

Te Kawa o Te Urewera Draft
Submission to Te Urewera Board from the
Eastern Fish and Game Council

1. FUNCTIONS OF FISH AND GAME COUNCILS

1.1 The Eastern Fish and Game Council is one of twelve regional Fish and Game Councils in New Zealand. Under the Conservation Act 1987, as amended by the Conservation Law Reform Act 1990, Fish and Game Councils have a statutory function to manage, maintain and enhance the sports fish and game bird resource in the recreational interests of anglers and hunters. Particular functions of Fish and Game Councils relevant to this submission include the requirement (i) to assess and monitor sports fish and game birds and anglers and hunters, (ii) to maintain and improve the sports fish and game resource, and (iii), to represent the interests and aspirations of anglers and hunters in statutory planning processes. Fish and Game Councils carry out their operational activities under the name of “Fish & Game”.

2. EASTERN FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

2.1 The Eastern Fish and Game Region extends from Wairoa in the east to Mt Ruapehu in the south, and northwards from there to Waihi. It encompasses the Bay of Plenty in its entirety, much of the East Coast, and all of the Tūhoe rohe. The Eastern Fish and Game Council is responsible for managing the freshwater sports fisheries and game bird populations within its regional boundaries. Sports fish present in the Eastern Fish and Game Region include rainbow trout, brown trout, tiger trout and brook char. Game birds include mallard duck, grey duck, NZ shoveler duck, paradise shelduck, black swan, pukeko, ring-neck pheasant, California quail, brown quail, bobwhite quail and red legged partridge.

2.2 The Eastern Fish and Game Council sold approximately 18,000 trout fishing licences and 3,800 game bird hunting licences over the 2015-2016 operational year. The Council has a statutory function to represent these licence holders in statutory processes that affect the Eastern Region and all anglers and hunters nationally that use sports fish and game bird resources within the region.

2.3 Significant/generic issues for the Eastern Fish and Game Council include:

- Impacts of adjacent land management on lakes, rivers, and wetlands;
- Impacts of hydrological management on water bodies;
- Water quality and water quantity;
- Protection and enhancement of sports fish and game bird habitats and in particular, those associated with lakes, rivers, wetlands and their margins;
- Aesthetics and natural characteristics of lakes, rivers, wetlands and their margins;
- Access for licence holders to sports fish and game bird resources;
- Sustainability.

3. SPORTS FISH AND GAME BIRD VALUES

3.1 Te Urewera contains a number of important trout fisheries that are managed by Fish & Game and offer some very high value opportunities to recreational anglers. The trout fisheries within Te Urewera are wild self-sustaining trout fisheries that currently support themselves through natural spawning. A National Anglers Survey undertaken in 2008-2009¹ indicated that collectively Te Urewera hosted approximately 23,000 trout angler visits to waters associated with Te Urewera in the 2007-2008 fishing season, and in previous surveys (1994-1995 season) anglers have expended up to 32,000 days fishing rivers and lakes within Te Urewera. The largest single trout fishery within the vicinity is Lake Waikaremoana (13,000 visits in the 2007-2008 season) and the rivers that support the fishery and the surrounding catchment make up an integral part of this fishing experience. The Ruakituri River is also a nationally significant fishery within Te Urewera and has been noted in recent studies² as scoring the highest ranking for enjoyment value for angling in the North Island and the third highest enjoyment score across all of the 431 New Zealand angling rivers fished by at least 10 survey respondents. The Ruakituri River attracts a relatively high number of international anglers¹ with over 16% of the annual effort expended by international visiting anglers. So not only do the Te Urewera trout fisheries have some high use waters, they also have some exceptionally highly valued fishery experiences to offer.

¹ Unwin, M. 2009. Angler usage of lake and river fisheries managed by Fish & Game New Zealand: results from the 2007/2008 National Angler Survey. NIWA Client Report CHC2009-046

² Unwin, M. 2013. Values of New Zealand angling rivers. Results of the 2013 National Angling Survey. NIWA Client Report CHC2013-120

3.2 Game bird species are patchily distributed across Te Urewera and much of the hunting of these is likely to occur on private land and to a lesser extent on river margins at the northern end of the area.

4. TE UREWERA ACT 2014

4.1 The Eastern Fish and Game Council wishes to restate its appreciation for the opportunity it had to be involved in the processes associated with the formulation and finalising of Te Urewera Act 2014, and the discussions it had with the Crown and Tuhoe in the lead up to Te Urewera-Tuhoe Bill. The Council wishes to acknowledge also, its support for the underlying Purposes of the Act and Principles for its implementation, (the one exception to this being the principle spelt out in s5(1)(b) requiring that introduced plants and animals are exterminated as far as possible.

4.2 In addition the Eastern Fish and Game Council is pleased to acknowledge a number of provisions within the Act which specifically relate to or are otherwise of interest to Fish & Game, these being s41(b) which notes that Te Urewera Act and the deed of settlement do not limit the statutory powers and functions of Fish & Game; s58(b) which excludes the requirement for an activity permit to disturb, take or kill sports fish); s61 which provides for Te Urewera Board and the Eastern Fish and Game Council to develop a memorandum of understanding to work together in a co-ordinated and co-operative way; s75(1)(b) which enables fish and game rangers to exercise the powers and duties conferred on them under the Conservation Act 1987 within Te Urewera; and s126 which provides for the ongoing wilderness status of the Ruakituri Wilderness Area.

5. TE KAWA O TE UREWERA

5.1 The draft Te Kawa o Te Urewera is a refreshing departure from the norm in terms of its structure and content, and Fish & Game wishes to register its support for what can only be described as an innovative and conceptually inspiring approach to management planning for an area of land. Identifying and focussing on principles in the first instance rather than prescribing in isolation of these a set of rules and dos and don'ts that are often meaningless, unwarranted, or unsupported, makes eminent sense. As too, does the underlying proposition that there is a need for us to reprogramme how we as humans view and interact with the natural world today, and shift the emphasis from land

management to people management in recognition that humans are but a part of the ecosystem as a whole, not a standalone entity.

- 5.2 Fish & Game recognises that it will take time to develop policies, plans, bylaws, and rules if there are to be such, and harbours some uncertainty as to what this might mean in terms of its existing activities within Te Urewera and Lake Waikaremoana in the short to medium term. We are comforted by s5.4 and others within Te Kawa that affirms the Board will establish annual priorities and operational plans, policies, bylaws, approvals, standards, friendship agreements (s 6.2) and such, along with s3.2.1.1 describing the Board's relationship with Fish & Game, but would like some assurance or guidance on implications and process in the meantime.
- 5.3 We consider some minor amendments to s3.2.1.1 on page 20 would be useful to record Fish & Game's desire to work with Te Urewera Board as well. For example, our wish to do so could be added to the current declaration printed in bold to complement the Board's statement that it wishes to work with the Fish and Game Council, along possibly, with some additional bullet points describing what that might mean. The final sentence in the paragraph above this could also be reworded to reflect the Board and Fish & Game's intention to work together by noting that both parties will have regard to approved and current statutory documents prepared by the other.
- 5.4 Notwithstanding s5(1)(b) of Te Urewera Act 2014 relating to introduced species, Fish & Game believes there may be merit and/or justification in adding a prioritised action to the "For life – the Nahere..." Parts of the Life of Te Urewera item in the table in s4.2 on page 24 of Te Kawa that acknowledges that some introduced species within Te Urewera can be described or considered to be valued from a tanata whenua and/or manuhiri cultural perspective.
- 5.5 Fish & Game is greatly encouraged by the sentiments expressed in Te Kawa and its kaupapa, and the Board and Te Urewera-Tuhoe's desire and commitment to be inclusive and welcoming of manuhiri and tanata whenua alike, and pledges to engage with the Board and other Te Urewera entities in good faith and in recognition of such.

4. TE UREWERA BOARD HEARING

4.1 I wish to appear before the Te Urewera Board to be heard on this submission.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andy Garrick', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Andy Garrick
Regional Manager
Eastern Fish and Game Council

20 July 2017