

Hokianga Accord Update #7

NZ Fishing News April 2008 edition

March 2008

Hokianga here we come!

The Hokianga Accord, will be returning to Whakamaharatanga Marae, Waimamaku, Hokianga, for the eleventh overnight hui. Dates for the hui are confirmed for 3rd and 4th of April 2008.

Living soils and other discussions

An interesting programme is planned. One feature item will be the progress being made to improve soil retention and how that can have a positive impact on the health of both fresh and marine waterways. "Living Soils and Estuarine Health" ties in well with previous Accord discussions to improve the sustainability of freshwater eels and healthy habitats.

After last November's hui the Accord sent a list of ten questions to the Ministry of Fisheries. As yet no formal response has been received. Discussion will be held on this matter with or without any answers from MFish. These questions are in Appendix Eight of the Waipapa hui report, online at http://option4.co.nz/Fish_Forums/documents/har1107.pdf.

The Kaimoana Regulations were hotly debated at Waipapa. Following that hui the Forum sent a submission to MFish supporting the amendment to enable the inclusion of fresh waterways within the customary regime. A brief outline of that submission and any Ministerial decision will be reported to the April hui.

Without doubt one of the more contentious topics will be the kahawai rebuild strategy proposed at Waipapa. A continuation of those discussions will be required in light of new research, which suggests an increase in the commercial harvest of kahawai in the area from East Cape to North Cape is a possibility.

An Accord representative who attended the recent meeting to develop an integrated plan for the management of West Coast finfish will also provide an update. The North-West Finfish Fisheries Planning Group will have had two meetings by the time the April hui is held.

Also on the agenda will be MFish' proposed engagement model for mid-north iwi. As reported last month, Ngapuhi, Ngati Whatua and Ngati Wai representatives met with MFish' Deputy Chief Executive, Stan Crothers and his staff prior to Christmas. According to Ngapuhi's Sonny Tau, the proposal by MFish needs a lot more discussion by mid-north iwi before any agreement can be reached.

Ngapuhi and Ngati Whatua view the Accord as being a simple platform where mid-north interest groups get together and discuss the real issues affecting good fisheries management and marine protection.

There is not much point having abundant fisheries if there is nowhere to go fishing. Likewise, it is pointless having pockets of fish in closed-off areas, such as marine reserves, if there are few fish available in the rest of the sea.

If you want to hear more about how Maori and non-Maori can work together to achieve good outcomes for our fisheries, local communities and ultimately for the benefit all New Zealanders, please feel welcome to attend the hui and participate. Both the NZ Big Game Fishing Council and fisheries advocacy group option4 are regular participants in these hui.

Visit www.HokiangaAccord.co.nz for marae details, email Shelley Naera at shelley.naera@ngapuhi.iwi.nz or call her on 09 4010084 for more information.