



Combined Tairāwhiti Regional Freshwater Planning and Waipaoa Catchment Planning ADVISORY GROUPS

Agenda, Minutes and Actions Hui 12

Held at the Rose Room, Lawson Field Theatre, from 9.00am on 20 November 2024

Advisory Group facilitator	Dr Jill Chrisp
Advisory Group members present	Seanne Williams, Colin Kerslake, Mere Tamanui, Alan Haronga, Samuel Lewis, Tim Tietjen, Nick Briant, Taylor Howatson, Hannah Kohn, Leo Kelso, Stan Pardoe, Dave Hawea
Council	Janic Slupski, Ariel Yann le Chew, Paul Murphy, Sarah Thompson, Katrina Ungco, Abi Wiseman, Juliette Gottlieb, Summer Agnew Adele Dawson, Amanda Langley
Apologies	Laura Watson, Stuart Davis, Bella Hawkins, Shanna Cairns, Tim Rhodes, Joss Ruifrok, Grant Vincent, Murray Palmer, George Horsfall, Jacob Harrison, Tash Irwin, Owen Lloyd

Agenda

1.1	Karakia and whakawhanaungatanga <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome• Housekeeping• Minutes and actions from hui #11	9.00
1.2	Legislative Updates	9.10
1.3	Water Security Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Q&A	
1.4	Outstanding Waterbodies	10.00
1.5	Wetlands identification	
1.6	Technical Evidence – next steps	
1.7	Updates on Forestry Plan Change <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land Overlay 3B, Transition Advisory Group	11.15
1.8	Wrap up, next steps	11.25
Lunch		11.30 – 12.30

Supporting documentation

- **Report 1:** Outstanding Waterbodies
- **Report 2:** Water Security Programme
- **Report 3:** Wetlands Identification
- **Report 4:** Summary of Technical Evidence
- **Report 5:** Transition Advisory Group
- Draft Hui 11 minutes

Summary of actions



Future Action *Refer to Parked List for summary



Current task

Notes:

- Each task is allocated a unique identifier e.g. T2 for ease of reference
- The numbering continues from previous meeting minutes

Task	Actions	Responsible	Due
T32	Provide a progress update on Council's Water Security Programme	Freshwater team	TBC - 2025
T33	Provide information on how current Outstanding Waterbodies were selected	Freshwater team	29 November
T34	Seek input from members on Outstanding Waterbodies	Freshwater team	29 November
T35	Provide link to provisional wetland layer developed by Morphem	Freshwater team	29 November
T36	Seek input from members regarding any wetlands that should be assessed for their regional significance	Freshwater team	29 November
T37	Confirm dates for Advisory Group Hui in June – August 2025 (next Hui confirmed for 21 May 2025)	Freshwater team	29 November

Minutes

Karakia and whakawhanaungatanga, next steps

1. The hui commenced at 9:00AM with an opening karakia. Staff noted apologies and outlined housekeeping matters.
2. The minutes and actions for the combined Regional Freshwater and Waipaoa Catchment Advisory Groups hui held on 9 October 2024 were taken as read and accepted as an accurate reflection.
3. Staff recapped the topics covered to date through advisory group hui. The group reflected on the Ka Hao Kupenga framework, noting that the concepts and principles are ambitious and necessary.

Legislative updates

4. Staff updated the group on Government's recent change to the Resource Management Amendment Bill, which stops Councils from notifying freshwater plans until a new National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) is developed, or 31 December 2025 – whichever comes first.
5. The change does not directly impact on this work, as notification of freshwater provisions is planned for 2026. It is important to continue the conversations and research about how we improve freshwater management in a pragmatic way. Staff will keep abreast of Government updates on the next iteration of the NPS-FM.

Water Security Programme

6. Council's Water Security Programme Lead presented on the programme (refer **Report 2: Water Security Programme**) covering:
 - the key challenges for water security
 - work underway by Council to increase water supply and manage demand
 - an overview of the Regional Water Assessment findings and limitations
 - Council's commitment to lead early-stage investigations and canvas a range of options to increase water supply – to then select most promising options.
7. Council is leading a scoping study (desktop exercise) to assess potential sites for dams/reservoirs, and progressing work looking into water recycling / reusing water.
8. In response to a member's question regarding Council's level of aspiration for increasing water supply, the Programme Lead clarified Council's aim to plan for the future (not just current pressures) and noted that funding remains a challenge.
9. Members raised the following points regarding the role of Council in non-municipal water supply:
 - Clarity on Council's role is important, as uncertainty stifles private sector investment.
 - Benefits of Council leading water supply solutions (as is the case in other regions) include economies of scale, cost-effectiveness, and ability to address inequalities in access to water.
10. Staff noted constraints on Council's ability to deliver water supply solutions in terms of funding options and limited ability to move at pace to develop infrastructure. It is likely that Council will be a participant in a wider group of interested parties to deliver solutions and welcomes input from members on solutions.
11. The group discussed re-use of treated wastewater for irrigation, with members raising the following points:

- There is an opportunity for a user-pays model to re-use treated wastewater for irrigation, consistent with approaches in other countries.
 - Re-use of water for irrigation should be considered a longer-term solution rather than a short-term option.
12. Staff noted that the KIWA Group is considering options for the 6 million³ of treated wastewater produced annually. As an export market, the end consumer defines what is acceptable in terms of re-using treated wastewater for irrigation.
 13. Members raised the importance of Kotahitanga, working better together to achieve outcomes, noting challenges with consent processes and communications with Council.
 14. The Programme Lead will update the Advisory Group on progress when the group reconvenes in 2025, and welcomes engagement and information sharing.

Outstanding Waterbodies

15. Staff presented on Outstanding Waterbodies (OWB) (refer **Report 1: Outstanding Waterbodies**), covering:
 - the definition for outstanding waterbodies and the purpose of defining them
 - current Outstanding Waterbodies in the TRMP
 - the current and proposed methodology for defining regionally outstanding waterbodies.
16. In response to a member's question, staff confirmed that current OWB may not necessarily remain on the list.
17. Staff noted that during the development of the current list of OWB, the view that all waterbodies are significant was raised and remains relevant. The purpose of Outstanding Waterbodies is to place additional protections around especially significant values.
18. Staff sought feedback on the proposed value criteria for OWB, with members raising the following points:
 - The rights and interests around whenua māori must be carefully considered, as litigation regarding ownership of the river will have implications for management.
 - Consider how to ensure no more adverse effects from land-use for OWB the Urukokomuka Stream, which is culturally significant.
19. Staff sought feedback on the proposed process for implementing the criteria and clarified that there are no criteria regarding the size of waterbodies that can be considered Outstanding. A member noted the importance of identifying culturally significant values through stories.
20. Staff will seek input on waterbodies to be shortlisted for evaluation outside of this Hui.

Wetlands identification

21. Staff presented on Wetland Validation (refer **Report 3: Wetlands Identification**), covering:
 - Why wetlands are important
 - NPS-FM requirements regarding wetlands
 - Wetland definitions
 - Council's work to date to map wetlands in Tairāwhiti, and the next step to validate mapping
 - Guidance from Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research regarding wetland mapping

22. In response to a member's question, staff confirmed that Council is required to adopt the NPS-FM definition of wetlands (i.e. natural inland wetland).
23. Staff demonstrated Oblique Aerial Imagery to illustrate how wetlands will be verified, noting this is a cost-effective validation method to shortlist potential wetlands from the ~3500 identified from previous work.
24. Members raised the following points:
 - Importance of working closely with mana whenua to validate wetlands.
 - Consider resourcing implications if wetlands will be required to be fenced off. The cost to protect and restore wetlands is significant.
 - Importance of reverting King's Wetland, part of a complex of four wetlands and habitats based at Rototahi, to its original name; staff noted this name change would be progressed with the Waimatā–Pakarae Catchment Advisory Group.
 - Ensure unnatural (modified or constructed) wetlands are considered differently to recognise their purpose.
25. Staff set out the purpose of developing a wetland inventory, and noted Council's intention to consult with appropriate mana whenua prior to decisions impacting wetlands within their area of interest, and with tangata whenua, landowners and catchment groups prior to the public release of Council's wetland inventory.
26. There was some discussion around ways that historic wetlands can be restored, for example through stock exclusion.
27. A member noted the value of the provisional wetland mapping to inform land management. Staff will provide the information to the group.
28. Staff will follow up with the group to seek input regarding wetlands that should be assessed for their regional significance.
29. Members noted that some constructed ponds have essentially become wetlands, particularly in forestry areas, and the important ecological value of spring-fed wetlands.

Technical Evidence – next steps

30. Staff presented on the focus of current and planned technical work to inform freshwater provisions (refer **Report 4: Summary of Technical Evidence**), noting:
 - Importance of a robust body of technical evidence to inform decisions, particularly regarding management of core freshwater issues.
 - Completed and planned technical work regarding water quantity, noting the focus of further work to understand the ecological and economic costs and benefits of different management scenarios.
 - Completed and planned technical work regarding water quality, noting that the Expert Panel for Freshwater Ecology and Ecosystem Health has been established.
 - There are a range of technical projects being progressed over the summer months and in the first half of 2025 to inform freshwater provisions, including gravel management settings.
 - All technical work is expected to be completed around mid-2025 – staff will report back to the group with findings and implications for draft provisions.
31. A member noted their interest in the output of the Expert Panel to address limitations of the NIWA report, in particular the minimum flow being based on wetted width.

32. The same member welcomed a visit to Wi Pere sites to provide an example of solutions to some of the issues discussed including reduce slash and sediment.
33. Staff reported that the first meeting of the Expert Panel for Freshwater Ecology and Ecosystem Health went well, and focused on how the Panel will respond to the scenarios presented.
34. A member questioned if the Waipaoa low flow modelling takes into account groundwater replenishment to the river. There was some discussion around this issue, with staff noting that this is not reflected in the model.

Updates on Forestry Plan Change – Land Overlay 3B, Transition Advisory Group

35. Staff presented on the Forestry Plan Change work (refer **Report 5: Transition Advisory Group**), covering:
 - An overview of the two key work streams
 - Workstream 1: Forestry harvest plan change
 - Workstream 2: Land overlay 3B mapping and wider TRMP provisions
 - The purpose and process for developing Land Overlay 3B (LO3B)
36. A key focus is transitioning the worst eroding land to permanent vegetation cover. This is a significant amount of land, with significant implications for the region. In response to a member's question regarding what this looks like in practice, staff clarified that the Transition Advisory Group is working through options for the transition and developing guidance.
37. Members noted that this kaupapa builds on work already underway by farmers and foresters to manage erosion risk, and the importance of ensuring this work does not inadvertently create other problems (for example, permanent vegetation should be the appropriate species).
38. Staff set out the scope and next steps for the Transition Advisory Group:
 - Term is August 2024 – April 2025.
 - Work is underway through a 'funding sub-group' to explore funding avenues to resource regional transformation.
 - Catchment planning provides a meaningful and achievable scale to deliver change – with work underway to explore the potential of a digital dashboard to inform the transition.
 - Gaining community-wide support for change is important.

Wrap up, next steps

39. Staff set out next steps:
 - Technical work to be completed by June 2025
 - Regional and Waipaoa Advisory Groups to progress four hui in May, June, July and August of 2025 with a focus on draft plan content.
 - Draft plans will be refined based on feedback and finalised by the end of 2025.
40. The next monthly hui for both advisory groups will take place on 21 May 2025.
41. The hui closed at 11.40 with a karakia and shared lunch.