 **Minutes of the BRaid General (51) Meeting held on Friday September 6th 2019 at 2.45pm at DOC Maahanui Area Office, Sockburn.**

**Present:** Nick Ledgard, Sonny Whitelaw, Bev Alexander, Edith Smith, Sue Mardon, Grant Davey, Jim Jolly, Reece Taylor, Peter Howden, Donna Field, Sanaz Safavien, Andy Bray, Frances Schmeckel, and Sarah Ensor (lateness).

**Apologies:** Jane Demeter, Eleanor Bissell, Rachel Hufton, Donna Field, Holly Simperingham, Rachel McLelland, Herb Familton, Val Clemens and Richard Maloney.

Sanaz Safavien was introduced to meeting. A Univ of Canterbury PhD student looking at anthropogenic impacts on braided rivers, using the Ashley-Rakahuri, Waimakariri and Ashburton rivers as study sites.

**Minutes of the May 24** meeting had been circulated beforehand, and were confirmed as a true and correct record subject to removal of ‘*and PFNZ’.* Moved by Sonny, seconded Nick. Carried.

.**Matters Arising:**

**1.** Case for management of smaller rivers. Discussed during the Bridge Project meetings. Further action to await the Dewhirst v Ecan decision from High Court.

**2.** Historic braided river reports. This requires a literature search for which resources not currently available.

**Correspondence:**

**In:** 1. Environment S’land – that our submission to make Russell lupin a total control plant declined.

**Out:** Letter of thanks to Rakaia Catchment Environmental Enhancement Society for Workshop funding.

**Financial Report.** Sue presented Financial Report for the period 1/07/2019 to 5/09/2019

Income over expenditure:$1,358.59

Closing Bank Balance: $48,785.95

Unallocated funds: $15.414.42

Resolved: ‘That the financial accounts be received as true and correct’ Nick / Edith. Carried

‘That the report be received and accounts amounting to $23,202.03 be approved for payment’ Sue/Jim. Carried

**Membership:** 39 general members (6 unpaid); 7 organisations (1 unpaid) and 36 casual members. Unpaid members are moved to casuals.

**Manager’s Report:**

**Braided River Partnership Project.**

* Trustpower came to the advanced trapping workshop in Hanmer Springs in July.
* Contact maintained regularly with interested parties through social media, newsletters
* Sent proposal with a range of options to way2go helicopters (courtesy of Nick)
* Aspiring Biodiversity Trust has nominated Wilkin Jets, Makarora School, and Southern Alps Air for Environmental Accreditation for their work in actively assisting with the cost of accessing trapping sites, engaging tourists, and raising funds for the protection of braided rivers birds and habitats
* Cresslands Contracing awarded environmental accreditation for their work in designing a weed ripper. ***Action****: Sonny to complete certificates and to provide to Nick for presentation.*
* Karakaas awarded for their ongoing contribution to awareness and donation of percentage of sales to local river care group
* Business in Dunedin has offered to sponsor a pair of dotterels in South Bay
* Discussion underway between Boffa Miskell and DOC re contractors learning trapping and increasing their general braided river awareness (particularly about birds). We have supplied material to Boffa Miskell for passing on to contractors. The question was raised about how much of this information is being taken up by actual contractors? ***Action***: *Nick to follow this up with BM*.
* Rangiora High School River Studies.The initiation of aYear 12 and 13 Geography ’Education for Sustainability’ student study of aquatic insect life in Ashley-Rakahuri river was facilitated by BRaid in 2018. ***Action***. *Sonny to enquire how this is proceeding.*

**Funding**

* End of financial year report to ECan sent
* Next report to Lotto due mid-2020
* ECan have generously funded us for another 3 years to support the website, social media, and other communications strategies including seminars and workshop
* Boffa Miskell have offered to fund a braided rivers seminar in 2020. Costs can be spread between them (running costs) and ECan (wages)
* Awaiting quote from Mike Bell for SBBG control before applying for funding from (possibly) RATA foundation or other to help with costs

 **Education/Outreach/Support**

* **Three newsletters** sent since the last meeting, delivered to 188 verified emails (this is down from 190 emails, however I have removed about 25 ‘bouncing’ email addresses + we’ve had about 21 new subscribers). Newsletters are archived here: <https://braidedrivers.org/news/>
* **Website**: completely rebuilt. The original site was barely functioning as it was not designed to have so much material. Most pages were dated in any case, with updates and recent research, surveys and reports needed to be added. I’ve removed the calendar as virtually no one used it.
* **Facebook** **posts**: approximately 158 posts since the last meeting. Posts reach between 150- 37,000 people, depending on the topic. Sadly, bad news garners the most attention. However, the ‘wrybills have returned’ post reached 3,300.
* **2019 Braided Rivers Seminar:** packed house, good food (special shout out to Karikaas cheese), great talkspresentations, all available on the website under ‘references’ in the relevant pages pertaining to the topic/s, and also summary links here: <https://braidedrivers.org/conservation/2019-seminar/>
* **BRIDGE project**: The Court of Appeals (Dewhirst Land Company Ltd v Canterbury Regional Council decision) is still underway but it does not look good as judges are suggesting farmers are the best ones to decide where braided river banks are.
* **Wrybill: Bird of the Year 2019.** Initiative led by Miranda Shorebird Trust; we will support it through social media.
* **Boffa Miskell:** weed contractors given 2-page river bird ID kit

**Monitoring.**

1. Wilberforce survey, Nov 3-8. Accommodation booked and request for volunteers to go out soon. A recce visit in October will confirm access requirements (4WD tracks, jet boat?). ***Action****: Nick/Jim/Peter to do recce trip in October; Nick to send out request for volunteers, Jim to send out survey details to volunteers closer to the time.*
2. DoC database. All survey results and reports are sent to Andy Grant DOC. Comment made that a standardised data base of these should be available for all to see**.**
3. ECan’s SBBG control strategy. Out by end of month. Those wanting to do SBBG control to consult strategy and seek permission from ECan for any area of specific control.
4. Harrier hawks. Suggested that these should be included in all surveys. As their flight habits are different to other riverbed birds, possibly best to have one observer recording these per group.
5. Updates: Ashley / Rakahuri: Update on tractor-mounted ripper trial – funded by DOC / ECan.
6. Ashburton: Management plan meeting on Sept 17. New trap installations at estuary and along 2km stretch by SH1 bridge.
7. Orari: Local group going well. ***Action****: Reece to supply Sonny with group names for website, plus an update of Group activities.*
8. Opihi / Opuha. Need for stimulating the set-up of a local group, perhaps through Paul Sagar(?). This could be done via a DOC trapping workshop. ***Action****: Jim / Edith to explore further, with Sonny exploring trap workshop option.*

**General Business.**

* Recommendations from NIWA and Productivity Commission on the need to give rivers ‘room to move’ as a risk-aversion management strategy (in good part due to climate change) now public
* RMA and NZ Biodiversity Strategy workshops now taking place – these and submissions on dairy farming and freshwater are open for submissions now. Sonny attending workshops and strongly advise all members doing so and/or making submissions (being at meetings is far more beneficial as they are often over-represented by opposing interests).
* Sonny will be giving the Hurunui Zone Committee a presentation on climate change impacts on braided rivers on 26 September
* Thanks to Rice Speir, BRaid will have a stand at the Environmental Compliance Conference November 13-14.

**Meeting concluded at 4.50pm**

**Next meeting: Friday, December 13 at 3pm**

**Signed: Date:**

**Action Items**

1. ***Sonny*** *to complete Award certificates and to provide to Nick for presentation.*
2. ***Nick*** *to write to Boffa Miskell to see how liaison with LINZ contractors is progressing*
3. ***Sonny*** *to enquire how Rangiora HS river studies are proceeding.*
4. ***Reece*** *to supply Sonny with Orari group names plus an update of activities for website.*
5. ***Jim / Edith / Peter*** *to explore further how to facilitate the formation of an Opihi / Opuha rivercare group (perhaps via Paul Sagar?), plus Sonny to explore option of utilising a trap workshop.*