

 **Minutes of the BRaid General (44) Meeting held on Friday November 25th 2016 at 3pm at DOC Maahanui Area Office, Sockburn.**

**Welcome:** Nick welcomed those present, Edith Smith, Peter Smith, Andy Bray, Colleen Phillips, Frances Schmechel, Sue Stubenvall, Bev Alexander, Peter Langlands and Richard Maloney and Sonny Whitelaw.

**Apologies:** Jim Jolly, Jean, Val Clemens, Eleanor Bissell, Jane Demeter, David Hunter, Sarah Ensor, Jan Walker and Robert Gumbrell.

**Minutes of the September 2nd 2016** meeting had been circulated and were confirmed as a correct record subject to the next meeting date being changed to November 25th. Moved by Peter, seconded by Sonny.

**Matters Arising:**

1.Case for better management of smaller rivers.

**Action:** To be addressed by Jim and Nick with advice from Richard Maloney.

Lupins. Nick’s letter to ECan read to meeting. Draft RPMP for release and comment soon.

**Action:** To be updated and sent to ECan CEO and Minister for Primary Industry. Nathan Guy.

3. Bird of the Year: BRaid/Nth Canty F&B changed allegiance to the Kea which was runner up to the Kokako this year. Bird of the Year is an opportunity to show case our native bird species.

Peter Langlands suggested that online advocacy is a better medium as it is ongoing.

4. Health and Safety. Sonny will work on a template relating to BRaid including activity such as river surveys.

**Action**: Sonny to design a H&S template.

**Correspondence:**

**In:** Di Lucas garnering support for threatened species such as lizards and dotterel which utilise open riverbed beyond the braids. These habitats are being lost to land development and failure of local body rules. The Environmental Defence Society is taking these T.A.s to the Environment Court because they have not responded according to RMA requirements. District Plans are currently being reviewed and it is vital that their rules adequately protect these dryland and braided river ecosystems. Members are encouraged to be involved in these important processes.

**Action: 1**. Next Braided river workshop. Contact Philip Grove about a Loss of Marginal Lands Habitat presentation being included in the programme. **Sonny**

**Action 2**. Contact Di Lucas to find out how BRaid can contribute to stopping this loss. **Sonny**

**Financial:**

Prior to this meeting a preliminary handover meeting was held with Sue who has offered to take over the treasurer role.

Peter presented the financial report and moved that it be received. Accounts amounting to $10.919.33 were passed for payment. Seconded by Nick.

Available funds on 12th November were $18,878.24

**Membership:**

Sonny has emailed subscription reminder notices to members. Invoices to be sent to member organisations.

136 people receive BRaid Newsletter.

**Manager’s Report:**

**Braided River Partnership Project**

Lower Waitaki. Jet Boat monitoring birds. Unable to carry out this year until H&S issues are resolved.

Orari: Work done this year rather than 2017 to clear weeds near Burden Rd to create nesting site for black fronted terns. Outlook for the river is dire due to weed proliferation.

Waimakariri: Christchurch Int. Airport Ltd (CIAL) lower river survey by Mike Bell and Niall Mugan. One small colony of black billed gulls surrounded by thousands of black backed gulls up and down the river. Need to educate the public about the effect black back gulls have as a predator. BRaid will continue communication with ECan and CIAL to release coordinated public statements and will promote CIALs assistance with bird surveys.

Harper and Wilberforce Rivers. Trustpower is undertaking trapping, clearing additional weeds and willows on the Harper delta. BRaid designed signs installed at prominent access points. November 21st visit by Nick and Sonny with Toni Barlow from Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust found banded dotterel on newly cleared delta area.

Waiau River: Amuri Jets checking BFT colony and BRaid traps set up by Geoff Swailes.

Ashburton River: Signs out around black billed gull colony at river mouth. High flows contributed to some of the colony abandoning the site. Now about 2,000 gull are renesting at SH1 Bridge.

Rakaia and Lower Waitaki: In terms of last year’s egg thefts DOC will erect signs along with local campaigns to warn against interfering with wildlife.

**Action:** Sonny to design an appropriate sign for this site.

Ashley/ARRG: Bbill gull colony on nearby irrigated paddock. The owner and farmer are co-operating to protect the 250 nest and 600 bird colony. ARRG will monitor outcome, band birds and do predator control.

**Flock Project:**

Over 300 birds created through schools and groups such as ARRG and ECan. Huge uptake Kaikoura to Mt Cook with 20+ displays across 4 districts.

Selwyn District Libraries using Flock resource for Holiday Activities. Jan 16, 18, 20 and 26th.

Cheviot displays shelved due to earthquakes. Display in Hanmer tentatively planned for December.

**Other:**

No short-term need for additional funding except to prepare for possible Braided River and Trapping workshops next year.

Facebook blitz seeking help to ID black-billed gulls for national survey resulted in 8,000+ hits and 30 shares. Email responses going directly to Mike Bell from WMIL( Canterbury) and Claudia Mischeler(elsewhere) Please send info on to Sonny and Mike.

Waimakariri District Science Stakeholder Advisory Group- keeping focus on weeds and terrestrial ecology in the Ashley Rakahuri.

**Dec 7th** Commissioner for the Environment is visiting Canterbury.

**Trapping Workshop.** Opportunities may arise with predator free NZ. Richard will advise and recommend should the trapping workshop go ahead.

**Upper Waimakariri Survey:** Result on BRaid website. Bbill gull colony of 70 birds now dispersed.

**ECan Braided River Regional Initiative:**

Frances reported $3,000 to fund Aphlocloride black back gull control.

Mid season breeding, predator control and monitoring progressing along. The Clarence River lower reaches affected by the earthquake but upper reaches and Acheron continuing with predator control, banding and monitoring.

South Canterbury and Ashburton zone committees visit to the Upper Rangitata went well. Hope for funding support for ongoing predator and weed management.

ECan decoy trial work is ongoing and will be reported back.

**Other Items:**

Monitoring is ongoing in braided rivers. Waiau has been surveyed and monitoring and predator control continuing.

Hurunui 200 m upstream from SH7 Bridge is a colony of 200 black bill gulls

Ashburton Hakatere River ShoreBird Management Plan has been released and a group of interested parties is being set up and facilitated by Donna Field from ECan.

Nick discussed the importance of monitoring insect life in riverbeds as they are the prime food source for birds and fish. There are opportunities for BRaid to work with children educating them about aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates that birds feed on. DOC Management Strategy for Braided Rivers in NZ is a good resource for this information.

**Meeting concluded at 5.30pm**

**Next meeting: Thursday February 2nd 2017:**

**Signed: Date:**