

Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group

Ngā Meneti Open Minutes

Commencing: Friday 9 August 2024, 09:30 AM

Venue: Rangitihi Marae, 14 Marae Lane, Matatā

Heamana

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

Heamana Tuarua

Deputy Chairperson: Dr Pouroto Ngaropo - Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa (TRoNA)

Ngā Kopounga

Members:

Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana (BOPRC):
Cr Malcolm Campbell (Alternate)

Kawerau District Council (KDC):
Mayor Faylene Tunui

Ngāti Mākino Iwi Authority (NMIA):
Awhi Awhimate

Ngāti Tūwharetoa (BOP) Settlement Trust:
Jim Schuster

TMoNRT:
Tiipene Marr (Alternate)

TRoNA:
Manu Glen (Alternate)

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

Te Hunga i Tae Ake In Attendance:

BOPRC: Chris Ingle - General Manager Integrated Catchments, Kerry Brown - Kaitohutohu Taiao Matua (Senior Advisor), Gemma Moleta - Senior Planner (Water Policy), Gina Mohi - Pūtaiao Mātauranga, Margaret Courtney - Senior Advisor, Shari Kameta - Committee Advisor
TMoNRT: Miria Nicholls - Kaiawhina Hapori | Taiao Admin Support - Environmental & Social, Simon Costar and Destiny Wharewera-Mason - Cultural Monitors
Staff/Presenters: as listed in the minutes

Ngā Hōnea Apologies:

Cr Gregg Brown and Lakes Community Board Chair Phill Thomass (Alternate) - Rotorua Lakes Council; Chairman Doug Leeder - BOPRC; Laurance Tamati (Alternate) - NMIA; Deputy Mayor Aaron Rangihika (Alternate), Morgan Godfery (Chief Executive), Kaumatua Te Haukākawa Te Rire (Cultural Advisor) - KDC

1. Karakia Whakatuwhera Opening Karakia

A karakia was provided by Dr Pouroto Ngaropo.

2. Ngā Hōnea Apologies

Resolved

That the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group:

- 1 Accepts the apologies from Cr Gregg Brown, Chairman Doug Leeder, Deputy Mayor Aaron Rangihika, Laurance Tamati, Lakes Community Board Chair Phill Thomass, Morgan Godfery and Te Haukākawa Te Rire tendered at the meeting.**

**Campbell/Luca
CARRIED**

3. Raupapa o Ngā Take Order of Business

The Chair advised that Item 9.1, Chairperson's Report would be considered before Presentation Item 8.1, Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) for Matatā Scenic Reserve, Whakapaukorero and Te Awa o te Atua.

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 Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group Minutes - 18 June 2024 Matters Arising

In relation to Minute Item 8.2 (Plan Change 11 Geothermal Pre-Draft Engagement) - sought assurance that staff were engaging directly with the relevant stakeholders in regard to the Kawerau geothermal resource, including on best practice methods.

Resolved

That the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group:

- 1 Confirms the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group Minutes - 18 June 2024 as a true and correct record.**

**Awhimate/Ngaropo
CARRIED**

6. Ngā Pūrongo Reports

6.1 Chairperson's Report

Presented by: Chair Leith Comer

Motion

Moved: Comer

Seconded: Ngaropo

Formally invites the Department of Conservation (DOC) to be a partner representative on the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group and Project Team.

Key Points - Chair:

- Welcomed Ms Merenia Sawrey, Kaitohu Matua Treaty Partner Relationships from the Department of Conservation (DOC)
- Considered it appropriate that DOC be invited to fully participate on the Strategy Group, both at the governance and project team level, given its mandate to consult and have regard to conservation matters relating to Te Awa o te Atua
- Ms Sawrey would be a suitable candidate as a senior DOC representative and member of the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC)
- Expected that DOC would be required to participate in future consent processes to support the Strategy Group's aspiration to reconnect the course of the Tarawera Awa back through to Te Awa o te Atua.
- The Chair was available to meet with DOC management to support the request.

Key Points - Members:

- Supported the motion
- Referred to clauses (g) to (i) within the Strategy Group's terms of reference that supported the motion.

The motion was **PUT** and **CARRIED**.

Resolved

That the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group:

- 1 Formally invites the Department of Conservation (DOC) to be a partner representative on the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group and Project Team.**

**Comer/Ngaropo
CARRIED**

Key Points - Chair (Continued):

- Minister Shane Jones had provided the following feedback from the meeting held on 6 August 2024:
 - Supported in-principle the aspiration to restore the mauri of Te Awa o te Atua and to enable economic opportunities for Matatā and the eastern Bay of Plenty
 - Emphasised the need of a viability study to support consent requirements. The Chair noted that the Project team would undertake the necessary investigations to determine what was possible
 - The Matatā wastewater scheme proposal did not fit the Regional Infrastructure funding criteria and should be referred to Local Government Minister Simeon Brown.

Key Points - Members:

- Pleased with the direction of focus to restore the mauri of Te Awa o te Atua
- Acknowledged the Chair's relationships and influence at the national level, and the Chair and Project team's attending the Whakatāne District Council's Long Term Plan hearing to support the Matatā wastewater submission.

Resolved

That the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group:

- 1 Receives the Chairperson's Report.**

**Ngaropo/Tunui
CARRIED**

7. Whakaaturanga Presentations

7.1 Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) for Matatā Scenic Reserve, Whakapaukorero and Te Awa o te Atua

*Presentation - Te Tatau Pounamu o Te Awa o Te Atua Joint Advisory Committee:
Objective ID A4739942 [↔](#)*

Presented by: Merenia Sawrey - Kaitohu Matua Treaty Partner Relationships,
Department of Conservation

Key Points:

- Provided background on 'Te Tatau Pounamu o Te Awa o Te Atua' Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) which had been established under the Ngāti Awa Claims Settlement Act 2005 to advise the Minister of Conservation and the Director-General on conservation matters affecting the specified sites which included Te Awa o te Atua (Matatā lagoon)
- Ms Sawrey's role of servicing the JAC commenced six months ago

- Acknowledged past and current JAC members, and those who were members of both the JAC and Strategy Group
- Outlined the five sites that the JAC was responsible for providing advice to DOC and the respective post-settlement governance entities
- After a two-year hiatus, the JAC re-established in mid-2023 with an initial focus to re-orientate within a new landscape of conservation stakeholders, challenges and opportunities
- Current focus of the JAC was to develop a five-year strategic aspirations document to set management priorities for each reserve. Key focus areas were to: gather input from stakeholders, enable nohoanga (site) access for reconnection and better care of taiao, advocacy and developing its strategic aspirations
- Highlighted DOC's position to:
 - Refine its mahi by providing quality over quantity with the limited resources that it had;
 - Focus on visitor and heritage experiences to enable engagement in the taiao
- DOC recognised the current (declined) state of Te Awa o te Atua lagoon. While DOC had limited capacity to contribute to restoring the mauri of the lagoon, they agreed and supported the sentiment and direction needed to reinstate biodiversity and reconnect people with place.

Key Points - Members:

- Acknowledged the presentation, mahi and past JAC members, alongside the coming together of iwi as a collective and the different roles of the JAC and Strategy Group
- Acknowledged the JAC as a key stakeholder of the Strategy Group and building a connection with DOC to obtain access to the respective sites
- Queried how the Strategy Group would interface with DOC on consenting matters, which Ms Sawrey noted for follow-up.

8. Ngā Pūrongo Reports (Continued)

8.1 Project Team Update

Presentation - Iwi and Stakeholder Engagement - TARSG Draft Strategic Objectives: Objective ID A4743799 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Dr Frances Teinakore-Curtis, Project Manager, Jane Waldon, Co-Governance Secretariat/Iwi-Stakeholder Engagement, Dr Emily Afoa, Technical Planning Engineer and Keri Topperwien – Plan Writer

Key Points:

- Sought advice on the question raised under section 3.4 of the Chairperson's report regarding responsibility of water quality monitoring, noting that the Project team wished to define this in respective Kōtuku Agreements that were to be formed with various stakeholders
- Iwi and stakeholder engagement (refer PowerPoint Presentation):
 - An iterative engagement process would be used to enable stakeholders meaningful input into the development of the Strategy document
 - Outlined the schedule of engagements that were currently in progress
 - Where possible, the Project team would look to attend stakeholder and community group hui to create efficiencies/reduce engagement fatigue

- Reference material would be provided to stakeholders ahead of time to inform discussions
- Technical planning:
 - Still progressing in the data discovery phase, involving data compilation from a lot of different people and organisations
 - Parallel strand of work to prepare a work plan for developing a business case in relation to Aspiration 1 to reconnect water flow into Te Awa o te Atua and out to Mihimarino
 - A hui would be requested with the Iwi Collective to better understand and demonstrate individual identity within the information/catchment
- Strategic Objectives development:
 - Currently in a holding pattern, but was observing and providing support while stakeholder engagement and other workstreams were getting underway
- Cultural monitoring:
 - Introduced cultural monitors Simon Costar (Ngāti Rangitihī) and Destiny Wharewera-Mason (Ngāti Rangitihī, Ngāti Awa) who were part of Ngāti Rangitihī's taiao management team and would be supporting the project
 - Noted also some good cultural monitoring work being undertaken by Ngāti Awa and Ngāti Tuwharetoa ki Kawerau within their own spaces that would be critical to some of the technical planning and Mātauranga Māori monitoring at specific sites in the future.

In Response to Questions:

- The next newsletter issue would be prepared during the following month for future release.

Key Points - Members:

- Provided the following feedback on iwi/stakeholder engagement:
 - Sought consideration to engage other geothermal users within the Kawerau geothermal field and/or catchment, along with Fonterra Edgecumbe and the Joint Advisory Committee if appropriate
 - Kawerau District Council were currently engaging with community on a number of challenging issues, therefore recommended the Project team engage separately with community/stakeholders rather than linking in with council-held hui/events
 - Suggested seeking engagement by activity, i.e. geothermal, forestry, farmers
 - Kawerau district now only had two marae within its district (Rautahi and Tohia o te Rangī Marae) as a result of a boundary change
 - It was important to engage with as many affected community members/stakeholders, including marae/hapū and those at the grassroots level.

Key Points - Staff:

- Acknowledged members feedback and signalled a request to work with members further on stakeholder engagement
- Queried whether the Rangitāiki River Forum should be included as part of stakeholder engagement.

Resolved

That the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group:

- 1 Receives the report, Project Team Update.**

**Awhimate/Tunui
CARRIED**

8.2 Outcome of Te Mahere Tūroa | Long Term Plan 2024 - 2034

Presented by: Chris Ingle, General Manager Integrated Catchments

Key Points:

- Highlighted Regional Council's adoption of the new community outcome Te Ara Poutama and a number of recommendations to support it, including approved the establishment of a Regional Co-Governance Secretariat Fund (RCSF), which the Strategy Group and Rangitāiki River Forum had supported in their submissions to the LTP
- The funding policy to support the RCSF would be reported to Komiti Māori in October 2024 for final approval.

Resolved

That the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group:

- 1 Receives the report, Outcome of Te Mahere Tūroa | Long Term Plan 2024 - 2034.**

**Ngaropo/Campbell
CARRIED**

9. Whakaaturanga Presentations

9.1 Freshwater Biosecurity Update on work in Tarawera Awa and Te Awa o Te Atua Lagoon

Presentation - Biosecurity Freshwater Update: Objective ID A4744919 [⇒](#)

Tabled Document 1 - Biosecurity Freshwater Update Memorandum (24 July 2024): Objective ID A4736903 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Shane Grayling, Team Leader, Biosecurity and Te Wakaunua Te Kurapa, Biosecurity Officer

Key Points:

- Provided an overview of three pest species (Alligator weed, Rudd fish and Sagittaria) that were present in the lower reaches of the Tarawera and Rangitāiki Awa and current control methods/programme being used:
 - Alligator weed - NIWA had recommended new control methods that were environmentally safe
 - Rudd fish - Council staff were working with the Department of Conservation and Ngāti Rangitīhi cultural monitors on a control plan that would involve netting
 - Sagittaria - there was a large presence in Te Awa o te Atua lagoon but could be effectively controlled
- A detailed description of the pests and associated controls was circulated to members for information (refer Tabled Document).

In Response to Questions:

- Pest plant species generally dominated over native vegetation and had a detrimental impact on the eco-system, i.e. reduced habitat and flooding
- Very low levels of glyphosate and metsulfuron were used in controls.

Key Points - Members:

- Sought consideration of a more strategic and integrated monitoring programme approach for the catchment (from source to sea) to improve resource efficiencies and potential issues from occurring downstream.

Items for Staff Follow Up:

- Members requested information on: native species that had been present before the pest species; and further information regarding control methods and associated nitrogen and phosphate outputs.

Resolved

- 1 **Receives the presentation, Freshwater Biosecurity Update on work in Tarawera Awa and Te Awa o te Atua lagoon.**

**Tunui/Campbell
CARRIED**

10. Ngā Whakamārama a Ngā Rōpū Update from Partners

10.1 Ngāti Tūwharetoa (Bay of Plenty) Settlement Trust (NTST)

- The Project team had held an engagement hui with NTST with feedback provided in relation to geothermal discharges into the Tarawera Awa, which the Project team had noted for further consideration
- Ngāti Tūwharetoa would seek to present their geothermal data to the next TARSG Iwi Collective hui on 9 September 2024.

10.2 Kawerau District Council (KDC)

- KDC had a number of issues it was currently dealing with
- Supported the mahi that was taking place in the Strategy Group space
- Kawerau had hosted the Rangitāiki Kapa Haka festival 6-7 August, which had been a joyous occasion.

10.3 Whakatāne District Council (WDC)

- WDC had adopted its Long Term Plan on Monday 5 August 2024
- Following the Chief Executive's resignation in May 2024, WDC were close to finalising a replacement
- Central Government's Local Water Done Well proposal would be a key focus of work, and would be discussed at the Mayoral Forum meeting on 16 August 2024.

10.4 Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana

- Supported the mahi and objectives of the Strategy Group, however noted the limited resources available across the current landscape.

11. Karakia Kati Closing Karakia

A karakia was provided by Dr Pouroto Ngaropo.

11:58 am - the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED

Chair Leith Comer
Chairperson
Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group