



MOUNTAIN ECHO

Newsletter of Nelson Branch NZDA December 2020



Motueka army cadets participating in their first shoot on our short range

Editorial

and another year gone – One less to look forward to. Damn!!

Do you ever get the thought that we don't have much control over our lives?

I look back on 2020 as a year that I achieved little, shot less, caught few fish and continued to find weeds in my new lawn.

Covid had a lot to do with this of course and the flow on from the mosque shootings has constantly reminded me that life is what actually happens regardless of how we plan and look forward to a happy and care free future.

The letter from the District Arms Officer advising that firearm owners can anticipate that the new vetting system will take a long time to process licence renewals is a direct result of police attempting to plug gaps in the vetting system. The unforeseen consequence for licence holders is that if your licence expires while your renewal is

www.nzdanelson.co.nz

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being processed then you are unlicensed and possession of firearms is unlawful. Current thinking is that three months lead time will not be long enough.

The new arms legislation places clubs with ranges under legal requirements that are new for all other than Pistol NZ ranges which already operate under tight restrictions.

All ranges in future must be registered and certified with a five year re certification requirement. Failure to do so would result in range closure and a sizeable fine for the club.

All ranges when active must be under the control of a qualified range officer.

Both requirements will be implemented and enforced by NZ Police and just how is being thrashed out by a joint working party of police and national firearm association representatives.

Nelson is well positioned regarding all this. Both our ranges are certified. We have qualified range officers and are working on increasing the numbers. What we will do with the publicly available range at Murchison will take some thought, but we are committed to keeping it open as a public asset.

In line with encouraging the safe and lawful use of firearms we were happy to welcome the Motueka Army Cadet unit on to our range on Saturday. The cadets made a great effort to tidy the small range and I am reminded that the 25mter firing position was constructed by Nelson cadet units some fifteen years ago. We expect the cadet usage of the range to be regular and perhaps to extend to other cadet units. President Greg Couper expressed the view that the more usage the range gets the better argument we have for retaining our range.

An aside- One bright spot in spending so much time in Wellington on firearm issues is that I got to spend time in the National Office. The office and the associated heritage museum and meeting room facility is beautiful. Bloody beautiful in fact and getting a lot of use from COLFO, Firearm Safety Council, Game Animal Council and other groups not necessarily connected with firearms or hunting but appreciative of the facility. NZDA and in particular branches like Nelson that contributed to the cost of the renovation can be very proud.

Well that's all from me for 2020. Richard and I want to thank those of you who have contributed to the newsletter during the year. We especially want to acknowledge the cooperation of Karen and Jacob from Fish and Game in producing the newsletter

There will be no newsletter in January and all going well Richard will deliver the February one and I will go fishing.

Bill O'Leary

Important Notices

**There will be no club nights
in December or January.
Next Club Night 23 February**

Changes to Range Hours

**Starting Saturday 9 January 2020,
the range will be open from 9am
to 11am.**

There will be no gate opening at 10.30 and therefore no 10.30 to 12pm range opportunity.

Recent range activity has shown that shooters make minimal use of the later opportunity but would value a longer period particularly when looking after junior or new shooters.

Closures over the holiday period

Packers Creek range will Not be open on the statutory holidays
December 25 -27 and January 1 – 3

The regular range officers need the break, but regular openings start again Saturday 9 January

Arms Officer – Nelson Police Station

Good Morning Bill and members of the Nelson NZDA

Over the last two weeks significant changes to how Police process firearms license and permit applications has occurred.

Nationally all firearms license matters are now being processed electronically. I recommend that all license holders have a read of the information posted on the Police web site at www.police.govt.nz , some of the changes are:

1. The new license (and renewal of a license) application form is 34 pages long and needs to be downloaded from the Police web site.
2. The application will take significantly longer to process as new steps are occurring, e.g. the referees will be sent a questionnaire to complete and return before they are interviewed, i.e. allow at least 3 months for a renewal application to be processed.
3. If a renewal application is not processed before the license expires, the license holder does not have a legal license and therefore would unlawfully be in possession of a firearm they have in their possession (i.e. they would need to give their firearms to another license holder in the interim).
4. Police's preference is for all documents to be sent in electronically for processing (except for mail order forms which require certification of identity). License applications will need to include the application form, copy of receipt of fee payment, copies of proof on identity forms and an electronic digital photo, all sent to the national e-mail address.

In addition to the current round of changes, additional changes to the Arms Act are occurring on 24th December. Again, checking the Police web site after this date is recommended.

Whilst this continual state of change in the firearms community has been challenging for all of us, these changes will make sure that licenses are only issued to the "right people" and help ensure a safer community for all of us.

Derek Coffey

Worth a Look by Richard Wells

I like hunting when just getting there is a part of the adventure!



Luckily and recently I had the pleasure to be invited by some southern mates into the Dobson Valley, this is my 5th trip there, so I guess I like it. There are both tahr and deer in here.

Access is well managed by the runholders Glen Lyon station (they have grazing rights to valley floor) which means you should not be bumping into other people while you are on your designated part of the valley.

DOC have information on the valley, huts and access here:

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/things-to-do/hunting/where-to-hunt/canterbury/mackenzie-country-and-waitaki-hunting/where-to-hunt/dobson/>

It is DEFINITELY 4WD drive country and if the river comes up you are going to have to sit it out...so it's a place for the more flexible hunter with a sensible weather eye and Plan B!

While we were in the other week we saw a few groups coming and going so it's a popular spot but worth a go.

It's 8-9 hours drive to Twizel and a few more up to the Station Homestead and then to the huts.



Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board

Nominations Now Open

Kia ora koutou

Conservation board nominations for the 2021 appointment round are now open.

Nominations **close on Friday 29 January 2021** appointments can be expected around June / July of next year.

Nominations are online via the DOC website, here:

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/statutory-and-advisory-bodies/conservation-boards/>

The same page includes links to information on what [conservation boards do](#), primarily providing advice to the Department of Conservation.

You can find out more about the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board, including agendas and minutes, [here](#).

Please contact the Statutory Bodies Team if you have any questions at nominations@doc.govt.nz

Kia ora rawa atu, nā

Jacqui Irwin MSc (Hons)

Community Ranger | Kaitiaki Āo Hāpori

Board Support Officer, Media & Events | Kaitautoko

Nelson | Whakatū



The Stalk – Summer 2020



View from the Chair

As New Zealand's statutory organisation responsible for hunting the Game Animal Council is looking forward to working with newly-appointed Minister of Conservation Kiritapu Allan. I had the opportunity to briefly catch up with the Minister at a function recently and found her to be very interested in what we do and the hunting sector generally.

A number of priorities exist for us over the next few years including continuing the work to develop a deer management strategy for the benefit of both hunting and conservation (more on that below). We also want to make progress on proposed herds of special interest, support the commercial side of the hunting sector through COVID-19, develop a hunter education strategy to help more people hunt safely and successfully, preserve public access to public lands and Kiwi's right to harvest. The implementation of the GAC's long-term funding strategy is essential to provide the resources to make these initiatives happen.

A Briefing to the Incoming Minister (BIM) has been submitted to Minister Allan, which we will make publicly available once public sector conventions allow.

On the tahr front it was positive that we were able to negotiate some positive changes for hunters on where DOC focused their tahr control outside Aoraki/Mt Cook and Westland Tai Poutini National Parks during spring. A reallocation of hours saw an emphasis on more control work in inaccessible and remote locations while easily accessible hunting areas were left for hunters. DOC also undertook to not undertake control work near road ends, huts and helicopter landing sites frequently used by backcountry users.

We look forward to continuing our work with other hunting sector stakeholders on the Tahr Plan Implementation Liaison Group and intend to work towards much-needed research and monitoring of tahr and their impacts so improved science based management plans can be formed in future.

Please do not hesitate to get in contact if you want to know more about the GAC and what we do.

Enjoy your hunting this summer and stay safe out there,

Grant Dodson
Chair, Game Animal Council

Study could reduce pressure on tahr resource

A recently published study by the Game Animal Council has established it is possible to contain male tahr on private land to provide additional commercial hunting opportunities and potentially reduce conflict with recreational hunters.

The study monitored two captive-bred male tahr relocated to a fully-fenced game estate and using a GPS-collar. Over the course of a year the tahr did not show any great determination to escape and quickly established a preferred territory within the 1,124-hectare enclosure.

The study's findings illustrate the possibility of locating male tahr on designated game estates outside their range for the purpose of commercial guided hunting.

This also has the potential to benefit recreational public land hunters by helping to take some of the pressure off the public tahr resource by catering for more of the guided hunting demand from overseas on private land and reducing instances where guided and recreational hunters come into conflict.

The full research report can be found at <https://researcharchive.lincoln.ac.nz/handle/10182/13049>

DOC finishes 2020-21 tahr control work

DOC has completed its aerial control work on public conservation land in the tahr range under the Tahr Control Operational Plan 2020/21. Maps showing where control took place and sightings of mature bulls are published on DOC's tahr web pages, available [here](#).

Deer management	Get Outdoors Week	Help protect the Kārearea
<p>The GAC is working alongside DOC on the development of a deer management strategy that preserves and where possible enhances New Zealand's deer-hunting resource while protecting the health of our forests. We consider a region-by-region, herd-by-herd strategy can broadly satisfy both conservation and hunting interests. We will keep the sector informed as to progress.</p> <p>Hunters know that different deer species in different environments pose different management challenges. We all know that the expansion of some herds in some places has led to a deterioration of the habitat. We also know that too many deer have an impact on the quality of the animals, their meat potential and the trophy hunting opportunities.</p> <p>Hunters will always play a critical role in deer management. Where there are too many animals priority should be given to taking breeding animals - mature hinds and yearling females. Where deer numbers are low, knowing how to identify old mature males from immature males and only taking the older males will support the ongoing viability of such herds.</p>	<p>The Game Animal Council and Hunting & Fishing NZ joined together to support Get Outdoors Week 2020, a national campaign run by Recreation Aotearoa to encourage Kiwis to get out and enjoy our outdoors.</p> <p>There are major physical and mental wellbeing benefits from getting into the outdoors and when it comes to hunting there are also significant conservation, community and protein advantages that come from harvesting our game animal species.</p> <p>Over 160,000 New Zealanders go hunting every year, but it is important that we continue to foster new and young hunters and help make the sport accessible to people, which is why we got behind this initiative.</p> <p>Congratulations goes to Bridgette Lynch who won the Try Something New photo competition sponsored by the GAC and Hunting & Fishing NZ. Bridgette received a \$500 Hunting & Fishing NZ voucher for her winning entry (pictured). GAC General Manager Tim Gale also contributed a story to the Get Outdoors Week website with advice on where to begin and what you need to go hunting. You can read that here.</p>	<p>Followers of our Facebook page will be aware that hunters recently helped back the kārearea/NZ falcon to fourth in this years Bird of the Year competition. This was even better than last year when the kārearea came in ninth and shows how much affection there is for 'New Zealand's original hunter'. The final results and some (over)analysis of the competition are available here.</p> <p>Thanks to NZDA and Hunters for Conservation for joining with us to support the kārearea. It is really important that we continue to show just how much the hunting sector cares about our indigenous species and how much work we continue do to protect them.</p> <p>For those that want to know more about supporting the conservation of the kārearea as well as NZ's other birds of prey, we recommend making contact with the Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust. Wingspan supports wild populations of falcon by releasing captive bred birds and rehabilitating injured wild birds. They also support research and advocacy to help reverse the decline of our native birds of prey in the wild.</p>



Cadets

shooting on the range after they cut scrub and generally tidied the range.

Red Deer Lodge

**Information on costs and bookings of the Red Deer Lodge
at Lake Rotoiti**

Contact the Calders: info@starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz

Use the website at www.starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz

Saying you are a member

2020 Committee

Committee:

President: Greg Couper terminatorproducts@xtra.co.nz

Vice President: Richard Wells richardw@nzdanelson.co.nz

Secretary: Warren Plum plumstone@xtra.co.nz

Treasurer: Aaron Shields aarons@nzdanelson.co.nz

Members: Bill O'Leary, Graeme Smith, Graeme Ching, Mike DeGray, Neill Cliffe, John Noakes, Mike Grant, David Haynes, Carina Jackson.

Range Committee:

Convener: Graeme Ching, graeme-doreen@xtra.co.nz

Members: Graeme Smith, Graeme Ching, Bill O'Leary

Hazard or Incident Reporting: website email (nelson.nzda@gmail.com) or contact member of Range Committee

Access, Rules and Safety: see website <https://www.nzdanelson.co.nz/range.html> and check your emails for updates or changes to range opening times

Branch Hunts and Activities:

Convener: Mike DeGray miked@nzdanelson.co.nz

Hunts Courses:

Website: <https://www.nzdanelson.co.nz/hunts.html>

Convener: Bill O'Leary b.f.oleary@xtra.co.nz

Members: Lawson Davey, Alistair Ching

New members:

email nelsonnzda@gmail.com or go to webpage <https://www.nzdanelson.co.nz/index.html>

The Mountain Echo

Bill O'Leary and Richard Wells