
WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

MINUTES 19 JUNE 2008

1 PRESENT

Roy Dench - Chairperson

Waipa District Councillor, Hazel Barnes

His Worship the Mayor Alan Livingston - Te Pahu and Karamu District

Alan Hall – Pirongia Historic Visitor Centre/Waipā Heritage Council representative

David Findlay – Whitehall and Te Miro District

Bill Garland – Rotorangi and Karapiro District

Ted Tauroa – Arapuni and Wharepapa District

Laurie Hoverd - Kakepuku and Te Awamutu District

Pieter van Dongen - Koromatua and Rukuhia District

Martin Watson – Kaipaki and Cambridge District

Kevin Christie – EcoFX Pest Solution representative

In Attendance

Project Manager - Heritage Development & Reserves Planning, T Roxburgh; Committee Secretary, S King

2 APOLOGIES

Councillor Bruce Thomas (non attendance)

3 LATE ITEMS

The following to be discussed as late items:

- An update on the Lake Ngaroto Recreation Reserve Management Plan was provided by Project Manager;
- Lake Posa, a small peat lake at Koromatua.

4 CONFIRMATION OF ORDER OF MEETING

Members agreed to the order of the meeting.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of meeting held on 19 March 2008.

Members agreed to receive the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 March 2008.

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6 WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL - OFFICER'S REPORT

Report of Project Manger – Heritage Development and Reserves Planning dated 9 June 2008 was included in the agenda.

Project Manager, Heritage Development & Reserves Planning provided additional information regarding the Mangauika Stream Enhancement Project. Information on the first population monitoring and habitat management project for native fish and in particular, short jawed Kokopu was discussed.

The Matakitaki Pa draft Management Plan is still sitting with local hapu for comment and correction.

At Lake Ngaroto, monitoring has shown that the water quality is not up to the standard for recreational use. This is a feature of lowland lakes and nationally addressing water quality issues is getting some traction. The multi-million dollar Government assistance package for the Rotorua Lake is an example.

Lake Serpentine has received an additional \$10,000 from the Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust for planting this year. This will enable the continued planting of *Restiad* species on the Council administered land. The plants will be sourced from the Yates peat management area at Kopuatai in the Hauraki Plains.

The draft proposal regarding Maungatautari Ecological Island Lots have been circulated to affected parties. Four landowners have responded and contact will be made with landowners who have not responded at this time. Tradeable titles works well for protecting areas of bush elsewhere in the District and it is hoped it will provide an incentive to both secure forest within the restoration area on Maungatautari and help resolve issues regarding access for MEIT to maintain the predator proof fence. Other issues raised include: impacts on the capital value of the property should access be granted; and the criteria developed to allocate the entitlements; and whether the entitlement should be realised on the parent property. Mr Tauroa advised that governance structures are being set up by Maori landowners to liaise with MEIT and improve communication channels.

Mayor Livingston commented that transferring entitlements may be a better option for some landowners due to the location of those farms and difficulties with subdivision.

Councillor Hoverd congratulated Mr Roxburgh and all the people that helped to arrange the World Environment Day at Lake Serpentine.

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Members agreed to receive the report of Project Manager – Heritage Development & Reserves Planning.

7 MEMBERS REPORTS

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

7.1 Councillors Hazel Barnes

Underground waterways need more understanding and management along with general water conservation. It was noted that the Ministry for the Environment are progressing national standards for the use of water. This will include restrictions on bore use and if there are no local regulations then the national standards will apply. Background papers are available for members from Project Manager, Heritage Development & Reserves Planning. Mr Tauroa advised of the benefits from installing complete monitoring systems using water flow meters to quickly identify water leaks at the farm.

7.2 Mayor Alan Livingston

The Guardians Establishment Committee will present the vision and strategy to improve the catchment of the Waikato River to the Crown and Tainui on Friday 20 June 2008. An advisory group will be responsible for the Waikato/Tainui area and another advisory group will be responsible for the upper areas of the river. There is a genuine desire to improve the river and this can only be achieved by co-management.

The funding and timing of the programmes, together with collating base information will require a lot of research and planning. Applying the programmes will take some time as dealing with a multiplicity of owners and interested parties along with numerous funding streams will require time and understanding. Nationally, New Zealand is now in an era of universal desire to improve the environment.

During a helicopter tour by members of the GEC, Gordon Blake commented that fifteen years ago the Kingleith water contamination problem was far worse and had improved greatly over that time. The Crown has been strong that the health and wellbeing of the river must take into account healthy communities and acknowledge the economic significance of the areas. The Hydro Dams, acting as sediment traps, have a significant impact on the quality of the river.

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Lake Taupo was the subject of numerous studies in the 1970's on managing erosion, but there is no scientific data regarding stock on streams and riverbanks. It is acknowledged that fencing waterways can have a significant benefit on the quality of the water.

7.3 Laurie Hoverd

Nothing to comment.

7.4 Ted Tauroa

Maungatautari is being used as a liberation site for animals raised in the Auckland and Hamilton zoos, however some public perception is that Maungatautari is going to become a zoo. When the wetland was created and the kiwi with the deformed beak was released, people flocked there to see her. Over time the benefits of having places like Maungatautari will help people overcome the zoo concept.

7.5 Bill Garland

A lot of effort is going into conservation at many levels and what can be forgotten, is that farmers must farm alongside it. Sustainable farming and environmental conservation need to be considered together as profitable farming is a key for conservation spending, and the cornerstone to good land management. There is a significant difference between a committed landowner and an uncommitted one.

Project Manager, Heritage Development & Reserves Planning advised that a sub-committee of the Biodiversity Council to look into the District Plan would be welcomed.

Farming has been impacted on in many ways and this would be an opportunity to highlight concerns. Mayor Livingston advised that concerns need to be balanced between a pristine environment and a sustainable economy. Names put forward for a sub-committee are: Bill Garland, Ted Tauroa, Pieter van Dongen and Martin Watson.

7.6 David Findlay

There have been some incidences of farmers putting stock into areas of bush protected under a QE II covenant due to the drought. The lack of knowledge of the fundamentals by farmers was highlighted. Mr Garland will discuss the non-compliance situation with QE II.

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7.7 **Martin Watson**

Nothing specific to report from his area.

7.8 **Pieter van Dongen**

Grazing in QE II blocks create enormous damage and there is very little benefit for farmers.

Mr van Dongen updated members on the progress with Lake Mangahia. NIWA had produced a management plan identifying action that would improve the lake and surrounding wetland margins. The owners were in discussion with EW and WDC, regarding the implementation of the recommendations made.

7.9 **Roy Dench**

Regarding the Council administered Pine plantation, Mayor Livingston advised that the current policy is to be continuous forestry at this time, although there has been no felling for two seasons. The water catchment requirements take precedent over financial concerns. It must be remembered that some of area planted was good quality farm land and not forest. Council made a decision to buy and plant the area in trees due to provide a long term financial asset.

An overall management plan for the riparian areas of the site would be useful. Project Manager, Heritage Development and Reserves Planning advised that putting forestry back into reserve should be subject to good forestry practise.

Members agreed to recommend to Council to ensure that the management plan is complied especially during the clear felling harvest.

7.10 **Alan Hall**

Nothing to report.

7.11 **Kevin Christie**

Nothing to report.

7.12 **Shannon Fergie**

Not here at this time.

8 CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Outwards Correspondence

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- 8.1.1 Letter of appreciation to Fulton Hogan Waikato Ltd regarding the removal of rubbish in the northern Waipa District.

Project Manager, Heritage Development & Reserves Planning advised that Fulton Hogan have expressed their thanks for the acknowledgement.

9 GENERAL BUSINESS

9.1 Biodiversity Field Day – Debrief and future field day planning

When advertising the next field day, it would be desirable to send the information to the previous participants to maintain momentum and encourage and grow rural interest. Local groups and school newsletters could be used to distribute information and contact names and addresses. A future field day could be held on a weekday as Saturdays are usually busy for many people.

The topic of fencing in different terrain, was popular and should be part of the programme of any future field days. The programme was mentioned as working very well.

The Pirongia area in November was decided as the next field day choice.

9.2 Natural Heritage Awards – Judging and presentation of awards

Despite promotion there has been very little response by the community. There are five categories with a recipient in each category. This is a bi-annual event and the next round of awards were likely to have more nominations. The recipients this year are:

- Lake Mangahia – this is a significant, privately owned lake.
- Mount Kakepuku – has achieved substantial goals in rat and possum control, reintroduction of native species.
- Te Pahu Land Care Group – For landscape improvement along the Kaniwhaniwha Stream walkway.
- Te Miro School – worthy recipients and also the first school to receive the gold ward.
- Out-in-the-Styx Café – for promoting tourism based around natural heritage.

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The next step is the event and Project Manager, Heritage Development & Reserves Planning will commence preparation with the event to be held in late July or early August. Visual presentations and a guest speaker will be part of the evening to generate as much interest as possible.

9.3 Heritage Newsletter – Items for inclusion

Suggestion were provided by members:

- Taylor's Field Day
- Lake Serpentine
- Natural Heritage Awards

9.4 Yardley's Bush – Project progress report and future work

A care group may need to be established to continue with the project as new fencing is required; if land is added to the reserve by adjoining landowners then entitlement would be awarded.

9.5 Natural Heritage Information Handouts: Proposal for the Biodiversity Council to produce a series of information handouts suitable for use by land owners. These could cover topics like: fencing, planting, weed control, pest control in forest and wetland remnants.

Although members felt that these shouldn't be duplicating what is on the market, there is a place for the Biodiversity Council to have handouts relating specifically to the Waipa District. These will be collated into a folder and made available to landowners to lift the profile of the Biodiversity Council. A logo has been created and will be made available to members at the next meeting.

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

11 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Waipa Biodiversity Council will be held on 21 August 2008 in Committee Room, Cambridge Service Centre, Waipa District Council, 23 Wilson Street, Cambridge, commencing at 10.00am.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.25pm.