



Colin Munn outlined how the Scheme operated, the area it covered, the assets covered by the Scheme, as well as the benefits of the Scheme to South Wairarapa.

The elements of the Scheme were explained by Ranjan Cyril, who outlined the main rivers, the diversion and the Barrage Gates. He showed the two main floodways and how they functioned during a flood event, and also how the flood gates operated.

One of the functions of the Scheme is to keep the Lake Onoke opening clear as this is the only opening to the sea for the entire Ruamahanga Catchment. Ranjan explained the method of opening the mouth, when it gets blocked, which involved a digger and a bulldozer.

Ranjan outlined the operation of the barrage gates during normal circumstances, flood events, when the mouth was blocked, and explained the fish passage incorporated into the operation of the gates. The resource consent conditions on the operation of the barrage gates were also explained.

Perry Cameron asked whether the Lake Ferry community made submissions to the original Resource Consent. Ranjan said he wasn't sure whether the Lake Ferry community made submissions, but there was reasonable representation at the review meeting last year.

Colin continued the presentation outlining some of the issues affecting stopbanks, eg the varying standard of stopbanks, the proximity of the stopbanks to the river and the difficulty of moving stopbanks, which in some cases are very close to the river edge. He showed how aggradation and berm build up effect flow and flood management. One way to manage this was to move the flood banks away from the rivers but this came at a considerable cost.

Bernie George said that part of the issue was due to insufficient grazing of some berms and this encouraged the accumulation of debris during floods.

The barrage gates' upcoming challenges were outlined by Colin, which includes the resource consent renewal in 2019, the aging and outdated operational equipment and the renewal of the barrage structure. Other issues which could affect the gates' operation are the impact of climate change, sedimentation and gravel deposition, changing cultural and environmental values.

Emily Greenberg asked how funding was allocated, and Colin advised that the normal annual maintenance funding dealt with the normal operations of the gates. There were reserve funds to deal with flood damage situations only.

Chris Laidlaw commented that the Scheme needed to build "consentability" into its planning/financials.

Ra Smith asked if there was a list of priorities for the various scenarios. Colin responded that a Floodplain Management Plan was needed to cover the full range of plans for the future and what the Scheme wanted to achieve.

Peter Gawith asked if GWRC had information on the sedimentation for all the rivers. Ranjan replied that there was some information available, especially the rivers where cross sectional surveys are carried out regularly.

#### **4. Presentation by Whaitua Committee**

Alastair Smaill, Project Manager GWRC, presented an overview of the Whaitua process, which works on the basis of a community led collaborative process. Alastair explained where the Whaitua fitted into the Regional Plan.

The Whaitua Committee role has a wide breadth. Its task is to produce a Whaitua implementation plan which will contain freshwater objectives, timeframes to put this into place, as well as including non-regulatory matters to achieve freshwater limits. This implementation plan will be incorporated into the GWRC Regional Plan. The Whaitua is currently about 25% of the way through the process of developing the plan. The main task is to implement National Policy Statements in terms of land and water management.

The Committee operates in partnership with tangata whenua, and will develop recommendations guided by the five principles created as part of the Regional Plan Review process.

Chris Laidlaw, Chair of the Committee, said it would be helpful for the Whaitua if people read the draft plan, and note the different timing for including the Whaitua input into the Regional Plan.

Perry Cameron said it needs to be recognised that Lake Onoke is a water body of national significance. It is the life of South Wairarapa on various levels. Ra Smith agreed that Māori believe the Lake was a significant body of water.

Bernie George asked what accountability the Whaitua had in terms of decisions that it made. Alastair said all financial decisions are made by GWRC, but ultimately the decisions must reflect community wishes.

Ra Smith appealed to the farming community to provide input to the Whaitua process because the farmers know best what the situation is on their land. Whaitua needed this to ensure it got things right, and to do some ground truthing also.

The Chair thanked the Whaitua members for joining the Committee meeting, and for their presentation on the work of the Whaitua.

#### **5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Mike Longworth asked if there were any queries and/or amendments to the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2014, taking the Committee through these briefly. There were no queries, and the minutes were accepted.

#### **6. Update of Scheme Works & Last Year's Financial Statement**

Ranjan advised there had been good progress on the Scheme works, and provided the following updates:

- Early work on the Tauherenikau River was necessary because of the weather conditions. However if more work was required later in the year there may not be sufficient budget available to undertake the work.
- Brian Tuckers needs more work.

- Jane Donald's section of the Tauherenikau stopbank has had more slumping which has been repaired, as well as improvements to the spillway. A new stock grazing regime has been put into place to manage this area.
- The Buicks Road property sale has been finalised, however money has not yet been paid as the new titles have not been issued by LINZ. Half of the funds will go to pay Scheme debt.

Ranjan went through last year's financial statement, advising that the surplus has been reduced because of the extra channel alignment work and work on Buicks Road house.

## **7. Whakawhiriwhiri Stream Project Update**

Colin Munn advised that resource consent approval had been granted. The conditions of the consent will be reviewed by the Flood Protection Department. In the meantime the Department is working with landowners seeking access approval and finalising design work.

## **8. Progress with Barrage Investigations**

George Harley said that some of the Barrage Gates equipment is more than 20 years old, and nearly at the end of its life span. Early in the year a high level assessment of the control systems for the gates was commissioned, with provision for future upgrades. This has now been completed, providing a path to the type of technology required. The next step now underway is to prepare preliminary design for the options. A draft report is scheduled to be provided before Christmas. GWRC is looking for a fit for purpose design which will fit with all the requirements of the resource consent, as well as the requirements of Wairarapa Moana.

## **9. General Business**

### **9.1 Ramsar Status Application for Lake Wairarapa**

Mark Lovett said he had attended a couple of meetings to discuss this application. Ramsar status is a status put into place for a wetland to protect wildlife and birdlife/water fowl.

Colin Munn advised he and Ranjan Cyril had attended a meeting of the Wairarapa Moana where the Ramsar application was discussed. He noted that the status gave international recognition to significant wetlands but did not give it any statutory status. This could only be achieved through other planning processes. There are five other wetlands in New Zealand with this status. Graeme Campbell asked the Committee if it would be helpful to invite someone to speak to the Committee to outline the purpose of Ramsar, its vision, what it would mean for the South Wairarapa area.

### **9.2 Asset Condition Rating**

Colin Munn provided the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme Asset Management Report for 2013/14, outlining the assets, the maintenance programme and their condition, as well as the reserves.

## **Resolutions:**

**That the Lower Wairarapa Development Scheme Advisory Committee:**

- 1. Received the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme Asset Management Report for 2013/14.**
- 2. Noted the content of the Report.**
- 3. Confirmed that the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme assets have been maintained to the satisfaction of the Advisory Committee.**

*R Sutherland / M Moran- Carried*

The next Advisory Committee meeting will be scheduled in May 2015.

Mark thanked the farmers, Committee members and GWRC staff for their work on the Scheme.

**Ingrid Philpott**  
Department Secretary, Flood Protection  
Greater Wellington Regional Council

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## **Wairarapa Moana Coordinating Committee meeting**

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015, 10am Featherston Community Centre

**Present:** Ian Gunn, Philippa Crisp, Toni de Lautour (minutes), Garry Foster, Anna Burrows, Aidan Bichan, Mark Lovett, Mike Burtenshaw, Geoff Doring, Porky Sexton, Ross Cottle, Bob Green, Russell Hooper, Perry Cameron, Colin Olds, Ranjan Cyril

### **1. Apologies**

Siobhan Garlick, Jim Law, Heather Atkinson, Colin Munn, Tim Porteous (please contact Tim via phone or email if you have any questions or want to discuss any of the reports under his name)

### **2. Minutes from previous meeting**

- No comments on the minutes

### **3. Update on Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Project**

Activities:

- Anna – some activities that have been carried out that are outside of the Fresh Start project include pest plant management such as willow and alder spraying, gorse & marram control.
- Toni – the training day for volunteers doing the kakahi monitoring went well. People found it a good experience. The actual survey day is 21<sup>st</sup> March. The Wetland Wonders event is this coming Sunday and the committee members were encouraged to attend.
- Perry Cameron – The SWBG are hosting a beach clean-up this Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March. People are to meet at Whangaimoana Beach at 9.30am.

Ramsar update – Ian is awaiting signatures from Haami Te Whaiti, Fish and Game and the Conservation Board; there has been no indication of support from the farming representatives and the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme (LWVDS).

Discussion points:

- people don't understand or are not trusting of the implications of Ramsar
- there is no forum (except via on-line communication) for farmer discussion or to act as a representative
- suggestions that a presentation could be made to the LWVDS board and to call meeting, inviting the farming community
- there may be consequences such as limitations or future exclusions that are yet unknown
- there are examples where consent conditions or rules have been interpreted differently over time and people feel that this could still occur
- Note the Ramsar application only includes land in the public domain ie administered by the Crown, SWDC or GWRC plus an area of Fish and Game land at Simmonds Lagoon.

Philippa reiterated that Ramsar status has no statutory effect– it is about intent to look after the lake. Concerns about Ramsar status have been blurred with regulation, due to current discussion around the draft Natural Resources Plan.

Garry provided the contact details of a farmer who lives near the Whangamarino Wetland Ramsar site. Stewart Barton has been given the details to contact the farmer of interest directly. No feedback has been received on this to date from Stewart.

A question was raised about large fish seen by the Barrage gates – there is an opening at the base of the gates for fish passage. Because of its siting generally only large fish have the capacity to utilise the fish passage. Most of our native fish are small and travel closer to surface, so this doesn't help them. The resource consent conditions were amended some years ago such that the two side gates are opened to coincide with high tide in spring and autumn.

The LWVDS have amended the conditions regarding the operation of these gates during periods when the Lake Onoke Spit is blocked. When the Spit is blocked it is not necessary to open the side gates. This speeds up the lifting of the Lower Ruamahnaga river levels to initiate a new opening at the Spit.

#### **4. Fresh Start for Fresh Water report**

Ian has been going through the required process for being able to have water moved into the edge wetlands (eastern lake)

Discussion points on pest animal management:

- mustelids are targeted because the aim is to protect bittern & spotless crake
- numbers of predators caught continues to be significant
- integrated management is needed
- the effect of rat control using poison on bittern, spotless crake (eating poisoned rats) is not known. The reason the rats are not targeted is so that dead rats are not predated by bird species preventing death from secondary poisoning.
- check the results of other wetland pest management programmes where rats controlled
- Wai Moana is a lot of separate areas and it would possibly more effective to manage the wider area; would need buy-in from the farming community
- Note – the SWBG have a presentation evening where Karen Schumaker, Taranaki biodiversity group is talking about integrated pest management (Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March at Martinborough)

Aidan gave a summary of results of what the constructed wetlands as Kaiwaiwai are achieving.

#### Draft natural resources plan

Ian handed out copies of an email response from Jo Beaglehole in regards to the coordinating Committee comments on the regional plan.

Discussion points:

- What is a water course or a drain? If it's man-made, it's a drain & doesn't need a consent
- There are two definitions in the plan for a water course – therefore confusing
- Wording of “best endeavours” to return fish – uncertainty as to what this means – lack of consistency

- Suggestion made to clear drains now, while the drains are dry?

Two video clips from on farm field days were shown: “Possible new approaches to drain clearing”, and “Fish in drains”. In summary, there is no one answer; there is a range of options for cleaning drains

Discussion re drain cleaning options

- Farmers don’t see any being effective. However, the status quo is not an option
- Question – what is the priority – the economy or the ecology?
- Need clear definitions around being a waterway or drain
- Activities on farms impinge on drains – some cause the growth of weeds
- One set of rules doesn’t seem to fit everyone. Developing a farm plan for each property (determining best production and best conservation) would be the ideal as all farms are different – rather than fixed rules. Best outcome is a healthy economy and a healthy ecology.
- A query about the potential for redirecting money spent on drains for planting alongside drains to prevent weed growth - sediment needs to be scooped out, therefore need to allow for work around growing trees
- This is a catchment problem - sediment going into drains & sediment going out of drains.

6. Wetlands project entrance signs – Garry gave an update. There will be a standard format with different icons for each experience node. Noted Matthews Lagoon has been left off the list of entrance signs.

7. Supporting landscape architecture students during their work at Lake Domain. It was noted by Colin and Russell that the students have produced a wide range of options, not all affordable. However, SWDC are considering how they can implement some of the ideas. It was agreed that over time, Russell would provide examples of the work for the committee.

8. Other issues:

- Perry- asked if there had been any discussion to date on the proposed irrigation project within the Ruamahanga river valley. There hasn’t.
- Perry inquired if GWRC had recovered the range rover which was lost on Onoke Spit recently. He had relayed information to the environmental hotline and had not received a reply. Ian undertook to follow up the matter. *Subsequently Ian had a discussion with Al Cross of Environmental Regulation(ER). Al indicated that ER would recover the vehicle if it resurfaces and that there was no record of Perry’s inquiry. Perry to provide details and Al would follow up this issue.*
- Aiden noted that the Whaitua was in a consultation mode at the moment and encouraged committee members to attend any proposed meetings in their patch. He and Colin are members of the Whaitua. It was agreed that a Whaitua update would be included on the agenda of all subsequent meeting agendas.
- Meeting closed 12:50pm