

Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group

Ngā Meneti Open Minutes

Commencing: Friday 16 February 2024, 09:35AM

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

Heamana

Chairperson: Leith Comer (Te Mana o Ngāti Rangitihi Trust)

Ngā Kopounga

Members:

Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana (BOPRC):
Chairman Doug Leeder, Cr Malcolm Campbell (Alternate)

Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC):
Cr Gregg Brown, Lakes Community Board Chair Phill
Thomass (Alternate)

Ngāti Mākino Iwi Authority:
Laurance Tamati (Alternate)

Kawerau District Council (KDC):
Mayor Faylene Tunui

Te Mana o Ngāti Rangitihi Trust (TMoNRT):
Tiipene Marr (Alternate) (Via Zoom)

Whakatāne District Council (WDC):
Mayor Victor Luca, Deputy Mayor Lesley Immink (Alternate)

Te Hunga i Tae Ake In Attendance:

Presenters: as listed in the meeting minutes;
BOPRC: Chris Ingle - General Manager Integrated
Catchments, Shari Kameta - Committee Advisor, Via Zoom:
Herewini Simpson - Kaihautu (Te Amorangi Lead), Ashleigh
Grant - Kaikarere (Communications Partner), Rawiri Bhana -
Senior Advisor (Treaty)
KDC: Morgan Godfery - Chief Executive Officer
TMoNRT: Amiria Nicholls - Kaiawhina Hapori Taiao

Ngā Hōnea Apologies:

Awhi Awhimate (Ngāti Mākino Iwi Authority)
Manu Glen (Alternate, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa)
Jim Schuster (Ngāti Tūwharetoa (BOP) Settlement Trust)

1. Karakia Whakatuwhera Opening Karakia

A karakia was provided by Tiipene Marr.

Chairman's Opening Announcement

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and congratulated Mr Morgan Godfery on his new appointment as Chief Executive Officer of Kawerau District Council.

2. Ngā Hōnea Apologies

Resolved

That the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group:

- 1 Accepts the apologies from Jim Schuster, Awhi Awhimate, Manu Glen and Kaumātua Te Haukakawa Te Rire for absence; and Chairman Doug Leeder and Deputy Mayor Lesley Immink for early departure tendered at the meeting.

Tunui/Brown
CARRIED

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

Mr Tyrone Newson declared a conflict of interest that he could no longer continue in his role on the project due to his recent appointment to Chief Executive Officer of Ngāti Awa Group Holdings Limited (NAGHL). Despite the change in circumstance, Mr Newson was able to provide an update on project work he had undertaken to date.

4. Ngā Meneti Minutes

Kia Whakaūngia Ngā Meneti Minutes to be Confirmed

4.1 Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group Minutes - 7 November 2023

Resolved

That the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group:

- 1 Confirms the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group Minutes - 7 November 2023 as a true and correct record.

Luca/Tunui
CARRIED

5. Whakahoutanga Kōrero Verbal Updates

5.1 Gold Clam Update

Presentation - Corbicula fluminea, Freshwater Gold Clam: Objective ID A4602262

Presented by: John Brightwell, Controller - Corbicula 2023 Response; and
Cath Duthie, Group Manager Response, Ministry for Primary
Industries(MPI)/Biosecurity New Zealand (BNZ) (Via Zoom)

Key Points:

- Background on freshwater gold clam (*Corbicula*) and its establishment in the Waikato river, which MPI/BNZ had only been notified of in May 2023
- The highest risk of *Corbicula* spreading into other waterways was from watercraft movements
- Extensive surveys had been carried out in the Waikato tributaries, Waipā river and 15 national waterways with no presence of *Corbicula* found
- Overview of the Controlled Area Notice (CAN) requirements that had been implemented for the Waikato River and Te Arawa Lakes. Noted that wake boats in the Waikato river were prohibited from moving between waterways due to ballast water
- Key focus areas:
 - 'Check, Clean, Dry' campaign that had been successful for didymo
 - Behaviour change actions which had been extended to the Te Arawa Lakes, Lake Taupō and high risk events across the country
 - Communication with engagement groups/clubs/networks/multi-media
 - Long-term continuation of visual surveillance, e-DNA sampling and working with partners/councils
 - MPI/BNZ would be seeking Ministerial approval and Government funding to support long-term research on ways to suppress existing populations, eradicate juveniles, decontaminate wake boats and taonga species and test surveillance tools. After the recent change in Government, response from the minister was anticipated in July/August 2024
- Outlined MPI/BNZ's layers of actions within the Waikato
- Actions for Te Arawa Lakes:
 - Temporary CAN to prevent/reduce the risk of transfer of *Corbicula*
 - Ongoing surveillance and wash station rules for cleaning boats
 - Manufacturing mobile wash stations for events/remote locations.

In Response to Questions:

- MPI/BNZ would consider trialling uwhi mats (harakeke weed mats) within future research to test their suppression efficacy
- Te Arawa Lakes CAN required watercrafts from infested areas to undergo self-certification at wash stations by way of QR code
- There were no known methodologies to reduce populations on a small scale
- *Corbicula* were very small with little to no viability for consumption
- MPI/BNZ would consider the feasibility of all options.

Key Points - Members:

- Sought the following considerations:
 - Install wash stations on Tarawera Road into Lakes Tarawera, Ōkāreka and Tikitapu; and at Lake Tarawera
 - Proactive video surveillance and monitoring
 - Imposing a fee on wash stations and boat ramps to recover costs

- Gene editing as a long term solution
- Stronger response to prevent contamination
- Stronger connection/relationship with tangata whenua
- RLC/Community Board were investigating the potential to impose fees on boat ramps and/or parking, which would require discussion with Te Arawa Lakes Trust (TALT). It was noted that Ngāti Tarāwhai had started to impose a (temporary) fee on the boat ramp at Lake Ōkātina in the effort to recover costs for security during implementation of the CAN.
- Any further questions from members could be passed to the Committee Advisor for MPI/BNZ response.

Key Points - Staff:

- TALT were trialling [uwhi mats](#) in Lakes Rotoiti, Rotomā and Tarawera to suppress lakeweed.

6. Ngā Whakamarama a Ngā Rōpū Update from Partners

1.1 Te Mana o Ngāti Rangitihi Trust (TMONRT)

- Noted that TMONRT had a level of comfort that the change in Government would not impact on the TARSG's purpose, composition and decision making.

1.2 Ngāti Mākinō Iwi Authority

- No update.

1.3 Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC)

- Progress with Lake Tarawera sewerage reticulation had been impeded by Lake Rotokākahi Board of Control's objection to the transit of pipes through their catchment. RLC had consulted/involved members of the Board and TALT within the project steering group, and staff would be following up again with them to discuss
- TARSG's site visit to the Essity Australasia Kawerau mill in November 2023 had been insightful and expressed the desire for visits to other key sites along the Awa, i.e. Norske Skog/Oji Fibre Solutions mill site.

1.4 Kawerau District Council (KDC)

- Acknowledged pending requests from the Project team, which would now be progressed with the recent appointment of KDC's CEO
- Would follow-up with the request for a TARSG site visit of Norske Skog site
- Looked forward to hosting TARSG on 20 February for Oji Fibre's site visit.

1.5 Whakatāne District Council (WDC)

- Supported further site visits
- WDC's Long Term Plan process was underway
- Matatā sewage project baseline environmental study was ongoing
- Detailed site investigation was in progress for the boat harbour project
- Whakatāne water supply was a critical issue and also a key focus for WDC.

1.6 Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana (BOPRC)

- The Government's repeal of Three Waters legislation and introduction of the Local Water Done Well Bill - territorial local authorities would be required to submit comprehensive water management plans. Suggested that if TARSG

wanted a more detailed explanation, it could consider inviting Mr Vaughan Payne (Entity B Chief Executive) to discuss the transition process

- BOPRC's Essential Freshwater Policy Programme (EFPP) was in a hiatus until the Government released its overarching policy document to replace the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020. BOPRC's view was that Te Mana o Te Wai principles would not change, however that new Government policy may impact implementation
- Were engaging with Tauranga Moana as an interested party on BOPRC's [Long Term Plan proposal](#) to sell down its Port of Tauranga shareholding however, considered that all iwi/hapū in the region had an interest and therefore wished to engage with iwi leaders and co-governance forums
- Preparing to carry out a representation review, which could have implications for its Eastern Bay of Plenty and Kōhī constituencies
- Consultation was currently open on proposed changes to the [Regional Navigation Safety Bylaws](#) with the opportunity to make submissions on speed uplifting limit on the Tarawera Awa.

10:43 am - The meeting **adjourned**.

11:05 am - The meeting **reconvened**.

11:05 am - Deputy Mayor Lesley Immink **withdrew** from the meeting.

7. Ngā Pūrongo Reports

7.1 Chairperson's Report

Presentation - Project Team Update: Objective ID A4603227 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Chair Leith Comer

Key Points:

- Introduced the Project team members and noted the recent appointment of Tyrone Newson as Ngāti Awa Group Holding Limited's Chief Executive Office, resulting in him stepping down from his role on the project
- Sought TARSG's approval of Frances Teinakore-Curtis to the project manager role
- Update on Project progress were provided by the Project team (*Refer minute items 7.1.1 - 7.1.4 below*).

Resolved

That the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group:

- 1 Receives the report, Chairperson's Report;**
- 2 Approve Frances Teinakore-Curtis as the Project Manager for the TARSG development of the Tarawera Awa River Document;**
- 3 Notes the departure of Tyrone Newson from the Project team and that securing a replacement external engineer for development of the Tarawera Awa River Document is being progressed.**

**Brown/Tunui
CARRIED**

7.1.1 Aspiration Two: Work together to protect the Tarawera Awa by dealing with all contamination and discharges into its waters

Presented By: Dr Frances Teinakore-Curtis, TARSG Project Manager

Key Points:

- Overview of engagement to date and summary of issues that would need to be addressed as part of the project
- Emphasized the importance of having an expert engineer to provide the project with technical information
- Next step: present technical data to Federated Farmers
- The Project team was working with BOPRC's technical support staff, which was imperative to progress the project and develop the River Strategy document
- Referred to the stakeholder hui held with Māori Investments Limited (MIL) Board members and the proposal for a Memorandum of Understanding ('Kotuku' Agreement) to be created between MIL to commit to sustaining the mauri of the Tarawera Awa
- There were a distinct set of other users/key stakeholders along parts of the Tarawera Awa and Te Awa o te Atua where conversations would be initiated in pursuit of 'Kotuku' Agreements to restore the mauri of the awa
- Noted that baseline data requested from Essity Kawerau mill was pending.

Key Points - Members:

- Having good baseline information on the awa's current state and starting on the right footing would be central to restoring the mauri
- Mayor Tunui would follow-up with Essity to request baseline data.

7.1.2 Iwi Engagement and Communication Plan

Presented by: Jane Waldon, Co-Governance Secretariat

Key Points:

- Provided an overview of the draft communications and engagement plan
- Sought feedback on the draft bi-monthly newsletter which had been developed to keep the community/stakeholders updated on the project. The newsletter was still in draft form and had not yet been published for release/circulation.

7.1.3 Aspiration Three: Regenerate the life sustaining properties of the Tarawera Awa and Te Awa o Te Atua to the food basket it once was

Presented by: Keri Topperwien, TARSG Strategy Document Writer

Key Points:

- Overview of strategic objectives towards achieving the aspirations
- Two Strategy Group workshops were proposed to be held in March/April 2024 to seek members' input on the strategic objectives
- Noted there was a high level of community interest and varying aspects to consider within the project, and that previous learnings used to develop the Rangitāiki and Kaituna River Documents would assist with development.

Key Points - Members:

- Noted that Kawerau District Council (KDC) had strong relationships with Essity and Oji Fibre Solutions, therefore requested that the Project team liaise with KDC members to assist with stakeholder communication.

7.1.4 Aspiration One - Rechannel and Reconnect the course of the Tarawera, Rangitāiki and Orini Awa back through Te Awa o Te Atua and out to sea at Mihimarino

Presented by: Tyrone Newson, External Engineer

Mr Newson declared a conflict that he could no longer continue his role on the project due to his recent appointment to Chief Executive Officer of Ngāti Awa Group Holdings Limited (NAGHL). Despite his change in circumstance, Mr Newson was able to provide an update on project work he had undertaken to date.

Key Points:

- Investigation completed on feasibility of (general alignment) routes for connecting the waterways
- Next steps:
 - Obtain technical advice to ensure the receiving waters could withstand current volumes/peak flows according to the size of Te Awa o te Atua
 - Obtain baseline information of each waterway which would be key to defining watercourse locations
 - Testing and verification of discharge points and water take allocations
 - Translation of group data to provide meaningful/feasible options. Noted that some options may not be viable due to changed geography
- The Project team would be looking to acquire the necessary engineering expertise to take the project forward
- Anticipated that a further update on this part of the project would be available and provided to TARSG at its meeting in August 2024.

Key Points - Chair:

- Emphasized the importance of this piece of work, which required the right people/skillsets to provide confidence to all stakeholders
- Would be seeking funding from the Ministry for the Environment to fund this part of the project
- A plan would be developed to communicate key messages to stakeholders.

Key Points - Members:

- Acknowledged the progress that had been made
- Noted that some of the necessary data should be available from BOPRC
- TARSG had been charged with restoring the Tarawera Awa and Te Awa o te Atua, which had to look at this as part of the Strategy Group's remit
- Needed to factor in climate change considerations (i.e. tidal volumes)
- Would like a site visit at a future time.

12:00 pm – Chairman Leeder **withdrew** from the meeting.

**Hei Pānui Anake
Information Only**

7.5 Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Consultation

*Presentation - Te Mahere Tūroa - Long Term Plan 2024-2034: Objective ID
A4602270* [↗](#)

Presented by: Merehine Waiari, Senior Māori Policy Advisor

Key Points:

- Overview of BOPRC's Long term Plan (LTP) consultation/timeline and strategic direction and goals under *Te Ara Poutama* community outcome
- Noted a key part of the LTP process was to work in partnership with tangata whenua and the community
- BOPRC wished to hear from tangata whenua on its strategic direction and three key consultation questions
- LTP consultation period would open on 8 March - 9 April 2024 and would include engagement opportunities that included hui with iwi authorities, co-governance entities and Māori leaders and online hui/webinars
- Staff were available to meet with TARSG at a separate hui to discuss BOPRC's LTP.

Key Points - Members:

- Noted the importance of engaging with iwi authorities and Post-Settlement Governance Entities (PSGEs) who were mandated to represent their iwi.

Resolved

That the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group:

- 1 Receives the report, Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Consultation.**

**Tamati/Tunui
CARRIED**

8. Closing Remarks

Members noted the importance of TARSG and its purpose and congratulated the Chair and Project team on its establishment and for the work and progress that was being made.

**9. Karakia Kati
Closing Karakia**

A karakia was provided by Tiipene Marr.

12:15 pm - the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED

Leith Comer
Chairperson
Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group