



SUPPLEMENTARY BUSINESS PAPER

(Item 17)

GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 8 July 2015

at 6:30PM



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17 SUPPORT FOR OYSTER FARMERS ON THE HAWKESBURY RIVER

Mass mortality of farmed Pacific Oysters associated with the virus Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS) was first recorded in the Hawkesbury River in 2013, when commercially farmed Pacific Oysters were affected by extreme mortalities.

Prior to the outbreak there were 15 oyster businesses operating in the Hawkesbury producing \$2.4 million worth of oysters annually. At present there are three farmers left who are struggling to meet costs to continue oyster farming.

The local oyster industry is an iconic industry, with its members forming an important part of the social and economic fabric of our local river communities.

Whilst Hornsby Council currently supports research into understanding POMS, in the short term farmers are struggling to survive.

I strongly support the local industry and am very concerned about the impact of POMS on local farmers and would like to see an active oyster industry remain on the Hawkesbury into the future.

I understand that oyster farmers lease their growing areas from NSW Fisheries and are unable to generate an income due to the presence of POMS. POMS is a natural event, outside the control of farmers. Despite the natural occurrence of POMS, farmers are still required to pay fees associated with their oyster leases.

Of practical assistance to local oyster farmers whilst they are unable to generate an income due to POMS, would be for the fees associated with their leases to be waived.

I therefore suggest that Council write to the Local State Member, Mr Matt Kean MP, requesting that he make representations to the NSW Minister for Primary Industries seeking fee waivers for our local oyster farmers.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council write to the Local State Member, Mr Matt Kean MP, requesting that he make representations to the NSW Minister for Primary Industries to have the fees associated with oyster leases in the Hawkesbury River waived whilst local oyster farmers are unable to generate an income due to Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome.

STEVE RUSSELL
Mayor

Attachments:

There are no attachments for this report.

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