

FILE NOTE



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Date: 18 August 2008

Subject: **Fisheries Panel Meeting - 14 August 2008**

Fisheries Panel Meeting held 9.00 am, 14 August 2008 at Environment Bay of Plenty Rotorua office.

Those in attendance were: Richard Barker, Michel Dedual, Ian Kusabs, Rob Pitkethley, David Rowe, Rob Donald, Andy Bruere and Brendan Hicks.

1 **Notes from last meeting**

Each Action Point was discussed; Ian commented that he had some difficulty in obtaining Smelt catch data on Ohau Channel via Willy Emery. It was suggested that this local Smelt catch data could be collected through contact with a more local person such as Mary Stanton.

Action:

- **Andy Bruere is to look at possible engagement with local iwi to enable the gathering of Smelt catch data.**

Andy explained that the shared file space had not been set up and that Environment Bay of Plenty had recently had trouble with its internet site.

Action:

- **Andy to follow this matter up so that all reports can be accessed through the internet shared file space.**

All other actions had been completed. There was comment that the Smelt caught last season to be held for otolith analysis had been given to Brendon Hicks for storage.

Action:

- **Rob Pitkethley is to give the Trout otoliths to Brendan for storage.**
- **Andy to circulate the NIWA Kakahi monitoring report.**

2 **Presentation on 2007/2008 Smelt monitoring work**

David Rowe presented his recent Smelt monitoring work. This is the completion of pre-wall monitoring work as the wall was closed off on 28 May 2008. A 2008 NIWA Smelt monitoring report is available as well as PowerPoint slides attached.

Dave presented draft indicators of impact in the Ohau channel for the Panel's consideration.

It was raised by the Panel that there was probably not enough pre-wall information to reliably set trigger or threshold levels of impact.

Alternatively the Panel suggested avoid setting specific thresholds of impact levels and assess the data each year.

For the Smelt monitoring in the Ohau Channel

Need to continue to use the four sites so that the baseline data can still be used as a comparison.

Acoustic monitoring work in Lake Rotoiti

Dave presented the biomass information and the calculated estimates of Smelt numbers. He presented a draft indicator of impact for the Panel. This involved using the three previous years data combined as a baseline.

Richard was concerned that the baseline might be changing due to other factors and believes that each of the separate pre-data years needs to be considered in any pre and post-wall comparison. Michel commented that there may be some natural Smelt number dynamics occurring here and the Taupo Smelt data may be taken into account to see if there are any similar natural trends.

Dave reported back on larval Smelt densities in Lake Rotoiti.

Netting results were slightly higher than last year.

He proposed again a trigger level for comparison pre-wall with post-wall. The Panel again indicated a preference to avoid setting trigger levels and consider the results as the post-wall monitoring occurs.

3 Electric fishing

Brendan Hicks did a PowerPoint presentation on his electric fishing report. The report and PowerPoint are attached. The aim of the work was to check densities of Smelt in the Ohau Channel for comparison with the trapping work of NIWA. He reported that although bullies were not targeted they caught a number and so these were also reported on.

A number of other species of interest were caught and these were thought to be of interest generally around the Ohau diversion wall project.

Action:

- **Continue to undertake electric fishing in December annually for the next five years and include an electric fishing run at the time of a known Smelt run during the season to establish if this methodology confirms high Smelt numbers at the same time as the trapping programme.**

4 Otolith presentation

Brendan Hicks presented more detail on the otolith micro chemistry work and also information from Matt Riceman's MSc study.

He reported that the methodology was reliable for establishing Trout lake of origin but for Smelt it was less reliable at about 72%. He commented that it could be better to use other

methods to identify smelt lake of origin. Richard Barker, however, felt the level of accuracy estimated by Matt Riceman's study was a useful indicator of lake of origin. Brendan commented that stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen could provide an additional indicator, as Chris McBride's results showed that smelt in the two lakes had distinct signatures.

Koaro monitoring was discussed. At this stage no Koaro monitoring had been undertaken as none had been caught in the Ohau Channel. If there had been any present they would have been caught either in the trapping programme or the electric fishing run. It was agreed that due to the rarity of the species it would not be advisable to undertake a programme of monitoring which destroyed Koaro. Monitors should simply record if any are caught.

Action:

- **Ongoing monitoring:**
 - **Continue Trout monitoring annually in Rotorua, Rotoiti and Ohau Channel at same time as previous years.**
 - **Catch adult Smelt for analysis annually.**
- **The sampling would involve the following:**
 - **Fish and Game on Rotorua to undertake mid-summer sampling during competitions.**
 - **Fish and Game on Rotoiti to do sampling at competition weigh-ins. Andy to provide University student to assist in Rotoiti work. Need to select wild fish.**
- **Ian Kusabs suggested possible use of Jo Butterworth of Te Arawa Lakes Trust to assist with this work.**
- **Smelt to be collected in December-January same time as past annually. Electric fishing to be undertaken by Brendan.**
- **For lakes sampling consider Ian Kusabs to assist this work. The Panel recommended keeping samples from each beach apart for both of the lakes.**

5 **Trout fisheries information**

Rob Pitkethly explained the Trout fishery information which had been presented. He explained the monitoring of percentage of wild fish on opening day and also the size of two year olds to give Trout feed information (length/weight). He explained that there are two monitoring systems which include open day two year olds and the tag programme.

Action:

- **It was agreed that channel fisheries surveys over summer would continue. The survey plan would be prepared by Rob Pitkethly. Environment Bay of Plenty will provide assistance to undertake this work.**

6 **Koura and Kakahi monitoring**

Ian presented the Koura and Kakahi monitoring work for the last two years. For Kakahi the monitoring involved six sites monitored three monthly. There was discussion about Kakahi work undertaken by NIWA and Jo Butterworth.

Koura monitoring undertaken every three months in the tau method.

Action:

- **Andy to circulate NIWA report and Joe Butterworth's MSc thesis.**
- **Monitoring to continue each year at the same frequency and monitoring sites.**

7 Fisheries dynamics work University of Waikato PhD

Brendan reported on the fisheries dynamics work PhD. To date they have had trouble attracting a suitable student but that both the University of Waikato and Environment Bay of Plenty would prefer to undertake this work using a PhD student if possible. Brendon indicated that there is still time for a PhD study to be undertaken and he will re-advertise to get a possible candidate.

Action:

- **Andy is to circulate to the Panel the Terms of Reference for the PhD however pointed out that this had been set up as a agreement between Environment Bay of Plenty and Fish and Game and that ultimately the Terms of Reference are the responsibility of Environment Bay of Plenty and Fish and Game to negotiate.**

At the conclusion of the meeting Andy outlined the next steps to formalise the monitoring programme as:

- 1 Complete minutes and notes.
- 2 Prepare draft monitoring report.
- 3 Circulate draft monitoring report to Panel for comment and then approval.
- 4 Submit the final monitoring report to Environment Bay of Plenty compliance team.

Action:

- **Rob to update Panel after opening weekend on any observed fisheries impact.**
- **Richard requested that in the monitoring report we include the goal for monitoring from the resource consent.**

Andy Bruere
Rotorua Lakes Programme Manager

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