

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

*Minutes of a meeting of the Waipa Biodiversity Council held in Council Chambers, Waipa District Council, 101 Bank Street, Te Awamutu on Wednesday 19 March 2008 commencing at 10.00am*

---

### **1 PRESENT**

---

#### **Members**

Roy Dench	Chairperson
Bruce Thomas	Waipa District Council
Hazel Barnes	Waipa District Council [from 11.26am]
David Findlay	Whitehall and Te Miro District
Bill Garland	Roto-o-rangi and Karapiro District
Laurie Hoverd	Takepuku and Te Awamutu District
Alan Livingston	Te Pahu and Karamu District
Pieter van Dongen	Koromatua and Rukuhia District

#### **In Attendance**

Tony Roxburgh	Project Manager – Heritage Development and Reserves Planning
Sharyn King	Committee Secretary

### **2 APOLOGIES**

---

Kevin Christie, Alan Hall, Ted Tauroa (non attendance) & Councillor Hazel Barnes (lateness).

#### **Received**

### **3 LATE ITEMS**

---

The following to be discussed as late items –

- Lake Mangahia

### **4 CONFIRMATION OF ORDER OF MEETING**

---

Members agreed to the confirmation of the order of the meeting.

### **5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

---

File: 65-09-05

**Minutes of meeting held on 13 December 2007 were included in the agenda.**

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

Members agreed to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Waipa Biodiversity Council held on 13 December 2007.

### **Matters Arising**

#### **5.1 Heritage Survey**

Tony Roxburgh reported that he has not contacted Jeff Walls at this time, therefore the report regarding the methodology used in Marlborough to undertake heritage surveys is incomplete.

#### **5.2 Workshop**

John Taylor has been contacted regarding the suggested workshop to be held on his farm and he is happy for the site to be used. At this time, John is investigating the species of plant to be used and would welcome suggestions.

#### **5.3 Peat Lakes**

The Council were advised that Roy Dench and Pieter van Dongen have not yet had a meeting with Tony Roxburgh regarding a submission to the Peat Lake Management Plan. A request was made that the minutes be sent out earlier to enable members to complete their duties before the next meeting.

#### **5.4 Road Verges**

Road verge issues were raised. Tony Roxburgh advised he has written to the Group Manager Engineering seeking an opportunity to talk to staff about this and other environment opportunities available. Generally, engineering staff are aware of the problems however, this issue is more about contractors. Contractor employees are often under time constraints and may not be as environmentally aware.

#### **5.5 Weed Invasion of Road Verges**

Weeds are appearing around the road markers in areas subject to continuous spraying. The weeds are prevalent in areas of bare ground with some weeds showing resistance to Roundup. Landcare have developed a mite to destroy bristle grass and Yarnley's Bush was discussed as a possible release site. Trevor James, a Government expert in weeds has put out a booklet that includes pictures to enable identification of weeds and the members felt that it was a good idea to distribute.

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

Roy Dench to obtain copies for the Biodiversity Council members. It was noted that a possible problem will occur at Maungatautari Reserve with vehicles spreading the seeds.

### 5.6 Bristle Grass

Bristle grass is appearing in areas of bare ground, including crop ground and is now a widespread problem. Stock are eating bristle grass at this time, however, it becomes unpalatable when sending flower heads; seed heads at times are at ground level.

This weed is supposed to be an annual so will be under observation by members to verify.

### 5.7 Rubbish on Road Verge

Towards the edge of Hamilton there is a lot of rubbish dumped on the road side and it was decided that Tony Roxburgh would advise McFalls of the Biodiversity Council's appreciation of the job they do. Mayor Livingston advised that they have a regular schedule for the minor dumped rubbish but for the big items Council or McFall's need to be contacted. Deliberate dumping of major items can be followed up if the owner can be identified.

## 6 MEMBERS REPORTS

---

This item enables members to bring up issues in relation to the organisation/district they represent on the Waipa Biodiversity Council.

### 7.1 Bruce Thomas – Waipa District Council

Nothing to report but commented that he would like to make sure that the administration update the list to remove Cr Sharpe and replace with Cr Thomas so that he can receive the agenda.

### 7.2 Mayor Alan Livingston - Te Pahu and Karamu District

The draft Annual Plan has been released for public submission and it was decided that Tony Roxburgh would summarise those aspects of the Annual Plan that relate to the members. The committee will then make submissions in support of what is proposed and/or recommendations for change.

### 7.3 Laurie Hoverd - Kakepuku and Te Awamutu District

#### 7.3.1 Kakepuku

In an update on Kakepuku it was noted that there was a

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

good increase in the interest of people wanting to work on the mountain. In particular, young people and townspeople are showing more interest in being involved.

### **7.3.2 Falcons**

At Hamilton Zoo, the young falcon is growing well and is being cut back on feed as he is now being chaperoned by two females, one released last year and one earlier this year. It was noted that walking groups are great for advocacy and at this time the falcons getting rabbits may be seen. In the South Island, falcons are being used to protect crops of vines although this is a big ask and may have limited success.

It was noted that at this time the falcons have not targeted any native birds although they will target the rosellas.

## **7.4 Bill Garland - Roto-o-rangi and Karapiro District**

### **7.4.1 Effects of Recent Weather**

The dry weather is having a number of effects and some trees planted have been lost, such as some koko on Pirongia and Maungatautari which is disheartening. The streams are getting very low and the bush is showing some signs of stress, in particular ferns are starting to die off the trees.

### **7.4.2 Tradeable Titles**

There have been a couple of instances of issues with tradeable titles where farms are sold and disputes have arisen with the new owners. These isolated cases need to be dealt with by the Waipa District Council. At Maungatautari, the new owner has the inconvenience of the fence while the old owner has the titles. It was noted that the ill feeling caused by this impacts on the credibility of the titles. At the next meeting Tony Roxburgh will present a report on the process involved in the transfer, the registration and the situations that determine titles. It was noted that the landowner has to apply and QE II have to approve based on the ecological value, money available and risks of management including future subdivision.

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

### 7.5 David Findlay - Whitehall and Te Miro District

#### 7.5.1 Walkways

Following a tramp around the Urewas, it was noted that they are in bad shape and that Arapuni Walk was overgrown with blackberries the whole walk highlighting the need for ongoing maintenance of such sites. Appropriate funding should be allocated at the planning stages.

#### 7.5.2 QE II Field Day

The fencing is well underway and plants will be ordered soon from Environment Waikato, the Biodiversity Council have been asked to provide recommendations on suitable plant types. Flyers will be sent out to advertise the Field Day on how to manage a bush. Tony Roxburgh advised that speakers will be on site and tea, coffee and biscuits will be available.

Due to concerns regarding planting in the current weather it was suggested that it be held at the end of May or early June, although frost tender plants would then need to be avoided. As this is a new venture for the Taylor's the species need to be conservative as it is important that it doesn't fail and reduce enthusiasm. It was decided to wait for decent rain before progressing.

Mayor Livingston commented that it was fortunate to have David Findlay & Bill Garland for advice about how to promote the preservation of indigenous bush areas. It is hoped that the workshop will encourage others to retire land and plant natives.

Tony Roxburgh advised that the Maungatautari Ecological Area book was out of print and money was being found to reprint. At only 15-16 pages long and focused on the Waipa District it has a suggested list of things to plant, including things on frost line – really good for people to use as reference book.

### 7.6 Pieter van Dongen

A QE II rep visited with Pieter and a neighbour and an agreement to a covenant was made jointly that gives more clout with Environment Waikato (NIWA to draw planting plan).

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

The stress on willows at Lake Mangahia has delayed the spray until November/December due to the weather effects. Some areas under the canopy have been identified and will not be sprayed by helicopter due to rare and significant sedges that need to be preserved. These areas will have to be manually removed by boring and using poison. The helicopter spraying had good results for Environment Waikato using Roundup on trees with lots of leaves. It was noted that there is an informal local landowners lake preservation group.

### 7.7 Roy Dench - Chairperson

Japanese honeysuckle is an issue on road sides at this time and it was discussed if Waipa District Council could send notices to landowners to remind them of their responsibilities. Although it appears quite pretty and can be easily sprayed, identification is thought to be the key to its removal. It was agreed that photos of the honeysuckle would be taken and articles inserted into the Te Awamutu Courier and the Cambridge Edition to provide identification and eradication information.

Tony Roxburgh commented that the next Heritage Newsletter is in the planning stage and the following issue would be dedicated to biodiversity and would include a piece on weed management.

### 7.8 Dr Bruce Burns – Landcare Research

Dr Bruce Burns has resigned and Tony Roxburgh has approached Shannon Fergie, a Department of Conservation botanist and programme manager for the Greater Waikato, who has indicated her interest in joining the Biodiversity Council.

## **8 WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL - OFFICER'S REPORT**

---

Members received the verbal report of Project Manager – Heritage Development and Reserves Planning.

### 8.1 Maungatautari Reserve

Members were advised of the proposed bylaw, Council Policy of Honorary Rangers, which passed recently and relates to the Maungatautari Reserve.

The Minister of Conservation visited Maungatautari Reserve recently on a favourable day and was well informed on the developments. Trust members impressed on her the money well spent thus far and the need for more funds.

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

### **8.2 Tari Road Developments**

The developments are proceeding including widening of the road, the car park, a bus turnaround, toilets and entrance way which should be finished by the end of the year.

### **8.3 Lake Ngaroto**

Members were advised that Waipa District Council approved the draft Lake Ngaroto plan and this would be open for public suggestion for two months. Suggestions and feedback would be appreciated. It was noted that an environmental awareness day is scheduled on Neil Barrett's farm which would help the message get out into the catchment area.

The University of Waikato is working on lake modelling and nutrient management. It was noted that the land exchange was halted due to the potential change in water levels over the next few years.

### **8.4 Te Tahi Road**

Members were advised of the Te Tahi Road water supply spill 1 year ago when caustic soda got into the stream due to human error (approximately 5,000 litres). Waipa District Council are likely to be prosecuted, have admitted guilt and assembled a conservation package to demonstrate concern which dovetails with the Department of Conservation recovery plan.

### **8.5 Queen Elizabeth II Trust**

The Trust are looking at not funding contributions to the fencing of heritage areas due to pressure on money and tracking. QE II was originally set up to help cover survey, fencing costs and the cost of retiring the land. It was noted that landowners shouldn't make money out of protecting areas.

There is a five (5) year moratorium during which if the landowner makes money, they are required to pay back the funding contribution, however, there is no monitoring.

### **8.6 221 Consent Notice**

There are two options, one being security on title with no subsidy for fencing, and the other being to invest the land to Council to add to reserves. There is a need to make sure the covenant comes through with the change of ownership.

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

Last year 43 – 45 sites were inspected and a formal scheme is being set up to check and protect what is left. It was noted that if a landowner requests information, then a visit from a QE II rep should be arranged. Mayor Livingston noted that the 221 is a big part of the management plan.

### **8.7 Lake Maratoto**

An agreement had been reached as to the buffer margin and a Fund with Environment Waikato towards the work of the fencing and planting.

### **8.8 Matakitaki Pa**

The conservation plan is still being prepared and an extension of \$10,000 has been given. This site is a potential showcase for historical, cultural and ecological values.

### **8.9 Lake Serpentine**

The Waikato Enhancement Trust has provided \$10,000 towards more fencing and this has the potential to be a showcase site. The idea of a pest proof fence has gained some interest from the Department of Conservation. The walking access down Jary Road was discussed which is a 4m margin down the boundary to the lake. There is no parking provision at present although there is a wide road edge; the landowner is not happy for it to be widened although there may be another landowner to target. \$650,000 has been allocated over a five year period but cannot be used for operating costs. The accord parties wish to focus on a couple of properties where the landowner can't refuse the offer, although it is bad timing at present due to the lake edges growing grass. This should be resolved by the end of the financial year.

### **8.10 Kakepuku Mountain**

Council has approved the designation of recreation reserve which will enable the Department of Conservation to reroute the track to the summit. This designation also acknowledges the importance of the area.

### **8.11 Peat Lakes**

The Peat Lakes plan has become operative and a land drainage field day is possibly planned for Lake Cameron.

Landcare Trust provide a booklet on the management of peat lakes highlighting the need to adopt good land management practices.

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

Hazel Barnes entered room (11.26am)

### **8.12 Lake Ruatuna**

The buffer zone is to be established at 50 – 200 metres as drainage activity can occur up to 150 meters.

### **8.13 Heritage Awards**

Waipa District Council's Heritage Awards programme promotes the work that individuals and groups are doing to secure the natural heritage within the district. In January, an advertisement was placed advising that the awards are available, however numbers have been low. A decision is required by the end of April with a presentation at the end of May so there needs to be an increase in promotion with Te Awamutu Courier and Cambridge Edition articles. Also, conservation groups in Waipa are to be contacted for nominations in the five categories e.g. private land owners that have done more than their share.

In time the awards will get their own momentum but need a kick start at the moment. It was noted the Heritage Awards provide a very good public profile and that recipients appreciated acknowledgement.

During discussion on possible names and the ceremony, Lake Cameron was provided as an example of a local group doing the hard graft successfully.

It was discussed that work in progress can be left for other years and the first year is retrospective. It is hoped that the publicity will encourage others within the District.

Members are requested to provide suggestions on names within the next two weeks.

The names of two reps from Biodiversity Council put forward for the Judging Panel are Bill Garland & David Findlay.

### **8.14 Environmental Protection Lots**

The criteria for the environmental protection lots need to be more consistent and Tony Roxburgh requested two members who were willing to sit down and talk through ideas with a District wide perspective about selection criteria and the value of sites. The names of two members from Biodiversity Council put forward for the meeting are Pieter van Dongen and David Findlay.

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

### 8.15 Documents Given to Members

- Landcare Network Day (9 April)
- Peat Lake document
- Heritage Newsletter information of members (to be approved by members)
- Research of value of native birds in NZ to ratepayers

## 9 GENERAL BUSINESS

---

### 9.1 Biodiversity Projects

No discussion.

### 9.2 Peat Lakes Reserves Management Plan

Discussion on proposed policy.

### 9.3 Meeting Programme

Thursday, 2 monthly.

### 9.4 Heritage Newsletter

Members are requested to verify their details.

### 9.5 Workshop

The workshop is to be an information only day on the status of indigenous forest cover including the types of means to secure that land, fencing, planting and re-vegetation, public access and the District Plan regarding Environmental Protection Lots and other incentives and assistance. It was suggested that site preparation be included.

Preliminary visit by the Biodiversity Council to the site is to be arranged. A draft flyer is to be prepared and Tony Roxburgh is to contact Environment Waikato regarding additional support. A suggestion was made that early May appropriate due to Field Days. Date set at 17<sup>th</sup> May. 10am to 1pm. To be confirmed ASAP with landowner.

## 10 ITEMS FOR NEXT WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETING

---

Items for the next meeting to be provided to the secretary 14 days before each meeting. This can be done by writing to Waipa District Council (attention Sharyn King) or phoning her on 07 872 0030 or emailing her on [sharyn.king@waipadc.govt.nz](mailto:sharyn.king@waipadc.govt.nz)

# WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES 19 MARCH 2008

---

## **11 NEXT MEETING**

---

The next meeting of the Waipa Biodiversity Council will be held on 17 April 2008 in the Committee Room, Cambridge Service Centre, Waipa District Council, 23 Wilson Street, Cambridge at 10.00am.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.00pm.