TAIRĀWHITI

WAIPAOA CATCHMENT PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP

Wednesday 29 May 2024

Hui #8 agenda, minutes, and actions

Held at Rose Room, Lawson Field Theatre, Gisborne from 12:30pm

Advisory Group facilitator	Dr Jill Chrisp
Advisory Group members present	Stan Pardoe, Grant Vincent, Nick Briant, Dave Hawea, Dianne Irwin, Alan Haronga, Samuel Lewis, Shanna Cairns, Murray Palmer, Jacob Harrison, Tim Rhodes, Joss Ruifrok, Leo Kelso, Stuart Davis, Tim Tietjen
Council	Janic Slupski, Ariel Yann le Chew, Sarah Thompson, Abi Wiseman, Paul Murphy, Bridget Bosworth
	Lois Easton, Wolfgang Kanz
Apologies	Phil Gaukrodger, Owen Lloyd, Matawhero Lloyd, Bella Hawkins, Hannah Kohn

Agenda

Session 1 – General overview
Karakia and whakawhanaungatanga • Welcome • Housekeeping Minutes and actions from hui #7
Session 2 – Water Quantity in the Waipaoa Catchment
Minimum flows and allocation blocks • Background context • Group exercise Report back
Cuppa & leg stretch
Session 3 – Water Quantity in the Waipaoa Catchment (cont.)
Minimum flows and allocation blocks (cont.) • Group exercise: • Questions

• Scenarios Report back
Next steps, wrap up
Closing karakia

Supporting documentation

- **Report 1:** Water Quantity in the Waipaoa Catchment – Minimum Flows and Allocation Blocks

Summary of actions

	*Future Action *Refer to Parked List for summary*		*Current task*

Tasks to be actioned

No tasks were raised for action.

Minutes

Session 1: General overview

1. The hui commenced at 12.30pm with an opening karakia.
2. Staff outlined housekeeping matters.
3. The facilitator sought agreement to members' proposed amendments to points 10 and 20 of the draft minutes for Hui 7. The amended minutes were taken as read and accepted as an accurate reflection.
4. In response to actions from Hui 7, staff noted:
    a. In response to action T19 to report back on the rationale for using RCP4.5 (climate change scenario) in the groundwater model: This climate scenario was used because it reflects the information available from NIWA. The scenarios are referenced in Appendix B of the WGA report.
    b. In response to action T20 to report back on what we know about the presence of aquifers in the bay: Preliminary outputs from SkyTEM mapping indicate possible aquifer discharge offshore to Poverty Bay – this has not yet been verified or quantified. Interpretation of this mapping is just beginning and could take 18 months to complete.
    c. Regarding action T21 to consider the impacts of climate change on Waipaoa surface flows: GDC's science team is looking into this and will report back at a later date.

Session 2 – Water Quantity in the Waipaoa Catchment: Minimum flows and allocation blocks

5. Staff recapped key points covered in Hui 7, including an overview of the current water allocation approach, limits and key messages: To get better environmental outcomes minimum flows need to be increased; to address aquifer decline and prevent saline intrusion we will need to reduce actual use of groundwater; and to meet water needs for the future we will need to increase supply.

6. A member raised that "global consents" are part of the current system, and will be more of a factor in the future.
7. Another member representing Te Whanau a Kai stated their opposition to transfers of water rights.
8. Staff explained that the Regional Freshwater Plan will set out the allocation framework, while the Waipaoa Catchment Plan will identify water quantity zones (which may need to change based on science); river minimum flows (incorporating Te Mana o Te Wai); the size of allocation blocks; and reduction targets and timeframes.
9. Staff introduced proposed scenarios for the Waipaoa River and for Te Arai River Minimum Flows.
10. Staff explained that the Pykes Weir flow monitoring site for Te Arai is not ideal, being upstream from most irrigation takes. Attempts to establish a flow monitoring site further downstream have not been successful, and as a result there is uncertainty and inferring associated with this data.
11. Staff introduced potential scenarios for aquifers. One member noted that the scenarios presented show impacts on reliability, but we need to also understand the scale of the benefit to inform where we land. Staff explained that the recent NIWA report presented benefits for ecosystem health of 'extreme' scenarios, and staff are seeking guidance from members on which 'in-between' scenarios to put forward for further assessment.
12. In response to a member's question about the timeline for further assessment, staff noted that GDC is preparing to procure an expert panel to test some scenarios, and a quadruple bottom line assessment will follow.
13. Another member raised that the NIWA report contains many qualifications regarding the limitations and uncertainties of the research. Staff acknowledged the NIWA report highlights the complexity of the issue, noting that river quality is affected by various factors. We can pose questions to the expert panel to improve our understanding, including through assessing scenarios.
14. One member questioned if other nutrients will also be looked at, with staff noting that while sediment is the main contaminant in the Waipaoa river, there are others.
15. Staff noted the issue that our fish are diadromous, they need to be able to move between the sea and tributaries.
16. There was some discussion around the impact of sediment in aggrading riverbeds and impacting on flood levels, noting the main source of sediment is likely gully erosion, which is hard to manage.
17. Members split into groups to discuss the following questions:
    a. What timeframes should we be planning for?
    b. Should we prioritise improving minimum surface water flows ahead of groundwater levels or vice versa?
    c. Should we prioritise Te Arai River over the Waipaoa River in terms of improving flows?
    d. What priority should we place on the smaller aquifers (e.g. Te Hapara Sands, Waipaoa Gravels) compared with Makauri Aquifer?
18. Transcribed input from group discussions is included in Report 1 for Hui 9.

Session 3 – Water quantity in the Waipaoa catchment: Minimum flows and allocation blocks (Cont)

19. In the same groups, members discussed the following questions:
    a. What pace might any transition take?
    b. Is it better to take an incremental approach or, for example give users 10 years and then a big cut?
    c. Should the surface water and/or groundwater allocation regimes place any priority on supporting high flow harvesting and storage?
20. In three groups (for Waipaoa River, Te Arai River and Groundwater Systems), members considered draft scenarios and discussed whether there are missing scenarios or alternatives they would suggest, and how we could consider both supply and demand side measures within the scenarios.
21. Due to time, staff suggested that feedback from group discussions be collated and reported back at the next hui in July. Group notes have been directly transcribed and are included in Report 1 for Hui 9.
22. A member noted that we only have one alternative at present to deal with issues – Managed Aquifer Recharge, but we need to think long-term.

Closing

23. The session closed at 15:00 with a karakia.

PARKING LIST

The following matters have been captured from discussions during the **WAIPAOA CATCHMENT PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP** hui. They are captured here to be incorporated as supplementary recommendations in the Group's final report and/or responded to directly.

Parking List			
Reference	**Item/Action**	**Date raised**	**Status**
T5	Organise site visits to discuss topic-specific catchment issues	12/7/23	TBC