

Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Committee

Workshop

14.09.17

5.00 – 9.00pm at Aotea Lodge

Summary

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Overview

Workshop **Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Committee:**

Attendees Barbara Donaldson, Diane Strugnell, David Lee, John McKoy, Richard Cook, Sharli-Jo Solomon, Stu Farrant (Chair), Hikitia Ropata

Apologies: Warrick Lyon, Dale Williams, John Gibbs, Jennie Smeaton, Larissa Toelupe

Project Team:

Alastair (Project Manager), Brent, Hayley, Jon, Kara, Keith, Murray, Nicci, Shelley, Suze, Mike

Others: Ned Norton (Land Water People), Kate Pascall (Wellington City Council), Nicola Etheridge (Porirua City Council), John Gilberd (Wellington City Council)

Workshop The purposes of this workshop were to:

- purpose**
1. Understand the policy framework for managing water takes, the situation for the Whaitua, and discuss and confirm recommendations for:
 - Water allocation limits;
 - Minimum flows, and,
 - Permitted activities.
 2. To review stormwater management policy tools in light of Stu Farrant's presentation on technical solutions for stormwater being used in other parts of NZ and beyond.

By the end of the night we aimed to have:

- Agreed on decisions from the Whaitua Committee in respect of:

- minimum flows;
 - allocation limits, and,
 - permitted activity water takes;
- Made any additions to the policy package for managing discharges as a result of a review of Stu Farrant’s presentation on stormwater management.

Following a robust discussion, Purpose 1 was partially achieved. Recommendations were discussed and further information was requested in order to confirm those recommendations. Purpose 2 was postponed due to lack of time.

Committee decisions and actions to do

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Committee Decisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Committee voiced a general level of support for using 90% MALF as the minimum flow limit. |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Committee requested more information with regard to the proposed 30% allocation limit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project Team to do some more work on what different % allocation limits would like in the whitua. ○ Also, across different types of years (dry). ● Committee requested information about the stressors on tuna health in the Porirua catchment, with a particular focus on the male populations. |

Workshop notes

Session 1 – Welcome, karakia, housekeeping

The workshop was opened by Stu Farrant and a karakia was given by Kara Dentice & Sharli-Jo Solomon.

Session 2 - Part 1: Managing Water Takes

(Murray McLea, GWRC; Ned Norton, Land Water People; Brent King, GWRC)

See presentation <http://www.qw.govt.nz/assets/PRESENTATION-2-water-allocation-23.08.2017-Read-Only.pdf>

Session purposes:

Understand the policy framework for managing water takes, the situation for the Whitua, and discuss and confirm recommendations for:

- Water allocation limits
- Minimum flows and
- Permitted activities.

This session followed on from the previous Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whitua Committee workshop (24th August 2017) at which a presentation on water takes and allocation was given by Murray McLea (GWRC).

Presentation and Q&A session

- Keep the Committee's high level objectives and values in your mind when considering the water allocation material
- MALF = mean annual low flow; this means that in certain times of the year the actual low flow will be less than what is being proposed?
 - The answer is yes, good to look through the graph in the presentation
 - MALF can either be calculated on a daily or 7 day basis.
- Reliability of supply slide - these apply to consented water takes. What about permitted activity takes?
 - Opportunity to recommend we don't set the take as low
 - % of time - not % of take.
 - What about fluctuations between years? The 10%-14%, and 6%-9% are averages over a number of years. Some years will be more time at cease or partial take and some years will be less.
 - Where in the stream do these apply?
 - Options - will flesh this out in following slides
 - Proposing "managing within limits"
 - Currently proposing these limits as a %, but once a decision is made the modellers will be able to produce an actual number (e.g. L/sec) per waterway
 - These % do not incorporate climate change - must consider that reliability will decrease.
- At 89% habitat available, what % of fish population are alive?
 - Difficult to make those links - the population existing at any give time depends on numerous factors (e.g. Passage; flow; habitat; water quality). Need to provide for all of these factors.
- How does MALF change over time?
 - MALF changes every year as new data comes through. Over time, it is expected that MALF will reduce with climate change.
 - So if limits are left as % then each time MALF is re-calculated the limits will be getting smaller. If you choose to express the limits as numbers for each waterway 'today' then that remains that same through time, thereby providing a constant.
 - With numbers, the protection would stay the same. But the takes could reduce with more days per year with restrictions.....could leave to behaviour change though.
 - Got to provide users with certainty.
 - How much certainty?
 - We have to consider changes into the future across many aspects.
 - MALF has been used since the 1980s
 - Big change has been the desired level of protection (e.g. In 1980s the protection level was around 70%)
 - Opportunity now to set levels whilst the protection levels can be so high and the reliability is still good.
- What happens with short term, high use consents impact e.g. Transmission Gully?
 - Consent holders will have to work w e.g. Truck water in if their

- needs are higher than consented amounts.
 - May lead to behaviour changes e.g. Water storage during high flows.
- NPS requires that limits are adhered to i.e. A limit is a limit is a limit
- Hydrograph slide (slide 11):
 - Land owners see a diagram like this, and see the water available (above the red band) they might want to use that?
 - In this example, no. The only water available is the red band.
 - On an individual basis, if your take is more than you need you can use your allocation to harvest.
 - Lifestylers could choose to bring water in if there was a lack? Yes.
- Harvesting water in another way (e.g. Off the roof) would be in addition to their allocation limit. However, this means the water then wouldn't make it into the waterway through groundwater.
- Need to find pragmatic, implementable middle ground.
- Have we done work on increased demand for future consents? Is the pool of takers going to grow?
 - Demand will inevitably grow. Important thing here is that we set a limit which cannot "grow with the demand". Consented water allocation would continue to be first in, first served until the allocation limit that reached. Then, no more.
 - The allocation limits includes all types of take i.e. Consented and permitted activity takes.
 - In some other regions permitted activity takes come with declaration requirements.
- The 90/30 recommendation originally came from a National Environment Standard as a default nationwide standard. Our modellers have taken that and translated that in relation to what it means for Porirua - that's where the the 98% habitat etc numbers come from.
- What is the impact of decisions made by other catchment groups? The drinking water in Porirua doesn't actually come from within the whaitua. Can we tap into other feeds? When Hutt starts setting limits - how will that impact us?
 - That's stored water, but it's not a huge storage.
 - We are reliant on someone else for drinking water supply.

Activity

Committee members were asked to select a waterway and discuss what's important specifically for this waterway in respect of their values and high level objectives which might be impacted by the taking of water.

The Committee was also asked to consider whether the **recommended minimum flow** provided for in the PNRP provided for these? And whether recommended **allocation limit** contained in the PNRP provided for these?

The Committee was to also consider what, if any, other policy measures might be needed to complement these limits in order to manage impacts on values and the long term objectives from the taking of water?

Taupo Stream

- How is the Taupo Stream different from the assumed "mean" stream? Who's taking? What's in it?
- Remember, that the allocation policy is only one aspect to the package
- All the streams across the Porirua whaitua respond quite similarly in terms of habitat protection and reliability (based on Ton's research)
 - Every reach of every stream measured and impacts averaged.

Committee member discussion:

- I'm comfortable with this % of protection across all streams (acknowledging that each waterway will have an actual numerical value).
- I'm happy with 90%. We should have a lower limit than 30%
 - Other Cttee members questioning why?
 - What about having 30% over some of the year, and a lower % over parts of the year when there's less water?
 - Or how the take is broken down into consented vs permitted. More permitted volume leaves less for consented.
- How long can a stream last at 90% MALF?
 - The smaller the amount of allocation means that you aren't reducing the water down near the minimum flow for as long.
- Precautionary approach limits the risk of going too far for too long.
- Some inherent variability across streams, we should base limits on impacts on the the most vulnerable streams
- Suggest we consider a lower limit than 30%.
 - Could we get some more information on this? E.g. What would a hydrograph look like at 25%.
- What is the reason why most of the tuna in the Porirua whaitua are males?
 - An expert would need to answer this. Most likely a range of stressors (quality, quantity etc)
 - Request for more information on male population of tuna in Porirua
- These are all averages - extremes will happen - so whilst 98% may sound high there will be times where this isn't achieved. Implementation is so important.
- This could all go to court. We need a reasonable justification. "Precautionary approach" won't cut the mustard. How justifiable would 90/30 be?
- A 'perfect' system would be clunky and too difficult to administrate. We need to strike a balance between managing this approach and achieving outcomes.
- We are dealing with averages. The real world isn't average - it varies. With streams, if you make an error the effects are significant

and take a long time to recover.

- So you don't think the variability is being captured?
 - No.
- If you make your allocation block too big, it can mean up to a cease take and with the stream being below minimum flow for a month
- RMA is a permissive environment, effects based. There may be a real issue with equity in terms of allocation
 - Existing government is looking at alternative allocation methodologies. Any change in govt would likely do the same. Allocation will be an ongoing debate around equity. There isn't much we can do at the regional level.
 - Any future conversation around allocation is about 'how the pie is cut' not 'how big is the pie'?
 - I think 'First In First Served' is good. If there are opportunities to transfer then fine.
 - What stops someone applying for more water than they need and then sell those rights later?
 - Efficiency ruler in place.
 - Existing users will also have to meet efficiency levels when their consent is up for renewal.
 - Can we alter renewal time frames for consents so limits can be altered through time?
 - Consents already in place can absolutely be changed (they can be renewed and/or reviewed).

Session 2 - Part 2: Permitted activity takes

(Brent King, GWRC)

See slides 15 – 17 of presentation <http://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/PRESENTATION-2-water-allocation-23.08.2017-Read-Only.pdf>

Presentation and discussion

- Theoretical allocation bucket is designed around the allocation level in a stressed period.
- Is there any mechanism to trigger a restriction for the permitted activity takes?
 - Any mechanism would require notification of permitted activity takes from landowners – which is not currently required/
 - When you get to the top of the bucket you can't give any more water - this requires compliance.
 - 5 cubic metres is a lot of water.
- Why do we need "other permitted activity"? Doesn't stock and domestic use cover everything?
 - Great difficulty understanding why anything should be classed as 'other'
 - AI - administrative burden.

- That unknown section is a risk - this is where we could clamp down.
- Could make a land use requirement that a water storage device is installed.
- Firefighting is covered by stock and domestic.
- If intensification occurs and there are a lot of permitted takes, this pressures the system.
 - Often rural landowners want a hook up to urban water.
 - An allocation limit of 30% would not provide water for all this intensification.
- The consented take durations are usually around 5-10 years in length. Nationally they're often 20-30 year. Possible trend in Wellington region to make them a bit longer.
 - The Regional Plan gets reviewed every 10 years - so limits are part of that. Or you have long consents and have review periods.
- How much is the variability of low flow going to change into the future? The variability is likely to increase over time, with climate change etc.

**Permitted takes
key points**

- More information about permitted activities requested.
- Don't want to lose potential consented water through PAs that should really be consented.
- Uncertainty of permitted activity takes is a risk.
- Don't want historical permitted activity takes to impede potential commercial consented takes
- Permission required for installing a swimming pool?
- What would the administrative burden look like if "other permitted activity takes" were removed?

**Session Three
summary and
actions**

- Committee have a general level of support for 90% MALF as minimum flow limit
- Committee requested more information with regard to the proposed 30% allocation limit
 - Project Team to do some more work on what different % allocation limits would like in the whatua.
 - Also, across different types of years (dry).
- Committee requested information in relation to male tuna populations in the Porirua catchment.
- Iwi voiced their struggle to justify keeping a river, a life force, alive by coming up with a number.
 - Hard to separate quality/quantity/flow in relation to the life force

- Alastair reminded the Committee that there will be opportunities to revisit these decisions as the context of other elements is added
- Remember, there are a wide range of tools at the Committee's disposal – not just 90%/30% limit setting.

Session Three – Stormwater Policy Tools

(Hayley Vujcich, GWRC)

Session purposes:

- To review stormwater management policy tools in light of Stu Farrant's presentation on technical solutions for stormwater being used in other parts of NZ and beyond

The Committee ran out of time to undertake Session Three.

Session Four – Any other business

Stu acknowledged Murray McLea's contribution to the Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Committee process. Murray is retiring, his last day at GWRC is September 28th.

Murray – "I've been 35 years in water management. The discussion to me is really reassuring to me - it's difficult and challenging stuff. The biggest changes I've seen is that water management has become community driven - which is a real privilege to me to have worked in this area with this Committee.

Kia ora"

The meeting closed at 9pm.

The next workshop of Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Committee is being held at the Plimmerton Boating Club, 5 – 9pm, Thursday 5th October.