

Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee - Martinborough Community Meeting

Date: 11 August 2016, 6:30-8:30PM, Lion's Club - Martinborough

Committee attendance: Esther Dijkstra, David Holmes, Colin Olds, Vanessa Tipoki, Mike Ashby

Project Team attendance: Lucy Harper, Kat Banyard

Public: 27 members of the public were present.

Q1: What do we need to make our rivers swimmable and how long should it take to get there?

- As farmers we know what we need to do.
- Present benchmark is very low – main stem and tributaries – moratorium on extraction – urgent.
- We need to look at all the tributaries – fencing off and planting incentives.
- Communication to make it known information and incentives are there.
- Who are the major polluters? – Wastewater (urban) and stormwater and water fowl.
- Farmers are pulling their weight.
- No of times that fails 'swimmability' test is improving now.
- We haven't got the scientific facts – need to see and investigate how bad it is. More monitoring needs to be done.
- Expectation that we maintain and improve.
- Separate stormwater – soak pits and approved stormwater systems.
- River control for flood protection – loss of swimming holes, deep cold pools – may need change to flood protection practices.
- Not enough water in the river – enforcement of water extraction, limits. Water meters – telemetry helps.
- 5 years resource consent renewal is acceptable.
- Stock exclusion.
- Get sewage out of rivers – discharge to land.
- Sooner the better in terms of getting the crap out of the water.
- Seen serious degradation in water quality in 15-20 years.
- Re-divert Ruamahanga River back into Lake Wairarapa.
- Education/awareness of issues. Riparian planting, wetland restoration.
- Community-driven projects for restoration.
- Fencing waterways.
- GWRC data says there is only place in the Wairarapa not swimmable.
- Waihenga Bridge – 12 years ago everyone swum there. Then people stopped. If wasn't swimmable there would have been signs.
- What is the definition of swimmable?
- The river is not as bad as people think.
- More sampling is needed.
- 1 wire isn't enough to stop stock getting into the waterways – polluting waterways.
- Cattle in the river at the diversion – problem, not swimmable.

- More monitoring stations needed for e-coli – locals could monitor – monitor different points during the year.
- Member of the community had their own water quality tested (south of Waihenga Bridge) and the data says the river is clean. Under the nitrate drinking standards but over for e-coli.
- Discharge to land. The land is owned in Martinborough but it is a recent idea to discharge to land.
- Readings from monitoring are skewed following heavy rain.
- Better definition of swimmable.
- How the river is formed.
- Irrigation.
- Urban metering.
- Planting on banks of the river.
- Subsidies for riparian planting.
- Encourage the use of native plants.
- Encourage Councils to improve wastewater discharge/stormwater.
- Encourage more storage in both rural and urban.
- More publication of appropriate data and readily available.
- More use of bio degradable products.
- Education.
- Community involvement and planting.
- Fish health.
- Data collected both winter and summer.
- When – ASAP.

Q2: What is the fairest way of restricting water use during the summer?

- More available in summer – all community needs change.
- All town water supply/property should be metered (e.g. Masterton) reduce use if metered (30% reduction in Carterton).
- Encourage rainwater tank domestic water storage – urban and domestic.
- Town restrictions on watering – look at how effective they are.
- Water storage – from dams on all sites.
- Practice efficiency.
- Restrict irrigator use in middle of the day and other good irrigation practice – written into consents.
- Efficiency of irrigator installation plus crops that use water better.
- Information and incentives to plant drought resistant species.
- Ways of transfer - Re-think that an individual doesn't own the water – transfer what's not needed – community scheme, pool for the catchment.
- Monitoring of deep aquifer recharge especially.
- Reallocate extra water (put fish back – may lead to expended use).
- Limit intensification.
- Staged restrictions as at present are necessary – including restrictions on bore users.

- Monitoring point at Waihenga manipulated by bulldozer use of GWRC. Automated minimum flow measure at Waihenga. GW staff need to measure in person on a regular basis.
- Incentivising investment of water harvesting over winter – on farm dams/storage.
- Tanks – urban and rural storage.
- Catch greywater and stormwater for irrigation purposes.
- Need proper fines in place so that people don't over-use (allocated amount) – meters in place for everyone (urban and rural) for entire community.
- Irrigation automated but only checked at the end of the financial year – doesn't ensure compliance and not timely enough to protect minimum flows.
- Reduce water use.
- Education – water conservation.
- Majority of groundwater takes unrestricted. Restrict all groundwater use.
- Recycling – reduce, reuse, recycle.
- Monitored by Council – enforcement.
- Monitoring of vineyard irrigation (make it a collective issue).
- Monitoring of all bores/river takes.
- Encourage more storage.
- All towns to be metered.
- Equity in catchments.
- Should people have more rights to water than others?
- Water efficiency – many different options.
- Water allocation relates to soil type and community benefits.
- Monitoring water and nutrient use.
- Incentivise to catch greywater.
- Stored water – offers many opportunities – using river as a conveyor.
- Water races – good or bad. Inefficient but help recharge.
- If you have to pay to pump water why would you waste it – similar to energy use.
- Not enough science to understand lowering of aquifers. Are aquifers connected to surface water? Not proven in some places.
- Some artesian bores have stopped being artesian.
- No one size fits all solution.
- If there isn't water available then new people can't get into those businesses and that's ok. People consider the resources available with land when they purchase it.
- Water storage would change the discussion.
- Already restricting water. That's working.
- Could make water tradable.
- Dam system – big or on-farm would be ok.
- Change the farming system – how much is enough water? Farmers will always want to take more.
- Take water when the flow is high if possible.

Q3: How should we manage rivers to improve natural character while safe guarding community assets, income and households?

- Natural flow levels for drift feeding fish and invertebrates.
- Re-divert the river back into Lake Wairarapa. Flush sediment, cool lake, improve habitat.
- Manage gravel extraction.
- Increase river corridor to allow the river to move without compromising flood protection. Room to move.
- Incentives for farmers to plant wider riparian areas and maintain which helps erosion and floods (right planting and weed control especially important – old man’s beard).
- Not willows, more natives.
- Willows are necessary (but not crack willow) as a short term management tool.
- Restoring wetlands (encourage on farms and in tributaries) – sponge and help flood control.
- Creating wetlands – working as a community.
- Communities working together – get them involved – educate children.
- We need to change from ‘river as the enemy’.
- Stock out and teeth to stop it – Fonterra contract – Beef too.
- Willows may hold a pool (good for cool, deep swimming pools which are fun).
- Manage for well-placed swimming holes for community spirit ‘Every community needs a swimming hole’.
- Keep local input into river schemes.
- Riparian planting.
- Fencing and planting matters.
- Allow for natural movement of waterbodies in certain areas (retire stretches) – widening the riparian margins.
- Monitoring adjoining land use.
- Regulate nutrient loss and chemical use.
- Move towards organics – incentivizing for this use, demand for organic milk.
- Re-divert the Ruamahanga river back into Lake Wairarapa and restore Wairarapa Wetlands and Boggy Pond area.
- Protection for native fish species please.
- Access funding for restorative works – particularly around re-diverting the Ruamahanga River – both public and private.
- Riparian planting – incentivise – currently subsidised. For erosion control – flood protection worked in 2004 floods.
- Fencing to go with the riparian planting.
- Management of trees.
- Keep battens off the main fences and parallel to the rivers – this allows flood water to go over the fences which stay intact.
- This will be affected by climate change.
- Try and preserve the natural character – some areas can be planted, some are for flood protection.
- Some places have crack willow.
- The right kind of bulldozing and only at certain times.
- Gravel extraction – pay to extract?

- Do we want to give away economic activity to go back to the way rivers were in Pre-European times? Environment vs people.
- Identify places along the river which can be natural reserves.
- Farmers are doing a lot of riparian planting already and can have natural character and economic activity together.
- Use of shelter belts.
- Need to preserve investment. Targeted rates on people who are being protected.
- The cut means natural character is already modified.
- Climate change – flooding.
- Councils have more control on building sites.
- Wider buffers adjacent to rivers.
- Managed gravel extraction – take it away from being visual (by bridges). Done with style.
- More balanced river management/bulldozers.
- More dams to catch winter rainfall – for summer use.
- More planting adjacent to rivers.
- Natural character takes in a lot – flows, farm, habitat, sediment, species.
- Direct water back to Lake Wairarapa.
- Community purchasing some property to put back into wetlands.
- Get rid of old man's beard and weeds.
- Honey dew could be a problem.
- Catchment management committee.