

Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing
Draft Outcomes - Meeting 38, 29 June 2006

Apologies

John Dunphy (Doug Joyner attended on Mr Dunphy's behalf), Anthony Moore (Megan Kessler attended on Mr Moore's behalf), Graham Moore and Meri Peach. Otto Volz was absent from the meeting.

Confirmation of minutes from previous ACoRF meeting

The Council accepted the draft outcomes as a true and accurate record of discussions from the 37th ACoRF meeting, held 12 April 2006. **Moved:** Elaine Garvey. **Seconded:** Ann Garard. **Carried**

Business arising from the minutes (addressed in other business)

- Wallaga Lake – spawning bream closure proposal
- Murray cod stocking proposal (addressed in Freshwater fishing update)

1. Minister's Address

The Chairman welcomed Minister Macdonald and asked the Minister to formally open the meeting.

The Minister discussed the following issues with the Council:

- Marine Parks – release of the Batemans Marine Park Draft Zoning Plan is expected very soon.
- Buy outs/Latent effort – the Minister suggested that the Council investigate options for additional buyouts using the \$3.2 million in Region 3 (focus on Macleay River) and Region 6 (focus on Shoalhaven river). Any options should address latent effort in the relevant regions.
- Grey Nurse Sharks – DPI is committed to developing an artificial breeding program.
- Australian Salmon – eligible commercial fishers operating north of Barrenjoey can apply for a DPI permit to retain up to 2 tonnes of by-catch of salmon.
- Review of Bag and Size limits – the Minister confirmed that the Council would have the opportunity to review the final changes, prior to inclusion in regulation.
- Buyout opportunities for licensed charter fishing boat operators – the Minister advised the Council that the Solitary Islands Marine Park review did not show any real impact on charter fishing and therefore, he cannot envisage the sector being eligible for compensation, as offered to commercial fishers.

2. Recreational Fishing Trust expenditure

Motion:

The Council supported expenditure recommendations from the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee, as outlined in Table 1. **Moved:** Jim Harnwell. **Seconded:** John Clarke. **Carried.**

Council was advised that the applicant undertaking the study on Mercury levels in marlin would not be proceeding with the project.

The Council reiterated its support for the above study and recommended that DPI investigate other suitable applicants to undertake the study.

3. Recreational Fisheries Management update (John Diplock - DPI)

- *Manning River RFH*

The Council was advised of a small technical change to the upstream boundary of this haven, to improve boundary identification for fishers and associated compliance activities.

- *Recreational fishing fee (licence) tender process*

The Council was advised that recent contract negotiations had been terminated. The Department provided details of alternative options for the recreational fishing fee administration process, including the provision of plastic licences and monthly renewal letters for anglers.

Motion:

The Council supported the implementation of enhancements for the recreational fishing fee administration system. **Moved:** Mel Brown. **Seconded:** Jim Harnwell. **Carried.**

4. Freshwater Fishing issues (Alistair McBurnie - DPI)

- *Protection of migrating fish at Steven's Weir*

Motion:

The Council supported the proposed closure (i.e. 80m upstream; 68m downstream) around the weir to protect migrating fish stocks from excessive fishing pressure.

Moved: Terry Maloney. **Seconded:** Steven Scott. **Carried.**

- *Snowy Lakes Strategy*

The Council was advised that they would be provided with an update on the Snowy Lakes Strategy at the next meeting.

- *Murray Cod stocking (Glen Lyon)*

Council was advised that the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFFTEC) would consider this issue/request at the next meeting.

- *Macquarie Perch*

Motion:

The Council recommended that a research program for Macquarie Perch hatchery breeding techniques be identified as a high priority for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trust. **Moved:** Jim Harnwell. **Seconded:** Terry Maloney. **Carried.**

- *General stocking issue*

The Council was advised that the eastern Monaro region is in severe drought and is therefore unlikely to be stocked this year. The Council supported the Department's position on this issue.

Motion:

The Council supported Government only trout stocking in public waters. **Moved:** Doug Joyner. **Seconded:** Jim Harnwell. **Carried.**

5. Structural Adjustment in the NSW commercial fishing industry (Anthony Hurst & Stewart Webster - DPI)

The Council was provided with an overview of the major issues that need to be considered during the structural adjustment process. Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

6. Marine Parks Authority update (Max Haste & Cameron Westaway – MPA)

The Council was advised that a summary of the Marine Park Authority's scientific information would be available from the MPA website in the near future.

- *Batemans Marine Park*

The A/Manager, Batemans MP confirmed that the draft zoning plan would be released very soon and encouraged members to comment on the various proposals. It was also mentioned that \$8 million had been allocated specifically for commercial fishing related buyouts in the Batemans Marine Park area.

- *Port Stephens-Great Lakes (PSGL) Marine Park*

The Council was advised that the closing date for submissions on the Draft Zoning Plan had been extended until 23 September 2006.

Max Haste, Manager, PSGL MP, advised Council that the MPA would be meeting with spearfishing representatives in the near future and made an undertaking to contact Mel Brown to ensure he is directly involved in this consultation.

The Department also advised Council of the outcomes from a meeting held with the Minister on 13 June 2006 regarding recreational fishing issues in marine parks. A copy of the meeting summary was distributed at the meeting.

Motion:

The Council supported the recommendations from the recreational fishing and marine parks meeting, held 13 June 2006. **Moved:** Jim Harnwell. **Seconded:** Doug Joyner. **Carried.**

7. Grey Nurse Sharks (Dr Nick Otway - DPI)

Dr Otway was unable to attend the meeting. The Council requested Dr Otway's attendance at the next meeting, specifically to present the scientific evidence that has been used to make decisions to date, as well as provide examples of the hooks that have been removed from GNS.

The underwater fishing representative stated that the frequency of observations of GNS by divers/spearfishers has increased and requested clarification of the process to have a threatened species de-listed, following recovery.

Motion:

The Council recommended that consideration be given by the Fisheries Scientific Committee to de-list GNS as a threatened species. **Moved:** Mel Brown. **Seconded:** Jim Harnwell. **Carried.**

Motion:

The Nature Conservation Council proposed a 1500 metre protection zone at all GNS Critical Habitat sites. **Moved:** Megan Kessler. **Motion not seconded.** **Motion lapsed.**

Action item

DPI to invite Dr Otway to the next ACoRF meeting (Thursday 28/9/06 at CFC).
Completed.

8. Commercial Fisheries Management issues

▪ *Richmond River RFH*

Following the provision of additional information, the Council further considered the request from Mr George Robinson, Manager, Ballina Fishermens Co-op, regarding the ongoing permit requirements to enable commercial fishing activities (hauling) in the Richmond River Recreational Fishing Haven.

The Council did not support Mr Robinson's proposal to remove the need for an annual permit by recognising this commercial fishing access to the Richmond River Recreational Fishing Haven in the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2002*.

Motion:

The Council supported the retention of an annual permit system, to enable the current level of commercial fishing access to the haven. **Moved:** Jim Harnwell. **Seconded:** Neil Ryan. **Carried.**

▪ *Interference with commercial fishing gear*

The Ocean Trap & Line Management Advisory Committee (OTLMAC) raised concerns regarding the potential for commercial fishing gear (for example, fish traps, lobster traps, drop lines and set lines - gear that is attached to the bottom) to be accidentally cut off or damaged as a result of recreational activity in the vicinity of commercial operations. The OTLMAC recommended that the distance prescribed in clause 111 be increased to 200 metres, to reduce the risk of commercial gear being cut off or fouled by recreational gear. With regards to the proposal relating to clause

111 of the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2002*, the Council did not support extending the exclusion zone to 200 metres.

Motion:

The Council supported the retention of the current 50m exclusion, as outlined in cl. 111 of the regulation. **Moved:** Ann Garard. **Seconded:** Jim Harnwell. **Carried.**

With reference to cl. 108 of the regulation, the Council believes that information and/or warnings regarding interference with commercial fishing gear should be clearly outlined in the Department's recreational fishing publications.

9. Proposed change to mesh size for prawn scoop nets (NSW DPI)

Council's advice was requested on a proposal to increase the size of mesh used in recreational prawn scoop nets from 20mm to between 25 and 30mm. The Council supported retention of the 20mm mesh size.

Motion:

The Council supported the retention of the current mesh size for prawn scoop nets. **Moved:** Neil Ryan. **Seconded:** Elaine Garvey. **Carried.**

10. Closure renewals (Salmon and Tailor; Possession of Shark Fins)

▪ *Salmon and Tailor*

The Council was advised of the 100 tonne/year catch trigger for salmon taken by eligible commercial fishers for bait. The Council agreed to retain the current closure until the recently funded research program on salmon is completed, to enable future management to be based on strong scientific information. Renewal of the tailor component of the closure was also supported.

Motion:

The Council supported renewal of the Australian salmon (north of Barrenjoey) and tailor (all NSW waters) closure without alternation. **Moved:** John Clarke. **Seconded:** Neil Ryan. **Carried.**

▪ *Possession of shark fins*

Motion:

The Council supported renewal of the current closure. **Moved:** Jim Harnwell. **Seconded:** Elaine Garvey. **Carried.**

11. Compliance update (Glenn Tritton - DPI)

The Council was given a brief overview of the joint seafood traceability and black marketing operation conducted earlier this year.

The Council was advised that the new Fisheries Patrol boat "Sydney Swan" is now in operation. The vessel is a 43-foot Steber with 2 inflatable tenders that can be launched from the boat and should greatly assist offshore compliance activities. Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

Out of session items

- Confirmation of the Council's position re: proposed amendments to the threatened species legislation.

Motion:

The Council does not support the proposed amendments to the Threatened Species legislation. **Moved:** Neil Ryan. **Seconded:** Elaine Garvey. **Carried.**

Other Business

- *Proposal to recognise fishing as a sport in NSW/Australia*

The Council supported the proposal to have fishing recognised as a sport, in order to be eligible for funding assistance when representing NSW/Australia at major fishing events and competitions. The Chair confirmed that RecFish is currently pursuing this issue at a National level.

Motion:

The Council write to the Minister to advise of its support for the proposal and request that the Minister write to The Hon Sandra Nori, MP, in her capacity as Minister for Sport and Recreation, to provide support. **Moved:** Steven Scott. **Seconded:** Neil Ryan. **Carried.**

- *Business cards for Advisory Council members*

Cards were distributed to members, except those whose terms expire in August 2006. Once the current appointments process is finalised, NSW DPI will arrange business cards for new/re-appointed members.

- *Articles on bream studies (Dr Matt Broadhurst), for Council's information*
- Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

- *Administrative arrangements for Council and Committee members*

Members have queried why official travel for DPI meetings, such as ACoRF, is not recognised as official business with regards to travel reimbursement payments. The Department undertook to provide further advice to the Council at the next meeting.

- *Proposed spawning closure for black bream in Wallaga Lake (Elaine Garvey)*

The Council expressed strong support for the protection of spawning stocks of black bream in Wallaga Lake.

Motion:

The Council supported the introduction of a Section 8 closure to protect spawning bream in Wallaga Lake. **Moved:** Elaine Garvey. **Seconded:** Jim Harnwell. **Carried.**

- *NSW DPI Conservation Managers (Inland)*

The Council expressed concern regarding the short-term appointment of inland Conservation Managers, as it is affecting the continuity of these roles.

Motion:

The Council write to the Minister to advise of these concerns and request consideration of longer term appointments to rectify the ongoing situation. **Moved:** Terry Maloney. **Seconded:** Elaine Garvey. **Carried.**

- *“Report Illegal Fishing” cards*

These cards, which have been developed to help deter/report illegal fishing activities, were distributed to members for information/use over time.

- *Commercial fishing buyouts*

Jim Harnwell distributed a letter from Mr Richard Franklin, a south coast commercial fisher, requesting the council’s consideration for a buyout as part of the proposed process.

Action item

DPI to advise Mr Franklin that his proposal will be considered in any future buyout.

Completed.

- *Catch and Effort Working Group*

Members were encouraged to provide a list of important recreational fishing species (i.e. not commercially harvested, for example drummer, groper etc) to Dr James Scandol, for consideration as part of the Working Group’s ongoing deliberations.

Correspondence received

- Letter from Mr Graham Duffy, Salamander Bait & Tackle, re: concerns with the abundance of salmon on the mid/north coast of NSW).
- Letter from Seagulls Fishing Club re: concerns with the abundance of salmon on the far north coast of NSW.
- Letter from Mr Peter Ragno, Commercial Fisher – Estuary General MAC representative for Region 4 (Mid North Coast area), re: concerns with the abundance of salmon on the mid/north coast of NSW.
- Letter from Mr David Smith, Commercial Fisher – Ocean Haul MAC representative for Region 1 (Far North Coast area), re: concerns with the abundance of salmon on the north coast of NSW.
- Letter from Messrs O’Brien, Wright and Gordon re: zoning proposals for the Batemans Marine Park.

Information noted. No recommendations or action items.

Next meetings

ACoRF meeting 39 (03/2006) is scheduled for Thursday 28 September 2006 at Cronulla Fisheries Centre. Meeting 40 is proposed for Thursday 7 December 2006 at Port Stephens.

Table 1: ACoRF recommendations regarding expenditure from the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust, as supported by the Expenditure Committee.

Program details	Applicant	Funding
<p>Catch N Cook Indigenous Youth Fishing Program, Phase II, La Perouse - involves a 12 week fishing program to educate youths about fishing rules, habitat and how to fish. This second phase follows on from a successful pilot project held over the previous summer.</p>	Koori Communications	\$5,000
<p>Angler Facilities in Coffs area - involves installation of 3 stainless steel fish cleaning tables with shade covers, interactive signage, pump out stations for fish waste at Arrawarra Headland, Coffs Harbour and Sawtell.</p>	Coffs Harbour City Council	\$20,000
<p>New weigh station and pontoon for Port Hacking Game Fishing Club - involves construction of weigh station angler facilities at Royal Motor Yacht Club</p>	Port Hacking Game Fishing Club	\$5,000
<p>Australian salmon (<i>Arripis trutta</i>): Population structure, reproduction, diet and composition of commercial and recreational catches in NSW - will provide information on the current population structure of salmon along the NSW coast (this program will be jointly funded by FRDC).</p>	NSW DPI	2006/07 \$63,028 2007/08 \$58,848 2008/09 \$28,792