

Rangitāiki River Forum

Ngā Meneti Open Minutes

Commencing: Friday 2 September 2022, 10:30 am

Venue: Mātaatua room, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 5 Quay Street, Whakatāne and Via Zoom (Audio Visual Meeting)

Heamana

Chairperson: Bronco Carson (Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare)

Heamana Tuarua

Deputy Chairperson: Terewai Kalman (Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa)

Ngā Kopounga

Members:

Bay of Plenty Regional Council:

Cr Bill Clark, Cr Kevin Winters

Hineuru Iwi Trust

Mei Winitana, Brenda Lewis (Alternate)

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa

Miro Araroa, Tuwhakairiora O'Brien (Alternate)

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa

Karito Paul (Alternate)

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare

Jane Nicholas (Alternate) (Via Zoom)

Tūhoe Te Uru Taumatua

Ngapera Rangiaho

Ngāti Tūwharetoa (Bay of Plenty) Settlement Trust

Shaneen Simpson-Almond

Whakatāne District Council

Cr Alison Silcock, Cr Wilson James (Alternate)

Te Hunga i Tae Ake In Attendance:

Bay of Plenty Regional Council: Chris Ingle - General Manager Integrated Catchments, Charles Harley - Team Leader Eastern Catchments, Mieke Kapa - Land Management Officer, Gemma Moleta - Senior Planner (Water Policy), Reuben Gardiner - Senior Advisor, Andrew Pawson - Area Engineer, Shari Kameta - Committee Advisor
Jane Waldon - Co-Governance Secretariat;

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa: Maxeen Newton – Pou Taiao, Te Mana o Te Wai Project team members: Himiona Nuku, Wiremu Nuku, Hunter Mellon;
Whakatāne District Council: Cr Lesley Immink, Astrid Hutchinson - Infrastructure Compliance Specialist
Externals: Chris Pye, Projects & Development Manager and Melany Hunt (Todd Corporation); Craig Rowe (Southern Generation Partnership Limited/Pioneer Energy)

Ngā Hōnea Apologies:

Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti (Bay of Plenty Regional Council)
Cr John Williamson (Taupō District Council)
Cr Tangonui Kingi (Alternate) (Taupō District Council)

1. Karakia Whakatuwhera Opening Karakia

A karakia was provided by Miro Araroa.

Chair's Opening Statement

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Forum members to Dean Flavell, Chair of Te Maru o Kaituna River Authority. Mr Flavell attended the meeting briefly to speak about the joint co-governance secretariat role, plans to hold a symposium in early 2023 and the opportunity for the two forums to work collectively in the future on potential matters of interest.

2. Ngā Hōnea Apologies

Resolved

That the Rangitāiki River Forum:

- 1 Accepts the apologies for absence from Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti, Cr Tangonui Kingi and Cr John Williamson tendered at the meeting.**

**Silcock/Simpson-Almond
CARRIED**

3. Raupapa o Ngā Take Order of Business

Agenda Item 8.1 - Noted a correction in the table of contents, which should have read: Todd Corporation/Nova Energy Solar Power Plant at Otamatea River

Members were advised that the following items were withdrawn from the agenda:

1. Agenda Item 8.2 - Presentation on Department of Conservation/Te Papa Atawhai Whitebait Conservation Regulations was withdrawn due to further details requiring to be worked through by the agency.
2. Agenda Item 8.5 - Presentation on Fonterra Edgecumbe Wastewater Treatment Plant Update would be provided as an informal 'closed' briefing for Forum members at the conclusion of the meeting.

4. Whakapuakanga o Ngā Take Whai Taha-Rua Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

5. Ngā Meneti Minutes

Kia Whakaūngia Ngā Meneti Minutes to be Confirmed

5.1 Rangitāiki River Forum Minutes - 3 June 2022

Matters Arising

1. In relation to Minute Item 7.1 – Karito Paul provided a progress update on the Bill Kerrison Memorial Sculpture at Aniwhenua Reserve. Currently was still trying to source materials both locally and further afield. Due to the additional time needed for this, a funding application had been prepared to submit to the next round of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council’s Environmental Enhancement Fund, and a list of other potential funding streams had been identified.
2. In relation to Minute Item 7.2 – it was requested that staff follow-up to investigate the installation of a fish passage at an irrigation scheme in the South Island.

Resolved

That the Rangitāiki River Forum:

- 1 Confirms the Rangitāiki River Forum Minutes - 3 June 2022 as a true and correct record.**

**Kalman/Rangiaho
CARRIED**

6. Whakaaturanga Presentations

6.1 Nova Energy - Solar Power Plant at Otamatea River

*Presentation: Rangitāiki Solar Power Plant - Chris Pye, Nova Energy: Objective ID
A4189982*

Presented by: Chris Pye, Projects & Development Manager, Nova Energy and
Melany Hunt

Chris Pye and Melany Hunt provided a presentation on Todd Corporation/Nova Energy’s solar power project in the Otamatea Awa at the headwaters of the Rangitāiki awa/river.

Key Points:

- Background introduction of Todd Corporation.
- New Zealand’s electricity generation 30-year forecast needed to move to renewable energy to achieve decarbonisation by 2050.
- Overview of the solar power plant project at Rangitāiki, State Highway 5.

- Outlined the project's strong alignment with Te Ara Whānui o Rangitāiki, respect for the significance of the Rangitāiki awa, initial plans including restoration plans for Otamatea Awa, project update, stages and engagement.
- Wished to build genuine relationships with mana whenua, those that had a connection with the whenua/land, and to have further conversations in relation to the project's design.
- Provided a progress update on:
 - Consent applications lodged in April 2022
 - Hearing scheduled in September in Taupō
 - Working with local partners to develop a work readiness/career pathway in solar energy
 - Initiating environmental improvement programme.
- Provided contact details for any queries.

In Response to Questions:

- Plans for wetland retirement would include identifying areas that would naturally revert back to watercourses.
- Various land conversion options from dairy were being considered, such as sheep grazing and were still to be decided and were open to suggestions and ideas.
- Nova had engaged with local iwi and hapū of Ngāti Hinerau, Hineuru, Hineuri and Tutemahuta of Tūwharetoa.

Key Points - Members:

- Sought consideration in regard to the identification of taonga species within the Rangitāiki awa.
- Ngāti Hineuru had discussed wetland revitalisation in that area and wished to be involved in the consent process.
- Thanked the presenters for their presentation and looked forward to further engagement regarding the project

6.2 Ngāti Manawa - Te Mana o Te Wai Project

Presentation: Te Mana o Te Wai Project: Objective ID A4207286

Presented by: Himiona Nuku, Wiremu Nuku and Hunter Mellon – Te Mana o Te Wai Project Team, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa

Key Points:

- Background on Te Mana o Te Wai (TMoTW) Project team and their mahi which included: planting projects, eco-tourism, forest restoration, Kani Rangi plant project, implementing community walking tracks.
- Outline of Ngāti Manawa values and principles: mana whenua, kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga and kotahitanga; and primary principles for Wai Māori (natural water).
- Ngāti Manawa had important knowledge and Mātauranga Māori to bring to the management of natural resources and their tupuna awa/ancestral river and ensure the continued transmission of traditional knowledge.
- TMoTW Project kaupapa:
 - Succession planning and building freshwater management capacity and capability
 - Develop freshwater monitoring framework utilising Mātauranga tools
 - Develop and implement tuna restoration plan

- Inform Regional Council of Ngāti Manawa aspirations for their waterways and Wai Māori as mana whakahaere (authority/mandate)
- Develop an agreed monitoring programme with Regional Council.
- Summary of mana whakahaere for Ngāti Manawa iwi/hapū.
- Aspirations: safe swimming and drinking water from the awa, plenty of koura, hinaki full of tuna, aiding the migration of tuna and placement of fish passage.
- The Project team had a lot to offer and wished to continue their mahi for the taiao and passing on knowledge to future generations.
- Showed a video of the project team's training and daily operations.
- Acknowledged the support of Ministry for the Environment, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Department of Conservation, JFN Roopu and individuals.

In Response to Questions:

- Providing fish passage and natural passageways for tuna migration was the primary priority and aspiration for tuna for Ngāti Manawa.
- The Forum could support the project team's mahi and aspirations through funding advocacy for implementing fish passage which was a key barrier.

Key Points - Members:

- Commended and thanked the project team for their work to protect tuna and restore Wai Māori and the taiao.
- Queried the cost of maintaining the project team to sustain the mahi for the tuna and awa.
- Noted there were wider funding avenues and science expertise available that had been noted at the recent Māori Freshwater Fisheries Conference.

6.3 Rangitāiki Wetlands Project update

Presentation: Rangitāiki Wetlands Murupara Update - Mieke Kapa: Objective ID A4207276

Presented by: Mieke Kapa, Land Management Officer, Toi Moana Bay of Plenty Regional Council

Key Points:

- Rangitāiki wetland restoration project was a five-year project (2018-2023) that was 50:50 co-funded by the Ministry for the Environment's (MfE) Freshwater Improvement Fund and the Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC).
- Key objectives: improve indigenous habitat, reduce pest plant/animals and build capacity and capability.
- Provided background and progress at the three sites between Murupara and Aniwaniwa at Rangipō, Karamuramu and Hinengāwari wetlands.
- Project team made sure the project contributes to the local economy, mentorship and training.
- Future considerations:
 - The environmental programmes (EPs) were due to finish in June 2023 and were currently being renegotiated with the landowners.
 - No further funding was indicated from MfE, but a funding application was underway with Bay Trust.
 - Overall funding would be substantially less and include \$20K contribution from BOPRC per year and any funding from the landowners.

- Unless specific funding was found, Place Group consultants' project management role would cease in June 2023 and be taken over by BOPRC or a nominated landowner representative.
- Acknowledged the landowners that had been involved in the project and funding contributors.
- With permission from the landowner, Mieke would be happy to take a visit to the wetlands for Forum members who were interested.

In Response to Questions:

- Opportunities for community or care groups to contribute and assist with ongoing maintenance was an option that BOPRC was happy to work with.
- With reduced funding the same activities would still occur, but not at the same intensity.
- The wetlands were on private land therefore access was subject to the landowners' permission.

Key Points – Members:

- Noted there was opportunity for other contributions to support the wetlands' restoration.
- Discussion needed to be held with Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa to consider how Ngāti Manawa could support ongoing maintenance in the wetlands on their privately owned land.
- Regarding the need to seek landowner approval to access the wetlands, noted that Hinengawari and Karamuramu wetlands had cultural significant sites within and around those area.
- Acknowledged the work that had been undertaken, as well as the funding contributions and support that had launched the restoration work.
- Commended Mieke Kapa, who would be leaving the Regional Council in December 2022, for her work and passion that she had applied to her mahi.

7. Whakahoutanga Kōrero Verbal Updates

7.1 Forum Members' Verbal Updates

Karito Paul – Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa

- Ngāti Manawa would be holding a Tuna & Taiao Expo Day at Kani Rangi Park during Conservation Week on 9 September 2022.

Tu O'Brien – Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa

- Rangitāiki Hapū Coalition were involved with the following mahi/work being carried out in lower Rangitāiki awa:
 - River & Drainage work and riparian planting by Tāne Mahuta contractors below Te Teko bridge.
 - Flood protection bylaw implementation and geotechnical work with Hemi Barsdell (Regional Council) around Kōkōhināu urupa and the adjoining stopbank.
- Noted that Te Mana o Te Wai/freshwater reforms were placing substantial workload and pressure on iwi/hapū and all involved.
- Commended Ngāpera Rangiaho's presentation (representing Kokopū Trust) at the 2022 Māori Freshwater Fisheries Conference held in Taupō on 31 August - 1 September 2022.

8. Ngā Pūrongo Reports

Hei Pānui Anake Information Only

8.1 Rangitāiki Catchment Programme: Annual Report 2021-2022

Presented by: Charles Harley, Team Leader Eastern Catchments

Key Points:

- A correction was noted in the financial table headings on agenda page 38, which should read 2021-2022 (not 2020-2021).
- Progress and timing of fish passage and science work had been put on hold to ensure it aligned with changes made to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management and Resource Management Act reforms. This work was anticipated to proceed in the coming year.
- Due to insufficient updates, the Dashboard report had not been reported to this meeting but would be circulated to members in December 2022 for information.

In Response to Questions:

- Work was scheduled to identify fish passage barriers in the lower reaches of the Rangitāiki awa/river.

Key Points - Members:

- Ngāti Manawa did not support the use of electric fish survey methods in the Rangitāiki awa/river.
- In the interest of taonga species, Fish & Game, Department of Conservation and Ministry of Primary Industries needed to collaborate and integrate on these matters rather than working in silos, noting it was difficult to navigate and work on desired outcomes.
- Fish & Game needed to speak with the respective iwi.

Key Points - Staff:

- All proposed activities and methods within the Ngāti Manawa rohe needed to be discussed and approved by Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa, including any work/mahi in relation to Te Mana o Te Wai.

Items for Staff Follow Up:

- Advise if population surveys for shortfin and longfin tuna can be undertaken and provided for the lower Rangitāiki awa; as well as whitebait inanga migration numbers upstream at Matahina Dam. It was noted that Kokopu Trust may have some information.
- Follow-up with Fish & Game to seek trout populations for the river system.
- Requested an invitation be extended to Fish & Game to present to the next meeting on their work and responsibilities within the awa.
- Requested an update on Rivers & Drainage stopbank flood protection works at the Matahina block near Waiohau.

Resolved

That the Rangitāiki River Forum:

- 1 **Receives the report, Rangitāiki Catchment Programme: Annual Report 2021-2022.**

Simpson-Almond/Araroa
CARRIED

8.2 Rangitāiki Catchment Programme: Annual Work Plan 2022-2023

Presented by: Charles Harley, Team Leader Eastern Catchments

The report was taken as read and comments were provided by members alongside the previous item, Rangitāiki Catchment Programme: Annual Report 2021-2022.

Resolved

That the Rangitāiki River Forum:

- 1 **Receives the report, Rangitāiki Catchment Programme: Annual Work Plan 2022-2023.**

Simpson-Almond/Araroa
CARRIED

8.3 Essential Freshwater Policy Programme Update

*Presentation: Essential Freshwater Policy Programme Update - Gemma Moleta:
Objective ID A4207280*

*Tabled Document 1 - Rangitāiki values, visions and environmental outcomes:
Objective ID A4212695*

Presented by: Gemma Moleta, Senior Planner (Water Policy)

Key Points:

- Outlined draft policy options that were currently available for feedback.
- The Kaitiakitanga chapter review would be available soon followed by Rangitāiki specific policy at the end of the year.
- An early draft working copy of a long-term vision, alternative (abridged) vision option, freshwater values and environmental outcomes was tabled (refer Tabled Document) and would circulate electronically to members for consideration and feedback.
- The alternative (abridged) vision had been drafted following previous hui with iwi and was based on the Regional Policy Statement objectives and Te Ara Whānui o Rangitāiki and highlighted the most important goals that were wanted within the Rangitāiki catchment.
- Elements of Te Mana o Te Wai hierarchy of obligations had been incorporated.
- Outlined feedback received from the 'Participate' online engagement tool, which also included the protection of Whirinaki forest park natural character and community to keep awa clean and available to all people - 10-50 years to achieve vision.

In Response to Questions:

- The assessment of values and their hierarchy would be established through limit setting and actions, which needed to be worked through before plan change notification in 2024.
- Provided clarification around National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management mahinga kai compulsory values, which provided more substantial and holistic values in regard to tangata whenua relationships to taonga species and environmental values.
- Regional Council had funding set aside to assist tangata whenua to define and establish mahinga kai values and provide support post-implementation.

Key Points - Members:

- Noted that whitewater rafting and kayak access had been provided below Aniwhenua Dam by Pioneer Energy.
- Wished to see tuna passage given the same priority as recreational access.

Resolved**That the Rangitāiki River Forum:**

- 1 Receives the report, Essential Freshwater Policy Programme Update.**

**Rangiaho/Silcock
CARRIED**

8.4 2022 Local Government Elections Update

Presented by: Chris Ingle, General Manager Integrated Catchments

Key Points:

- Noted the Local Government elections process, which would require a hiatus to the Councils' and Forum's meeting schedules until early 2023.
- Staff would advise Forum members when the 2023 meeting dates were set.

Key Points - Members:

- The Chair noted that Cr Clark was not standing in the upcoming election and on behalf of the Forum, thanked him for his contribution to the Forum over the past six years.

Resolved**That the Rangitāiki River Forum:**

- 1 Receives the report, 2022 Local Government Elections Update.**

**Kalman/Araroa
CARRIED**

9. General Business

Forum members requested the actions be followed up by staff:

1. Request a written letter/update from the Department of Conservation on the whitebait regulations.
2. Extend an invitation to Forum members and Chair of Te Maru o Kaituna River Authority to attend the LakesWater Quality Society Conference symposium being held on 10-11 November 2022 at the Millennium Hotel, Rotorua; and advise members if registration and accommodation will be funded.
3. A Forum Workshop in early 2023 to revisit Te Ara Whānui and refocus the Forum's purpose. A pre-lwi hui to be scheduled prior to the workshop.

10. Karakia Kati Closing Karakia

A karakia was provided by Miro Araroa.

12:35 pm - the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED

Bronco Carson
Chairperson, Rangitāiki River Forum