: PARTICIPATION

Fish & Game New Zealand 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 Fish and Game (NM)'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 Fish and Game (NM) 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 Fish and Game (NM). Too much angling pressure can diminish the perceived value of the back country fishery. Similar pressures have not yet had a major impact on hunting, but it is likely this will occur as the reputation of New Zealand as a hunting destination grows.

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 Fish & Game New Zealand 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 Fish and Game (NM).

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. Signposting of significant angling and hunting access points enable licence holders to easily identify opportunities.

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

Ethical standards of behaviour include:

(a) a desire to have others enjoy their hunting and angling opportunities as much as you.
(b) acknowledgment that anglers and hunters often have no audience to ensure they behave ethically and that such behaviour is self motivated and regulated.
(c) an individual concern for the well-being of the environment and for others also interested in and using that environment;
(d) promotion of uses which preserve the diversity, integrity, and beauty of ecosystems and the disapproval of those which do not;
(e) 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 and supporting opportunities for new anglers and hunters to receive training and 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. Where legal access is available, physical access may be impeded by vegetation or lack of tracks.
6. 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 Fish and Game (NM)'s capacity to successfully achieve its purpose and functions. To be effective, Fish and Game (NM) requires high public awareness of its role and activities, and the contribution it makes to environmental enhancement and an acceptability of Fish and Game activities.

Fish & Game New Zealand 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 Fish and Game (NM)'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 Fish and Game (NM) and vice versa.
3. Lack of consultation may result in unnecessary conflict or may miss opportunities.

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 Fish and Game (NM). One of the

strengths of the Fish and Game system is the ability for users of the resource to self-police their own system.

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

It is important that Fish and Game (NM) 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 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
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 & Game New Zealand. Licences purchased in the Nelson/Marlborough region are able to be used nationwide, apart from sports fishing in the Taupo Fishing District.

Part of Fish & 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. The licence categories do not necessarily meet the requirements of all anglers and hunters

OUTPUT CLASS 7: COUNCIL

Licence holder ownership of fish and game management and involvement is based upon an elected Council system. Fish and Game (NM) 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 therefore publicly notified and 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 staff for the administration of the Fish and Game resource in the region.

Each Fish and Game Council appoints a manager and other staff for the efficient and economic administration of the affairs of the Council. Preparation of agendas, meeting reports and minutes are part of the manager and staff'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. Councils need to be effectively serviced to carry out its governance role.

OUTPUT CLASS 8: PLANNING AND REPORTING

Fish and Game (NM) requires planning and reporting systems that enable it to establish and maintain clear direction and to provide accountability to licence holders. Fish and Game (NM) 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 Fish and Game (NM) include:

1. Preparation of a Sports Fish and Game 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 (s.26X Conservation Act). It documents activities undertaken for the year and the degree to which objectives are being met by Fish and Game (NM).

4. The financial statement is to be audited by the Office of the Auditor General or their agent.

Fish and Game (NM) must also prepare each annual Anglers and Game Notice which regulates sports fishing and game bird hunting in the region. These notices set out the conditions under which a current licence holder may fish or hunt in the Nelson/Marlborough 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 throughout New Zealand 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 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 its functions to advocate the national requirements of Fish & Game New Zealand and coordinate its regional functions.

It is necessary for councils to co-operate to ensure that the most effective use is made of every licence dollar. It is also necessary for the system to achieve excellence of fish and game management and services to anglers and hunters.

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 Management Plan*
  - *an annual operational work plan*
  - *an annual report, including a Statement of Service Performance*
- *Implementing national policy determined by the New Zealand Fish and Game Council*
- *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 Fish and Game regions*

Issues:

1. Without capable planning, management of the fish and game resource in the Nelson/Marlborough region will not be cost effective.
2. Some issues cannot be effectively dealt with in isolation from other Fish and Game regions

PART THREE

ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The Fish and Game management system is based on twelve regional councils coordinated by the New Zealand Council. With inter-availability of fishing and hunting between regions, funding of all thirteen 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 Fish & Game New Zealand administers are managed by each Fish and Game Council for all New Zealanders. When buying a licence, the licence purchaser is contributing to the management of the resource nation-wide – not only a particular region. This plan, however, is directed entirely at the medium to long term management of the Nelson/Marlborough region, within the context of the legislation and Fish and Game national policy.

METHODS TO BE USED

An important feature of the changes brought in by the Conservation Act was to ensure that 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.

Decisions by Fish and Game Councils can be challenged by the Ombudsman or by judicial review. A management plan can provide a statutory basis for decision-making and this is particularly the case when a Fish and Game Council wishes to turn down an application for an activity which it believes is inappropriate in its region.

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 Fish and Game (NM) providing some of the background information on the state of the resource and the reasons behind the decisions. Fish and Game (NM) meetings are public meetings. A time for public comment can be 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.

Fish and Game (NM)'s practice is to invite participation in decision making with affected parties. In addition, all Council meetings are publicly advertised with time set aside for public input or would be included on a meeting agenda if requested. In addition, Fish and Game (NM) is obliged 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.

A large area of sports fish and game bird habitat is on, adjacent to, or passes through, private land. It is important for the Nelson/Marlborough region to encourage land owners and managers to create, maintain and enhance sports fish and game bird habitats on their land. Many freshwater habitats are dynamic environments and respond rapidly to change. Riverine wetlands, for example, can be created after gravel extraction and within 5 years after their creation can be providing important wildlife and/or fisheries habitat.

Fish and Game (NM) 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. Advice on habitat protection or restoration will be provided to landowners most effectively in conjunction with funds sourced externally for biodiversity purposes. Fish and Game (NM) will seek support in the provision of advice wherever and whenever this is available. Where resources are required to undertake habitat enhancement, Fish and Game (NM) will seek external funds to assist if appropriate.

In addition to the provision of advice, Fish and Game (NM) reserves or leases a number of areas of land for the purpose of habitat enhancement. The major area is the Para Swamp, the largest freshwater swamp in Marlborough, of which about 80% of its 120 ha is owned or administered by Fish and Game for wetland habitat enhancement and game bird hunting. In addition Fish and Game (NM) administers a leasehold block at Botham's Bend in the lower Wairau, and the Top Valley Wildlife Management Reserve on the Wairau North bank.

FORMAL STATUTORY PLANNING PROCESS

Fish and Game (NM) will provide for and recognise Fish and Game (NM) and the New Zealand Council's interests in all appropriate statutory planning matters. This will involve:

1. consultation under the First Schedule of the Resource Management Act with the appropriate local authorities on all relevant planning documents.

2. 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

3. solutions of remediation or mitigation, where adverse effects of activities on sports fish and game bird habitat or recreational values cannot be avoided

4. development of effective protocols with other resource management authorities to manage key environmental impacts.

5. liaison with the Department of Conservation and Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board on their planning processes as required.

OPERATIONAL WORK PLANS

Operational work plans (OWPs) are prepared annually. If there is no sportsfish and game management plan for the time being in force for the area, the Minister of Conservation approves OWP's or provisions in them relating to the management of those species of sportsfish or game bird for which there is no management plan in force. OWP's 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.

Fish and Game (NM) begins to draft its OWP 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 OWPs of the regions are reviewed for consistency at meetings of regional managers and their recommendations are considered by the New Zealand Council. Ultimately it is the responsibility of the New Zealand 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 nation-wide 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 been set in early July, each region can finalise its annual OWP ready for the start of the new financial year in September. In developing its priorities and projects, Fish and Game (NM) will be mindful of any operative minimum operating standards or national policy developed for Fish and Game Councils by the New Zealand Council.

Fish and Game (NM)'s OWP will detail the outputs and activities necessary to implement the goals and objectives of this management plan as determined each year by Fish and Game (NM).

FISHING AND HUNTING REGULATIONS

Many anglers and hunters at times pursue their sport in regions other than where they purchase a licence. With nation-wide 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 Anglers 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. Fundamental to Fish and Game (NM)'s responsibility to promote angling and hunting is the avoidance of regulations, which would advance elitism or provide for exclusive use of the resource. It is especially important for newcomers to angling and hunting that regulations do not unnecessarily constrain the way they wish to pursue their chosen sport. In particular, Fish and Game (NM) takes the view that most regulations should be intended to maximise fishing and hunting opportunity. Restrictions should generally only exist for biological reasons and to ensure that sports fishing and game bird hunting remain as sporting activities, available to all who purchase the appropriate licence.

Fish and Game(NM) will draft and approve regional regulations which:

- 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 Nelson/Marlborough region will have impacts beyond its boundary. Therefore, in meeting its responsibilities, Fish and Game (NM) will consider the interests of all fish and game users and those of the wider community.

From an administrative point of view, Fish and Game (NM) 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 ("the New Zealand 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 New Zealand Council relevant to this plan are:

- to develop national policies in consultation with regional Fish and Game Councils. It is important that regional objectives and policies are not inconsistent with national policies and any national strategic direction.

- 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 nationally and regionally.

- To advocate in any statutory planning process its interests in the management of sports fish and game birds.

Even though the New Zealand Council is a separate body with its own staff, its councillors are all appointed; one from each of the 12 regional Fish and Game Councils. It is through the New Zealand 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.

Fish and Game (NM) nominates one of its councillors to sit on the New Zealand Council. The Director (Chief Executive or CE) of the New Zealand Council participates with fellow regional managers (CEs) in triennial managers' meetings with national office staff. A two-way liaison needs to be maintained with all levels – politically, managerially, technically and administratively.

ADJOINING FISH AND GAME COUNCILS (WELLINGTON, WEST COAST AND NORTH CANTERBURY) AND OTHER SOUTH ISLAND COUNCILS

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. For example, migratory species like Canada geese or Black Swan cross regional boundaries to the south and east respectively. The region works cooperatively with Wellington over the provision of swan trend count data and with South Island regions over Canada geese, drift diving, ranging/compliance and other staff training.

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. Its main function is to disperse funds by way of grants to any landowner or organisation that satisfies the 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 New Zealand Game Bird Habitat Stamp programme administered by the New Zealand Council. Fish and Game (NM) has applied for grants under this programme to purchase and restore the Para Wetlands. It also promotes this fund to land owners and acts as a referee for applications to the Trust Board from this region. As a referee it provides progress reports to the Board and signs off the authorisation that work has been completed for the Board to make its payments to land owners.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Fish and Game (NM)'s relationship with the Department of Conservation involves close liaison between the two agencies with responsibilities under the same legislation – the Conservation and Wildlife Acts 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 Department also administers more than 50% of the land area of the region in many parks and reserves, including part or all of three National Parks. Fish and Game (NM) works closely with the Department over its management of these resources on the public's behalf and according to the various statutues, where these affect Fish and Game (NM's) interests. In particular, Fish and Game (NM) has sought to ensure that the Conservancy's Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) and the National Park Management Plans allow for ongoing Fish and Game management of resources covered by these plans.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been developed and adopted at a national level between the Director-General and the Chief Executive of the New Zealand Council to guide the working relationship of the two organisations at a national level and specifies some agreed objectives.

The Director General of the Department of Conservation or his nominee is entitled to attend and speak but not vote at Fish and Game meetings. For Fish and Game (NM), this function is normally performed by a delegate of the Nelson/Marlborough Conservator.

NELSON/MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION BOARD

The functions of the Conservation Board are set out in Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987 and in the National Parks, Reserves and Walkways Acts. The Board focuses on providing advice, and contributing to the Department of Conservation in relation to any public conservation areas and in relation to species administered by the Department within the jurisdiction of the Board. One of the specific functions of a Conservation Board is to liaise with the relevant Fish and Game Council (Conservation Act Section 6M(1)(f) on matters relating to sportsfish and game within the area of jurisdiction of the Board..

A major responsibility for the board is overseeing the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Management Strategy (CMS). The CMS is a 10-year plan for managing and protecting the natural and historic features and wildlife of the region. Once a CMS has been approved by the New Zealand

Conservation Authority, boards advise on their implementation. A Sports Fish and Game Management Plan shall not derogate from a CMS (Conservation Act 1987 Section 17L(3)(c)).

Fish and Game (NM) will maintain regular liaison with the Conservation Board and seek for the Board to recognise and provide for Fish and Game (NM), angling and hunting interests in its work. Fish and Game (NM) will liaise with the Conservation Board on relevant matters, for instance in the development of management plans for lands administered by the Department in which Fish and Game (NM), or anglers and hunters, have an interest.

REGIONAL IWI

The Nelson/Marlborough Fish and Game region includes areas of interest to a number of different iwi. In the south east of the region and lower parts of the Buller catchment, the Ngai Tahu iwi has mana whenua. Te Runanga O Ngai Tahu, based in Christchurch, is the body representing the collective 18 runanga of Ngai Tahu. Two of the tribal runanga cover these parts of the region: Takahanga in the Kaikoura area and Te Runaka o Kati Waewae in the Murchison area.

The northern part of the region has interests held by a number of different iwi in different locations, including Rangitane, Ngati Rarua, Ngati Toa, Te Atiawa, Ngati Kuia, Ngati Koata, Ngati Apa, and Ngati Tama. The Treaty claims of these iwi have yet to be settled with the Crown.

Ngai Tahu has settled their Treaty claims with the Crown and the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 (NTCS Act 1998) defines those species that are taonga and recognised as native game birds. Fish and Game (NM) must have particular regard to advice provided by Ngai Tahu concerning the conditions for hunting seasons for native game birds and those parts of draft sportsfish and game management plans which relate to native game birds (NTCS Act 1998 s,279). The Claims Settlement has also resulted in each South Island Fish and Game Council being asked to co-opt a Ngai Tahu representative to advise on matters affecting native game birds. The Nelson/Marlborough region has agreed with this request, but has concerns that if all iwi were to seek such representation on the Fish and Game (NM) council it might become unworkable. The tribal boundary between Ngai Tahu and northern iwi remains in dispute.

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 Fish and Game (NM) to act in accordance with these principles, unless the principles are clearly inconsistent with the legislation (*Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board V Director-General of Conservation*, 1995 3 NZLR 553).

Generally speaking, Fish and Game (NM) and iwi have a common interest in maintaining clean water and protecting the natural character of rivers, lakes and wetlands. Fish and Game (NM) and iwi also have a common cause in seeking to manage wild populations of species for sustainable harvests.

Fish and Game (NM) has sought to work jointly with several iwi in management of land owned or administered by Fish and Game (NM) in the Para Swamp in Marlborough. The objective is to facilitate habitat development and enhancement which enables sustainable harvest of sports fish and

game birds for licence holders, but would also enable sustainable harvest of cultural resources of interest to iwi, such as eels and flax.

Fish and Game (NM) recognises that the Treaty encourages the partners to afford each other reasonable co operation and to act towards each other reasonably and with the utmost good faith. This includes an obligation to consult and have respect for the other's point of view.

Consultation between Fish and Game (NM) and iwi should occur on matters of potential common interest, including matters arising from the Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement or any other settlements, should they occur. This will enable informed decisions to be made.

MONITORING & 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.

Fish and Game (NM) 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 ten year period.

PART FOUR

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The area managed as the Nelson/Marlborough Fish and Game Region is described in Gazette No. 83 of 24 May 1990 at page 1861, and is shown on the map on page 9.

The Nelson/Marlborough region is divided into six electoral wards. These six wards are:

- Wairau South; being that part of Marlborough lying south of the Wairau River except for the Blenheim ward.
- Wairau North; being all of Marlborough lying north of the Wairau River
- Blenheim; being the area within the former Blenheim Borough Council boundary
- Waimea/Buller; being the Waimea and those parts of the Buller River catchment in the region
- Motueka/Golden Bay; being the Motueka and adjacent river catchments to the west, Golden Bay and western catchments to Kahurangi Point and Golden Bay
- Nelson; being the City of Nelson

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. It also lies at the centre of the country, being the northernmost area for salmon and chukar and the southernmost for substantial hunted pheasant populations.

The region includes the territorial councils of Tasman District, Nelson City, Marlborough District and Kaikoura District and small northern parts of the Buller and Hurunui Districts.

Based on the 2006 provisional census data, Nelson City (44 900) and Tasman District (47 700) have a total population of 92 600. The total Marlborough (45 700) and Kaikoura Districts (4810) population is 50 510. All four of these Districts are showing high rates of population growth. Small amounts of Buller and Hurunui Districts also lie in the Nelson Marlborough Fish and Game region, but their population would be substantially less, with light population densities.

Agriculture, horticulture (including viticulture), fishing, forestry and tourism are major sources of employment in the region.

Topography

The Nelson/Marlborough region comprises many mountain ranges, especially to the south, with relatively small areas of flat land associated with the major river valleys. The underlying geology is complex, particularly in Nelson. The coastline is extensive and varied, with the Marlborough Sounds to the northeast and a variety of estuaries and bays and rocky coastline in different areas.

Climate

Nelson/Marlborough's climate is warm and sunny. Annual rainfall varies from less than 600 millimetres to over 3000 millimetres, with higher rainfall to the west and in the major ranges. Lower rainfall is experienced in the lowlands in south-eastern Marlborough and around Nelson City. Dry periods often occur between January and March. Inland areas experience more 'continental' conditions, with hot summers (wet to the west and drier further east) with cold frosty or foggy winters. Snow conditions occur in winter in the mountains.

HISTORY

Fish and Game Councils in New Zealand owe their origins to acclimatisation societies that began to form during the 1860s. The Nelson society was one of the first with rules and objects dated 1863. 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. Societies such as Nelson, Marlborough and the two or three West coast societies flirted with merger but ultimately only the Buller and Grey societies united.

It was not until the formation of Fish and Game Councils in 1990 that Nelson and Marlborough became united as one of the 12 Fish and Game regions. The formation of Fish and Game (NM) resulted in the two operational centres of the Marlborough and Nelson Acclimatisation Societies with administrative functions being centralised in Richmond. Initially secretarial and accounting functions were let out to contract but then absorbed into the operations at Richmond in 1991.

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, much of Fish and Game (NM) efforts go into habitat protection, either directly by maintenance of habitat on Fish and Game (NM) owned or administered areas such as the Para Swamp, or indirectly by statutory advocacy through the Resource Management Act 1991, Conservation Act 1987 or other similar legislation. Since the advent of Fish and Game (NM) in 1990, statutory advocacy has become increasingly important as pressures on habitat due to changes in land use and development increase.

The sports fish and game bird habitat descriptions for the Nelson/Marlborough region are based on the six Fish and Game electoral wards.

SPORTS FISH HABITAT

Purchase or ownership of sports fish habitat is not desirable as this might signal ownership or exclusive use of the sports fish resource itself. The sporting ethic and the legislation holds that the sports fish resource is a public one, managed by Fish and Game Councils on behalf of licence holders who each contribute towards management. Sports fisheries and game birds are publicly owned and managed under New Zealand law, irrespective of their location. In addition, the environment in which sports fisheries are located is publicly administered and those administrative bodies 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 (see below) and many habitats of trout and salmon are also significant native fish habitats, for species such as whitebait (*Galaxias* spp.).

The habitat of sports fish is largely also a public resource 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 salmonid 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. An example is in Marlborough District, where that Council has recognised that all Marlborough waters should support fish life so has sought that all freshwaters have an underlying water quality standard that supports fishery habitat.

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 is to protect all wildlife under that Act.

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 is 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. Fish and Game (NM) has promoted and supported joint wetland inventories with the Department of Conservation and several local authorities in the region, which have shown that most lowland wetlands are in private ownership. 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. Fish and Game (NM) has objected to proposals by two local authorities to make wetland drainage a permitted activity.

Fish and Game (NM) 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 Fish and Game (NM), it may be appropriate to safeguard that by way of covenant on the title. Often, at the most minimal level, Fish and Game (NM) can offer advice to landowners which can assist management of their private land to provide habitat. Fish and Game (NM) 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). Fish and Game (NM) 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.

Wairau South

This includes the rugged South Marlborough mountain pastoral country, centred on New Zealand's largest farm, Molesworth. This provides back country angling and plenty of Canada goose hunting and habitat for chukar and Californian quail. To the east the Clarence River drains through dry gorges and the rocky Kaikoura Coast, providing the most reliable salmon fishing in the region at the mouth. Kaikoura provides limited freshwater fishing, but plenty of waterfowl hunting and the potential for more upland game. The north-western area of this sub-region is drained by the Wairau River, which provides a diversity of angling and hunting opportunities, with much of the best quail hunting opportunities available there. The Wairau or Vernon Lagoons at the river's mouth provide a tremendous wildlife resource and hunting opportunity.

Wairau North

This includes the North Bank of the Wairau, the Sounds and the Pelorus/Rai catchment, providing both excellent waterfowl and quail hunting and the best and most accessible rainbow trout fishing in the region.

Blenheim

Blenheim is largely noted as the second largest population centre in the region, with fishing opportunities in the adjacent rivers and streams.

Waimea/Buller

The Waimea is a regionally important fishery due to its proximity to the largest regional population centre of Nelson/Richmond, while the Waimea Inlet, as the largest estuary in the South Island, provides a significant hunting opportunity. Much of the region's pheasant hunting is undertaken on the Waimea River bermlands. The upper Buller provides superlative back country angling in the lakes

and rivers, recognised through the Water Conservation Order, as well as considerable waterfowl hunting.

Motueka/Golden Bay
The Motueka provides world renowned brown trout fishing, as recognised in the Water Conservation Order, with more limited waterfowl, quail and pheasant hunting opportunities. Golden Bay provides significant fisheries, largely in the Takaka and Aorere River catchments which are underutilised given the area's relative remoteness as well as locally important waterfowl hunting opportunities.

Nelson
Nelson provides the largest population base in the region, as well as small but attractive rivers such as the Maitai and Wakapuaka.

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 Nelson/Marlborough region offers the most diverse opportunities for angling and hunting of any single region in the country. Being located in the central part of the country, it straddles both the southern range of largely northern species such as pheasant, while being also the northern limit of southern species such as salmon. This region is also unique in its diversity of underlying geomorphology and climate, as its numerous mountain ranges crossing the prevailing winds result in some extremely dry parts of Marlborough, with wetter conditions in the western parts of Nelson. The region is also renowned as having some of the best weather in the country, so there is ample opportunity to enjoy the recreational opportunities.

SPORTS FISH

BROWN TROUT

The region is best known nationally and internationally for its diverse wild brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) fishery. This resource is recognised and enjoyed by discerning anglers from throughout New Zealand and visitors from other countries. A combination of a large number of variously sized but accessible rivers providing brown trout habitat and fishable water and a range of scenic settings with suitable access and good climate provide excellent angling opportunity. The Motueka River catchment has historically received the most use, at more than 13,000 estimated angler visits per annum (Unwin and Brown, 1998), closely followed by the Wairau River catchment of more than 11,000 estimated angler visits. At the other extreme are the numerous highly valued back country or wilderness fisheries that have good numbers of trophy-sized fish but relatively low usage by anglers. To recognise and protect these outstanding brown trout fisheries, Water Conservation Orders exist in the Motueka and Buller and there is protection for the Wairau in the Wairau Awatere regional water management plan.

RAINBOW TROUT

The most significant rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) fishery is the Pelorus catchment, particularly the Rai and its tributaries, which is regionally important and especially sought-after as a

contrast from the region's predominantly brown trout fisheries. Other rainbow fisheries include the Argyle Pond, which has been stocked by Marlborough Electric in mitigation for the effects of the Branch River hydro scheme. This is the only stocked water in the region in recent years, although the Nelson City Council has agreed to allow fishing in the Maitai Reservoir in mitigation for the effects of its water supply schemes on that river. Other rainbow trout fisheries include the Cobb Reservoir and upper Cobb River, Lake Daniells near Lewis Pass and the occasional fish in Lake Rotoroa, which now supports a small self sustaining rainbow stock following a major stocking programme during the 1970s.

CHINOOK SALMON

Chinook or quinnat salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) have been the subject of numerous efforts over many years to establish wild populations from the Buller River catchment, to Golden Bay, the Pelorus River catchment and Sounds to the Wairau, Clarence and several smaller catchments such as the Kahutara near Kaikoura. Of these, most have failed, especially in Golden Bay. Efforts in the Wairau and Clarence Rivers have seemed most likely to succeed, being most similar to the major salmon rivers of the eastern coast of the South Island. A hatchery in the Wairau for salmon was developed as early as the 1930s. Ova implantation and release of mixed sex stocks has occurred in most years during the late 1980s until 1996 and intermittently thereafter. Only the Clarence and Wairau have developed irregular small runs of salmon for the angler. These are likely now self sustaining at this level, with the Clarence having a more reliable, if brief, localised run. Ongoing investigations using genetic techniques are attempting to establish whether runs are wholly wild or supplemented by stocking. Latest information suggests salmon populations are naturally restricted by water temperatures at sea, which increase by several degrees at the subtropical convergence just south of Kaikoura and also increase steadily up the West Coast of the South Island.

COARSE SPORTS FISH AND NON-SPORTS FISH

Until recently, the region was not known to have any coarse fish species present. Recently there have been discoveries of populations of gambusia and the coarse fish koi carp in the region. Both are unwanted organisms under the Biosecurity Act and formerly considered as absent from the South Island. These, together with the noxious coarse fish rudd and the two coarse sports fish, tench (*Tinca tinca*) and perch (*Perca fluviatilis*) have been cause for concern for local authorities, the Department of Conservation and Fish and Game (NM) when they have appeared in areas where they had previously been absent. No other populations of coarse sports fish species are known within the region. The Department has embarked on a programme to eradicate koi and gambusia, which has coincidentally eliminated the populations of most of the other coarse species. The question remains open as to whether there should be an authorised coarse sports fishery in the region. Fish and Game (NM) has developed guidelines in respect of the exercise of its responsibilities under Section 59 of the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations for any sports fish introductions. This acknowledges that any requests for such introductions also need the separate approval of the Department of Conservation and/or the Minister of Conservation under Section 26ZM of the Conservation Act. The national policy of the New Zealand Council requires any introductions of new sports fish to be to artificial water bodies only, in areas accessible to the public, and should protect existing sports fisheries and native fisheries. While any applications to liberate new species of sports fish in the Nelson Marlborough Region would have to be considered on their merits, having regard to relevant statutory provisions Fish and Game (NM) is unlikely to support any such applications. In the meantime, as a measure intended to limit any incentive to unlawfully spread pest species, the region has closed the fishery to coarse sports fish angling. This is reviewed annually as part of the Anglers Notice.

GAME BIRDS

DABBLING DUCKS

Dabbling ducks are the mainstay of game bird hunting in New Zealand and this region is no exception. Mallard ducks (*Anas platyrynchos*) are widespread, after expanding their range and success greatly from the early 1950s until the mid 1960s, particularly in the more developed parts of the region. Grey ducks (*A. superciliosa*) remain more abundant in less developed rural areas, including the Marlborough high country and especially wooded country such as the Pelorus Sounds area, the upper Buller catchment, western parts of the Motueka catchment and much of Golden Bay. While these two species freely interbreed, more remote parts of the region provide good habitat for grey duck, with a greater proportion of grey ducks noted in the hunter's bag in such areas. Grey duck are defined as native game birds in the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998. Because of their interbreeding with mallards, Hitchmough (2002) considers grey duck to be a threatened species nationally, although there is no evidence cited by Williams that this is influenced by hunting or their status as a game bird.

The region generally lacks substantial freshwater wetlands suitable for ducks. Small wetlands, streams and drains provide good breeding habitat, especially in wet years, but a lack of open water in proximity to feeding areas means many areas lack large numbers of dabbling ducks. Drier parts of the region such as the Wairau Plains, Seddon/Ward area and the Moutere Hills and Motueka and Waimea Plains are very dependent upon adequate rainfall for duck survival until the hunting season. Changes to land use from cropping to viticulture in many areas, particularly Marlborough, in recent years have reduced food available to waterfowl, with corresponding reductions in the average hunter's bag. Dry summer and autumn conditions cause ducks to move towards the coast or inland away from these drier areas with a reduction in hunter success, unless they have developed suitable-sized wetland habitat. The huntable duck population fluctuates considerably from year to year depending on the weather over the previous 9 months. Good weather during the season appears also to affect success for many dabbling duck hunters. The extensive estuaries along much of the coastline, however, provide good cover and are utilised by both ducks and hunters.

Recent genetic analysis shows that many dabbling ducks are hybrids (Williams, 1999), even those appearing to be one of the two species, so the two nominal species must effectively be managed as one population for the purposes of wildlife management. The numbers of both species but particularly mallards increased dramatically during the late 1970s and early 1980s throughout the whole country, so the numbers of all dabbling ducks in the region are much greater than they were in the 1950s. Small (1953) estimated the entire Nelson Acclimatisation District had 1,800 grey ducks and 100 mallards. Such numbers are now routinely seen on the Bell's Island oxidation ponds alone, during the hunting season. The highest estimated harvest of mallard ducks in the region from 1992 to 2006, in the 1996 season, was 28,481; while for grey ducks the estimate was 4,143. Overall dabbling duck numbers are at least an order of magnitude higher than was the case 40 years ago.

New Zealand Shoveler ducks or spoonbill ducks (*A. rhynchotis*) were very uncommon in Nelson in the early 1950s and not recorded at all by Small in 1953. They are now known from a number of specific locations in the region with suitable habitat. Their speed of flight and seasonal migration to other parts of the country makes population estimates difficult. The 95% confidence interval for the estimated bag in 1996 was between 187 and 569 shoveler. Being small, fast flying and uncommonly seen in many areas, this species is targeted by few hunters. Fish & Game New Zealand is now undertaking a national shoveler trend count in August each year. Shoveler ducks are less common,

but can be locally abundant at certain times of year and are considered part of a national and highly mobile population.

PARADISE SHELDUCK

Once thought to be in decline, paradise shelduck (*Tadorna variegata*) have now adapted well to improved pasture, especially in cattle grazing country and have thrived in the last 20 years. Shelduck are a form of goose and feed upon pasture grasses. They frequent the high country where they are generally widespread but in low numbers, often in pairs or family groups. They can form nuisance flocks for farmers after the moult in January, when large numbers of hungry birds can descend upon green feed or crops. They can also feed on grain fed to deer in winter.

Although once not favoured by hunters, paradise shelduck (or parrie) have become more popular to hunt in recent years as the techniques to hunt them have become better known, such as decoying, calling and use of camouflage. As numbers have increased due to pasture improvement, there is both better opportunity for the hunter and a greater call for their control by landowners. Groups organised by Fish and Game Councils and others have undertaken special parrie hunts in places like the upper Buller, Tapawera, Matakitaki, Bainham, the Awatere and Kaikoura. As paradise shelduck have a slow breeding rate compared to mallard ducks, there is always a risk of over-harvest lowering populations for several years. For this reason, Fish and Game (NM) undertakes trend counts of parrie numbers during the moult in January to ensure the bag limits and seasons are appropriate. The 1996 estimated total harvest for the region was 11,948, indicating the relative numbers of parries and their importance for the hunter. Paradise Shelduck are defined as native game birds in the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.

BLACK SWAN

Farewell Spit maintains one of the largest populations of Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) in New Zealand, usually varying between six and fifteen thousand birds as recorded during trend counts in January. Smaller populations occur in the Westhaven Inlet, Lake Otuhie, the Waimea Inlet, several lagoons and estuaries in the Marlborough Sounds, the Wairau lagoons, Lake Grasmere and the Kaikoura Lakes. Occasional pairs are also noted in the Nelson Lakes and other locations within the region.

Black swans from this region breed here but many trade across to Lake Wairarapa where most hunter harvest occurs. Farewell Spit is a Nature Reserve and is not hunted. Some swans are harvested in Golden Bay, Havelock, the Wairau lagoons and Lake Grasmere but the total harvest for the region is estimated at 200-300. Black swan are not a favoured species by many hunters although swan drives are undertaken periodically in Golden Bay, where swans can become a nuisance to the harvest of cockles near Pakawau due to perceptions of their fouling areas intended for harvest.

CANADA GOOSE

Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) are a very mobile species best known in the high country, preferring grassland and improved pasture. Their wily nature makes them sought after by the hunter as a prime quarry, but cursed by high country farmers, where numbers can reach pest levels if not controlled. Pasture development in the high country has suited the geese, making the problem worse in recent years.

Canada geese in the region are centred on the south Marlborough high country from the Kaikoura Ranges north and west to the main divide, with an over-wintering population of less than 1,000 in this area. Many geese trade to this area from Lake Ellesmere to breed in October and November. There is also a population of some 500 resident birds in the lower Wairau lagoons area, with a further 300 to 500 birds in the mid Wairau Valley. A small population of several 100 lives in the middle Buller catchment, particularly in the upper Maruia and Matakitaki, with about 50 living between Marahau and the Takaka hill and around 100 in the Puponga area of Golden Bay. The numbers of geese have also been increasing on the eastern margins of the Marlborough high country towards the Kaikoura coast in recent years.

Canada Geese in the region are managed under the provisions of the South Island Canada Goose Management Plan. In this region all goose control is presently undertaken by hunters. Hunts organised by Fish and Game(NM) have been able to keep goose numbers below the threshold targets in the management plan. Three organised goose hunts are undertaken in late October, March and June each year, catering for between 120 and 250 hunters each and achieving tallies of between 300 and 2,450 geese harvested depending on the areas and times hunted. Since hunts commenced in 1983, the skills of hunters and knowledge of the area have improved, which is reflected in generally improving tallies despite the geese becoming more difficult to hunt and reducing in numbers. The hunts remain popular with hunters, with considerable interest from outside the region and are generally regarded as effective by run-holders. Other forms of goose control may need to be considered from time to time in accordance with the management plan, should goose numbers increase or their range spread.

PUKEKO

Pukeko (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) are an underrated and little harvested game bird, common in family groups in suitable habitat throughout the region. As a member of the rail family rather than a species of waterfowl, their behaviour is quite different from that of the other water-based game species. Their numbers vary in habitat due to climate and the type of land use. It appears their numbers in Nelson are higher now than they were reported in the 1950s by Small, although no quantities were given in his surveys.

Due to their highly territorial nature, prolific breeding under suitable conditions, willingness to live in close proximity with people and inquisitive nature, pukeko can create a considerable nuisance at times. More permits to disturb or control pukeko have been written in this region than any other single species in some years, particularly in coastal Tasman Bay. They can be particularly destructive in rural residential areas, especially to fruit trees and crops such as vegetables. The usual form of control is to allow hunting, although this is sometimes not possible, in which case noise control or more rarely capture and transfer can be effective. An extended season in the area around Tasman Bay has been trialled in recent years to enable hunting during the February/March period without a permit. Pukeko are defined as native game birds in the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.

CALIFORNIAN QUAIL

Drier parts of the region remain suitable for California quail (*Callipepla californica*), though populations accessible and available to the hunter are becoming rarer due to land use change, amongst other reasons. Quail hunting has fewer participants than waterfowl hunting, but is highly valued for those hunters dedicated to this high energy sport, requiring good teamwork and dog handling skills. Extensively farmed hill country in Marlborough is more suited to quail hunting than are many areas of Nelson and most keen upland game hunters are likely to do at least some of their hunting there. Almost no public areas are available for quail hunting - the largest such area being the

Wairau River berms, with some limited hunting available on some forestry land. Most hunting is undertaken on private land.

Quail numbers fluctuate greatly from year to year, depending upon the suitability of spring for breeding and the habitat changes which are steadily reducing many formerly suitable habitat areas. Periodic rabbit control has formerly been implicated in dramatic reductions in quail numbers, due either to direct feeding by quail on poison baits or indirect effects such as predators turning to quail as a source of food, or increased vegetation growth reducing habitat suitability for quail. Recent droughts in Marlborough and the advent of the rabbit calicivirus disease reducing the need to poison rabbits appear to have improved quail populations throughout the region. Quail populations also used to benefit from occasional burn-offs to open up habitat and increase the growth of suitable herb species and hunting opportunities, but such burn-offs are now rare. Little research has been undertaken into the effects of these activities on quail, so the relative importance of these different factors is hard to determine. Estimated total season bags for quail vary considerably from year to year, from less than 2,000 to more than 4,000.

PHEASANT

Ring necked pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) have been hunted in the Waimea/Motueka area since the early 1960s. Pheasant are the prime upland game species for the hunter and highly sought after by those hunters dedicated to this challenging sport. Nelson has had the longest history of pheasant hunting in the South Island, which brings a number of hunters from elsewhere in the region and further south.

Pheasant numbers are relatively constant, depending upon the habitat available. Habitat suitability for pheasant has been generally improving in recent years with the diversification and development of rural residential properties in the area. Hunting opportunities are being steadily reduced, however, as there are fewer and fewer areas large enough whose owners are willing to allow pheasant hunting.

In order to provide as many hunters as possible with the chance to hunt pheasant, Fish and Game (NM) has in recent years had a one cock bird limit and restricted the season to only 3 weekends each year. This is closely monitored using hunter surveys, harvest surveys and call counts and may be adjusted if either the population or hunting opportunity changes. Total estimated harvest is quite variable but is in the order of 100 to 300 cock birds per season, averaging about one cock bird per active pheasant hunter per year.

Given the popularity of pheasant hunting and the limited opportunity available, Fish and Game (NM) has been undertaking pheasant releases in the Clarence River mouth and intends to continue the programme in the Kaikoura area. Only wild captured birds are being released over a three year period in each area in an attempt to establish wild populations which may ultimately be available for hunting.

A small privately owned pheasant hunting preserve has recently been approved by Fish and Game (NM) under the New Zealand Council's national policy on upland game preserves in the Tadmor Valley near Tapawera. This provides a pheasant hunting opportunity for hunters using commercial guiding services at the preserve. A special hunting opportunity (without any charge for services) is also provided at the hunting preserve to junior hunters each season. It is possible that pheasants may also move to areas outside the boundaries of the preserve and provide some new local hunting opportunities.

CHUKAR

Chukar or Himalayan partridge (*Alectoris chukar*) is an alpine species, restricted to the high country centred on Marlborough, with scattered populations reported as far west as Mt Owen. Its numbers have declined to the point that it has not been targeted by hunters for a number of years. Fish and Game (NM) decided to close its hunting season in 1994 as its population is considered insufficient to sustain harvest. Coveys of more than 6 or 8 birds are now rare, with most of the infrequent observations just of pairs or family groups. The reasons for the decline of chukar are not clear but either inbreeding or rabbit control using pindone laced carrots have been some of the more likely explanations. The advent of rabbit calicivirus has stopped rabbit poisoning and this may improve chukar populations. Hunters have been monitoring chukar populations for Fish and Game (NM) during Molesworth goose hunts.

RED LEGGED PARTRIDGE

A breeding programme to establish the red legged partridge (*Alectoris rufa*) in Marlborough was undertaken from 1989 until 1994. In 1994 the programme was reviewed independently with Fish and Game (NM) deciding to terminate the programme and release the breeding stock in the driest parts of this country along the coastline from Rarangi to Cape Campbell. Sporadic monitoring has noted adult survival but there is little evidence of young being fledged. It now seems unlikely this species will become established in sufficient numbers to be viable as a game species.

RECREATIONAL USE

SIGNIFICANCE OF REGIONAL RECREATIONAL AREAS

The major publicly accessible habitats in the region 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. This analysis has been confined to those areas which are publicly accessible, as changes to land use, public access and habitats on private lands can occur at any time on privately owned lands. The changes in land use in Marlborough particularly in the last two decades have been major, with consequent effects on game bird habitats and hunting opportunities (Rouse 2007). As a result relatively few areas used by hunters are recognised in this analysis, which reflects the extent to which hunting is undertaken on private land, often in or on many hundreds of small areas such as farm ponds, or scrub gullies in the case of upland game hunting. By contrast, angling is almost entirely undertaken on areas which are publicly accessible and are usually public waters.

As background to preparing this plan, the public 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 Surveys (Unwin and Brown, 1998; Unwin and Image, 2003) but have been extended to include wetlands and any public 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 the recreation.

The appendix lists both the public 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.

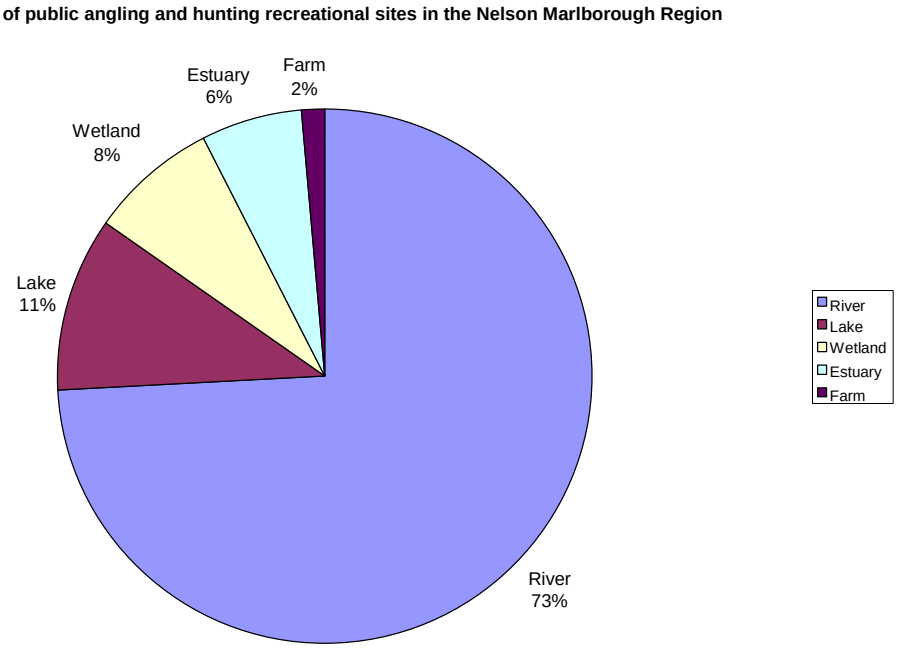

Figure 2 Type of public recreational opportunities in the Nelson Marlborough Region

It is evident from this chart that there are a large number of rivers which are available, particularly for the angler, in the region. A significant proportion of the public hunting opportunity is on estuaries, while the region overall has relatively few lakes in which fishing or hunting can occur.

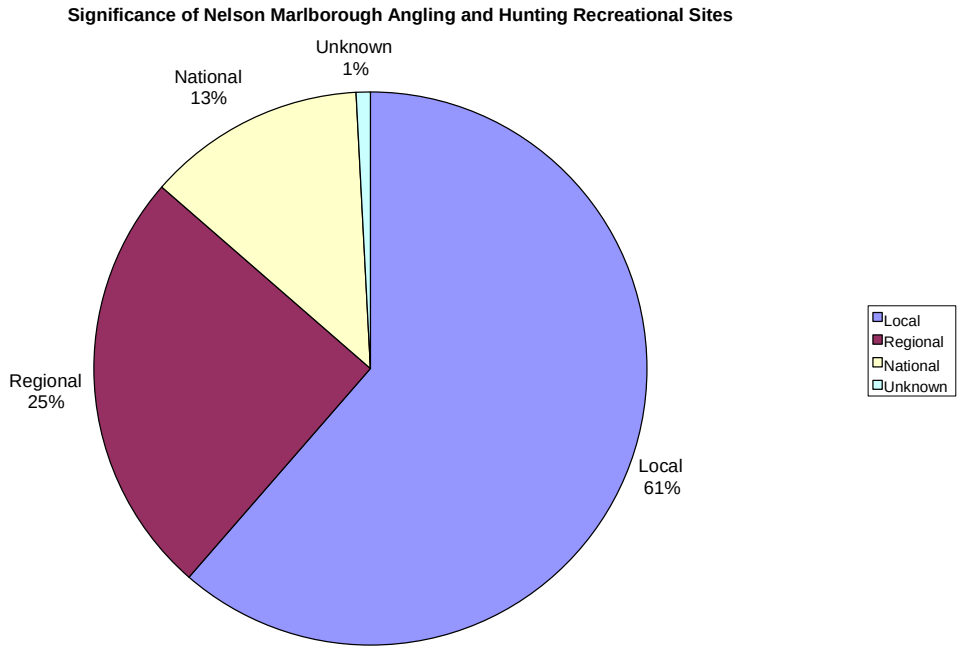

Figure 3 Relative significance of different public angling and hunting recreational opportunities in the Nelson Marlborough Region

Significance was determined against criteria which have subsequently been applied to the whole National Angler 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.

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 is sometimes difficult to assign the full length of a given river or large site such as Molesworth Station to a particular category. Some sites will vary in character in different parts; the predominant character was assigned in each case. The table used has

been modified from that used by the Otago Fish and Game Council in its Sports Fish and Game Management Plan and since applied for sports fisheries across the whole country.

Table 1 Nelson Marlborough 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	Salmonids	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 following pie chart summarises the regional distribution of ROS categories. Clearly much of the recreational opportunity occurs across the rural environment, while there are few opportunities in the urban area. The region has a high proportion of natural and remote sites, by comparison with many other parts of the country, however.

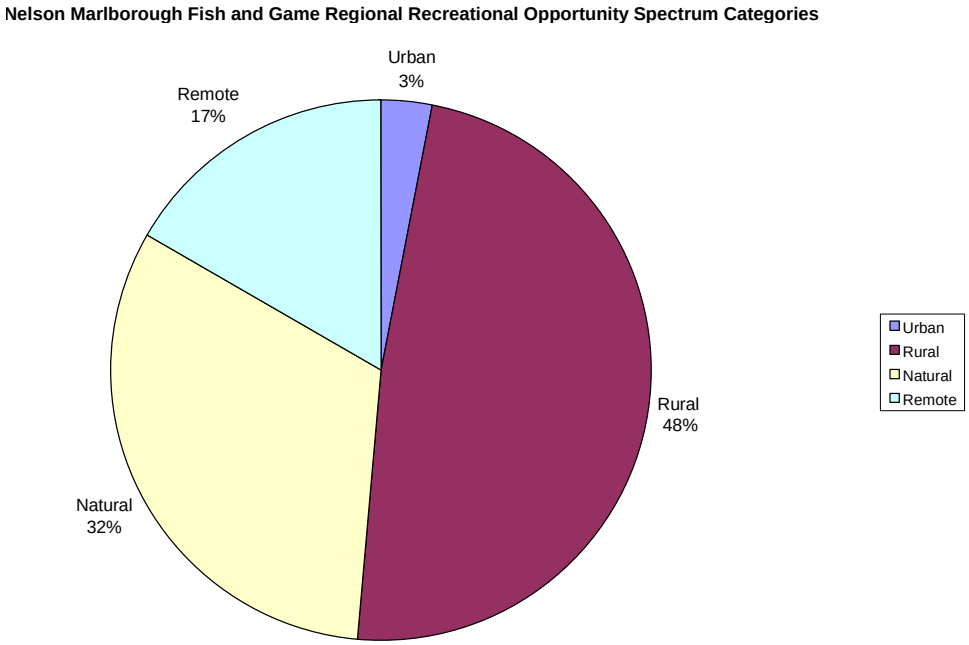

Figure 4 Distribution of different ROS categories in the Nelson Marlborough Region

Once again, the importance of the region's brown trout fishery and to a lesser extent for duck hunting is borne out by these data and, in contrast, the small number of public sites where upland game hunting can be undertaken.

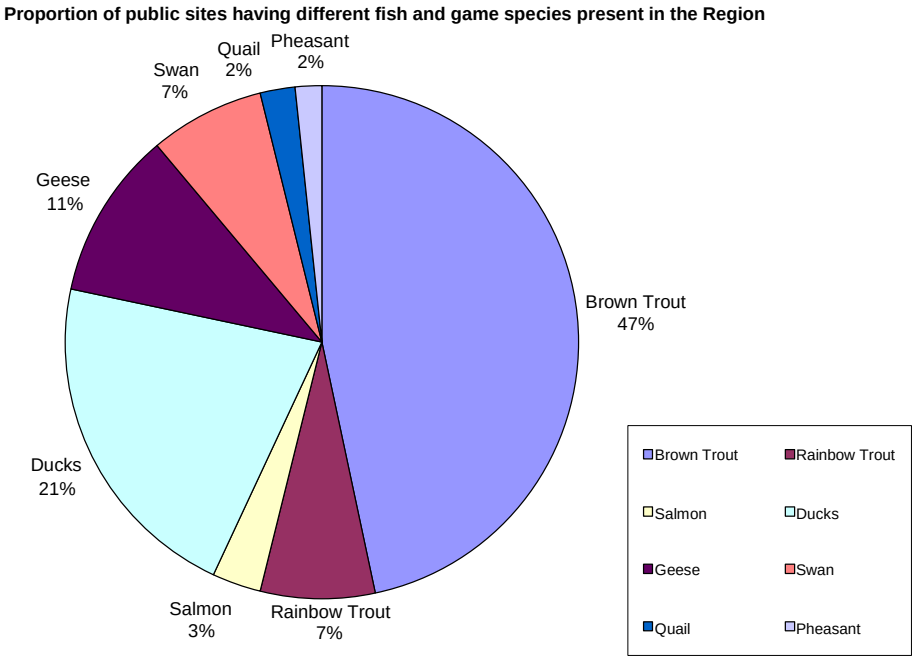

Figure 5 The proportion of all 132 sites having particular sports fish and game bird recreational opportunities

ISSUES FOR THE REGION

There are a number of significant national and regional issues of relevance to Fish and Game (NM)'s interests. Consistent with its statutory functions Fish and Game (NM) and the New Zealand Council seek to take an active role in the policy development processes underpinning many such issues and play an active advocacy role to protect its interests.

Some of Fish and Game (NM)'s most critical concerns relate to the implementation of the Resource Management Act 1991 by local authorities and permissions issued by them to undertake activities in or on, discharge contaminants into or to extract freshwater from water bodies, which may adversely affect sports fish and game birds and their habitats[2]. Many of Fish and Game (NM)'s and the New Zealand Council's concerns were confirmed in the November 2004 report by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE) entitled "Growing for Good – Intensive Farming, Sustainability and New Zealand's Environment". These concerns are also reflected in the recent OECD report (2007) on New Zealand environmental performance.

Fish and Game (NM) seeks to ensure public agencies with responsibilities for protecting ecosystems or habitat actively takes the lead role in tackling issues to safeguard those ecological systems. Issues identified by Fish and Game (NM) as critical to its interests include:

- water quality degradation, largely from land use intensification
- water extraction for irrigation
- loss of and modification to wetlands, including estuaries
- hydro development - impacting on fish and wildlife habitat, migration and angling opportunities
- local authority implementation of the Resource Management Act 1991
- recreational access to the outdoors - in particular access to rivers for fishing
- private commercial use of public fisheries, lands and game resources
- Treaty of Waitangi claims - impacting on the ownership and control of natural resources, rivers and lakes
- tenure review of the South Island high country - implications for public access to sports fish and game birds.
- biosecurity threats - eg. pest fish like koi carp or gambusia and aquatic weed species such as didymo or hornwort
- the protection of the wild trout fishery and the equity of access to all anglers
- management of public lands and access to these
- changing societal attitudes towards non-native species and the recreational pursuits of angling and hunting

Operational issues are listed in this Plan under the respective output areas described in Part One above.

[2] Section 7(h) Resource Management Act 1991

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 and tench are the two coarse fish classified as sports fish now known to occur in the region
Dabbling duck	typically birds 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 (see below under waterfowl and upland game)
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
Indigenous	native to the area or self-introduced, rather than introduced by human agency. A subset of indigenous species are those endemic species, which are found only in the particular area or country
Pest Fish	Includes noxious fish such as rudd as defined in the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations, unwanted organisms under the Biosecurity Act such as koi carp or gambusia or where defined by agreement with Fish and Game Councils in Regional Pest Management Strategies
Ranger	any person appointed as such pursuant to section 26FA(1) or (2) of the Conservation Act 1987 and having powers under the Conservation and Wildlife Acts
Salmonids	fish of the family Salmonidae. In New Zealand this family is represented by Chinook, sockeye and Atlantic salmon, rainbow and brown trout and brook char, lake trout and hybrids such as splake
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 upland game species listed as game birds in the First Schedule of the Wildlife Act 1953, specifically pheasant, brown quail, Californian quail, chukar, grey and red legged partridge.
Waterfowl	those waterfowl species listed as game birds in the First Schedule of the Wildlife Act 1953, specifically mallard duck, grey duck, shoveler duck, paradise shelduck, pukeko, black swan and Canada goose

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Fish and Game (NM) and the New Zealand Council operates under two principle acts – the Conservation Act 1987 and Wildlife Act 1953 - and within a number of other statutes.

CONSERVATION ACT 1987

Fish and Game Councils are established under the Conservation Act, which contains the legal authority for them 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. The Conservation Act also details the functions of the Department of Conservation and requires a ten year Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) to set the general direction for the management of all land administered by the Department in the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy and particularly areas held under the Conservation Act. Anglers Notices are promulgated under this Act.

FISH AND GAME COUNCIL ELECTIONS REGULATIONS 1990

These regulations are made under the Conservation Act and prescribe the procedure for the election of members of regional Fish and Game Councils and the appointment by such Councils of members of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council.

FRESHWATER FISHERIES REGULATIONS 1983

The Freshwater Fisheries Regulations are made 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.

WILDLIFE ACT 1953

The Wildlife Act 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 warranted officers for the purposes of this Act and sets out penalties for offences under this Act. Game Notices are promulgated under this Act.

WILDLIFE REGULATIONS 1955

These Wildlife Regulations are made under the Wildlife Act 1953. These regulations provide for game bird hunting licences, hunting methods and game bird liberations amongst other matters.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991

The Resource Management Act 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. Regional and territorial authorities must follow the processes set out in the Act for the making of development decisions and Fish and Game Councils may input into those processes. Fish and Game NM is bound by the provisions of the RMA, regional policy statements and regional and district plans. At the same time, the RMA 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 Management Plan when preparing or reviewing their plans and strategies.

A great deal of Fish and Game (NM) time and effort has gone into resource management advocacy to achieve habitat protection.

BIOSECURITY ACT 1993

The Biosecurity Act includes provisions on the treatment of animals, which Fish & Game New Zealand must follow in its operations. Fish & Game New Zealand must also obtain approval under this Act to introduce new species of sports fish or game birds to the country. The Biosecurity Act also includes provision to prevent new pests and diseases from arriving in New Zealand and eradicating or controlling those already present.

Fish and Game (NM) has worked closely with Biosecurity New Zealand concerning the unwanted organisms koi carp and gambusia and more recently the surveys and management of didymo.

NATIONAL PARKS ACT 1980

National Parks are of high national standing, being preserved in their natural state for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the public. Abel Tasman, Nelson Lakes and part of Kahurangi National Park all lie within the region. While Abel Tasman has no sports fish and few upland game birds without any history of angling or hunting, the other two parks both have nationally significant sports fishing opportunities recognised in the region's Water Conservation Orders or elsewhere, and significant game bird habitat, which predate those parks' existence by many decades.

The New Zealand Conservation Authority and the Department of Conservation through its Park management plans has recognised the value of these sports fish and game bird resources and their ongoing management by Fish and Game (NM). Fish and Game (NM) does not support liberations of sports fish into any areas outside the management area of existing stocks in National Parks.

RESERVES ACT 1977

The Reserves Act 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, 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. Wildlife Management Reserves are managed on a day-to-day basis by Fish and Game (NM) in the Para and Top Valley under these provisions, and the land on which the Fish and Game (NM) office is located in Richmond is a local purpose reserve for acclimatisation purposes.

Fish and Game (NM) 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 (NM) presently owns or manages several areas of land in the Para Swamp which have been covenanted.

The Reserves Act requires every reserve to have a management plan. A plan for the entire Para swamp is presently in draft form.

NGAI TAHU CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT 1998

The Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 provides for Fish and Game (NM) to invite Ngai Tahu to recommend a person to attend Fish and Game (NM) meetings as a statutory advisor. Ngai Tahu can also provide advice on the harvest of native game birds and the preparation of those parts of sports fish and game management plans which relate to native game birds. Fish and Game (NM) must have particular regard to that advice.

LOCAL BODIES OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT 1987

Fish and Game (NM) is subject to the Local Bodies Official Information and Meetings Act. 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 ENTITY ACT 2004, PUBLIC FINANCE ACT 1989 AND PUBLIC AUDIT ACT 2001

All Fish and Game councils are subject to the provisions of the Crown Entity 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. Fish and Game (NM) is a Public Entity 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 regional Fish and Game 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 regional Fish and Game Council thinks fit.

Invite persons or organisations to send to the regional 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 regional Fish and Game Council considers practicable and appropriate.

Give full consideration to any submissions and opinion make known to the regional 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 regional 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 regional 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 regional Fish and Game Council to prepare a summary of the submissions received on the draft.

The regional 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 regional Fish and Game Council for further consideration before approval.

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APPENDIX

Table of public recreational sites of interest to anglers and hunters in the Nelson Marlborough Region

Nelson Marlborough Water Bodies	Water Type	Size	ROS Category	Recreational Significance	Brown Trout	Rainbow Trout	Salmon	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Acheron River	River	Large	Remote	Regional	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes			
Alma River	River	Small	Remote	Regional	Yes		Yes		Yes			
Anatoki River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Anatori River	River	Small	Remote	Local	Yes							
Aorere River	River	Large	Natural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Argyle Pond	Lake	Small	Rural	Regional	Yes				Yes			
Awatere River	River	Large	Rural	Local	Yes						Yes	
Bankhouse	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes				
Bartletts Creek	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Baton River	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes							
Blind River	River	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Botham's Bend	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes				
Bowscale Tarn	Lake	Small	Remote	Regional	Yes			Yes	Yes			
Branch River	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Buller River (between Iron Bridge and Gowanbridge)	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes			Yes				
Buller River (upstream of Gowan bridge)	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes							
Clarence River (below Acheron confluence)	River	Large	Remote	Regional	Yes		Yes		Yes			
Clarence River (upstream of Acheron River confluence)	River	Large	Natural	Regional	Yes				Yes			
Cobb Reservoir	Lake	Large	Remote	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Cobb River	River	Medium	Remote	Regional	Yes	Yes						

Nelson Marlborough Water Bodies	Water Type	Size	ROS Category	Recreational Significance	Brown Trout	Rainbow Trout	Salmon	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Conway River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes				Yes			
D`Urville River	River	Medium	Remote	National	Yes	Yes						
Daniells Lake	Lake	Small	Remote	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Deepdale River	River	Medium	Remote	National	Yes							
Dove River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Druggan's/Appos Dams	Wetland	Small	Remote	Local				Yes				
Elterwater	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes		Yes		
Fish Lake	Lake	Small	Remote	Local	Yes			Yes	Yes			
Fyfe River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Gibsons Creek	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Glenroy River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes							
Goulter River	River	Medium	Remote	Regional	Yes							
Gowan River	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes	Yes						
Graham River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Grasmere	Estuary	Large	Rural	Local				Yes		Yes		
Grovetown Lagoon	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Havelock Estuary	Estuary	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes		Yes		
Hope River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Howard River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Island Lake	Lake	Small	Remote	Local	Yes				Yes			
Jasper Lake	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes				
Kahutara River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Kaihoka Lakes	Lake	Small	Natural	Local					Yes			
Kaikoura Lakes	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Kaituna River (Marlborough)	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Leatham River	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Lee River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes							
Lyell Creek (Buller)	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Lyell Creek (Kaikoura)	River	Small	Urban	Local	Yes			Yes				
Maitai River	River	Small	Urban	Local	Yes							
Mangles River	River	Medium	Rural	National	Yes							

Nelson Marlborough Water Bodies	Water Type	Size	ROS Category	Recreational Significance	Brown Trout	Rainbow Trout	Salmon	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Marahau River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Maruia River	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes			
Matakitaki River	River	Large	Natural	Regional	Yes			Yes	Geese			
Matiri River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes							
McRae Lake	Lake	Small	Remote	Unknown					Yes			
Middle Creek	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Molesworth Farm Park	Farm	Large	Remote	National	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes			
Motueka River (above Wangapeka confluence)	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Motueka River (below Wangapeka confluence)	River	Large	Rural	National	Yes			Yes				Yes
Motupiko River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Moutere River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Omaka River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Opawa River	River	Medium	Urban	Local	Yes			Yes				
Opouri River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Orinoco River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Otuhie Lake (D'Urville Is)	Lake	Small	Natural	Local				Yes		Yes		
Otuhie Lake (West Coast)	Lake	Small	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Owen River	River	Medium	Rural	National	Yes							
Pakawau/Puponga Coastline	Estuary	Large	Natural	Regional				Yes		Yes		
Para Swamp	Wetland	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes				
Paturau River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Pearse River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Pelorus River (above Pelorus Bridge)	River	Large	Natural	Regional	Yes	Yes						
Pelorus River (below Pelorus Bridge)	River	Large	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes		
Puponga Farm Park	Farm	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		

Nelson Marlborough Water Bodies	Water Type	Size	ROS Category	Recreational Significance	Brown Trout	Rainbow Trout	Salmon	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Rahu River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Rai River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Rainbow River	River	Medium	Remote	Local	Yes				Yes			
Rainy River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Riwaka River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Riwaka River N Branch	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Riwaka River S Branch	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Roding River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Rolling River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Ronga River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes		Yes				
Roses Overflow	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Rotoiti (Nelson Lk) Lake	Lake	Large	Natural	National	Yes							
Rotoroa Lake	Lake	Large	Natural	National	Yes	Yes						
Ruataniwha Inlet	Estuary	Large	Natural	Local				Yes		Yes		
Sabine River	River	Medium	Remote	National	Yes	Yes						
Sedgemere	Lake	Small	Remote	Local	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes		
Severn River	River	Medium	Remote	Regional	Yes							
Speargrass Creek	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Spey Stream	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes							
Spring Creek	River	Small	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Station Creek	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Tadmor River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Takaka Estuary	Estuary	Large	Rural	Local				Yes				
Takaka River (above Lindsay's bridge)	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes							
Takaka River (below Lindsay's bridge)	River	Large	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes				
Taylor River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Tennyson Lake	Lake	Small	Remote	Local	Yes				Yes			
The Brook Stream	River	Small	Urban	Local	Yes							
Timms Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							

Nelson Marlborough Water Bodies	Water Type	Size	ROS Category	Recreational Significance	Brown Trout	Rainbow Trout	Salmon	Ducks	Geese	Swan	Quail	Pheasant
Tinline River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Top Valley Reserve	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes				
Top Valley Stream	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Travers River	River	Medium	Remote	National	Yes							
Tuamarina River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes			Yes				
Tunakino River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes	Yes						
Tutaki River	River	Small	Rural	Regional	Yes							
Waihopai River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes							
Wai-iti River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes						Yes	Yes
Waikakaho River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Waikoropupu River	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes		Yes					
Waimea Inlet	Estuary	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes				Yes
Waimea River	River	Medium	Rural	Regional	Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Waingaro River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes							
Wairau (Vernon) Lagoons	Estuary	Large	Rural	Regional				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Wairau Diversion	River	Medium	Rural	Local	Yes		Yes	Yes				
Wairau River (above Wash Bridge)	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes				Yes			
Wairau River (below Wash Bridge)	River	Large	Rural	National	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Wairoa River	River	Medium	Natural	Regional	Yes							
Wakamarina River	River	Medium	Natural	Local	Yes							
Wakapuaka River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Wangapeka River	River	Large	Natural	National	Yes							
Warwick River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Westhaven Inlet	Estuary	Large	Natural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Whangamoa River	River	Small	Rural	Local	Yes							
Whatariki Lakes	Wetland	Small	Rural	Local				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Woolley River	River	Small	Natural	Local	Yes							
Totals					**109**	**16**	**17**	**48**	**24**	**15**	**5**	**4**