

# MEETING NOTES



## Fresh Water Advisory Group

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**Held in the Council Chambers on 11 March 2015 at 10.00am to 1.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Bill Ruru, Chris Keenan, Alan Haronga, Trevor Helson, Eben Herbert, Peter Jex-Blake, Becky Lander, Murray Palmer, Pat Seymour (Chair), Roger Haisman, Stan Pardoe, Stuart Davis, Lester Pohatu, Manawa Waipara, Owen Lloyd, Tui Warmernhoven, Ian Ruru, Jody Toroa, James Sinclair, Peter Williamson, Sally Gaddum

**GDC STAFF:** Dennis Crone, David Wilson, Kurt Ridling, Keriana Wilcox-Taylor, Janic Slupski, Tim Blackman, Lois Easton and Sarah Pohatu

**APOLOGIES:** Jamie Foxley

### 1. Karakia

Owen Lloyd opened the meeting with a Karakia.

### 2. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were given from Jamie Foxley

Welcome to new people – James Sinclair (Ernslaw One), Jody Toroa (Ngai Tamanuhiri Iwi Trust), David Wilson (Strategic Planning Manager, GDC) and Sarah Pohatu (Policy Advisor Maori Focus, GDC).

### 3. Matters arising

Endorsement of the meeting notes from 21 November 2014 were moved by the chair and carried by the FWAG.

### 4. Project Managers Update

#### **Feedback on the Freshwater Plan**

- We received lots of feedback - approximately 400 individual submission points or questions. Feedback was generally very detailed and useful;
- Largest proportion of feedback was on Sections 3, 4 and 5; and
- Some submission focused on the full plan, whilst others focused on certain sections.

#### **Questions and answers from the FWAG**

Q. Why has the NES for forestry not been taken into consideration in the Freshwater Plan?

A. The NES for forestry is a draft version and still needs to go through the consultation process. If a rule in the Freshwater Plan is more restrictive than the NES, then the NES provisions apply.

Q. Does Council need to decide on the role of tangata whenua in the Freshwater Plan?

A. We have been to council and they approved us to look at 'co-governance' only in the Waiapu Catchment. This is a separate process to the Regional Freshwater Plan.

Q. We have had iwi around the table for years and now we have this new group. Who is the Hourouta Iwi Collective?

A. The Horouta Iwi Collective submission is treated like all the other submissions. The collective is comprised of 5 iwi groups, these are - Ngati Porou, Te Whanau a Apanui, Rongowhakaata, Ngati Manuhiri, Mahaki.

### **Timeline moving forward**

- Mid May – Finalise Plan
- Late May – Next FWAG meeting
- June – July – Plan publically notified
- Late September – Submissions
- Late 2015 – Hearings

### **5. Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) Pilot Program Update**

- Why are we exploring Managed Aquifer Recharge?
  - Currently the rate of take in many of our aquifers on the Poverty Bay Flats is greater than the rate of recharge;
  - Golders report recommended that the Makuri Aquifer is suitable for a MAR pilot. The program will let us know the potential of the aquifer for ongoing managed recharge; and
  - Major project for the region. Important from an economic and environmental perspective;
- Other details:
  - Recharge water would come from the Mangapoike Dam;
  - We have impermeability issues, so we are doing direct injection; and
  - The pilot will be project managed by GDC;
- How much will the project cost?
  - The pilot is expected to cost \$400, 000. Currently \$200,000 is coming from MPI and the other \$200,000 still needs to be sourced. An application is with Eastland Community Trust to fund the other \$200, 000; and
  - If the funding is secured GDC will prepare the Resource Consent Application and associated Assessment of Environmental Effects.

### **Feedback from the FWAG**

- When we interfere with nature it can be destroyed;
- Project could potentially be assisted by the Bushmere Augmentation Plant; and
- MAR is not new, there are international experiences to draw from.

### **6. Waipaoa Catchment Model**

- Key Objectives of the Waipaoa Catchment Model:
  - To understand the current nutrient losses (runoff and leaching) and their flow paths from current land uses
  - To understand the impacts of land use change on waterways
  - Understand the effectiveness of mitigation measures
- Details of the Waipaoa Catchment Model:
  - Horticulture New Zealand have provided a brief to GDC and they are keen to partner with other organisations;
  - Development time for the model - 3 months;
  - Initially this will be a basic model, but over time it can become more sophisticated; and
  - It is a model that helps all the stakeholders understand the implications of limits;
- What will be the capabilities of the Waipaoa catchment model initially?
  - Measure key attributes of environmental health;

- Simple groundwater; and
- Subsurface flows;
- What is likely to be modelled in the future?:
  - Sediment;
  - Water storage; and

### **Questions and answers from the FWAG**

Q. Why are you not planning to measure periphyton?

A. Overtime the model will be able to model a more extensive range of water quality attributes, including periphyton.

Q. What is the influence of the log yard on water quality?

A. Most of the impact is from upstream.

## **7. Stormwater and Sediment Quality in Urban Environments**

- Stormwater and River Sediment tested over July – November 2014. Purpose was to look at impact of stormwater from the urban areas;
- 9 sediment sites, 6 Stormwater pipes, 8 stream/river sites during “first flush” event; and
- Key question – What are the effects at the early part of the rain event?

### **Sediment Quality**

- Looked at a range of known urban contaminants;
- Most toxicants are at expected levels;
- Zinc, lead, copper and hydrocarbon (PAH) levels were very high in Waikanae Stream and Kopuawhakatapa Stream sediments.

### **Stormwater Quality**

- 1st flush – most major urban contaminants in high levels;
- Industrial stormwater had highest levels; and
- Receiving streams and rivers had very poor first flush.

### **Key recommendations:**

- Investigate contaminants sources in the Kopuawhakatapa and Waikanae Streams;
- Investigate historic contaminant loads in estuaries to see if the problem is getting worse or better;
- Review consent conditions and compliance for Waikanae Stream discharge consents; and
- Undertake ongoing monitoring to better understand priorities and potential treatment options.

## **8. Workshops**

Issues discussed at the workshop were largely based around key policy areas, including - Oil and Gas, Permitted Water Takes, Wastewater Overflows, Municipal Supply, Farm Environment Plans, Maintaining or Improving Water Quality, Riparian Management and Wetlands. See Appendix 1 for a full breakdown of the feedback.

## **9. Round Table**

- We support the collaborative approach;

- NOF attributes – need full suite, which includes periphyton; and
- Have issues with the RPS part of this plan change. RPS should be standalone within document. RPS has different status and must also relate to landuse issues.

#### **10. Next meeting**

Next FWAG meeting late May 2015. Exact date not currently decided.

#### **11. Meeting closed**

Meeting concluded with a karakia by Owen Lloyd at 1.30pm.

## Appendix 1

### Feedback from FWAG Workshop – 11 March 2015

#### 1. Oil and Gas:

- Happy with Council approach around discharges;
- Concerned about effect of takes on existing activities and believe storage/timing should be a requirement for any new take for exploration/fracking;
- Management plan like farms to achieve best practice;
- 100m minimum to outstanding water bodies and regionally significant wetlands;
- We should encourage oil and gas, provided it doesn't have a detrimental effect on water quality;
- Support Parliamentary Commissioner for Environment's precautionary position as put forward in new proposed rules;
- Agree in principal that drilling through aquifers is not a great idea in practice shouldn't be needed;
- Water takes and discharge rules should be the same as any other applicant; and
- Subsurface drilling needs to be addressed where bores move horizontal, especially where they are in close proximity to outstanding waterbodies and/or regionally significant wetlands.

Support/Oppose	Proposed Alternative Approach	Costs	Benefits
Support having water takes and having limits to how they apply	200m distant from Outstanding Waterbodies or be prohibited. Depending on topography and geography of the land is suitable that it will not have and we can avoid adverse effects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term of potential earthquakes with the shale rock formations the east coast are a high risk to contamination of aquifers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain mana and mauri of cultural significance enhancing the environment for all to enjoy and work at a holistic value knowing we are practicing best practices maintaining a green image.</li> <li>• Stress free living knowing that any environmental effects won't be adverse</li> </ul>

#### 2. Permitted Water Takes

- Encourage water storage;

- If taking 'x' out 'x' needs to be coming back in;
- Confusion over bands re 50% of MALF;
- How can you have a permitted activity that does not measure the effect of the take? Should require metering and reporting;
- Support;
- Register of permitted takes is required;
- Concern about permitted takes reducing flow to 50% of MALF. Our dry summers mean many fish will survive by sheltering in small pools and this level of extraction will further threaten them;
- Oppose raising from the 10m<sup>3</sup>/day figure. 10,000 litres will fill a lot of troughs;
- Reducing flows to 50% of MALF has the potential for negative ecological effects. Provisions in RMA for Permitted Takes are on basis that taking or use does not, or isn't likely to have adverse environmental effects. i.e – 50% of MALF is too low;
- Must not reduce flows that impact negatively on waterbodies and cultural sites; and
- Support for plan. Rural communities and Maori should have access to quality water. This is a consideration that needs to be addressed with allocation. Consider co management and co governance models.

Support/Oppose	Proposed Alternative Approach	Costs	Benefits
Support permitted water takes and having limits to how they apply	Council should maintain a register of permitted takes. Support the volumes proposed. 50% of MALF too low.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some existing takes may require consent. Council will have to administer a basic register of permitted water takes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased focus/protection on aquatic ecosystems. Council will have better knowledge of extent of permitted water takes.</li> </ul>

### 3. Wastewater Overflows

- 5.1.2 – Consistency in terms of the use of “wet Weather” use “heavy rainfall” – this is an error in the draft plan;
- Support
- Look at defining “heavy rainfall”
- Support 2020 date;
- Permitted activity rule – how are the effects measurable if the discharge is not controlled? Controlled activity would even be a stretch;
- Need permitted solution by 2020; and
- Need to understand the range of reasons for the wastewater overflows in order to understand why overflows actually occur. It is not straightforward – should be explained better in the s32 e.g. wet conditions exacerbated by “heavy rainfall”.

### 4. Municipal Supply

- Priority for essential drinking water and sanitation purposes only, all the rest should have the same priority;
- Support, but concern for ecological effects of continued low flow;
- Access to municipal supply for rural areas e.g. Tuaraki Rd;

- All marae and community facilities, should have access to quality drinking water
- Small takes to be permitted;
- Need to consider industrial uses of water and quality of water needed for their operations;
- Rural community access to same standard as city;
- Ensure appropriate restrictions are in place during water shortages; and
- Minimise potential ecological impacts of low water levels.

## 5. Farm Environment Plans:

- Significant infrastructure is being established nationally for farm plans;
- Generally support, but concern that plans in themselves will not improve environmental outcomes.
- Timeframes for GDC are reflective of timeframes in other jurisdictions (audit, train, certify, report, design)
- The provisions are unclear whether LEPS should be done for the whole farm or just to areas that are being intensively farmed. LEPs should only apply to farm areas that are being intensively farmed;
- Most farming operations are having to develop FEPs;
- Shorter timeframes to implementation are a reasonable consideration;
- Support use of plans, as long as they are achieving something. I.e. clear environmental standards to be achieved;
- How will plans ensure that the adverse effects they're intended to address, will be addressed?
- Support but not sure if environmental outcomes will necessarily improve;
- If no FEPs, then it should be ok to have consent requirements for specific farming activities with environmental effects managed through consent conditions.

Support/Oppose	Proposed Alternative Approach	Costs	Benefits
Support		Some costs associated with compliance.	Provides best practice requirements to minimise impacts on water quality.

## 6. Maintaining or Improving Water Quality

- Flow adjusted measurement is important. At what flow do we take the reading?
- Fed farmers believe there should be an allowable fluctuation within a band, provided the values of that particular waterbody are maintained;
- The biological health of a waterbody should be used as a barometer, rather than absolute numbers;
- Water quality should be improved beyond national bottom lines;
- Believe it is the quality of water that should be maintained, not the absolute number. Propose that an alternative number within A band is provided as the limit to allow for changes over time;
- Support retaining at the current state (long term median), not just within the band;
- Protect what good values we have;
- Support wider monitoring programme (especially bio-monitoring) with clear targets for improvements;
- Attribute levels need to be taken over a ten year period;

- Should be maintain AND improve, where possible;
- Support for council's approach to maintaining current state;
- DoC supports GDC's current approach; and
- MCI index should be used.

Support/Oppose	Proposed Alternative Approach	Costs	Benefits
Support			Gives effect to the NPS and NOF, and ensures no further degradation to water quality.

## 7. Wetlands

- More wetlands – financial incentives;
- Restore wetlands at headwaters of all streams as a first response filters system;
- GIS/spatial data for wetlands;
- Policy 7.1.5 – should be targeted at cattle. Rule 7.1.5 – should specifically exclude cattle grazing. This would have no significant effect on any farming operation;
- There should be very strong protection for wetlands in general. Rules should not result in the potential for cumulative loss or degradation of wetlands;
- Significance of wetland is understated in public area. Need to identify all wetlands to clarify responsibility of owners/occupier administration;
- Contribute to natural water storage, recharge of subterranean water;
- Support for natural wildlife etc;
- NPS Freshwater requires protection of all remaining wetlands, because less than 1% of all wetlands remains; and
- We must –
  - Avoid adverse effects;
  - Protect and strategically enhance; and
  - 4% should be restored based on historical, cultural and ecological value – bringing our total wetlands to 5%;
- All stock excluded from regionally significant wetlands identified as having native biodiversity value;
- DOC, GDC, Hapu, landowner, schools, public – collaboration to actively restore and protect;
- All wetlands are significant;
- Wetlands:
  - Complete ecosystem;
  - Provides ecosystem services to communities (eg. Filtering filth out of water);
  - Only habitat for rare native flora and fauna (eg. Bittern, Kakaho);
- Support wetland management plans;
- Council and DOC do updates survey of all wetland sin region to inform this area of the plan;
- At less than 1% remaining we are in a silent crisis, and seemingly worse off than most other areas in the country. Our remaining wetlands are a tiny portion of the district and as such warrant special attention;

- Concern that cattle access is still allowed to all wetlands in the district. Would like to see targeted funding towards stock exclusion projects in small and large wetlands, and assistance with reticulation to enable this if necessary;
- Concern that many small wetlands are unknown, and landowners (and digger contractors) are often unaware of their special status and rules regarding activities. Also more education for landowners on what is and isn't a wetland;
- Support modifying Rules 7.1.6 and 7.1.8 to make all drainage and in-filling a non-complying activity;
- Policy 7.1.4 should apply to all wetlands; and
- Support removing the 200m<sup>2</sup> distinction, as all wetlands are significant.

## **8. Riparian Management**

- Support Councils approach on the basis the plan is transitional and will continuously improve in Riparian Management Controls. Must include stock (especially cattle) exclusion;
- Margin should depend on the following:
  - Biodiversity values of a waterway;
  - Topography/slope of land;
  - Intensity/size of crop or number of stock; and
  - Emphasis should be indigenous vegetation and education.
- Range from 5m – 50m;
- Education and adoption of best practice models:
  - Pamphlets;
  - Video on website;
  - Field days; and
  - Solar electric fencing.
- Educate. Plant specific native species that absorb or remove sediment and/or nutrients. These species exist;
- Support thrust of plan. Targeted exclusion of cattle would have significant benefits. Still support farming operations;
- Support the plan in its current form with regard to stock grazing. Would like to see rules tightened up about amount of slash in waterways at the time of harvesting forestry;
- Support stronger restrictions on stock grazing and cropping around riparian margins, especially scheduled waterways;
- Woody vegetation (even if not fenced off) beneficial;
- Reclaim and protect wetlands as part of riparian strips;
- Concern with any vegetation clearance within 5m of waterways, whatever land-use is in place;
- (Shade is a major factor in water quality, habitat);
- Prefer a minimum distance between cropping and permanent waterways (1m?);
- Prefer cattle and deer exclusion about margins of waterways over a certain size. (Request larger targeted funding pool to support this);
- Support Policies 7.2.1 and 7. 2.2 with addition of 'and where appropriate require';
- Support interactive/wider environmental approach;

- Impacts of 'riparian' vegetation on waterbodies and 'water livestock' environments – fish etc; and
- Exotic vegetation clearance rules could adversely affect native species as the exotic vegetation may be high value habitat.

<b>Support/Oppose</b>	<b>Proposed Alternative Approach</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
Support riparian setbacks for intensive land use activities and waterways that would apply for a setback are too limited.	Avoid stock grazing and cropping around the riparian margins of all (or at least more) waterways as permitted activity. If not able to meet then a resource consent would be required which would suit the specific site.	Lots of money to fence and manage riparian areas. Loss of productive land, loss of stock watering areas.	Cleaner water.
Support status quo as being appropriate.	Farm management plans will bring best practice to minimise impact on riparian areas and water quality.		
Do not support. There is a clear issue regarding sector equity. Sediment and pathogen contaminants are identified as significant effects. The plans rule structure doesn't address them equally.	Cattle exclusions from beds of rivers and streams. Practical solution may be electric fence with a slope included. 20 degree?	Minimal cost to intensive and non-intensive farming.	Reduced impact form faecal discharge.
Support and do not support. I support anything that will enhance the environment and sustain it for our future generations as we are scientifically at our threshold on uses of natural resources. I would however like to see more protection.	At least have a Riparian Management Area of 10 – 20m or more for rivers/streambeds that is permanently flowing or more than 2m in width. Topography of land surrounding also taking into consideration to allow the purpose of riparian to take effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve rivers for swimming;</li> <li>- Kaimahi and Iwi/ Hapu, cultural values still practiced;</li> <li>- Safe water use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Re-assurance of an effective working riparian protection and enhancement of waterbodies;</li> <li>- Apart of the entire eco system providing benefits to other environmental sectors;</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved stock pastures;</li> <li>- Restoring banks to erosion and sustaining pasture; and</li> <li>- Enhanced collaboration and maintain the mana and mauri of waterbodies.</li> </ul>
	Forestry – 5m margin not enough. Farm and forestry on different terrain. Land slope will determine the size of riparian. Share models of forestry practice.	5 – 8 year - improved.	
	Educating landowners of benefits of riparian value. GDC website – benefits of riparian tools management area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fencing riparian – filter sediment;</li> <li>- Improved stock value, biodiversity etc; and</li> <li>- Field days/sharing info.</li> </ul>	
Appropriate to require protection on some areas.			