



Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

Summary

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Proposal for One Additional Commercial Upland Game Preserve

Portfolio	Hunting and Fishing
Purpose	This paper seeks agreement for the Minister to issue drafting instructions for an Order in Council to provide for an additional commercial upland game preserve.
Previous Decisions	In May 2025, ECO agreed to make it easier for commercial game preserves to be approved, as part of wider Fish and Game reforms for inclusion in the Fish and Game Bill (the Bill) [ECO-25-MIN-0063.01].
Proposal	An upland game preserve is an area of privately-owned land where captive-bred pheasants (or potentially partridges) are released and then hunted recreationally. There are currently 25 upland game preserves, 22 of which are commercially operated, with costs met by the landowner charging hunters a fee. These preserves employ the equivalent of about 40 people full-time and contribute approximately \$7 million annually to New Zealand's economy. The new proposed preserve is Te Konini in Hawke's Bay (detailed in Appendix 1), an area of approximately 286 hectares that the operator wishes to begin operating commercially for the 2027 game bird hunting season (beginning May 2027).
Impact Analysis	Not required, as the proposals are considered to have no or only minor impacts.
Financial Implications	None from this paper.
Legislative Implications	An Order in Council is required to list the new commercial game preserve in Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act 1953. The Bill will change this current process for approving commercial game preserves, by allowing them to be authorised by notice in the New Zealand Gazette. Until the Bill is passed, the Minister seeks authority to issue drafting instructions for any future Orders in Council required to approve new commercial upland game preserves, for approval by the Cabinet Legislation Committee.
Timing Matters	The Bill is yet to be introduced.

Communications DOC will advise Fish and Game and the New Zealand Game Conservation Alliance who will inform the game preserve operator.

Consultation Paper prepared by DoC (Hunting and Fishing). MfE, Treasury, DPMC (Prime Minister), MPI (Biosecurity), MBIE (Tourism and Hospitality), MFAT (Trade and Investment) were consulted. PCO was informed. New Zealand Game Conservation Alliance and Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council were also consulted.

The Minister indicates that ECO was consulted and that discussion has occurred with the government parties.

The Minister for Hunting and Fishing recommends that the Committee:

- 1 note that providing for a new commercial upland game preserve will provide opportunities for hunters and support local economic growth;
- 2 note that the New Zealand Fish and Game Council supports the establishment of commercial game preserves, as they provide increased hunting opportunities both within such preserves and beyond preserve boundaries;
- 3 note that in May 2025, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee agreed to make it easier for commercial game preserves to be approved as part of wider Fish and Game reforms, and invited the Minister for Hunting and Fishing (the Minister) to issue drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO) for a Fish and Game Councils Bill [ECO-25-MIN-0063.01];
- 4 invite the Minister to issue drafting instructions to PCO for an Order in Council to add the new area, as described in Appendix 1 to the paper under ECO-26-MIN-0037, to the list of game preserves listed in Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act 1953;
- 5 authorise the Minister to issue drafting instructions for any future Orders in Council required to approve new commercial upland game preserves, until the Fish and Game Councils Bill is enacted.

Rachel Clarke
Committee Secretary

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Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

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Office of the Minister for Hunting and Fishing
Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

Providing for one additional commercial upland game preserve

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks Cabinet's agreement to an Order in Council to provide for one additional commercial upland game preserve.

Relation to government priorities

- 2 Approving a new commercial game preserve will support this Government's aims to provide local economic opportunities, help businesses to grow, and enable Kiwis to go hunting and fishing.

Background

Game birds and preserves

- 3 "Game birds" are listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Act 1953. Wild-bred populations of these are managed by the 12 regional Fish and Game Councils in the interests of recreational hunters.
- 4 An upland game preserve is an area of privately-owned land where captive-bred pheasants (or potentially partridges) are released and then hunted recreationally. There are currently 25 upland game preserves. Three are non-commercial, operated by private syndicates or family trusts. Twenty-two are operated commercially, where the costs of providing the hunting resource and associated activities are met by the landowner charging hunters a fee.
- 5 Commercial game preserves have been operating for over 20 years. The existing preserves provide valued recreational hunting, employ the equivalent of about 40 people full-time, and contribute approximately \$7 million annually to the New Zealand economy. Other hunters can also benefit from 'leakage' of the birds living on private game preserves into the surrounding areas.

Proposal for a new commercial game preserve

- 6 I propose to enable a new commercial game preserve to begin operating, providing more opportunities for hunters, increasing financial sustainability of the preserve, and supporting local economic growth. This is supportive of my aim to ensure a permissive environment for recreational hunting activities in New Zealand. The proposed new preserve (fully described in Appendix 1) is:

6.1 Te Konini (Hawke's Bay) (286 ha).

- 7 The preserve operator wishes to begin operating commercially at the start of the 2027 game bird hunting season (beginning May 2027). A swift decision from Cabinet and clear signal of support will enable the game preserve operator to make business and investment decisions accordingly ahead of time.
- 8 I therefore seek Cabinet's agreement to the making of an Order in Council under section 8 of the Wildlife Act to add this new preserve area to the list of preserves in Part 2 of Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act under the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Region section.

Establishing a new commercial game preserve

- 9 This is a routine operational adjustment. An Order in Council is the current mechanism to provide for new commercial game preserves. An Order in Council would list commercial game preserves in Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act, which allows for commercial hunting of listed species outside of Fish and Game control. The most recent additions of preserves to the schedule were made by Cabinet in 2025.
- 10 I intend to simplify this process and make it easier for commercial game preserves to be established, through my wider proposals to reform Fish and Game. Cabinet agreed to these proposals in May 2025 [ECO-25-MIN-0063.01]. Once the legislation is passed, commercial game preserves will be authorised by Notice in the New Zealand Gazette. Until then, an Order in Council remains the only mechanism available to enable commercial game preserves to operate.

Proposed interim delegation to streamline approval of new commercial game preserves

- 11 As an interim measure, ahead of legislative amendments that will simplify the process, I propose that the Minister for Hunting and Fishing be delegated the authority to issue drafting instructions for future Orders in Council required to authorise new commercial game preserves.
- 12 The existing policy is to enable the establishment of commercial game preserves. Authorising each new preserve is a technical step that – for historic reasons – currently required an Order in Council. Providing targeted delegation would streamline the process by removing the need for Cabinet agreement to issue drafting instructions. Cabinet's oversight would remain intact, as proposed Orders in Council would continue to be considered by the Cabinet Legislation Committee prior to submission to the Executive Council.
- 13 Standard consultation requirements (e.g. with agencies and Fish and Game) would continue to apply before drafting instructions are issued and confirmed in the Cabinet Legislation Committee paper.

Implementation

- 14 Once the Order in Council is made, the new preserve will fall within the scope of the Wildlife (Pheasant and Red-legged Partridge) Notice 2022, which prescribes the conditions for hunting on commercial game preserves.

Cost-of-living Implications

- 15 The proposal in this paper would have minimal to no direct impact on the general cost of living. It will, however, provide local economic opportunities and support rural employment.

Financial Implications

- 16 The matter considered in this paper has no financial implications for this Government, DOC or Fish and Game Councils. Listing the new preserve in the schedule to the Wildlife Act will enable a new commercial business to operate, increase employment, and provide additional business for supporting companies.

Legislative Implications

- 17 To implement the proposals in this paper, an Order in Council under section 8 of the Wildlife Act will be required to include one additional preserve area (described in Appendix 1 of this paper) to Part 2 of Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act.
- 18 If no regulatory action is taken, the preserve cannot operate commercially.

Impact Analysis

Regulatory Impact Statement

- 19 The Ministry for Regulation has determined that this proposal is exempt from the requirement to provide a Regulatory Impact Statement on the grounds that it has no or only minor economic, social, or environmental impacts.

Climate Implications of Policy Assessment

- 20 A Climate Implications of Policy Assessment (CIPA) team has been consulted and confirms that the CIPA requirements do not apply to this policy proposal, as the threshold for significance is not met.

Population Implications

- 21 The proposal in this paper is not expected to have population impacts.

Human Rights

- 22 The proposal in this paper is consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993.

Consultation

- 23 The continued operation of commercial game preserves was discussed at length by the New Zealand Fish and Game Council, and among the 12 regional Fish and Game Councils and all affected parties (including the New Zealand Game & Conservation Alliance (NZGCA)), from 2018 to 2022. Cabinet agreed in 2022 that commercial preserves could be formally established and continue operating [ENV-22-MIN-0009].

- 24 The Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council within whose region the new game preserve will operate, supports the creation of this new commercial game preserve.
- 25 I do not consider that additional consultation is necessary for the proposed small increase in hunting opportunities provided by this long running activity.
- 26 The following government agencies were consulted in the preparation of this paper: The Treasury, the Department of the Prime Minister, MBIE, MFE, MPI, and MFAT. The Treasury suggested that given the operational nature of the decision, the Minister for Hunting and Fishing should be delegated authority to issue drafting instructions for future commercial game preserves (until the Fish and Game Bill simplifies the process).

Communications

- 27 Once a decision has been made, DOC will advise Fish and Game and the NZGCA, who will advise the game preserve operator.

Proactive Release

- 28 Once decisions are confirmed by Cabinet, I intend to proactively release this paper.

Recommendations

The Minister for Hunting and Fishing recommends that the Committee:

- 1 **note** that providing for a new commercial upland game preserve will provide opportunities for hunters and support local economic growth;
- 2 **note** that the New Zealand Fish and Game Council supports the establishment of commercial game preserves as they provide increased hunting opportunities both within such preserves and beyond preserve boundaries;
- 3 **note** that Cabinet agreed to make it easier for commercial game preserves to be approved, as part of wider proposals implementing the Fish and Game reform;
- 4 **invite** the Minister for Hunting and Fishing to issue drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office for an Order in Council to add the new area (described in Appendix 1) to the list of game preserves listed in Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act;
- 5 **agree** that the Minister for Hunting and Fishing be given delegated authority to issue drafting instructions for any future Orders in Council required to approve new commercial upland game preserves, until the Fish and Game Councils Bill is enacted.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon James Meager
Minister for Hunting and Fishing

Appendix 1 – One new preserve area for addition to Part 2 of Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act 1953

- 1 The area proposed for addition to Part 2 of Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act 1953, under the subheading *Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Region*, is as follows:
 - (ea) Te Konini (Hawke's Bay): 286 ha, more or less, at 1129 River Road, RD 9, Hastings, being Lot 1 DP 1246, Lots 1 and 2 DP 1265, Lots 2 and 3 DP 12520, and Lot 1 DP 24648, Hawke's Bay Land District.

Proactively released by
the Minister for Hunting
and Fishing



Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

Minute of Decision

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Proposal for One Additional Commercial Upland Game Preserve

Portfolio **Hunting and Fishing**

On 25 March 2026, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee (ECO):

- 1 **noted** that providing for a new commercial upland game preserve will provide opportunities for hunters and support local economic growth;
- 2 **noted** that the New Zealand Fish and Game Council supports the establishment of commercial game preserves, as they provide increased hunting opportunities both within such preserves and beyond preserve boundaries;
- 3 **noted** that in May 2025, ECO agreed to make it easier for commercial game preserves to be approved as part of wider Fish and Game reforms, and invited the Minister for Hunting and Fishing (the Minister) to issue drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO) for a Fish and Game Councils Bill [ECO-25-MIN-0063.01];
- 4 **invited** the Minister to issue drafting instructions to PCO for an Order in Council to add the new area, as described in Appendix 1 to the paper under ECO-26-SUB-0037, to the list of game preserves listed in Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act 1953;
- 5 **authorised** the Minister to issue drafting instructions to PCO for any future Orders in Council required to approve new commercial upland game preserves, until the Fish and Game Councils Bill is enacted.

Rachel Clarke
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon David Seymour
Hon Nicola Willis (Chair)
Hon Chris Bishop
Hon Simeon Brown
Hon Brooke van Velden
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Louise Upston
Hon Tama Potaka
Hon Simon Watts
Hon Chris Penk
Hon Penny Simmonds
Hon Andrew Hoggard
Hon Nicola Grigg
Hon Mark Patterson
Hon James Meager
Hon Scott Simpson
Simon Court MP

Officials present from:

Officials Committee for ECO



Cabinet Legislation Committee

Summary

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Wildlife Order 2026

Portfolio	Hunting and Fishing
Purpose	This paper seeks authorisation to submit the Wildlife Order 2026 (the Order) to the Executive Council.
Previous Decisions	In March 2026, ECO agreed to the making of an Order in Council to add one new area to the list of upland game preserves [ECO 26-MIN-0037].
Proposal	The Order gives effect to the above decision. The proposed new preserve is Te Konini (Hawke's Bay).
Impact Analysis	Not applicable.
Compliance	On 14 May 2026, PCO certified the Order as being in order for submission to Cabinet.
Timing Matters	The Order comes into effect on 25 June 2026.
Communications	The game preserve operator will be advised once the Order is made.
Consultation	Paper prepared by DoC (Hunting and Fishing). PCO, MfE, the Treasury, MFAT, MPI (Biosecurity), MfR, and MBIE (Economic Growth) were consulted. DPMC was informed.
	The Minister indicates that LEG was consulted, and that all Government parties will also be consulted.

The Minister for Hunting and Fishing recommends that the Committee:

- 1 note that in March 2026, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee invited the Minister for Hunting and Fishing to issue drafting instructions for the making of an Order in Council under section 8 of the Wildlife Act 1953 to add one new area to the list of upland game preserves in Schedule 3 of that Act [ECO 26-MIN-0037];
- 2 note that the Wildlife Order 2026 will give effect to the decision referred to in paragraph 1 above;

- 3 authorise the submission to the Executive Council of the Wildlife Order 2026 [PCO 28929/4.0];
- 4 note that the Wildlife Order 2026 will come into force on 25 June 2026.

Jenny Vickers
Committee Secretary

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Proactively released by
the Minister for Hunting
and Fishing

Office of the Minister for Hunting and Fishing
Chair, Cabinet Legislation Committee

WILDLIFE ORDER 2026

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks authorisation for submission to the Executive Council of the Wildlife Order 2026. The Order will allow for the creation of one new commercial game preserve, to provide recreational hunting opportunities.

Policy

- 2 “Game birds” are those species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Act 1953. Wild bred populations of game birds are managed by the 12 regional Fish and Game Councils in the interests of recreational hunters. I have Ministerial responsibility for Fish & Game New Zealand.
- 3 An upland game preserve is an area of privately-owned land where captive-bred pheasants (or potentially partridges) are released and then hunted recreationally. Commercial game preserves have been operating for over 20 years. The existing 22 commercial preserves provide valued recreational hunting, employ the equivalent of about 40 people full-time, and contribute approximately \$7 million annually to the New Zealand economy.
- 4 A prospective preserve operator wants to establish a new commercial game preserve. The proposed new preserve (fully described in the Order) is Te Konini (Hawke’s Bay) (286 ha).
- 5 The Wildlife Order 2026 is the only mechanism currently available to enable the preserve to operate commercially. I am simplifying this process as part of my proposed Fish and Game Councils Bill [ECO-25-MIN-0063.01].
- 6 The policy for the Order was agreed to by Cabinet Economic Policy Committee on 25 March 2026 [ECO-26-MIN-0037]. I am progressing this to Cabinet Legislation Committee. The Wildlife Order 2026 will add one new preserve to Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act, which lists the areas of commercial game preserves.

Timing and 28-day rule

- 7 The Order has a commencement date of 25 June 2026. To comply with the 28-day rule, the Order must be made, and then notified in the New Zealand Gazette no later than 28 May 2026. A swift decision from Cabinet will allow the legislation to come into force in time for the preserve operator to make business investments ahead of the beginning of the 2027 hunting season.

Compliance

- 8 The Order complies with each of the following:

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- 8.1 the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi;
 - 8.2 the rights and freedoms contained in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 or the Human Rights Act 1993;
 - 8.3 the principles and guidelines set out in the Privacy Act 2020;
 - 8.4 relevant international standards and obligations;
 - 8.5 the Legislation Guidelines (2021 edition), which are maintained by the Legislation Design and Advisory Committee.
- 9 There are no statutory prerequisites for the making of this Order.

Regulations Review Committee

- 10 I am not aware of any reasons why the Regulations Review Committee might draw the Order to the attention of the House of Representatives under Standing Order 327.

Certification by Parliamentary Counsel

- 11 The attached draft Order has been certified by the Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO) as being in order for submission to Cabinet.

Impact Analysis

- 12 The Ministry for Regulation determined that this proposal is exempt from the requirement to provide a Regulatory Impact Assessment, on the grounds that it has no or only minor economic, social, or environmental impacts (the earlier policy paper ECO-26-SUB-0037, paragraphs 19 and 20 refer).

Publicity

- 13 Once the Order is made, DOC will advise the New Zealand Game and Conservation Alliance (NZGCA, the national association of preserve operators), which will advise the game preserve operator, who can then make business investments and begin advertising services to hunters.

Proactive release

- 14 Once decisions are confirmed by Cabinet, I intend to proactively release this paper.

Consultation

- 15 The continued operation of game preserves was discussed at length by the New Zealand Fish and Game Council (NZ Council), and among the 12 regional Fish and Game Councils and all affected parties (including the NZGCA), from 2018 to 2022. Cabinet agreed in 2022 that commercial preserves could be formally established and continue operating [ENV-22-MIN-0009].
- 16 The NZ Council, and the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council (within whose region the new preserve will operate), support the creation of the new preserve.

IN CONFIDENCE

- 17 I do not consider that additional consultation is necessary for the proposed small increase in hunting opportunities provided by this long running activity.
- 18 The following government agencies were consulted in the preparation of the policy for the proposed Order: The Treasury, Ministry for Regulation, MBIE, MfE, MPI, MFAT, and Parliamentary Counsel Office. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has been informed.

Recommendations

I recommend that the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 **note** that on 25 March 2026 the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee agreed to the making of an Order in Council under section 8 of the Wildlife Act 1953 to add one new area to the list of upland game preserves listed in Schedule 3 of the Act [ECO-26-MIN-0037];
- 2 **note** that the Wildlife Order 2026 will give effect to the decision referred to in paragraph 1 above;
- 3 **authorise** the submission to the Executive Council of the Wildlife Order 2026;
- 4 **note** that the Wildlife Order 2026 will come into force on 25 June 2026.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon James Meager

Minister for Hunting and Fishing

Wildlife Order 2026

Order in Council

At Wellington this day of 2026

Present:
in Council

This order is made under section 8 of the Wildlife Act 1953 on the advice and with the consent of the Executive Council.

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Order

- Title**
This order is the Wildlife Order 2026.
- Commencement**
This order comes into force on 25 June 2026.
- Principal Act**
This order amends the Wildlife Act 1953.

4 Schedule 3 amended

In Schedule 3, Part 2, after paragraph (e), insert:

- (ea) Te Konini (Hawke's Bay): 286 ha, more or less, being Lot 1 DP 1246, Lots 1 and 2 DP 1265, Lots 2 and 3 DP 12520, and Lot 1 DP 24648 Hawke's Bay Land District:

Clerk of the Executive Council.

Explanatory note

This note is not part of the order but is intended to indicate its general effect.

This order comes into force on 25 June 2026 and amends Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act 1953 (the **Act**).

Part 2 of Schedule 3 of the Act lists areas (commonly known as upland game preserves) where certain wildlife may be hunted or killed subject to conditions. This order adds 1 new area to the list in the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Region.

Issued under the authority of the Legislation Act 2019.

Date of notification in *Gazette*:

This order is administered by the Department of Conservation.



Cabinet Legislation Committee

Minute of Decision

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Wildlife Order 2026

Portfolio **Hunting and Fishing**

On 21 May 2026, the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 **noted** that in March 2026, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee invited the Minister for Hunting and Fishing to issue drafting instructions for the making of an Order in Council under section 8 of the Wildlife Act 1953 to add one new area to the list of upland game preserves in Schedule 3 of that Act [ECO 26-MIN-0037];
- 2 **noted** that the Wildlife Order 2026 will give effect to the decision referred to in paragraph 1 above;
- 3 **authorised** the submission to the Executive Council of the Wildlife Order 2026 [PCO 28929/4.0];
- 4 **noted** that the Wildlife Order 2026 will come into force on 25 June 2026.

Sam Moffett
Committee Secretary

Present:

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Louise Upston (Chair)
Hon Mark Mitchell
Hon Tama Potaka
Hon Penny Simmonds
Hon Brooke van Velden
Hon Shane Jones
Hon Casey Costello
Hon Nicola Grigg
Hon James Meager
Hon Scott Simpson
Hon Cameron Brewer
Hon Andrew Hoggard
Stuart Smith MP
Jamie Arbuckle MP

Officials present from:

Office of the Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
Officials Committee for LEG