

Taupō Fishery Advisory Committee Meeting.

DOC Office, Turangi, Thursday 16 July 2026, commencing at 5.30pm.

Agenda.

1. **Welcome.**
2. **Apologies.**
3. **Minutes of previous meeting.**
4. **Matters arising.**
5. **Correspondence.**
6. **DOC Fishery Management Team updates:**
 - 6a - Managers report: Dave Conley – written report
 - 6b - Licence sales update: Matt Noel – charts and tables
 - 6c – Communications update: James Barnett - written report
 - 6d – Technical update: Mark Venman – written report
 - 6e – Compliance update: Steve Doughty – written report
7. **Agenda Items:**
 - 7a – Willow control update - (DOC).
 - 7b - Lake Otamangakau regulation changes - (Peter Bragg).
 - 7c – Suspension bridge replacement – (DOC)

8. **Verbal reports.**

TALTAC (Chair TFAC)	Julian Proctor
Tongariro River Advocates	Richard Kemp
Waitahanui Anglers...	Shirley Fraser
NZPFG	Mike Fransham
Motuoapa Boating...	Bob Crompton
TNTCS	Louise Stewart
NZPFG	Deb Mair
National Angling...	Peter Bragg
Fish & Game NZ	Debbie Oakley (National Council)
Taupō Launchmans...	Vacant

9. **Next meeting.**

RECOMMENDATION: That the information be received and noted.

Agenda: 6 DOC Fishery Management Team updates.

Item: 6a – Operations Manager Taupō Fishery
Dave Conley

Mānawatia a Matariki from the Taupo fishery team, hope you all have had an enjoyable long weekend. Given the time of year, we have a number of staff taking a well-earned break, including Mark Venman, after the usual hectic rush to the end of the financial year.

Generally speaking, when I reflect back over the past season it is with a sense of a job well done by the wider group. Financially the fishery landed very much on target, with a minor overspend and good achievement against revenue targets. The recent regulation changes in the new Angler Notice seem to have been greeted favourably by the majority of anglers, based on feedback to date, and the changes to our district team structure which took effect late last year, have bedded in well, and the team is functioning well under the new leadership structure.

A great deal of work has gone into developing a draft business plan, and I am happy to touch on the key elements relating to the fishery at our meeting, with a view to perhaps having a more detailed conversation at the following meeting. There are some proposals in the plan which I think may be of interest to the committee.

Another key discussion point are our plans around how we might implement a summer closure (February) at Lake Otamangakau, in the event of a hot weather event. Looking at the projections for a dryer than normal spring and summer it may well be something we need to be prepared for, after a series of cooler and wetter summers more recently.

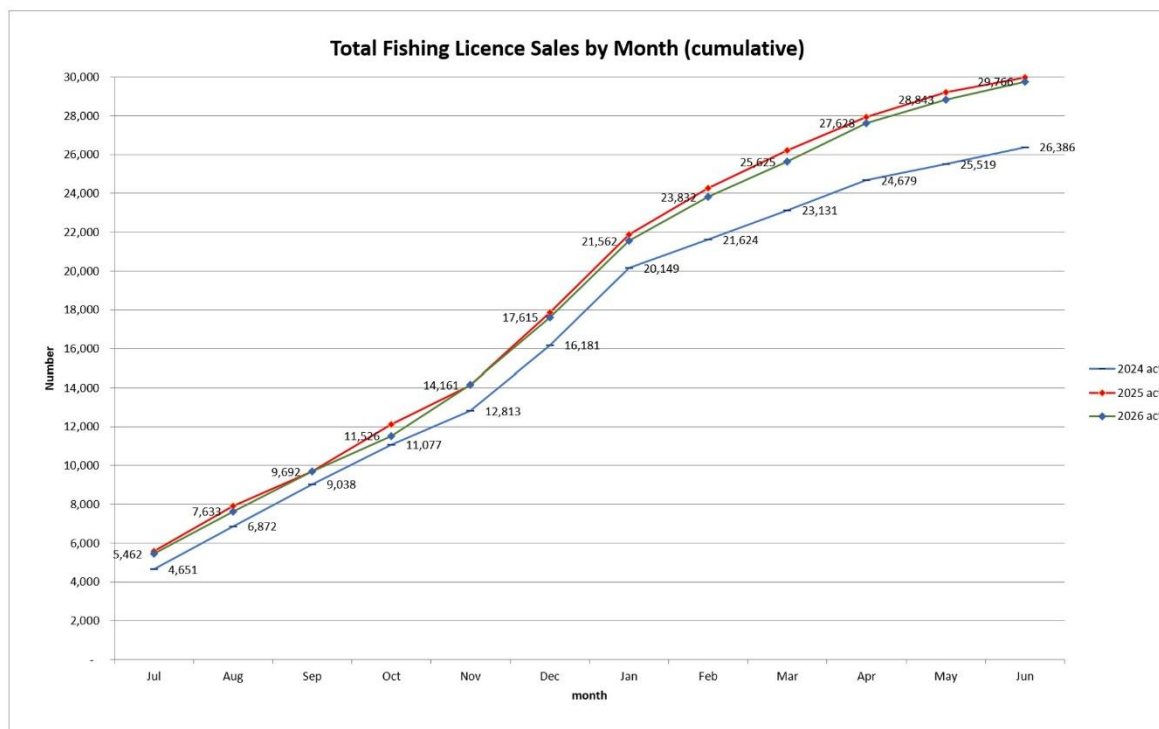
Beyond that, we have a recruitment process in the pipeline following the resignation of Fishery Ranger Sarah Campbell, after a short stint with the team. The rest of the team are in the thick of the winter monitoring season, with the two traps, drifts dives and the normal river compliance and creel survey work keeping them pretty busy.

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Item: 6b – Licence sales data
Matt Noel – CNI Accountant.

1. Taupō fishing licence sales – 2025/26 Season.



Final Taupō District fishing licence sales for the 2025/26 fishing season have been compiled. Revenue for the 25/26 season ended up slightly down by 4.4% on the previous season.

Total licence sales numbers at the end of last season were 29,766 compared to the same time the previous year of 29,962. Total Sales revenue to June 2026 is \$1,315k compared to \$1,378k at the same time in the previous year.

Further information including cumulative revenue and licence types can be found attached - Appendix 1.

Item: 6c – Media and communications.
James Barnett

It has been a busy build up and start to the new fishing season. Our communications programme began with the successful delivery of our annual photo competition. The competition is an excellent way to engage the angling community while promoting the upcoming fishing season. There were seven winners, with an overall winning photograph used to illustrate the plastic wallet card.

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We made a feature of our ongoing policy to keep licence fees as low as possible. This is an important approach that ensures anglers get good value for money and assists families on a tight budget to go fishing and gather kai. It also reassures anglers that we run an efficient fishery management operation.

Regulation changes featured heavily this period. We delivered all the regulatory work required. This included creating the final draft of the new Anglers Notice for 2026, developing a Briefing for the Minister, and submitting the final Notice to the NZ Gazette. We also assisted the Ministers Office with a PR release focussed on the regulatory changes. This was a sound investment which helped elevate the profile of the changes. This was followed up with our own media outputs distributed through our usual channels.

The change to the open season at Lake Otamangakau attracted particular interest. As a result, our newsletter carried a more detailed outline of the process and thinking behind the new flexible approach to February closure. It was particularly interesting to hear feedback from experienced anglers, keen to support trout welfare and seeking reassurance that we have not changed our position.

We completed analysis of the survey about limited spin-fishing along a short and defined section of the lower Tauranga-Taupo River below SH1. Findings were published in a summary released on our website and shared through our newsletter.

The quantitative data provided a clear indication that most anglers who completed the survey supported the initiative (yes 68%, no 27%, unsure 5%). A more nuanced view was captured by the written feedback, which warranted detailed analysis. Full details can be found online.

In an expansion of our social media footprint, we launched an Instagram page. This is an exciting initiative driven by our younger social media focussed Fishery Rangers. They spotted an opportunity to better engage a new audience and offer more dynamic photo and video material from the field. We look forward to investing time into growing this new platform.

Item: 6d – Operations and Technical update

Mark Venman

Winter technical monitoring is in full swing in the Taupō District. Both the Waipa and Te Whaiiau fish traps are operational, escapement counts have started and angler surveys on the rivers are underway.

This is a busy time for our monitoring team, as they actively collect data, which means analysis opportunities are limited. However, trapping at Te Whaiiau is largely complete so we can offer a more substantial insight. A snapshot of other monitoring work has also been included.

Technical report - Appendix 2.

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Item: 6e – Compliance update
Steve Doughty

We have now completed the 25/26 fishing season. As previously reported, we experienced an increase in offences over Summer which has increased our non-compliance figures from 4.55% of all anglers checked in the 24/25 season, to 7.73% in the 25/26 season.

That is 70% growth in offences compared to 33% growth in compliance checks over the previous season which equals a net 28% growth in offending. Various factors will have impacted this growth such as improved detection based on history and intelligence as well as an increase in offending.

We continue to prioritise advocacy in our interactions with anglers however compliance is an important management tool for the health of the fishery. We want to see this result from last season turn around through communication, education and awareness among the angling community and the large number visitors to the Taupo region.

Detailed compliance report - Appendix 3.

Agenda: 7 Committee Agenda Items.

Item: 7a - Standing item – Willow control update (DOC).

Discuss ongoing project that aims to control invasive woody growth on the Tongariro River.

Item: 7b – Lake Otamangakau management (Peter Bragg).

Discuss regulation change to enable a more responsive management approach.

Item: 7c – Suspension bridge replacement (DOC).

Discuss progress on this high profile technical bridge replacement project.

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Taupō Launchmans...	Vacant

Agenda item: 9 – Next Meeting

To be agreed.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Licence sales report.
- Appendix 2 – Technical report.
- Appendix 3 – Compliance report.

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