

**Wainui Bay Spat Farms
Annual Consent Holder Meeting**

**Pohara Boat Club - Port Tarakohe
12 June 2015 - 2:00pm**

In Attendance:

Carolyn McLellan – Golden Bay Community Board
Doug Saunders-Loader – Talleys Seafood (Consent Holder)
Hika Rountree – Clearwater Mussels (Farm Operator)
Rosalind Squire – Coastal Consents Planner, Tasman District Council
Tania Bray – Policy Planner, Tasman District Council
Quentin Davies – Gascoigne Wicks Lawyers
Amanda Hill – Gascoigne Wicks Lawyers
Ron Sutherland – Property and Land Management Services
Jill Foxwell – Wainui Bay landowner
Peter Griffith – Wainui Bay landowner)

Apologies: Community Board Members Leigh Gamby and David Gowland and Golden Bay Councillors Martine Bouillir and Paul Sangster.

1. Welcome from Carolyn McLellan – Golden Bay Community Board and introductions by those present
2. Purpose of the meeting explained (Rosalind Squire, Tasman District Council)
3. Issues raised since last meeting:
 - No formal service requests (complaints) have been received by Tasman District Council over the last 12 months;
 - Aware that vessels have operated late at night on a number of occasions including Christmas Eve;
 - The four inner farms are currently operating by virtue of their existing deemed coastal permits (which are the Marine Farming Licences and conditions - which do not restrict the hours of operation);
 - Update on Council review of deemed coastal permit conditions (Rosalind Squire) - Draft reviewed conditions for the four inner farms were sent out in mid 2014, no feedback was received to the draft, a final decision on the conditions was sent out in late 2014. The reviewed conditions have been objected to by three of the four consent holders – MacLab (two farms) and Clearwater Mussels (one farm). Council staff met with the deemed consent holders prior to Christmas 2014 to seek resolution of the objection. A letter and amended conditions was sent to the deemed consent holders following the meeting. No response has been received to date. If Council does not hear back soon then a hearing will be scheduled for the objection;

- Doug Saunders-Loader said that the Marine Farming Association opposes the objections to draft conditions and is placing pressure on the consent holders to resolve the matter;
 - A discussion was held (initiated by Carolyn McLellan of the Community Board) regarding the condition requiring an annual community meeting. There was general agreement that the meetings were important as they gave all parties the opportunity to be involved. It was noted that the condition requiring the community meetings should be included in the review of the deemed consents. Carolyn McLellan stated her intention to have the matter recorded at the next Community Board Meeting.
4. Carolyn asked the meeting if there were any current Issues:
- It was noted by Jill Foxwell that they were currently experiencing a busy period with nine boats operating on Monday, for a long period of time. She said it felt like they were living near a factory. She noted that the noise travels across the water. The commencement of operation in the morning was abnormally early. Jill was asked what time the boats were starting, she could not say exactly but believed it was before 6:30am;
 - She said that the amount of rubbish continues to be an issue. However, she added that it had significantly improved in the last year or two;
 - Night pollution was still a problem with boat strobe lights panning the Bay early in the morning. Some boats were better than others. Hika Rountree noted that he is happy to keep pressure on the other operators, but noted there was no legal means to enforce any controls. He said that he was happy to receive complains. It was suggested that it would not be too hard to redesign strobe lights so they did not pan the Bay. Lights were only a problem in winter when it is dark during the hours of operation;
 - A general discussion was held regarding the noise from boats and it was stated that some boats are a better designed than others when it came to the amount of noise they generated. Mufflers had been added to some boats. The difficulty in enforcing noise provisions was discussed and Jill noted it was easier to talk to Hika Rountree than to complain to Council. The impracticality of compliance officers coming over from Richmond to monitor noise was raised. The forum was identified as a good way to practically deal with some of the issues including noise. It was mentioned that on a very still days the acoustics were such that you could hear people talking on the boats;
 - Hika Rountree was thanked for his recent email warning of an upcoming busy period;
 - The source of noise was discussed with the engine noise, revering, winches, speed of travel and hydraulics mentioned. It was noted by the operators that they don't want to work in a noisy environment either and some of changes that had been made to the boats and work practice where discussed, including changing the winch type, use of mufflers, dampening noise from the engine room and turning the main engine off once arrived;
 - It was suggested that two boats working at a time was not that bad but up to nine boats was really noisy. Noise becomes a whole Bay problem – with everyone hearing it. The activity is focused on one small site, all at once, and then everyone leaves and it is quite again. The need to maximise spat collection while it was available was

discussed. Hika Rountree considered that there was only one boat left operating at Wainui Bay that breaks the rules. It was suggested that Jill Foxwell ring Doug Saunders-Loader who will ring the MFA, who will deal with issues in a timely manner.

5. Tabled Questions

- Sarah Collins on behalf of De Lambert Trust had raised a couple of questions via email that she requested a response to:
 - She noted that the closing of the Sanford factory in Christchurch had been in the media and that the reason for the closure was given as warming seas and less spat being available. She wanted to know if the Wainui Bay spat farms had the same or similar level of spat production or if their experiences were different.

In response to this question Ron Sutherland (who is a contractor for the Wainui Bay Group of farms) noted that they have not had the same experience with spat supply problems at Wainui Bay. He advised that Sanford have a number of different sources of spat, the main being - spat washed up on seaweed at Kaitaia (which had had significant supply issues due to El Nino conditions and very little spat laden seaweed being washed up), farms in the Marlborough Sounds (which had variable success) and spat from the Ring Road and Wainui Bay farms. Combined they had not been sufficient to sustain the farms.

He noted that few sites exist and the catch was highly variable. The other sites were not producing enough to sustain the industry compared to Wainui and Kaitaia. He said that Wainui is the jewel in the crown and was currently having a bumper year.

A question was raised regarding the industry's knowledge of spat supply, variability and climate change. It was noted that hatcheries were trying to take out the variability in sourcing spat. However, the hatchery raised spat is performing poorly in the wild. Hika Rountree noted that in his opinion wild sourced spat grows better. He noted that the Ring Road spat catching marine farm was difficult to farm (prone to rough weather) and the catch was poor.

A question was asked regarding other potential locations. Jackson Bay and D'Urville Island were mentioned as possible alternatives but no one knows where the spat comes from. Spat catching in the Firth of Thames was being undertaken with not much success.

- Sarah Collins also asked if Sanford are related to, or operate any of the farms at Wainui Bay.

Rosalind Squire noted that Sanford is not a consent holder in the Bay. Hika Rountree advised that Sanford had leased lines within the farms he manages in Wainui Bay in the past, but they currently lease 3 lines close to the beach on one of the inner two farms owned by MacLab and they also leased some lines at the seasonal Ring Road

sites. It was also noted that Sanford is behind SpatNZ (in conjunction with MBIE) developing hatchery spat at the Glen in Nelson.

6. Line location:

- A question was raised regarding the location of the lines. Rosalind Squire noted that the aerial photography indicates that some of the lines are off site. The response from Hika Rountree was that the anchor blocks were within the consented areas but the lines often floated in and out with the tide. He mentioned that they try to have all our lines empty by tourist season leaving only ID floats and back bones so the farms are less intrusive.

7. Any other matters – Proposed Private Plan Change.

- Quentin Davies from Gascoigne Wicks Lawyers introduced the work he was undertaking to enable the farms in Wainui Bay to remain beyond their expiry of the existing consents. The marine farmers in the Bay (Wainui Bay Spat Catching Group) are proposing a private plan change to enable this to happen. A preliminary draft for the private plan change is ready and consultation with the community will commence shortly, followed by lodgement of the Plan Change with the Council, and calls for submissions.
- He advised that he was at the meeting to take on board comments raised in the forum and the plan change will reflect the matters mentioned at the meeting today. They intend to look at the conditions of operation and they will and try and resolve as many of the problems as they can and see what mitigation can be provided. Contact details were provided for anyone wishing to discuss the proposal. In the first instance it was advised that contact should be made with Ron Sutherland (Property and Land Management Services Ltd – P O Box 751, Blenheim 7240, (03) 578 1733 or 027 220 7299 Email: palmsltd@xtra.co.nz).
- Ron Sutherland will be sending out letters in the next couple of weeks inviting residents to discuss the proposal and information will be available to interested parties. Quentin Davies noted that the meeting is only the second group to hear about the proposed plan change and they need to also talk to DOC and other organisations to see how they can mitigate effects. They are looking to have a good plan change which address the issues raised and remove the uncertainty in the current plan provisions.
- Hika Rountree mentioned new technology that was emerging that will improve the operation and visual effect of the farms. They were looking at new buoys (less prominent), new lashings (reduced debris) and an alternative systems of attaching the buoys to the longlines. The option to use subsurface buoys was queried and while accepted as an option they were not considered the most appropriate at Wainui Bay because of the shallow water.

8. The meeting closed at 3:20 pm.