

Fish & Game's women angler study - results

Discussion outline

- Background – why did we need to do this study?
- Women angler study aims and methods
- Key results
- Next steps for F&G



Background

- Across the world, participation in recreational angling is gender skewed – more men participate than women.
- In New Zealand, < 10% of full season licence holders are women.
- Women/girls make up 25% of all trout anglers when family licence is considered.
- Fish & Game's Ministerial review noted:



There is a lack of engagement with female anglers and hunters and a corresponding dearth of representation of female anglers and hunters on the councils. In the last fishing season and gamebird seasons, 24% of angling licence holders and 3.9% of gamebird licence holders were female and yet only three councillors are female (two elected, one appointed). This perpetuates “the old boys’ club” image of Fish and Game. Comparable conservation focussed organisations have a much high proportion of female members and better reflect society as a whole. Fish and Game’s R3 Strategy (recruitment, retention and reactivation) is aimed at combatting the trend of declining participation by growing the licence-holder cohort generally, but also at attracting younger people and people from diverse backgrounds particularly those who may have had no prior engagement with hunting or fishing. The Review commends these initiatives and encourages their continuation and expansion.

The women angler study is a starting point for improved engagement with women anglers.

Aims

- Understand women anglers' current and past motivations for freshwater fishing.
- Explore the relationship between freshwater fishing and identity.
- Investigate socialisation factors to do with women anglers' participation in freshwater fishing.
- **Identify factors that constrain and/or facilitate women anglers' participation in freshwater fishing.**
- Evaluate the values and ethics of women anglers.
- **Explore women anglers' views in relation to representations of women in FGNZ material, and the willingness of women anglers to be involved with fisheries governance.**

Study methods

- Study was led by Dr Stu Hayes and Professor Bent Lovelock (University of Otago, Department of Tourism).
- Email survey of women anglers.
- Sub-sample of men for comparison purposes.
- In-depth interviews with 30 women to provide qualitative data.



Quickfire results

Men play an important role in introducing women to fishing, spouses' and fathers most important.

Participation in related activities (boating, camping, tramping) is a key reason many women take up trout fishing.

Women are more likely to perceive themselves as novice anglers relative to men.

Main motivations are to relax, be outdoors and experience a natural environment.

80% of women wish they could fish more. Biggest barriers were work commitments, lack of confidence, lack of time, other competing recreational interests, costs, family commitments.

25% of women anglers somewhat or strongly disagree that women/girl anglers are well represented by FG NZ (e.g., in online material, publications etc.).

Quickfire results

31% of women anglers somewhat or strongly disagree that FGNZ represent men and women/girl anglers equally (e.g., in online material, publications etc.).

29% of women anglers somewhat or strongly disagree that FGNZ have adequate initiatives that target women/girl anglers.

26% of women anglers somewhat or strongly disagree that FGNZ provide a good level of communication with women/girl anglers.

52% of women anglers, compared to 38% of men anglers, somewhat or strongly agree that standing for a Fish and Game Council would be daunting.

54% of women anglers, as compared with only 35% of male anglers, did not know what a Regional Fish & Game Council is or does.

Key results

Enhanced communication with women anglers and particularly secondary licence holders

Respondents requested more frequent and tailored communication from F&G.

The comment from one angler really hit home and shows how secondary licence holders who are often women, are left uninformed.

On a family membership only the primary angler is kept updated on anything about fishing. I didn't know my husband had been emailed this survey until he forgot to log out of his email on the computer we share! In 20 years I have never been directly contacted by anyone from Fish and Game.

F&G have missed an opportunity to connect with women angler by not requesting an email contact for the secondary licence holder.

Key results

Inclusion of women on F&G Councils

The survey revealed a desire for greater representation of women on F&G Councils.

Over 50% of women find the prospect of standing for a council daunting and ca. 30% feel that their opinions might not be taken seriously.

Relative to men, women display less interest in standing for a F&G Council.

Next year, 2024 F&G elections, F&G will need to make a concerted effort to encourage and support women's involvement in F&G Councils.

To help inspire more women to stand for Council we need targeted communication e.g., social media campaigns, video interviews with women F&G staff and council members.



Key results

Review of secondary licence holder rules

Many women expressed dissatisfaction with the regulations surrounding secondary licence holders.

They noted that the rules were a barrier to their participation.

DOC Taupo allows the secondary licence holder to fish independently.

Fish and Game will need to consider whether allowing independent fishing for the secondary licence holder is viable.



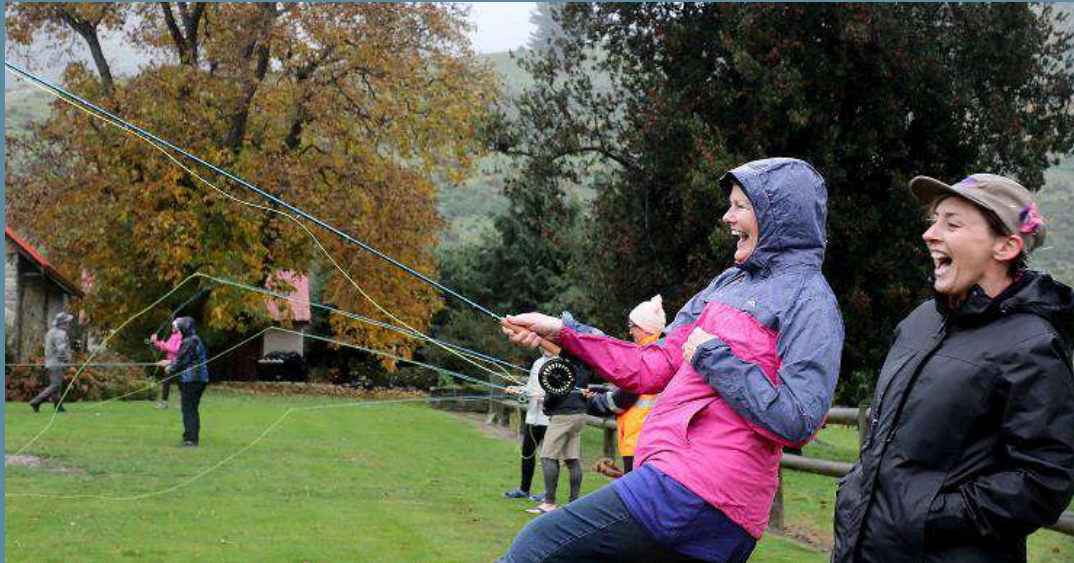
Key results

Tailored fishing events for women

The survey highlighted a strong desire for fishing events tailored specifically for women.

Some women also expressed reservations about being treated differently from men.

F&G will need to look at coordinating/assisting with events tailored to women.



Key results

Improved representation in F&G publications:

Many women expressed the desire to see greater representation of women in F&G publications.

Achieving this goal requires concerted efforts across all regions.

Coordinators of the magazine and Reel Life should be mindful of gender representation, particularly in images. A retrospective analysis of gender representation in past publications could provide valuable insights.



Conclusions

Our women angler study is the first step towards engaging better with women licence holders.

Lots of learnings from this work:

- Need for better communication with women
- Encouraging them to stand for F&G Councils
- Review secondary licence holder rules.
- Explore the potential for women focused fishing events.
- Concerted effort to include imagery of women and girls in online and print media.

