

MONARO ACCLIMATISATION SOCIETY INC MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD AT BIDGEE LODGE 3 AUGUST 2019

1.0 Meeting opened at 1.03pm

2.0 Attendance

S.Samuels, B.Blair, N.Buckland, D.Harkins, F.Dunford, J.Killip, R.Vickery, D.Collier, G.Barlin, K.Pfeiffer, P.Smith, F.Smith, M.Ogilvy.

3.0 Apologies

R.Whiteway, M.Sawa.

4.0 Previous Minutes

That the Minutes, as circulated, be adopted. Berlin / Pfeiffer

5.0 Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 A second public meeting was held at Gaden Hatchery to discuss the Trout Strategy. This meeting was convened so Mr Jim Harwell from DPI could attend and meet local representatives. The meeting identified several issues that could be tackled quickly to try and improve trout fishing in the region. One suggestion was to develop a fishing trail using hatchery brood fish to stock smaller waterways such as Lake Williams and Sponars. Another was to continue with the faster growing of fingerlings in the hatchery with the possibility of earlier stocking.

5.2 Kerry Pfeiffer received a letter from Environment and Heritage informing that the nominations for positions on the Brumby Scientific and Community Committees were still in the process of being considered. There may be further notice in August / September. Kerry Pfeiffer also advised that the brumby population survey in the Kosciuszko National Park had been completed but the results have not been released.

6.0 Correspondence out

Nil

7.0 Correspondence in

Nil

8.0 Reports

Treasurers Report

The balance at bank as at 1 August 2019 was \$12,729.80. The Treasurer expressed thanks to Buckenderra Holiday Village for their donations this year.

9.0 General Business

9.1 Kerry Pfeiffer advised that there will be less water for the Snowy River below Jindabyne Dam this coming season. Advice received indicates that the allocation will be half of the stipulated allocation of 21%. K. Pfeiffer advised that the Commonwealth water holder had been given a substantial amount of money to purchase additional environmental water for the Snowy, but this has not been delivered. K. Pfeiffer was delegated to write to the Scientific Committee to ask for an explanation as to why the annual 21% allocation cannot be met. Samuels / Collier.

9.2 Kerry Pfeiffer raised the matter of the new Farm Trespass legislation passed by the NSW Government. Concern exists that anglers may be inadvertently be compromised by the legislation. It was noted that anglers have a statutory right to access the bed of the stream in certain circumstances and there seemed to be a level of confusion around how this and the new legislation will function. Steve Samuels advised that he had contacted DPI and their advice was

that because the new legislation was drafted under the law of trespass the angler access right would not be affected. He also advised that he has asked the NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers (CFA) to take on this issue as it is a State-wide concern. Bill Blair advised that CFA has discussed this issue and are in the process of seeking clarification.

9.3 Steve Samuels advised the meeting that the MAS and Snowy Hydro had signed a Heads of Agreement to work together to examine how a Recreational Fishing Offset for the Tantangara Dam Redfin threat could be developed. One consideration is the building of a trout grow-out facility which would allow the MAS to grow larger trout for stocking should redfin enter Tantangara Dam. Steve Samuels also advised that a Joint Statement had been prepared by the parties for distribution to interested media and anglers. Now that the Agreement has been signed it is time for the MAS to begin looking at the options available and to begin the planning process. Steve Samuels advised members that there is no plan or guarantee for anything specific at this time and there is a lot of work to be undertaken to get a firm agreement. Steve Samuels will be issuing a more detailed press release.

9.4 The matter of the Koi Herpes Virus was raised. Discussion revolved around the deployment of the virus. Fred Dunford moved the following motion *“Given the current state of the Murrumbidgee River at the Cooma Pumping Station for the last three years and given our understanding that a decision on the release of the KHV was due this year, could the Commonwealth minister advise when the KHV will be released.”* Dunford / Vickery. Motion passed that the President write to the Minister.

9.4 Murray Ogilvy advised that the Gaden Hatchery Staff are issued with permits, from time to time, to cull cormorants that invade the hatchery. Recently several pelicans have taken up residence at the hatchery and are taking significant numbers of spawning trout. The hatchery manager applied to National Parks for a permit to cull the pelicans, but this was refused. President Steve Samuels resolved to contact the hatchery manager to see if the MAS can provide support.

9.5 Kerry Pfeiffer raised the matter of MAS clubs becoming involved in citizen science under the NSW Trout Strategy. He noted that the MAS was purchasing stream temperature data loggers to compliment the DPI loggers. He advised that clubs may wish to also get involved by asking for funds from RFFTEC for the purchase of loggers for deployment in local streams.

9.6 NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers.

Bill Blair advised that the CFA will be implementing the new affiliate fee structure. This will mean that the MAS fees will increase from \$350 per annum to \$580 per annum.

The CFA is seeking clarification from DPI as to the status of the NSW Trout Strategy. DPI has released a “Snapshot” but there has been no release of a detailed Strategy with goals and milestones. The CFA is concerned that RFFTEC funding will be used to implement the “Snapshot”, but that funding will not be able to be measured if goals and milestones are not identified.

The CFA wrote to the Minister expressing concern that the NSW Fisheries Angler Access Website was, after 10 years of development, still unsatisfactory. The response from the Minister was less than convincing and the CFA will be auditing the website to determine the value of the data available to anglers.

9.7 Steve Samuels has been advised by NSW Fisheries that there are still no firm plans to reconstitute the Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW) now that its tenure time has expired. This is the Council that advises the Minister on recreational fishing matters. Another consequence is that the freshwater and saltwater expenditure committees will not meet until the RFNSW matter is resolved by the Minister. This effectively means that licence funds are being collected but not spent.

Meeting closed 2.52pm

Next Meeting at Bidgee lodge, Cooma, 1pm Saturday, 2 November 2019.