

Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee - Masterton Community Meeting

Date: 9 August 2016, 6:30-8:30PM, Senior Citizen's Hall, Masterton

Committee attendance: Esther Dijkstra, Ra Smith, Mike Birch, David Holmes

Project Team attendance: Natasha Tomic, Mike Grace

Public: 19 members of the public were present.

Q1: What do we need to make our rivers swimmable and how long should it take to get there?

- Issue – not swimmable.
- Reduce heavy metals (stormwater), cyanobacteria, blue green algae, ecoli 260-540, farming stat?, N&P, human sewerage – estrogen, water quantity, ducks/cod.
- Climate change canvas.
- Flexibility - climate change, drink ability?
- Diffuse run-off – Private (farm plans including riparian), Councils (Catching rain water, riparian), Community (Riparian planting).
- Rivers are being swum in.
- Sub-catchments Waipoua and Taueru are different.
- Staged improvement, ASAP, practical.
- 1st level is education.
- Infrastructure – wetlands. Used for agriculture.
- Wastewater ponds, composting toilets, revolving compost, new models.
- Wastewater – independent assessment of Masterton District Council's WWTP enforcement project.
- Discharge can be noticed by standing on the bridge.
- Approximately 650 hectares of land required for irrigation of WWT discharges.
- Communicating to community what is right/ what we do/ what we need to swim for/ in a simple language.
- Irrigation practices – Mangaterere - Driving through irrigated area, river very low.
- Swimmability is a lot to do with the quantity of water in the river – better management/efficiency practice for irrigators e.g. irrigate not in the heat of the day.
- Metering – residential metering, irrigation metered.
- Economic sustainability – won't be able to continue irrigating.
- More riparian strips 'filter'.
- Less discharge, more water.
- Change single solution mentality.
- Urban and stormwater – better solutions for stormwater treatment.
- Immediate action – less talking more action – it is a journey that needs to start now with some velocity – don't need another 5 years to talk.
- Look for quick wins.
- Is it safe? How does e-coli get in? Cattle, people, sewerage. Identify issues and fix them. Fence cattle out, fix wastewater system.
- Silt not an issue for swimmability.

- Maintain minimum flows to service swimming holes.
- Swimmability is an indicator of a basket of values.
- Awareness has sifted, greater sensitivity.
- Swimmability is seasonal.
- Need to be safe, clean and clear.
- More irrigation of wastewater.
- Better use of existing water.
- What is the state of the Ruamahanga?
- A swimming river is stony bottomed, holes with sufficient water, bank to jump from.
- We're not far off achieving swimmability in the Ruamahanga.
- Not swimmable when high – seasonal.
- Info needed to address and identify issues, stock, ducks, other?
- Other priorities than swimming in all rivers.
- As long as towns are putting wastewater into the rivers then there will always be questions around safety.
- Timeframes for territorial authorities discharge to land too long.
- If every ratepayer put up \$5k it would be done.
- Should wastewater discharge consents be stricter to protect swimmability?
- Mix of scientific and community perceptions that support swimming standards.

Q2: What is the fairest way of restricting water use during the summer?

- Governance question about treating effluent fairly and equitably.
- How to factor in climate change.
- Taratahi training should include water savings.
- All towns metered.
- Bench marking – business, families, farms.
- Historic allocation of water justice and equitable?
- Minimum flows are questions.
- Cut operations that are inefficient.
- Plans – farm designed.
- Education in farm plans.
- Very few farm plans around water – all farmers should have water plans.
- Farmers need assistance – a go to person for advice.
- Governance should provide help.
- Farm consultant can help too.
- Farming needs differ per type of water.
- Summer – need hill country on farm storage.
- More need in flat farms.
- Capturing water – on farm storage – binding to hold water in small units.
- Opportunities in winter to harvest water.
- More wetlands.
- Vegetation that can take less water.
- GM vegetation.

- A lot of work on summer crops.
- Attitude at many levels needed.
- Education in why water is needed – urban.
- Ethos of catching water.
- Infrastructure is the cost.
- Value of the water? What will you pay?
- More research into variability of climates and water need.
- 70 litres per cow per day.
- More needed for irrigation in summer.
- Benefits of irrigation is better feed for longer time.
- Efficiency is varied and can be better.
- Deficit irrigation needed.
- Water tanks could be used in urban areas.
- Better use of water – sewage, grey water.
- Storage time at tanks.
- 1st in 1st served.
- MCI for the catchment.
- Common takes.
- Irrigation efficiency – market forces – if they want to stay in business – sinking lid for existing takes.
- More efficient irrigation research – clear statements.
- Over allocation and global warming – need to do something now.
- Better models the first in first served.
- Stop watering for one day – water meters.
- Education about water use – urban water tanks, incentives for water storage.
- What we use treated water for – separate out greywater.
- Recycled wastewater for irrigation – make regulation easier for it to happen.
- On farm storage – resource consents are too costly and can take a long time. Engineering costly as well.
- Intakes below outfall – makes people think about quality (don't want to use 'not clean water')
- Fragmented management of water races (multiple owners) – aquifer recharge through water races.
- Capturing flood flows – careful about unintended consequences. Most efficient user gets the allocation.
- Existing consent holders – grandparenting not sustainable, not fair and never to the benefit of everybody only for one that holds.
- Fairness – taking water from one catchment to another.
- If aquifers are failing we need to transition to a new system.
- Metering is only one element.
- Allocation must be transparent.
- Merit system – points for best use i.e. drinking water a priority. Different rivers can be 'merited' differently.
- New paradigm might mean that existing water rights cannot be sustained.

- Businesses need to adapt to conditions. Not get allocation as of right.
- Hierarchy of water use.
- Time based allocation to provide for transition of use e.g. crop, process.
- Regulate for greater efficiency.
- Recognise ecological requirement of river as important.
- Debate re: groundwater interaction.
- Farm to the conditions – not high use water models.
- Apply resource to area of biggest benefit based on definition of benefit – dollars, efficiency.
- Address distribution losses (include urban).
- Education and information in effective, efficient water use i.e. water applied where it is needed – not extensively.
- Enabling storage framework at a range of scales – district – farm and communities – recharge.

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

- Concern re: drying of river channels due to flood protection practice.
- Whakamoekau – how will water from black creek be managed to prevent damage to water quality of the Whakamoekau?
- It is important to safeguard the natural character of the river though can't do this everywhere.
- Can't protect property everywhere – where they have been built of floodplains.
- Utilise water harvest to enhance natural character. (Oxbows, recharge, wetlands).
- Widen and allow meanders and slow water.
- Rivers are highly modified and natural character relates to indigenous farm, flora and fauna.
- Must be a better way than current flood plain management practice – natural character is despoiled.
- There needs to be more creativity in management.
- Meanders slow water but creates opportunity to store in wetlands etc.
- Flood protection works. Some is very good.
- Waingawa coming to town!
- More holistic approach to flood management include enhancement as an overview of all catchment needs across GWRC silos.
- Encourage and incentivize development of natural character rather than rules.
- Create buffers, extending stop banks.
- Willows (crack). Managed approach to replacement. Planned and strategic.
- Stop banks are guarding us.
- Flow of rivers being returned but the river temperature is increased.
- Some planting in an enhanced river – less flooding.
- Enhanced character in rivers after removing willows.
- Build a champion community through synergetic education.
- Dynamic nature of rivers needs to be recognised.
- Holes are part of the river.
- Unnatural character is best known.

- What is natural character along a river.
- Rivers do their own things – give space to do their own thing.
- Signposting drains for impact on fish.
- Schools are more involved in ownerships.
- Art works to improve communication.
- Signs worked in Makoura about eels.
- Managing townies to use water.
- More signs about rubbish at rivers.
- Celebrate more at rivers.
- Rates for stop banks to take water out.
- Share ideas wider for leadership in building communities.
- Think long term in change to environments.
- Average IQ of Masterton in doubt because assets are by the water.
- Barefoot world champ. Skiers incentivised through low water character.
- Relationship to the water needs to be recognised.
- Block rock at the river in narrow channels.
- Wide channels have increased temperature.
- Lime rivers were quite cool.
- Lots of trout, but stocked by acclimatisation committee.
- Water quality in an enhanced river is a lot better.
- Aesthetic character is a part of the character of the river.
- Manage retreat of assets from risk – rivers risk assets – intervention needs to be rethought.
- Keep bulldozers out of the river.
- More natural river shape - water would recharge.
- Flooding occurs further down moving your problem from up the river to the bottom. Wider corridor. Leave the bottom alone.
- River management around the world is more sophisticated than what we are doing in the Ruamāhanga.
- Degrees of 'artificiality' in flood management – straight channel, rock groins, creating deeper pools.
- Rivers are currently artificial – enhance pools.
- Need to manage erosion as well – unprotected land needs more planting – manage the catchment. Natural meandering river.
- Different type of tree species in the margins.
- Keeping protecting 'hard assets' (houses) – combination of hard engineering and riparian margins.
- Need to be managing the margins of the river, not just bulldozing the bottom.
- Gravel extraction – in set areas is ok – target areas rather than taking in many places. Affects downstream and what are other alternatives? Old river beds?