

Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group

Ngā Meneti Open Minutes

Commencing: Friday 6 December 2024, 09.38 am

Venue: Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana (BOPRC) Offices, Waiariki Room, Corner Fenton & Pukaki Streets, Rotorua and via MS Teams (Audio Visual Meeting)

**Heamana
Chairperson:** Pou Tākiwaiora Arapeta Tahana

**Heamana Tuarua
Deputy Chairperson:** Deputy Chair Cr Kevin Winters - BOPRC

**Ngā Kopounga
Members:**

Te Arawa Lakes Trust (TALT)

Mariana Te Rangī

Georgina Whata - Alternate (via MS Teams)

Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC)

Mayor Tania Tapsell

Cr Gregg Brown

Lakes Community Board Chair Phill Thomass - Alternate

BOPRC

Chairman Doug Leeder (until 11:00 am)

Cr Te Taru White - Alternate

Ministry for the Environment (MfE) (Observer)

Lorena Stephen

**Te Hunga i Tae Ake
In Attendance:**

TALT: Geoff Rolleston - Interim Chairman; Soweeta Fort-D'Ath - Lakes Programme Coordinator; William Anaru - Biosecurity Manager; Charmaine Newson - Director of Funding and Programmes

RLC: Cr Conan O'Brien; Andrew Moraes - Chief Executive; Cr Conan O'Brien; Stavros Michael - General Manager, Infrastructure and Environment

BOPRC: Cr Lyall Thurston; Helen Creagh - Rotorua Catchments Manager; Amanda Namana - Committee Advisor

**Ngā Hōnea
Apologies:**

Nuki Nicholson - TALT; Rangitihi Pene - Alternate, TALT

Declaration of Public Recording

The meeting was recorded and made available on the Bay of Plenty Regional Council YouTube channel following the meeting and archived for a period of three years: [Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group - 6 December 2024](#)

1. Karakia Whakatuwhera Opening Karakia

A karakia whakatuwhera was provided by Arapeta Tahana.

2. Ngā Hōnea Apologies

Resolved

That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:

- 1 Accepts the apologies from Nuki Nicholson and Rangitihi Pene tendered at the meeting.**

**Winters/Tapsell
CARRIED**

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

None declared.

4. Ngā Meneti Minutes

Kia Whakaūngia Ngā Meneti Minutes to be Confirmed

4.1 Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group Minutes - 20 September 2024

Resolved

That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:

- 1 Confirms the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group Minutes - 20 September 2024 as a true and correct record.**

**Winters/Brown
CARRIED**

5. Ngā Pūrongo Reports

Hei Pānui Anake Information Only

5.1 Update on Refreshed Lakes Strategy

Presentation: Refreshed Lakes Strategy: Objective ID A4840971 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Elva Conroy – Conroy and Donald Consultants Ltd (via MS Teams)

Key Points:

- Outlined the framework for the Lakes Programme
- Suggested that the refreshed strategy hold a duration of 25 years rather than ten years, with the opportunity to update it at any time
- The work plan/implementation plan would have actions to deliver the strategy and could be updated regularly to address funding opportunities or new innovations that arose
- Highlighted some of the key features of the refreshed strategy including:
 - A smaller, more concise document focused on the key elements within the strategy for the next 25 years
 - New principles and the way in which the strategy would be implemented
 - New themes/priority focus areas: Wai Ora, Wai Ata, Wai Rua, which aligned clearly with the vision
 - Enabling adaptive management
 - Enabling more strategy led action planning
 - Monitoring outcomes based reporting – to build an information/evidence base on the impacts of activities
- Encouraged involving others in developing a draft implementation or action plan to assist in guiding and shaping it. Outlined key aspects which needed to have focus alongside this to ensure the strategy was successful
- There were also international funding opportunities to be explored, for which it was important to be able to demonstrate strong leadership and governance, clear strategic direction and outcomes monitoring and reporting.

Key Points - Members:

- Strongly supportive of the refreshed strategy, commended the work undertaken and the outcome
- Needed to consider what existed in the centre of the three strategic priorities
- Supported collaboration with outside parties and including different parts of the community in the process going forward. Acknowledged that this could also align with assisting them to achieve their own projects and goals, whilst being realistic about funding restrictions
- Agreed with the essence of the vision but considered the wording could be more concise
- Heightened thinking and a more strategic focus would be important going forward, including seeking long term funding opportunities/revenue streams

- How the group supported the collective impact would be key – including the expected outcomes and actions
- Suggested members present to their respective councils on where the refreshed strategy had landed and use this opportunity to enlist communities on the journey.

In Response to Questions:

- Explained green taxonomy as a set of standards that provided integrity to demonstrate credibility behind environmentally sustainable outcomes.

Resolved

That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:

- 1 Receives the report, Update on Refreshed Lakes Strategy.**

**Winters/Te Rangi
CARRIED**

**6. Whakaaturanga
Presentations**

6.1 National Corbicula (Freshwater Gold Clam) Programme Update

Presentation: National Corbicula Programme Update - Te Arawa Lakes: Objective ID A4830234 [↗](#)

Presented by: Catherine Duthie - Group Manager, Pest Management Programmes; Biosecurity New Zealand (via MS Teams)

Key Points

- There were two different controlled area notices in place – one on the infested area of the Waikato River and another on Te Arawa Lakes, with particular restrictions for Lake Ōkātāina
- In March 2024, a different species of Corbicula (Corbicula Australis) to those found in the Waikato River had been identified in a manmade recreational lagoon in Taupō. As this was a small and isolated waterbody, the opportunity existed to achieve complete elimination - a copper sulphate treatment had been recommended and would start in January 2025
- The response to Corbicula Fluminea was officially being stood down to focus on long term management, with a long term plan having been developed
- Corbicula competed with taonga species and could impact cultural values, with significant impacts on ecosystem functions and the potential to cause major infrastructure damage
- Although it was assumed there would be similar impacts for each species' incursion, there was limited information on the Corbicula Australis
- The primary means of control relied heavily on human behavioural change
- Lake Ōkātāina held a significant risk and had specific controls placed upon it for protection – the lake had a higher ability to control what went into it due to its location and limited access
- The National Pathway Management Plan was key and included long term aspirations, management objectives and holistic management – tool development was also critical, as was research in suppressing populations

- Important to not place restrictions on people without managing the risk - compliance decreased significantly the more restrictions people had. Compliance largely depended upon the public doing the right thing, therefore it was critical to make it as easy as possible for them to do so
- Mana whenua, regional councils and the Department of Conservation were working in partnership with Biosecurity New Zealand to operationally deliver the long term management delivery model
- Outlined immediate actions and the working groups established to guide work over the summer
- Procedures were being developed for rapid assessment in case of another detection.

Key Points - Members

- Pleased with the automatic gate for Lake Ōkataina and acknowledged the support from TALT
- TALT had qualified scientific staff available in their team - would like representation on the working groups, and to be involved in surveillance operations
- Communication with mana whenua occurred regarding the automatic gate, however this needed to be re-established so that they could continue being proactive in protecting the lakes and assisting with public compliance
- MfE requested confirmation of TALT contact email addresses due to previous issues with email delivery errors
- Noted the four other lakes with similar access to Ōkataina which could benefit from a gate (Lakes Ōkareka, Tikitapu, Tarawera and Rerewhakaaitu).

In Response to Questions:

- The community connection was crucial in achieving outcomes for awareness and adherence to compliance measures in place
- Advice to date indicated that eradication of Corbicula Fluminea was not currently feasible, therefore suppression and management was the only option. However, research was underway that may provide better options and tools in the future
- Higher standards for inspection of boats were forthcoming (particularly for wake boats arriving from other parts of the country), noting that more stringent controls were already in place
- Washdown facilities would be in place across different ramps at times over summer.

7. Ngā Pūrongo Reports (Continued)

Hei Pānui Anake Information Only

11:00 am - Cr Leeder **withdrew** from the meeting.

11.02 am - The meeting **adjourned.**

11.13 am - The meeting **reconvened.**

7.1 Funding Deed Review

Presented by: Helen Creagh – Rotorua Catchments Manager and Charmaine Newson
- Director of Funding and Programmes, TALT

Key Points

- The agreed \$10m transfer through the Annual Work Programme specified that the money was to be paid back to the Crown, so that BOPRC could draw this down for the incentives scheme. This was unable to occur due to complications with Treasury approval. The varied deed meant that the money would be drawn down by RLC now, then paid directly back to BOPRC when required for the incentives scheme. TALT requested to be a party to the deed and to receive operational funding to elevate their role within the programme and enable them to run it, aligning with the recommendations from the recent Strategy Group review. Effectively the deed had been re-worked to enable these two changes to occur
- Within the three year time period, TALT would build capability and capacity, also working collaboratively with BOPRC and RLC to seek longer term funding and broader ways to source funding which did not rely on the Crown. Any time period longer than this funded out of the current deed, would affect delivery of the outcomes of the deed.

Key Points - Members:

- Expressed overall comfort with the reviewed deed, with the exception of Item 1.1, bullet points six and seven. In terms of recovery from the funding of the deed, cautioned that the funding proposal would likely run through two triennium and two reviews of RLC's LTP during the stated time period. Considered that the contractual arrangement of the funding deed did not ensure the funds would be repaid and the outcomes achieved, particularly in the instance of potential future local government reform.

In Response to Questions:

- The funding allocated would be \$150k per year for three years, with deliverables to meet through the deed
- Mayor Tapsell appreciated the identified risk to BOPRC, which was addressed at an operational level, acknowledged the long term relationships and provided assurance that the agreement would be honoured
- Signalled support for TALT and acknowledged the value of the partnership, time and expertise they brought
- Minor changes included the wording of TALT's description of activities.

RLC Staff - In Response to Questions:

- A binding commitment had been made by RLC to reimburse the incentives programme within the prescribed timeframe in the revised deed. All councils held a range of commitments that did not contain provisions for possible future legislative changes. Also noted that the current central government had not indicated there was a programme for reorganisation of local government and did not consider that there were any foreseeable scenarios which required planning for at present
- Although the mechanisms were somewhat complex, the intent of the document remained the same.

Resolved

That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:

- 1 Receives the report, Funding Deed Review;**
- 2 Directs staff to finalise the minor changes to the Deed circulated, and provide to each of the three parties for execution.**

**Brown/Winters
CARRIED**

8. Whakahoutanga Kōrero Verbal Updates

8.1 Update on Rotoehu Rotomā Climate Change Working Group

Presented By: Phill Thomass

Key Points:

- Approximately halfway through the process
- The group was established to work with Rotoehu and Rotomā communities around their specific issues with flooding through climate change, as they had no natural overground exits
- The group was made up of two members from each community, with advisory support from BOPRC and RLC
- At present, online meetings were held once a month with additional in-person workshops and meetings planned going forward
- Learning to frame the correct questions to ask was critical and a public hui would be held for the whole community to provide feedback to these
- A report would be provided to the Strategy Group mid-2025 with an update and a list of possible actions for identified issues.

9. Karakia Kati Closing Karakia

A karakia kati was provided by Arapeta Tahana.

1.49 pm - the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED

Pou Tākiwaiora Arapeta Tahana
Chairperson, Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy
Group