

Meeting Notes: North Island-South West

Regional Recreational Forum

Saturday 10 November 2007

Open Meeting Meeting chair, Paul Creswell (MFish) opened the meeting and welcomed members.

A special welcome was given to Terry Liggett (Wanganui-Manawatu Sea Fishing Club) and David Thorpe (Mana Cruising Club) who were both joining the forum for the first time.

Paul welcomed Ross Thurston from MFish Fisheries Compliance to the meeting.

Attendees Paul Creswell (Chair, MFish)
Terry Liggett (Wanganui-Manawatu Sea Fishing Club)
Kevin Moratti (Taranaki Recreational Fishers Association)
Jim O'Brien (NZ Angling & Casting Association)
Brent Rolston (Fielding Surfcasters Club)
Bob Rosemergy (Freediving New Zealand)
Ross Thurston (MFish)
Dave Thorpe (Mana Cruising Club)

Apologies Jo Cook (Wellington Surfcasting & Angling Club)
Jim Mikoz (Wellington Recreational Marine Fishers Association)

Meeting Introduction Paul confirmed the meeting agenda with members. The main agenda items were the region's fisheries compliance team and the upcoming National Meeting of the Regional Recreational Forums.

Other agenda items included next year's proposed recreational regulation review and a North Island West Coast Finfish Fisheries Plan.

Paul stated that Jim Mikoz had requested that his concerns about the local tarakihi fishery be tabled. The forum agreed to consider this issue at the next meeting when Jim could lead the discussions.

Paul advised the minutes of the last forum meeting held on 7 July 2007 had been posted on the MFish website at:

www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Recreational/Recreational+Forums/Lower+North+Island/NI+SW/Meeting+3+-+7+July+2007.htm

Action: 1) Next forum meeting to discuss the TAR 2 fishery.

Regional Updates

Members provided regional updates on the state of recreational fishing within their local areas. There was a general feeling that recreational fishing over the winter had been very poor but that fish abundance and catches had very much improved over the past couple of months with plenty of large fish being caught.

Local Fisheries Compliance Team

Ross Thurston introduced himself to the forum. He is the District Compliance Manager (DCM) for MFish's Wellington Fisheries Compliance Team. This team covers the area between Tirua Point, Nth Taranaki to Turakirae Head, Wellington.

Ross gave members his contact details and invited them to contact him directly regarding any questions or issues they had about compliance matters within their area.

Ross described his fisheries compliance team. The team comprises of 12 fisheries officers - 10 based in Wellington (at 40 Bouverie Street, Petone) and 2 based in Taranaki (at 31 Wynyard Street Bell Block, New Plymouth). His team also manages a very effective Honorary Fishery Officer (HFO) network throughout the region.

Ross stated that his team is responsible for four main compliance areas:

1. Recreational fishing
2. Inshore commercial fishing
3. Customary fishing
4. Fishing thieves

He stated that his team spends considerable time and resources trying to combat the significant paua poaching problem within the Wellington area. He outlined some of the characteristics of the local paua poaching problem, and noted that paua poaching was occurring every day.

Several forum members highlighted that their clubs expel any member that is found breaking the fishing rules.

Ross outlined several recent compliance operations to highlight the nature of local enforcement activities and the methods used to catch offenders. He noted that offending was often drug-related. He said that judges were imposing greater penalties (including fines, car/vessel confiscations, fishing bans) for the more serious offending.

Bob asked whether his team would be increasing their presence on the water this summer. Ross noted that his Wellington team now has an inflatable vessel and his fisheries officers would spend more time on the water checking boats.

Kevin questioned why fisheries officers in Taranaki were under utilising the local compliance vessel. Ross agreed the vessel was not being fully utilised and said this was because of various OSH requirements that needed to be addressed.

Terry asked why fisheries officers were not able to use private vessels to carry out at-sea inspections. Ross stated that fisheries officers were only authorised to use commercial vessels because of health and safety requirements under OSH.

Brent asked several questions about the use of customary fishing permits to take fish in excess of the amateur daily bag limits and less than the minimum

legal size. Paul briefly outlined customary fishing under r 27 of the amateur fishing regulations and the North Island kaimoana regulations. Ross said he would send Brent further information regarding the customary fishing permit system.

Kevin stated that telson clipping would be effective in reducing illegal fishing activities in rock lobster fisheries.

Paul provided members with a compliance information pack that included the *Recreational Fisher's Handbook*, various fishing pamphlets and posters, and a fish/shellfish measuring device.

Proposed Recreational Fishing Regulations Review

Paul informed the forum that MFish would begin the final review of the top 10 recreational concerns as identified by the NZ Recreational Fishing Council early in the new year. He noted there was an opportunity for the forum to identify possible issues for review, which MFish would then forward to the NZRFC for discussion and prioritisation. Ideas can also be forwarded directly to the NZRFC. The forum raised the following initial ideas:

- Reducing the maximum number of hooks on recreational longlines
- Introducing rock lobster telson clipping
- Enabling a recreational paua fishery in Taranaki.

Paul noted that this item would be further discussed at the next forum.

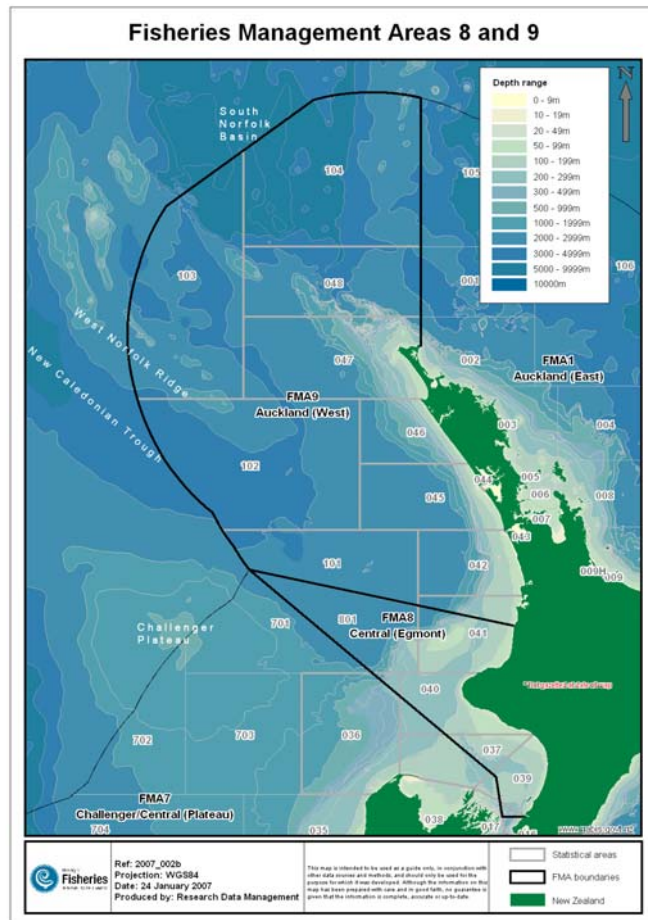
Jim asked for information on the state of the local kahawai fishery. Paul invited members to look at the MFish website (www.fish.govt.nz) for information on status of inshore finfish and shellfish stocks.

Action: 2) Next forum meeting to discuss the proposed recreational fishing regulations review.

Action: 3) Next forum meeting to discuss the KAH 2 fishery.

North Island West Coast Finfish Fisheries Plan

Paul provided the forum with a brief outline on fisheries plans. He informed members that MFish would develop a fisheries plan for the North Island West Coast finfish fisheries (FMAs 8 & 9) over the next 12 months. This plan would encompass inshore fisheries between North Cape and Titahi Bay, Porirua (see below).



The plan would consider the following finfish species.

- Snapper
- Tarakihi
- Red Gurnard
- Grey Mullet
- Flatfish
- Leatherjacket
- Trevally
- School Shark
- Rig
- Hapuku/Bass
- Kahawai

Paul highlighted there was an opportunity for the forum to participate in developing the fisheries plan. He invited two forum representatives to join the Fisheries Plan Advisory Group that would be responsible for developing the plan. One representative would represent the Taranaki Region, and the other would represent the North Wellington to Wanganui region.

The forum agreed that Kevin Moratti and Brent Rolston (Terry Liggett as back-up) would represent the forum on the Fisheries Plan Advisory Group.

Paul noted that MFish would reimburse any travel costs incurred. Kevin highlighted problems of a lack of funding and resources to enable the recreational sector to effectively engage with fisheries plan development and other MFish/government processes.

National Meeting of the Regional Recreational Forums

The forum considered several agenda items that would be discussed at the first National Meeting of the Regional Recreational Forums. This meeting would be held on 20-21 November (at the Mercure Hotel Wellington) and would be attended by Kevin Moratti and Jim O'Brien on behalf of the forum.

The forum discussed the following agenda items:

- Recreational sector engagement
- Charter boats
- Recreational research
- Spatial management tools
- Promoting responsible recreational fishing

The forum reached consensus on key messages regarding these items that their representatives would talk on at the National Meeting.

The forum agreed to invite a member of MFish's Science Team to the next meeting to provide an overview of recreational fishing research.

Action 4) Kevin and Jim to report back to the forum about the outcomes of the National Meeting at the next meeting.

Action 5) Invite MFish Science to the next meeting to discuss recreational fishing research.

General Business

The forum agreed to hold the next meeting in the new year on a weekday evening to avoid clashing with summer fishing competitions.

No other items were raised.

Next Meeting

The following agenda items are to be carried to the next forum meeting:

- Forum reps to report back on the National Meeting of the Regional Recreational Forums
- Next year's proposed recreational fishing regulations review
- Tarakihi (TAR 2) fishery – Jim Mikozi to lead discussion
- Kahawai (KAH 2) fishery
- Overview of recreational fishing research

Closing

Meeting closed at 3pm
