

MONARO ACCLIMATIZATION SOCIETY MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD AT BIDGEE LODGE, 4 MAY 2024

1.0 Meeting opened at 1.00

2.0 Attendance

R Whiteway, D Collier, J Killip, K Pfeiffer, P Batho, B Batho, M Sawa, F Dunford, J Miller, G Verney, R Allen, A Allen, G Wood, M Oglivie, R Mould, S Samuels, D Collier.

3.0 Apologies.

B Blair, B Batho, R Edwards, J Bray, A Cathor, T McCallum, F Smith, P Smith, D Flinn.

4.0 Previous Minutes.

That the minutes as circulated be adopted, Collier/Verney.

5.0 Business Arising from Minutes.

5.1 Access to the upper Maclaughlin River is still blocked. Correction from last minutes. Funding is being sought to survey the reserve that fronts the river upstream from the Snowy Mountains Highway bridge. Very rough going and it would be hard to make a track but is walkable so need to retain it.

6.0 Correspondence out

A number of letters have gone out concerning the stocking bans, to State Minister responsible for Fisheries, Director of Fisheries, the Federal Minister for the Environment and the head of the Federal Scientific Committee responsible for the listing of Galaxia as endangered. These letters are available for viewing on the MAS website.

7.0 Correspondence in

Similarly for correspondence in

8.0 Treasurers Report; The closing balance at May 4 2024 was \$20,643.42 down \$76 from January 2024. The Anglers Reach Boat Ramp Project Bank Balance remained at \$24,655.55.

9.0 General Business

9.1 There were reports of a fish kill in the Nungar arm of Tantangara. Being investigated by Snowy Hydro Fisheries and Department of Environment. Still await a report but understand that it was due to a Blue Green Algae outbreak. Said to have been due to high water temperatures. There were no severe heat waves as far as we know last season but consistent warmth and higher than normal night time temps could have contribute. Another major factor could have been the release of nutrients into waterways by the actions of feral horses breaking down riverbanks and destroying bog areas. Whatever it does not bode well for the future of the lake and the Murrumbidgee downstream.

9.2 Rod Whiteway spoke to local landowners about a possible fish kill in the Hall area of the Kybeyan. I could not get verification of a massive fish kill but dead fish had been seen. Fish had been seen in the area afterwards so hopefully it was a seasonal die off of fish caught in the wrong place associated with the high population and spread of fish at present. At any rate Mitch from the hatchery topped up the area with some advanced fingerlings later in Autumn.

9.3 Steve Samuels asked if we had requested that catch and release be introduce in stretches of streams subject to stocking bans. Needs to be raised formally.

9.4 President praised the work Fred Dunford has done in preparing a paper comparing stocking bans due to Booralong frogs to current Galaxia bans. As you would know these bans were lifted when subsequent research found that the bans

were unnecessary. Fred suggested a letter writing campaign and circulated a list of names for people to write to.

9.5 The Fisheries Management Plan produced as a requirement of the Snowy Hydro 2 project to consider the effects of the project on the Tantangara fishery was disappointingly limited. It concentrated almost entirely on the possible benefits of the proposed grow out facility but failed to examine the possible effects of the rise and fall of the lake on things such as the shore based fishing, and underestimated the value of the fishery to the local economy. Steve said that he had initial discussions with the contractors that produced the report but was surprised that he did not get follow up before the plan came out.

9.6 There was discussion about the effect of inflation on the \$5 million set aside for the grow out facility. Steve said that the \$5m was part of the consent conditions and has to be spent in 5 years. We need to continue to put pressure on Fisheries to start work.

9.7 There was concern at the tone and content of the anti-trout sentiment being expressed by the invasive species council. We need to step up our publicity. The invasive species council only needs to sell a simple message, "Feral Trout", whereas we need to voice complex one.

9.8 President Kerry outlined a strategy for bringing more recognition of the need to address other galaxid key threatening processes such as riparian land degradation and resultant habitat loss. Has included requests for funding assistance in letters to the Federal Environment Minister and request for assistance from the threatened species unit in Fisheries to set up a program.

9.9 Steve suggested that we put a submission to the Rec Fishing Trust to fund our own survey of the Snowy Catchment Galaxia Teranassus. Need a scoping document and funding requirement.

10.0 The economic and social benefits of the trout fishery seem to be regularly underestimated. Should we be seeking an update of the 2002 Dominion Consulting Survey that was funded by ACORF

10.1 Jim Harnwell from Fisheries wants to have regular online meetings with MAS executive to discuss issues. The executive thinks that they are worthwhile. Do members have any issues that they want raised?

10.2 Concern was raised about sand slug that has ruined much of the middle reaches of Wullwye Creek. Can Fisheries look into the causes which we believe to be poor agricultural land use?

Closed 2.30 pm

Next Meeting, Bidgee Lodge Cooma, 1pm Saturday, August 3 2024.