

Rangitāiki River Forum

Ngā Meneti Open Minutes

Commencing: Thursday 23 March 2023, commencing at 10:30 am

Venue: Mataatua Room, Bay of Plenty Regional Council,
5 Quay Street, Whakatāne

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 Toi Moana
Cr Malcolm Campbell, Cr Kevin Winters

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa
Miro Araroa

Hineuru Iwi Trust
Ngawai Crawford, Tracy Bush (Alternate)

Whakatāne District Council
Cr Wilson James (Alternate)

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare
Jane Nicholas (Alternate)

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa
Karito Paul (Alternate)

Tūhoe Te Uru Taumatua
Ngapera Rangiaho

Ngāti Tūwharetoa (BOP) Settlement Trust
Shaneen Simpson-Almond

Taupō District Council
Cr John Williamson, Cr Yvonne Westerman (Alternate) (Via Zoom)

Te Hunga i Tae Ake In Attendance:

Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana: Herewini Simpson - Kaihautu, Te Amorangi Lead, Charles Harley - Team Leader Eastern Catchments, Gemma Moleta - Senior Planner (Water Policy), Kirsty Brown - Rivers and Drainage Assets Manager, Gina Mohi - Putaiao Mātauranga, Andrew Pawson - Area Engineer, Shari Kameta - Committee Advisor

Jane Waldon – Co-Governance Secretariat (Director, Pareārau Limited)

Whakatāne District Council: Deputy Mayor Lesley Immink, Jessica Browne - Project Planner

Taupō District Council: Heneriata Oneroa - Co-Governance Management Partner/Hoa Hautūtanga Takirua (Via Zoom)

External: Manawa Energy: Annie Tangata, Community Engagement and Communications Advisor, Caleb Sjardin - Lead Advisor – Environmental Performance, Summer Bennett - Iwi Engagement Coordinator; Department of Conservation/Te Papa Atawhai: Eriora Park, Merenia Sawrey, Pohaira Hughes-Iopata; Adria Green – Grahn Creative

Ngā Hōnea Apologies:

Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti, Cr Kat Macmillan and Cr Ken Shirley (Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana), Cr Tuwhakairiora O'Brien (Whakatāne District Council), Whakaeke Ritete (Te Kotahitanga o Ngāti Tūwharetoa), Mihipeka Sisley (Alternate, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa)

1. Karakia Whakatuwhera Opening Karakia

Miro Araroa opened the hui with a karakia and mihi of welcome to new and returned members, supported by Ngāpera Rangiaho and responded to by Ngawai Crawford.

Chair's Opening Statement

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and with the leave of Forum members, invited Deputy Mayor Lesley Immink to the table.

2. Whakawhanaungatanga Introductions by Members and Overview of the Forum

Presentation - Rangitāiki River Forum Overview and Induction: Objective ID A4339113 [↗](#)

Members and staff representatives provided a round of introductions followed by a presentation overview presented by Herewini Simpson.

10:46 am – Cr John Williamson **entered** the meeting.

Key Points - Presentation:

- Forum's establishment, membership, catchment area, purpose/functions, unique co-governance arrangement and legislative drivers
- Forum highlights included:
 - Te Ara Whānui o Rangitāiki River Document completed and embedded within the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement
 - New partner members Ngāti Hineuru, Tūwharetoa (Taupō) and Taupō District Council had joined the Forum
 - Community connections, co-governance arrangement exemplar and establishment of an independent secretariat
- Future focus included: actions implementation, review of Te Ara Whānui o

Rangitāiki River Document, National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management policy/plan involvement and pre-emptive engagement on significant resource consents

- Further details could be provided to members where requested.

In Response to Questions:

- Three Waters was a regulatory function of the district councils/territorial authorities, whereas the Regional Council's focus was freshwater management.
- The Forum would be involved in the review of Te Ara Whānui supported by Regional Council planning staff.

3. Ngā Hōnea Apologies

Resolved

That the Rangitāiki River Forum:

- 1 Accepts the apologies from Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti, Cr Kat Macmillan, Cr Tuwhakairiora O'Brien, Whakaeke Ritete, Cr Ken Shirley and Mihipeka Sisley for absence tendered at the meeting.**

**Kalman/Simpson-Almond
CARRIED**

4. Raupapa o Ngā Take Order of Business

Members were advised prior to the meeting of the following changes to the agenda:

- **Agenda Item 10.1, Manawa Energy Update on Wheao Reconsent** had been withdrawn by Manawa Energy due to an unforeseen meeting conflict and requested that the presentation be deferred to the Forum's next meeting.
- **Agenda Item 10.3, Update on Whitebait Regulations** - Department of Conservation had deferred this update to the Forum's next meeting due to the unavailability of the requisite staff, however the presentation on inanga research would still be provided at this meeting.

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

No conflicts of interest were declared.

6. Ngā Meneti Minutes

**Kia Whakaūngia Ngā Meneti
Minutes to be Confirmed**

6.1 Rangitāiki River Forum Minutes - 2 September 2022

Matters Arising

In relation to Minute Item 3, Order of Business, Fonterra Edgecumbe Wastewater Treatment Plan Update informal closed briefing – members requested an update on the resource consent application, along with any presentation/notes taken and pre-circulation of future presentation information. It was noted that Fonterra had consulted with Ngāti Awa, the Rangitāiki Hapū Coalition and held community meetings in relation to the resource consent application.

Resolved

That the Rangitāiki River Forum:

1 Confirms the Rangitāiki River Forum Minutes - 2 September 2022 as a true and correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- Item 6.1, Nova Energy Presentation (agenda page 10) first paragraph: replace wording “at the headwaters of...” with “where it joins”
- Item 6.2, Ngāti Manawa Te Mana o Te Wai Project (agenda page 11) remove first bullet point under Key Points (as it does not relate to TMoTW project team’s mahi).

Rangiaho/Winters
CARRIED

7. Whakahoutanga Kōrero Verbal Updates

7.1 Forum Members’ Updates

Terewai Kalman - Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa:

- Working with councils on a number of projects, i.e. tuna and Resource Management Act reforms
- Te Mana o Te Wai project team were currently undertaking tuna heke and would be attending a conference with other Te Mana o Te Wai (TMoTW) teams around the rohe
- Finalising a TMoTW framework and agreements with councils/other entities
- Main focus for teams was building capability and succession planning.

Karito Paul - Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa:

- The Tuna & Taiao Expo Day at Kani Rangī Park held in September 2022 had been a success with 2,000 plantings on the day and taura/students from local kura learning about conservation aspects for tuna
- Bill Kerrison memorial update – progress had previously stalled due to structural issues with the design concept however, work was underway on making the necessary adjustments.

Cr Wilson James - Whakatāne District Council:

- On Cr O’Brien’s behalf, expressed thanks to the Forum for providing letters of support for the installation of a toilet block on the eastern side of the Thornton river mouth. Toilet facilities had recently been erected and a blessing undertaken on Wednesday 22 March 2023 with final work being completed today. It was noted that the toilet block had been funded by the Lions Foundation and the remaining costs covered by Whakatāne District Council.

Miro Araroa - Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa:

- Tu O'Brien had recently been elected as Ngāti Awa's Board Chairman.
- Court proceedings were still ongoing for the Whakaari/White Island disaster
- Ngāti Awa were working with Manawa Energy on the tunaheke programme and integrating this alongside Ngāti Awa's kiwi conservation mahi.

Shaneen Simpson-Almond, Ngāti Tūwharetoa (BOP) Settlement Trust:

- Ngāti Tūwharetoa (BOP) Settlement Trust were meeting with the Ministry for the Environment this week to discuss their concerns and position on RMA reforms.

Cr Kevin Winters - BOPRC Toi Moana:

- Council had been working over the last few years to update its flood protection plans for the region, i.e. Ngongotahā Stream, Whakatāne and Rangitāiki rivers (included between Matahina Dam and Thornton) to protect farmland and communities, and design work was in the final stages with further capital expenditure for the Rangitāiki flood spillway being looked at to protect the Edgumbe township since the 2017 flood.
- Noted lessons to be learnt for everyone following Cyclone Gabrielle and work happening behind the scenes, including with the territorial authorities.

Deputy Mayor Lesley Immink, Whakatāne District Council:

- The Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group had held its inaugural meeting on 28 February 2023. Membership was comprised from Ngāti Rangitahi, Regional Council, Whakatāne and Kawerau District Councils, Rotorua Lakes Council, Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa (BOP) Settlement Trust and Ngāti Makino. Noted that Jane Waldon was providing secretariat support during the Strategy Group's establishment. Noted that the Strategy Group would look to receive learnings from the Forum and were excited about working collectively to protect and restore the mauri of the Tarawera Awa.

Ngawai Crawford - Hineuru Iwi Trust:

- Due to Cyclone Gabrielle and recent changes in Hineuru Iwi Trust's Board, new members had not had the opportunity to receive a handover from their predecessors and would be looking to do this in due course.

Ngapera Rangiaho - Tūhoe Te Uru Taumatua:

- Tūhoe Te Uru Taumatua had been supporting their whanaunga in the Wairoa District and Waikaremoana area following Cyclone Gabrielle
- Navigating RMA reforms, consent applications and climate change impacts on tuna fisheries
- Kokopū Trust monitoring of tunaheke and accountability with Manawa Energy.

Cr John Williamson - Taupō District Council:

- Taupō District plan change review was open for further submissions until Friday 7 April 2023.
- Council was current working on their Annual Plan.
- Council had undertaken a site visit in March 2022 of Nova Energy's solar power project at Otamatea Awa, noting the benefits to wetland restoration.

7.2 Rangitāiki River Festival Update

Presentation - Rangitāiki River Festival 11 March 2023: Objective ID A4341645 [↗](#)

Presented by: Annie Tangata, Community Engagement and Communications
Advisor, Manawa Energy

Annie Tangata provided an update on the Rangitāiki River Festival held on Saturday, 11 March 2023.

Key Points:

- Noted that the festival had been well attended and had great representation from the schools in the lower Rangitāiki area
- Festival highlights included the kahawai fishing contest, children's events and new bombing platform
- Carwyn Kerrison of the Kokopu Trust had provided a tuna display and photos of his late father Bill Kerrison. Manawa Energy had information on tuna also
- Recognised Bill Clark and the Edgecumbe Lions Club for their organising and efforts for what was a successful day and event.
- Hoped to encourage attendance from schools further up the catchment in the future.

Key Points - Members:

- Congratulated and commended Bill Clark and the Edgecumbe Lions Club's efforts and all those involved in the organising of the festival.

8. Whakaaturanga Presentations

8.1 Wheao Dam Reconsent Update - Item Withdrawn

The item was withdrawn due to unavailability of the presenter and was deferred to the next meeting of the Forum.

8.2 Establishing a Netting Programme for Tunaheke downstream of Matahina Dam

*Presentation - Manawa Energy Matahina Netting Programme: Objective ID
A4334619 [⇒](#)*

Presented by: Caleb Sjardin, Lead Advisor - Environmental Performance, Manawa Energy

Key Points:

- Background on Matahina Dam's barrier to fish passage, timeline of downstream passage options review, management plan and expert advice provided from Jacques Boubée
- Upcoming migration season would involve an intensive tunaheke netting programme with Omataroa Kaitiaki Limited Trust¹
- Outlined key preparation aspects, programme components, proposed and potential netting locations that would be trialled and training undertaken

¹ Refer amendment Rangitāiki River Forum meeting 2 June 2023

- Results and learnings would assist with refining the management plan and future mahi and would feed into Matahina Dam's resource consent reporting. Results would also be shared at a Matahina community hui later in the year
- Acknowledged Miro Araroa, the Omataroa Kaitiaki Limited Trust and Carwyn Kerrison (Kokopu Trust)² for sharing his mātauranga/knowledge with the programme and future opportunities to expand training for the next generation of rangatahi.

In Response to Questions:

- Was open to discussions to explore fish passage options, however noted that the dam's size and elevation made non-human intervention options a challenge
- Investment was being put into upgrading Bill Kerrison's trap/transfer design and trialling this to make it as efficient as possible and to provide for other fish species
- Those involved in the netting programme would be paid for their time.
- Was open to incorporating mātauranga Māori methods into the netting programme
- Provided an update on the Archimedes screw/fish elevator. The first two stages of installation had been completed, allowing elvers to be collected in a tank that was attached to the station wall next to the upgraded trapping system for vehicle transfer. Due to technical challenges and ongoing maintenance stage three (Archimedes screw up to the Station carpark) was being debated and discussions were ongoing into other viable solutions.

Key Points - Members:

- Recognised first steps being taken and the importance of iwi involvement in decision-making, building capability, succession planning and next steps for how the work was funded
- Data integrity and information sharing was important for Iwi and needed to be discussed and considered
- Excited to see the involvement of rangatahi and noted a potential funding avenue that may assist with the programme
- Working collectively with iwi to incorporate mātauranga Māori within the programme was noted for consideration
- Noted that the Rotorua lakes' catfish netting programme used fyke nets and may be able to provide useful advice and experience.

Staff - Key Points:

- Jane Waldon, Co-Governance Secretariat noted that Regional Council's Rivers and Drainage team had specialised machinery and may be able to assist with the programme.

8.3 Department of Conservation/Te Papa Atawhai Update on Whitebait Regulations and Current State of Inanga within the Tarawera and Whakatāne Rivers

Presentation - "He mana nui tō te ika iti" Whitebait Species found in Eastern Bay of Plenty Rivers: Objective ID A4335429 [⇒](#)

² Refer amendment Rangitāiki River Forum meeting 2 June 2023

Tabled Document 1 - Whitebaiters Guide to Whitebaiting - Summary of Whitebait Fishing Regulations 2021 (published January 2023): Objective ID A4342160 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Eriora Park, Biodiversity Ranger supported by Merenia Sawrey, Senior Advisor Treaty Partnerships and Pohoirā Hughes-Iopata, Kaiwhakatairanga Tiriti

Key Points:

- Background on native whitebait species, threats/pressures and their importance to our freshwater and marine ecosystems
- Whitebait regulation amendments were released in July 2021
- Community hui held in Matatā, Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki had highlighted gaps in knowledge which had led to a two-year research project to identify species composition
- The research project was carried out in the Waioeka, Whakatāne and Tarawera Awa at specific sites and in accordance with the Te Arawa maramataka³
- Sampling results identified more inanga in the Tarawera, variation of species between each river and larger proportion of smelt in later months. No giant kokopu had been detected in either of the rivers
- The project had included the involvement of local people and community engagement/wānanga held with local kura
- Indicated potential opportunity and willingness to support/undertake research in the Rangitāiki Awa if the Forum wished to consider it in future
- Questions on the whitebait regulations could be taken and information provided back to the Forum at a later time
- Wished to educate people on inanga and the importance of preserving the rarer species
- Circulated the Guide to Whitebait Fishing Regulations incorporating the 2021 amendments, noting that an updated version (published in January 2023) would be circulated electronically with the meeting minutes (refer Tabled Document 1).

Key Points - Members:

- Thanked Te Papa Atawhai staff for their presentation, mahi and willingness to share their knowledge.

Staff - Key Points

- Co-Governance Secretariat Jane Waldon noted the presence of a Giant Kokopu had been found within a perched wetland (Ngakauroa) within the Omataroa Rangitāiki No.2 Trust land block.

9. Ngā Pūrongo Reports

Ngā Whakatau e Hiahiatia Ana Decisions Required

³ Refer amendment Rangitāiki River Forum meeting 2 June 2023

9.1 Change of Membership

Herewini Simpson, Kaihautu Te Amorangi Lead, Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana presented the report which was accepted and taken as read.

Resolved

That the Rangitāiki River Forum:

- 1 Receives the report, Change of Membership.**
- 2 Notes the following members appointed to the Rangitāiki River Forum:**
- 3 Crs Malcolm Campbell, Toi Kai Rakau Iti (reappointed), Kat Macmillan and Ken Shirley and Kevin Winters (reappointed) as the appointed members for Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana;**
- 4 Crs Tuwhakairiora O'Brien as the appointed member for Whakatāne District Council and Wilson James (reappointed) as the alternate member;**
- 5 Crs John Williamson (reappointed) as the appointed member for Taupō District Council and Yvonne Westerman as the alternate member;**
- 6 Ngawai Crawford as the appointed member for Hineuru Iwi Trust and Tracy Bush as the alternate member;**
- 7 Mihipeka Sisley as the alternate member for Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa.**

**Winters/Simpson-Almond
CARRIED**

Hei Pānui Anake Information Only

9.2 Rangitāiki Catchment Programme December 2022-February 2023 Dashboard Report

Presented by: Charles Harley, Team Leader Eastern Catchments, Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana

Key Points:

- The Dashboard report provided a summary of work being undertaken by the Regional Council and territorial authorities that linked and aligned with the objectives and actions of Te Ara Whānui o Rangitāiki River Document
- Regional Council was recruiting for a fish passage officer to cover the region. Two years of funding had been secured within Council's budget to bring more awareness to fish passage within the work that Regional Council undertook in connection with agency/industry stakeholders, i.e. forestry, agriculture, horticulture, transport and territorial authorities.

Key Points - Members:

- Sought consideration/alignment with Te Mana o te Wai and Mātauranga Māori and engaging with Iwi/hapū where appropriate within the role
- Sought awareness of relevant freshwater management policy/regulations within the role when communicating with agency/industry stakeholders
- Urged any sightings of dama wallaby to be reported to Regional Council's land management team to help contain satellite populations.

In Response to Questions - Staff:

- Key specification skills for the fish passage officer position would include coordinating, communicating and working proactively with the community
- Would be seeking advice from Herewini Simpson in relation to Iwi/hapū considerations.
- Regional Council would follow-up immediately with any dama wallaby sightings that were reported.

Items for Staff Follow Up:

- A map (visual aid) was requested to illustrate where project were occurring within the catchment as part of the Dashboard reporting.

Resolved

That the Rangitāiki River Forum:

- 1 Receives the report, Rangitāiki Catchment Programme December 2022-February 2023 Dashboard Report.**

**Araroa/Kalman
CARRIED**

9.3 Secretariat Update

Presentation - Website Development - Grahn Creative: Objective ID A4346030 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Jane Waldon, Co-Governance Secretariat, accompanied by Adria Green, Digital Marketing & Web Design, Grahn Creative

Key Points:

- Recommended an internal process begin with iwi members to commence a review of Te Ara Whanui River Document to provide additional lead-in time before the 2025 review timeframe
- Regarding the tuna plan, raised for the Forum's consideration seeking independent specialist (engineering) support to review the Wheao and Aniwanui resource consents that were due for renewal in 2026 and potential review of Manawa Energy's downstream fish passage options report and management plan
- A charitable trust would enable the Forum, and in particular Iwi members, an additional avenue to apply for funding for environmental projects and independent specialist advice
- How the charitable trust was structured was up to the Forum to decide
- The initial proposal was for the charitable trust to support both the Rangitāiki River Forum and Te Maru o Kaituna River Authority
- Development of a website would provide a place for all activity in relation to the Rangitāiki Awa and catchment to be independent of the Regional Council and accessible to more people
- A contract could be put in place for the next 12 months for any necessary changes to be made to the website as and where required
- Adria Green presented design options for establishing a website where the Forum could translate key messages and information into a digital format, with opportunity for other visual elements to be incorporated.

In Response to Questions:

- Cost of \$4K-6K to establish a charitable trust included legal costs and establishing the trust deed

- The cost to develop a website was \$6K which would be covered by the Secretariat's budget and included development of a Communications Strategy that would provide a framework for updating the website
- Clarified that establishing a charitable trust would remove the issue that Te Maru o Kaituna had experienced in regard to Council's administrative funding approval processes
- Clarified significant consents on the river were those that were up for renewal.

Key Points - Members:

- Requested further information on the legal responsibility and liabilities of setting up a charitable trust
- Supported the development of a website to raise awareness about the Forum and provide an avenue to connect and engage with the community
- Recognised the additional funding avenue and support that a charitable trust would provide
- Noted the Forum's previous success in attaining external funding for wetland restoration from the Freshwater Improvement Fund through the Regional Council
- Discussed external specialist advice in regard to significant resource consents that would be seeking application and/or renewal in 2026.

Key Points - Staff:

- Requested advice in relation to setting up of a charitable trust also include Regional Council's legal responsibility and liability.

Resolved

That the Rangitāiki River Forum:

- 1 Receives the report, Secretariat Update;**
- 2 Agrees that the timeframe for reviewing Te Ara Whānui o Rangitāiki for the iwi within the Forum is brought forward to begin in 2023;**
- 3 Agrees to create a working party to review the Tuna Plan;**
- 4 Agrees to proceed with the development of a website and communications strategy;**
- 5 Request a report on options to establish a charitable trust;**
- 6 Request Regional Council provide a status report on significant consents within the Rangitāiki River Catchment.**

**Simpson-Almond/Rangiaho
CARRIED**

Miro Araroa **abstained** from voting on Resolution 6⁴.

9.4 Update from the Rangitāiki-Tarawera Rivers Scheme Advisory Group

Presented by: Kirsty Brown, Rivers & Drainage Assets Manager

⁴ Refer amendment Rangitāiki River Forum meeting 2 June 2023

Key Points:

- The report provided an update from the River Scheme Advisory Group's meeting held in September 2022 and was taken as read
- Advisory Group hui were held in March and September and did not align with Forum meetings, with the latest meeting held on 22 March 2023
- Agenda report updates would continue to be provided to the Forum following each Advisory Group meeting.

Resolved**That the Rangitāiki River Forum:**

- 1 Receives the report, Update from the Rangitāiki-Tarawera Rivers Scheme Advisory Group.**

**Kalman/James
CARRIED****9.5 Essential Freshwater Policy Programme Update***Presentation - EFPP Update and Visions: Objective ID A4059405* [⇒](#)

Gemma Moleta, Senior Planner (Water Policy) presented the report which was taken and accepted as read.

Key Points:

- Gemma Moleta alongside the freshwater policy and Kaupapa Māori teams were available to answer any questions that members had on the Regional Council's Essential Freshwater Policy Programme for implementing the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management.

Resolved**That the Rangitāiki River Forum:**

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

**Rangiaho/Araroa
CARRIED****10. Karakia Kati
Closing Karakia**

A karakia was provided by Miro Araroa.

1:45 pm - the meeting closed.**CONFIRMED 2 JUNE 2023**

Terewai Kalman
Chairperson, Rangitāiki River Forum