

Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee - Pirinoa Community Meeting

Date: 5 July 2016, 6-8PM, Pirinoa Hall

Committee attendance: Esther Dijkstra, Vanessa Tipoki, Colin Olds, Philip Palmer

Project Team attendance: Jon Gabites, Mike Grace, Emily Greenberg

Public: 35 members of the public were present

Notes:

Q1: What is the fairest way of restricting water use during the summer?

- As an irrigator – how can we increase the supply of water to everyone?
 - A counter question is - What is the balance of more productivity?
 - Is a better question how can we stop draining/restore wetlands
- Can we store the surplus water?
- Surplus dams on farms?
- Can NZ be more efficient in water use?
- Concern that excess water carries nutrients below the root zone
- If we can go to Jupiter , we can come up with answers
- Efficiency can be increased. At home as well.
- Dryland farming can be very successful. Depends on management crop choice.
- Farming is more intensive now which needs more water.
- Minimum standard for quantity should be available. Possibly based on soil type. Determines who needs it.
- Explore on-farm shared storage.
- River management and climate change contribute to availability.
- Efficiency of use and relationship with shutdown.
- Explore re-allocation options based on 'take time'. Eg irrigating at night time to avoid high temperatures and risk of evaporation
- Measurement points need to make sense on a local level (allocated on what flows under the Martinborough Bridge).
- Allocation related to value of land? Soil types, topography, water holding capacity, quantity of land. Not on farm type.
- Promote efficiency.
- Technical support to understand effective use and limit 'over watering'.
- Prioritise uses – human use, household and stock water, wash down – non-negotiable.

Summary

- Should investigate water allocation related to soil type.
- Small blocks – tanks/consented take including water races.
- More research and development monitoring for more effective use in the lower valley. Info on flow rates.
- Opportunity to share water locally supported by better information.
- Local water bank.

Q2: What do we need to do to make our rivers swimmable and how long should it take to get there?

- Timing has to be shared so it's fair for all – This relates to how long it should take to improve quality
- Fish life is abundant
- Treat stormwater e.g. riparian planting, wetlands
- Address urban issues first in conjunction with rural sector – the rural community have done huge amounts of work around improving water quality and there are great expectations on them from many directions. The same cannot be said of urban areas
- Better monitoring locations (avoid salinity effecting chemistry) – water quality tests are carried out at locations which can be contaminated by salt water which could effect results
- Wastewater – comply and monitor resource consents
- Sediment – explore mitigation measures e.g. buffer zones
- Need to know what water quality is now – stop urban wastewater asap (e.g. Lake Ferry did their bit) – stop leaching from farming
- 4 years to reach swimmable – let's make this a priority.
- Need a target. Is it realistic to always have swimmable?
- Need to know when it's safe.
- Need to know how you can stop wastewater – is there enough land? How do you stop leaching?
- How long it takes depends on what needs to be done (budget/business management)
- Think it's already swimmable (in summer)
- What we need to do depends on what's causing it. Timing – sewage consent is 35 years so the rest of us should have the same time.
- Dilution happens now.
- More worried about other rivers – need more water – Turanganui and Tauanui rivers.
- Mary T has written notes: Repair the wetlands within 10 years' time. Spend as many dollars repairing them as has been spent destroying them.
- Want water to be swimmable today.
- All water should be swimmable unless natural disaster.
- Buffer from rivers for overland flow.
- Greater awareness of water quality. Perception of water quality is a significant factor.
- More monitoring required of e-coli to establish swim ability.
- More research and development – what can we do to limit e-coli.

Summary

- Timing - Should be swimmable now
- Timing - Should be based on length of time given to sewage consents (35 years)
- Timing is dependent on the cost of what needs to be done
- More local monitoring to establish swim ability.
- Understand causes of hot spots – wildlife. Do research and development.
- Establish goals – baseline, cause, strategy, and cost.

Q3: How should we manage rivers to improve natural character while safe guarding community assets, income and households?

- Worried when Lake Onoke is opened at early summer and results in dry summer lake levels. Need water in Lake Onoke in summer.
- Review the management of the lake opening.
- Manage sediment going into Lake Onoke. Mud flats are created.
- Logging and regeneration effects on sediment – Turanganui river
- Appreciate stop banks protecting land.
- Concerns about weeds.
- Making requirement/providing guidance for flood protection works. Condition on consents.
- Would like process to prevent deforestation along river banks and in wetlands.
- Are riparian buffers big enough? Consider effects on private property. Need to consider both.
- Should use native species along rivers (could use Lucerne as nursery crop which is cut down later).
- More information to public needed.
- Long raking, cross blading – explore alternatives while safeguarding community and assets.(Q13)
- Endorse future engineering opportunities for floodplain management. Reference and share information. (Q13)
- Channel management and gravel extraction – pay rather than charge, or no charge. (Q13)
- Pest plant removal as a flood management option – willows, poplars, lupin (Q14)
- Sediment control (Q14)
- Planting is a big thing. E.g. Tauanui River regarding pest control.
- Fencing in hills supports natural character. Planting.
- Planting foreshore of Lake Onoke and Wairarapa Moana.
- Prioritise safety.
- A natural characterised river could be dangerous.
- Getting water back through the cut-off without compromising the LV scheme – works perfectly – no going back.
- Enhance what we've got without compromising safety.
- Enhance where possible, include artificial including dams, wetlands. Focus on the river.
- Re-establish and support existing wetlands and plantings that filter nutrients. Open drains are fenced and riparian planting. Sediment traps that enhance the river.
- Closer to populations.
- Stop banks needs to be maintained and channels kept free of sediment – flood management #1.
- Be careful regarding planting around drains.
- Lower valley is how it's always been in our lives.

Summary:

- Existing character keeps us safe and should be retained – flooding.
- There are opportunities for enhancement, redirect cut off, lake edges, spit wetlands, replace willows with natives.
- Prioritise for best result.
- Shingle build up (aggrading) in other rivers.
- More research is needed to guide opening of Lake Onoke.