

Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee - Community Meeting on WIP recommendations (3)

SUBJECT Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee meeting with the community on their Whaitua Implementation Programme (WIP) recommendations

WHEN Tuesday 8 May 2018, 6:30-8:30PM

WHERE Auditorium, Carterton Events Centre

ATTENDEES

WHAITUA COMMITTEE Peter Gawith, Esther Dijkstra, Ra Smith, Colin Olds, Rebecca Fox, Mike Birch, David Holmes, Phil Palmer, Chris Laidlaw, Aidan Bichan, Mike Ashby

PROJECT TEAM SUPPORT Mike Grace, Natasha Tomic, Caro Watson, Alastair Smaill, Kat Banyard, Horipo Rimene

COMMUNITY MEMBERS 130 members of the community attended the meeting.

Presentation from the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee presented on the contents of their WIP for approximately an hour. The presentation can be found [here](#) or on the GWRC website at: <http://www.gw.govt.nz/ruamahanga-whaitua-process/>.

Break out

A number of blank sheets were put up around the room. People then went to a sheet and wrote down their question for the Committee. The questions are below. The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee then answered a number of these questions back to the whole meeting.

Sheet 1

- How will the WIP balance climate change considerations for maintaining flows with managing for expected extreme flows and weather events?
- How can we provide data that supports decision making at a local scale over time?
- How will the farm plans align/interact with catchment plans?
- How will FMUs be governed?
- How is 90% habitat for torrent fish measurable? How can only one indicator be used for every catchment?

Sheet 2

- Why didn't the monitoring begin four years ago?
- Where are the monitoring points for Upper Ruamāhanga and Waipoua?

- Can we get consent to operate outside the proposed allocation limit?
- Are the category A takes on the Mangatarere affected?
- Where are the incentives for improved what/practice? E.g. consent conditions.
- What are the effects on municipal takes-will they be subject to stop-take?

Sheet 3

- Why 10 years? It is too far away.
- Why 10 years? This is not enough time.
- There must be more to take into account other than the economic argument?
- What can a landowner (not farming) that sees farming properties with stock eroding and accessing river do to change this?
- What subsidies are available for riparian planting?
- Where is Water Wairarapa project in all of this?
- How FMUs are going in catchment community/neighbourly relationships and how are these relationships managed best?
- How much less healthy 70% habitat is to 90%?
- When will we know the nutrient limits for the FMUs?
- How will FMUs be developed so they are 'owned' by the landowners? Wanting to do it is better than being told to do it.

Sheet 4

- Practical/economic maintenance of smaller waterway (water races) when recommendations to fence are in place. Increased weeds/growth is a major issue. GWRC discourages use of Glyphosate weed spray. Mechanical/physical control is extensive. Any suggestions?
- There have been newspaper articles that say the proposed flow reduction will cause problems in Lake Henley (e.g. it drying up in summer). Has this been looked into and can you provide any comment on this?
- Do we know that the financial value of irrigation is \$50million per year?
- Why do we not trap torrent fish and put them somewhere safe?

Sheet 5

- What are district councils doing to move to discharge to land? Why don't urban people want to pay/do something about their own water quality issues?
- Why haven't considered community storage dam under river and lake management?
- If don't meet freshwater objectives what enforcement will happen?
- Need more monitoring of category A takes - how old is the water?
- Does storage option include the big dam sites? What does the committee think about this?
- Why no market based allocation mechanisms considered? Take and discharges.
- In first 10 years on Upper Ruamāhanga lots of monitoring is being carried out, how are the findings of this monitoring being communicated?
- If people want to move to less intensive land use then 20m³-5m³ permitted activity doesn't encourage them to change and give up water.

- What is GWRC recommending farmers do now? Nutrients and water use.

Sheet 6

- Can we have more information on process/cost/detail of category A ground water review?
- What evidence will determine category A or B?
- Why do the 'phase in' times between water quality and quantity of urban and rural differ so much?
- Why are there no industry/commercial reps on the Committee?
- Will there be a 're-balancing' in regard to compliance of 'point discharge' v 'non-point' discharges?

Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee response to questions

- Multiple questions around Category A groundwater.
 - GWRC are carrying out investigations. Checking that cease take will protect the river. Farmers can contact GWRC if they have concerns.
- Multiple questions around water storage.
 - The RWC supports storage generally. The Committee does not think that big storage is the only option. There are other options like storage in aquifers etc. It is not the role of the Committee to say whether the community should support big dam storage.
- What are district councils doing to move to discharge to land? Why don't urban people want to pay/do something about their own water quality issues?
 - The urban community are responsible alongside the farming community. Council's need to increase discharges to land.
- Clarification sought on the change to permitted activities.
 - Permitted activities – allowed to take water for the health needs of people and for stock water over the 5 cubic metres per day.
- Why are there different timeframes for urban and rural?
 - Considered each FMU separately.
 - Some things will take longer to change than others.
 - Time lags for methods to take effect.
 - For water quantity there was consideration of how big is this problem? How long to fix? What are the impacts? E.g. Waipoua has shorter timeframes for changes in minimum flows.
- How can you stop sediment from the Tararua Ranges?
 - We can't control this. 400,000 tonnes comes from native bush. Farming will reduce sediment loss to be less than native forest.
 - Pest control will start having an effect.

- Earthquakes cause sediment runoff. This is a natural process.
- Gravel build up in rivers-should be addressed as this is going to lead to a big flood.
 - The Committee wants to acknowledge the protection of assets, but practices haven't been friendly river management to the environment and need to change.
- How can we provide data that supports decision making at a local scale over time?
 - Supporting freshwater management unit (FMU) based catchment groups. People work out what additional monetary support they need through citizen science.
 - There will be limits and rules that FMUs have to stick within.
 - Within FMU groups, members will have to work together to make change. Some people won't want to engage in this process. There will be a review in 10 years. If the objectives and limits aren't being met then there is the potential for more rules.
 - The Committee acknowledge that it will be hard to work together all of the time. The other option is rules for everyone. People want to try and work together first.

Statements

Chris Laidlaw – Chair, Greater Wellington Regional Council

- An additional phase is needed in this dialogue period – the draft WIP will be made available for comment.
- Where is Water Wairarapa going? The WIP will say storage is important. Putting together proposal to the government. New Plan. Government will not fund new storage. Water management scheme requires more data to be gathered. GWRC needs to get more information out there. Include environmental and social impacts. All councils need to be behind this.

John Stevenson - Representing dairy farmers

- Farmers want to engage with the whaitua process. They desire collaboration.
- Wants the economic impacts faced by farmers to be genuinely considered. By 2040, loss of \$92.1M (based on economic modelling report). This is only a very small amount of the economic loss faced. He believes that economic loss is understated.
- The public is only just engaging so this period should not be rushed.
- GWRC needs to put more work into the category A takes. The process should be delayed until all of the data is understood.
- A dam should be built in the headwaters and release water in times of need.
- Re-charging aquifers is untested and we will not see the benefits within 10 years.
- A dam is needed for long term sustainability. Having increased water storage will not lead to an increase in cow numbers. Planning for the future is important, look to Cape Town for an example.
- He fully supports innovation, but economic viability is needed to encourage innovation.

Leo Vollebregt – Water Users Group

- Acknowledged the protection of farmland from flooding is needed. Alternative management regime will need to be created. This will not be done in time for the WIP but it could be done in time for the plan change.
- Agree with the review of Category A takes that GWRC is undertaking.
- Pleased by the announcement by Chris Laidlaw supporting integrated water management system.
- Bigger storage is needed. GWRC needs to take a bold attitude.
- Putting the Ruamāhanga River back into the lake would have big economic impacts and an alternative is very important.
- Some people will be significantly impacted by the Committee's proposals and they are only just beginning to realise this.

John Booth – Mayor, Carterton District Council

- GWRC has taken 4 years in this process. Farmers have taken decades to develop their businesses. Councils are pushing for wastewater to land. The time to pay is now. Large rate increases are likely.
- Category A users - pleased for 10 years to transition and extra monitoring.
- Encourage people to make a submission on the draft WIP. If people do not engage then they cannot complain.