

Minutes of the BRAid General Meeting held on Friday Sept 27, 2024, 2.45 pm at DOC office, 31 Nga Mahi Road, Sockburn, Christchurch

The Chairman, Nick Ledgard, welcomed those present: Sonny Whitelaw, Frances Schmechel and Miles Burford (ECan), Edith and Peter Smith, Sue Mardon, Grant Davey, Jim Jolly, Diana Shand, Peter Langlands.

Apologies: Ellery Mayence, Val Clemens, Peter Howden, Donna Field, Nicky Snoyink. Sue / Edith Carried

Minutes of last GM (October 6th 2023) were confirmed as a true and correct record. Nick/Sue Carried

Matters Arising: Five Action Items – all completed and/or covered below.

Financial. Sue presented the Income and Expenditure report for 1/07/24 to 8/9/2024. These are available on the BRAid website. Income \$3973.77; Expenditure \$12,955.82, giving an excess funding/spending of -\$8,980.05
Opening Bank Balance: \$26,893.18; Closing bank balance: \$16,584.28 Our major expense is for Manager expenses, for which there is sufficient in general funds for the next few months, with our application for further funding known before the end of the year. The second major expense deals with the annual Symposium. This year the cost was 45% less than for the previous year.

Resolved: 'That the financial accounts be received'. Sue/Peter. Carried

Membership. We currently have 145 members (registered with contact details), with 305 persons on our email list. Subscriptions are no longer required, but donations are welcomed, and currently exceed what was made from subscriptions.

Outreach / Manager's report. Sonny's report is the same as presented to the AGM – available on our website. A vote of sincere thanks to Sonny for her work, without which BRAid would not exist.

July 10 2024 Seminar. This is the highlight of BRAid's year, and was the usual success, as reported at the AGM. Major thanks are due to Sonny Whitelaw for the organizing this year's symposium, and to the Waitaha Action Fund for the funding.

ECan / DOC Braided River projects. Frances reported on the projects, speaking to a map which showed locations of work on virtually all of Canterbury's braided rivers. Co-funding comes from DOC, LINZ and local stakeholders, with objectives covering weed and predator control, island enhancement, outcome monitoring (bird breeding), plus investigations into populations / dynamics of braid plain invertebrates and braided river food chains. Reports are posted on the BRAid website as they become available. ECan funding supports the backbone of braided river environmental investigations and management, and the meeting acknowledged the efforts of Frances in making sure that outputs are as available as possible to the public. The existence of the Rivers Group was discussed, along with the possibility of BRAid becoming a member.

Action: *Sonny and Frances to explore possible membership for BRAid within the Rivers Group.*

Monitoring

- Determining bird productivity / breeding success. Frances noted that there are monitoring protocols available. However, there is a gap around fledges per nest. **Action:** *Frances to notify availability of existing protocols. [Link here [Protocol for best practice in monitoring braided river birds.](#)] Frances and Grant – explore ways to capture fledges per nest but correct for re-nesting.*
- Standardising braided river bird database and access. Miles Burford, working for ECan, reported on good progress with this. He has accessed all past records and incorporated them in a standardized database, wherever possible as recordings per kilometer. Survey data/km can be entered directly into a readily-available electronic

template (cell-phone housed), although paper-entry is still possible. Currently, he is linking this to Canterbury Maps, but there are hold-ups. Once the system is up and running, BRaid will try to assist in filling gaps. The database allows for ready interrogation (relative to the likes of trends over time) by anyone, and BRaid is keen to encourage such investigation. A vote of thanks was passed to Miles for all his work in this vital area, plus to the support given to his efforts by Frances.

- SBBG control in upper Waimakariri. Nick reported further discussion but no action on this issue.
Action: Nick to keep the matter alive.
- River reports. Much of this was covered by Frances in her reporting on ECan/DOC projects (see above)
 - Waiau / Hurunui. BFT breeding success at the Sharks Tooth demonstrated the worth of good weed-free islands. The Waiau-upha bird survey is planned for the week of Nov 4-8.
 - Waimakariri. No bird survey this year, but a whole-river review is planned for gravel cross-sections and ground cover changes – to be compared with those obtained in 2012.
 - Ashley-Rakahuri. Annual survey is on Nov 16. The breeding season has got off to a slow start. There was discussion about better communication between ECan engineers and their earth-moving contractors with other riverbed/berm users such as local community groups (eg., ARRG). Closer collaboration would lead to less conflict and more cost-effective outcomes.
 - *Action: BRaid to consider a Deputation to Council promoting better collaboration.*
 - Ashburton. Annual survey will be over 2 days in November. Edith updated on current situation.
 - Orari. Opihi / Opuha. Jim Jolly spoke of action by dedicated local groups, which deserves more support.
 - *Action: BRaid to explore possibility of a local seminar to promote/discuss local management initiatives on these smaller S. Canterbury rivers.*
- **General Business**
 - Meeting frequency. Meeting felt that there was need for 2 meetings a year, in addition to the mid-year BRaid seminar.
- **Date for next meeting.** Planned for February, 2025.
Action: Nick / Sonny to organise
- **Close of Meeting.** 4.30pm.

Action items.

1. **Rivers Group membership:** *Sonny to explore possible membership for BRaid within this Group.*
2. **Bird monitoring protocols:** *Frances and Grant to explore ways of collecting fledglings, with corrections which incorporate re-nesting.*
3. **SBBG control in upper Waimakariri catchment:** *Nick to keep the matter alive.*
4. **Better collaboration:** *BRaid to consider a Deputation to Council promoting better collaboration between braided river engineering works and other river environmental managers.*
5. **Orari / Opihi / Opuha seminar:** *BRaid to explore possibility of organizing a seminar to promote/discuss local environmental management on these smaller S. Canterbury rivers.*
6. **Meetings:** *Sonny / Nick to organize a BRaid meeting in late February to discuss breeding season outcomes.*