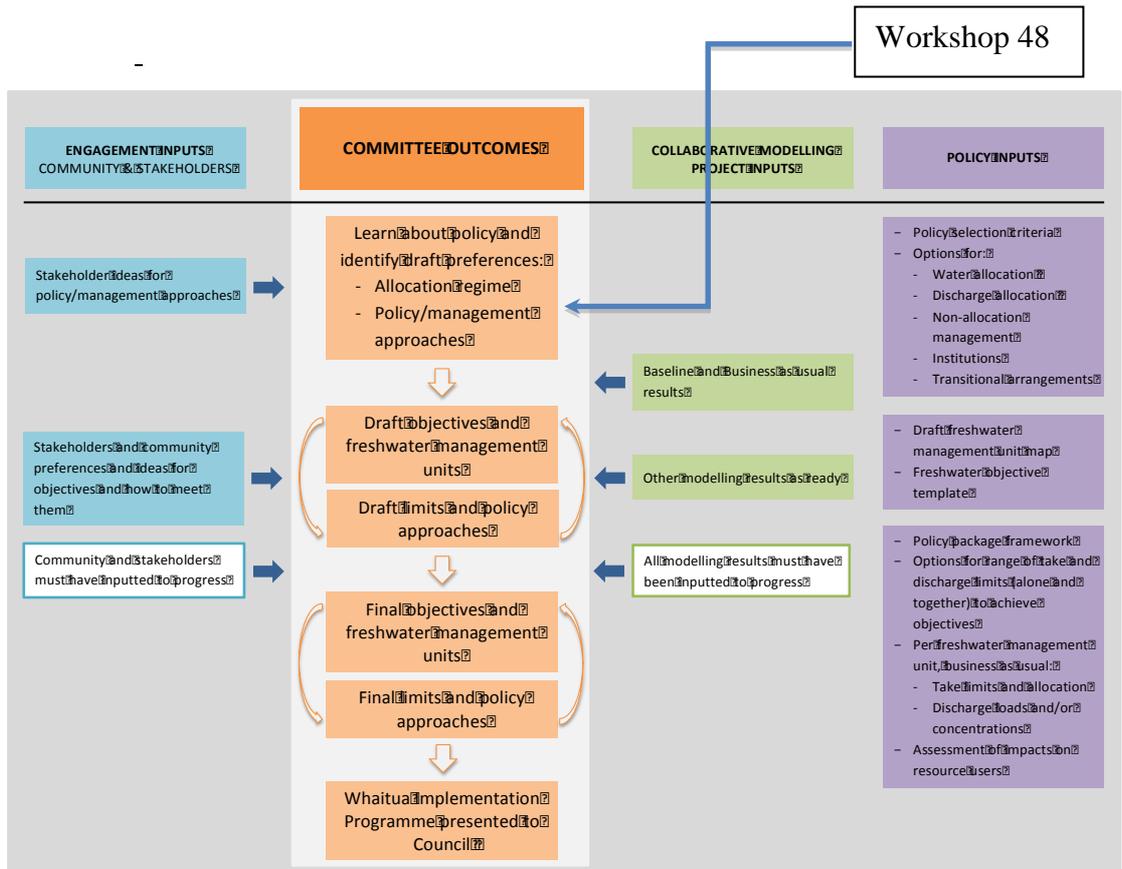


Meeting Notes: Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee

Deliberations Phase 3 – Workshop 48

Monday 4 September 2017, 1:30-6PM

Featherston Community Centre



Summary This report summarises notes from a workshop of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee held 4 September 2017 at the Featherston Community Centre.

Contents These notes contain the following:

- A** Workshop Attendees
- B** Workshop Purpose and Agenda
- C** Workshop Decisions
- D** Workshop Actions
- E** Workshop Notes – Fish and Game Presentation Discussion
- F** Workshop Notes - What happens at minimum flow?
- G** Discussion and decisions – What happens at minimum flow?
- H** Workshop Notes – Table – Flows & Allocation Limits
- I** Workshop Notes – Phasing in of minimum flow changes
- J** Mana whenua engagement preparation

Appendix 1: Photos of Flipcharts

A Workshop Attendees

Workshop Attendees *RW Committee:* Aidan Bichan, Mike Birch, Esther Dijkstra, Andy Duncan, David Holmes, Russell Kawana, Vanessa Tipoki, Chris Laidlaw, Colin Olds, Phil Palmer, Ra Smith.

Greater Wellington Project Team: Mike Grace, Murray McLea, Horipo Rimene, Mike Thompson, Natasha Tomic, Kat Banyard, Richard Parkes, Hayley Vujcich.

Modellers: John Bright.

Independent Facilitator: Michelle Rush.

Apologies: Peter Gawith, Rebecca Fox, Mike Ashby, Alastair Smail.

B Workshop Purpose and Agenda

Purposes The purposes were:

1. Discuss and identify the implications for process and policy packages of prior Fish & Game presentation.

2. Finalise RWC water allocation package with respect to:
 - Minimum flow and allocation table
 - Timing
 - What happens at minimum flow:
 - Category A
 - Water races and
 - Municipal supply.

3. Prepare for upcoming hui with mana whenua.

The purposes were achieved in part. A decision was not reached on Purpose 2.

Some additional agenda items identified were also not discussed. These were:

- Report back on the recent update Esther did to Federated Farmers.
- National Science Challenge – Ra Smith.
- MDC Waipoua water take.

Agenda

The agenda is detailed in the table below.

<u>Time</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>
1:30 – 1:40PM	Welcome (Esther Dijkstra) and Karakia (Ra Smith), Purposes (Michelle Rush)
1:40 - 2:00PM	Discussion about Fish and Game Presentation (All)
2:00 – 2:45	What happens at minimum flow for category A groundwater, water races and municipal supply? (All)
2:45 – 3:15PM	Timeframes for the minimum flows and allocation limits for the 8 rivers
3:15- 3:45 PM	Afternoon tea
3:45 - 4:30PM	Planning for kaitiaki hui on 16 Sept (All)
4:30 - 6:00PM	Other Items
6:00PM	Meeting Close

C Committee Decisions

Committee Decisions

Decisions were reached on the following:

What happens at minimum flow for water races?

Water races are required to reduce their water takes at minimum flow to the amount of water needed to provide water for the health needs of people and animal drinking water.

What happens at minimum flow for municipal supply?

Restrict to health needs of people at minimum flow, except that community water suppliers can take water for industry for a period of seven years from notification of the PNRP – If industry are not aware of this provision then the provision should take effect for seven years from the notification **of the plan change that gives effect to the WIP** – final outcome to be confirmed at next workshop.

Minimum flow and allocation table

All rivers in the minimum flow and allocation limit table were signed off with the removal of the ‘minimum flow 2’ in the table for the Waingawa and Waiohine rivers.

D Workshop Actions

Workshop Actions

The following actions were agreed to:

- Esther to respond to F&G thanking them for presenting to the Committee.
- Check whether industry using community drinking water supplies water are aware of the provision for them to stop taking water at minimum flow from 7 years from notification of the PNRP.
- Any Committee members available on Thursday at 10:30AM to attend meeting to continue planning for the hui with mana whenua.

E Workshop Notes – Fish and Game Presentation Discussion

Overview

Phil Teal and Peter Wilson from Fish & Game (F&G) gave a presentation to RWC members prior to the workshop on their preferences for the future of land and water management in the whitua. In this workshop the Committee discussed the matters raised and their implications for the Committee’s work. Some follow up actions were identified. The notes below set out the key points and the actions arising.

What was of concern from the presentation?

- Narrow focus on what the solution might be (i.e. not looking across the full draft package)
 - ‘Interim’ allocations approach needed in order to ensure ‘maintain’ test at least is met.
 - That they felt they hadn’t been heard.
-

What were the messages for the RWC draft policy package?

- Be very clear the difference between a limit and an allocation, and that limits are required by the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM).
 - That F&G consider all farms can reduce nitrogen leaching by 15% with no change in profitability – but recognise this is better as a target linked to better practice and innovation.
 - Pay attention to stickability.
 - Need to better explain to community how we’ve reached a position – for both each component and the package as a whole.
 - That F&G see impacts on MCI as the driving need for change and that nitrogen is the major attribute affecting MCI thus nitrogen must come down – the Committee recognised that there is disagreement within the science community on this.
 - F&G are ambivalent about water races - black and white idea of what water races are! Minimum flows in the Lower Ruamahanga are just OK.
-

What were the messages for the RWC process?

- Fish and Game want to know what is going on.
 - We need to make sure relevant legislation is covered off.
-

Actions Arising

The following actions were agreed:

- Vanessa requested a web link to the Hearing 3 evidence from F&G on values allocation approach be provided to RWC.
 - Thank you email to F&G to say thanks for participation and point to the way forward – acknowledge confusion. To come from the Deputy Chair.
-

F Workshop Notes – What happens at minimum flow?

Overview

Murray gave an overview of the policy decisions required for what happens at minimum flow for the following:

- Category A groundwater
- Municipal supply
- Water races

A paper on [managing Category A groundwater, municipal supplies and water races at minimum flows](#) was provided in advance of the workshop.

RWC members reviewed the background handout, and identified the questions they had to understand the thinking behind the recommendations. The questions were then worked through and discussed in a plenary session. They are detailed below.

Workshop Notes

The key points from each discussion, and the decision reached are set out below.

Appendix 1 contains photos of the sticky wall and the flipcharts.

Questions about category A groundwater

Q: How do we know if a take is or isn't a category 'A'?

A: Category A is mapped in technical reports.

Q: How many Category A groundwater takes are there? Where are they in the catchment?

A: There are about 150 Category A takes in the valley. Accounts for about 40% of total river depletion and 65-75% of groundwater take by volume (based on daily allocations). Category B is about 15-20% and Category C about 10-15% by volume. The re-categorisation of Category A areas could be looked at in the future but there are no plans currently for wholesale review (noting that a technical review of the Lower Ruamahanga Groundwater Management Zone groundwater classification is underway).

Q: What are the implications of failing to fully restrict Category A takes during minimum flow on the compulsory value - life-supporting capacity/ecosystem health?

A: The effect is already there. The question is what are the benefits you would see from the water being there (when it isn't at the moment)?

Q: What effect would failing to fully restrict Category A during minimum flow have on all the community values? Particularly given climate change.

A: If you don't restrict you would have river levels below

minimum flows for longer. Category A groundwater takes are already affecting surface water users.

Q: Do Category A takes potentially have greater ecological adverse effects for smaller tributaries? If yes, then should we treat them differently?

A: The Committee could have a different recommendation for these smaller tributaries. It could be effects based using the values. That would take into account the higher risks of impacts in smaller water bodies.

Questions about
municipal
supply

Q: How many litres per person per day are required for health needs?

A: Other Councils have guidelines as below:

- MWRC = 300 litres / day
- CDC = 220 litres / day
- Auckland = 180 litres / day
- WCC = 250 litres / day
- Beacon Hills Pathways = 120 litres / day – recommended for new builds.

RWC can decide to put a number in a rule in the PNRP.

Q: Why industry can continue taking water at minimum flow for seven years from notification of the PNRP when irrigators (Category A) have a 50% reduction?

A: This refers to industries that take from community drinking water supplies – mostly industries taking from Masterton drinking water supplies. The rules in the PNRP attempt to get equity. Can we check whether industry has submitted on this rule?

Questions about
water races

Q: What are water races used for now? Do we know? Would this change our view of them?

A: Mainly stock and domestic use. There is some small scale irrigation. Water Wairarapa did a report on water races which might be useful.

Q: How have water races contributed to a reliance on water races at low levels?

A: Water races are an inefficient system. Not equitable for those using water races as opposed to other irrigators having to show efficient use.

Q: Which water races and catchments are most affected by potential reductions in water takes for water races?

A: You would consider shutting down the ones which would give the best effect. Potentially the Waingawa and the Waiohine. Water races are a source of water that feeds groundwater and neighboring small streams.

Q: What happens if the water race dries out because of low river flows?

A: This happens now.

Q: How many people drink water from races?

A: Very few and some have back up supplies. Is there a good reason to continue to support this?

G Discussion and Decisions – What happens at minimum flow?

Discussion and Decisions – Category A Groundwater

The Project Team recommendation for Category A, groundwater was:

- Require Category A groundwater users to reduce water takes by 50% at minimum flows (as required in PNRP) **OR**
- Progressively step down Category A groundwater takes at minimum flows so that in 20 years these users are required to cease completely at minimum flows.

The group that considered this returned with the following recommendation:

- 50% reduction now
- 75% reduction in 10 years
- 100% reduction in 20 years

In the plenary discussion that followed, unanimous agreement was not reached. Key points from the discussion:

- If we're trying to achieve environmental protection then a 50% reduction isn't defensible.
- This reduction is all on the irrigators. The advantage of the 10/20 years is that it gives irrigators time to look for alternatives and fits better with their investment cycle. Storage could be an alternative.
- Surface water takes are already being affected by groundwater takes. Where is the equity?
- Need to consider this in the wider context of the policy package – if this is changed it's all about the allocation and in fact the mitigations in the whole package will help reduce the amount of times the minimum flow is hit. What if other mitigations don't occur?
- Don't we need a regime that takes into account the higher risks of impacts in smaller water bodies?
- Alternative would be reduction of 75% in 5 years and 100% in 10 years.

- Could take out the two timeframes to test with the community – would need to be clear about the effects of the decision and match it to the modelling results and wider package.

NO CONSENSUS REACHED. Potential consensus on general principle to move to completely cease at minimum flow over a timeframe still to be agreed.

Discussion and Decisions – Municipal / Community Water Supply

The Project Team recommendation for community water supply was:

- Restrict to health needs of people at minimum flow, except that community water suppliers can take water for industry for a period of seven years from notification of the PNRP.

Recommendation accepted with the following amendments:

- Check potentially affected industry users are aware of this provision.
- If not this provision should take effect for seven years from the notification of the plan change that gives effect to the WIP.

RECOMMENDATION AGREED

Discussion and Decisions – Water Races

The Project Team recommendation for water race takes at minimum flow was:

- Allow water to be taken at minimum flow as required to provide for human health needs and animal drinking water.

RECOMMENDATION AGREED.

H Workshop Notes – Table – Flows & Allocation Limits

Decisions on table of minimum flows and allocation limits

[An updated minimum flow and allocation table](#) was provided to the Committee in advance of the workshop.

Mike Thompson and the Committee discussed each river individually. Agreement on the contents of the table by done by river.

The column for step down flows – ‘what happens at these flows?’ shows a draft Category A groundwater position ahead of the Committee discussing their recommendation at this workshop.

Kopuaranga – Agreed.

When the water is there why isn't it possible to take more to buffer against the poorer reliability? You can through the supplementary storage rules in the PNRP.

The Committee wants to encourage storage through its recommendations.

Waipoua – Agreed

MDC are applying for a consent at the moment. GWRC staff assessing the consent are aware of the direction of the whitua work.

Waingawa – Agreed with changes recommended

The issue in this catchment is that the combined take of the water race and town supply is a high proportion of total catchment allocation (about two thirds) and much of it can continue to be taken below minimum flows. Discussion with the committee was about how best to reduce takes above minimum flows to give as much effect to the habitat objective as practicable.

Mike Thompson used several [presentation slides to demonstrate](#).

1300L/S is the habitat objectives flow.

1200L/S is the amount allocated (880 of which is town supply and water race).

1700L/S is the management flow at which reductions occur.

1100L/s is the minimum flow in the PNRP

Currently, the 1100 minimum flow is relatively redundant in the PNRP as it does not force any action (1900 and 1700 are the flows in the PNRP that require reductions or cease take).

Committee agreed to remove reference to 1100 (minimum flow 2) and require the most stringent restrictions on public supply and water race to apply at 1700. This was considered to provide a good balance between acknowledging the necessity of town supply and water races to persist at low flows and limiting erosion of the habitat objective.

Upper Ruamāhanga - Agreed

Mangatarere – Agreed

A significant proportion of the allocation goes to the water race. Allocation rate remains unchanged as high allocation is compensated for to an extent by conservative minimum flows that preserve the 90% habitat protection the Committee wants to achieve.

Perception in the community that it's in poor condition because of over allocation so will need to go out to the community with a good

story.

There is a significant trout hatchery there – are F&G likely to challenge? They were involved in the initial development of the plan which set this allocation limit.

Waiohine - Agreed

Same change as for the Waingawa for the same reasons.

Lower Ruamāhanga – Agreed

Tauherenikau - Agreed

Total allocation - Agreed

The Committee previously agreed that the existing use is ok. The higher of the two numbers is used – 8045L/sec rather than 50% of MALF. [Note: Subsequent to this meeting, Council staff came to a view that the whole of catchment allocation value needs to be revisited once all upstream sub catchment allocations are decided because it will be a product of these decisions and may differ slightly from 8045 L/sec].

Note: This interim table is based on a number of values but primarily is about achieving a physical habitat objective. It's not unusual for this work to be based on physical habitat.

Could we look at the indicative framework for water allocation parameters suggested by Fish& Game in their PNRP hearing evidence for hearing 3? Provide better transparency between the regime and the values.

I Workshop Notes – Phasing in of minimum flow changes

Discussion on phasing in of minimum flow changes

The Committee received a background paper in advance of the workshop.

[Progressive implementation of changes in water allocation policy in resource consent conditions](#)

General discussion:

- It's difficult to agree the timeframes without talking about what happens at expiry.
- Concern about saying it will reduce reliability. It would reduce reliability if nothing else was done.
- Concern about the number of people who would be hit with the increase to minimum flows in the Upper Ruamahanga

and a reduction to the amount of category A groundwater they could take at minimum flow. How many people are potentially affected? Split out the policy package by river again to pick up on these types of issues.

- Have the environmental measures been considered in the recommendations in the paper? Or just the economic ones?
- What has been the reasoning for the shorter consents used at the moment and has that been successful?
- Question for John and Natasha and the modelling process – can the amount of water no longer available with increased minimum flows be topped up from somewhere else?
- Need to look at holistic picture to make some of these decisions.

Outcome of discussion:

- Agreed in principle that when there is a big shift in the river minimum flows then allow longer periods with stepped changes.

The recommendations around general changes to resource consents on page two of the background paper were not discussed.

J Mana Whenua Engagement Preparation

Questions identified for mana whenua engagement

Mike Grace talked about the importance of the upcoming engagement and how it was critical to the success of the Whaitua Implementation Programme.

The Committee had been provided a paper about mana whenua values in advance of the workshop.

[Mana whenua values paper](#)

Two meetings have already been held with mana whenua so they understand the policy landscape. Mana whenua have made a significant time investment.

RWC members identified the following questions for discussion with mana whenua at the upcoming hui on 16 September:

- What opportunities could the WIP provide through which they could be engaged with monitoring?
- Their perspectives on the Committee's proposed minimum flows and broader water allocation policy e.g. wanting to achieve 90% habitat retention and consideration of Caleb's

cultural flows.

- Mana whenua already support sub-catchment groups. How would mana whenua like to be involved in sub-catchment groups and what do they think of that approach?
 - How important is approaching it from a catchment wide perspective compared with an issue by issue approach?
 - How can we ensure equity in decisions across the catchment?
-

Process on the Day

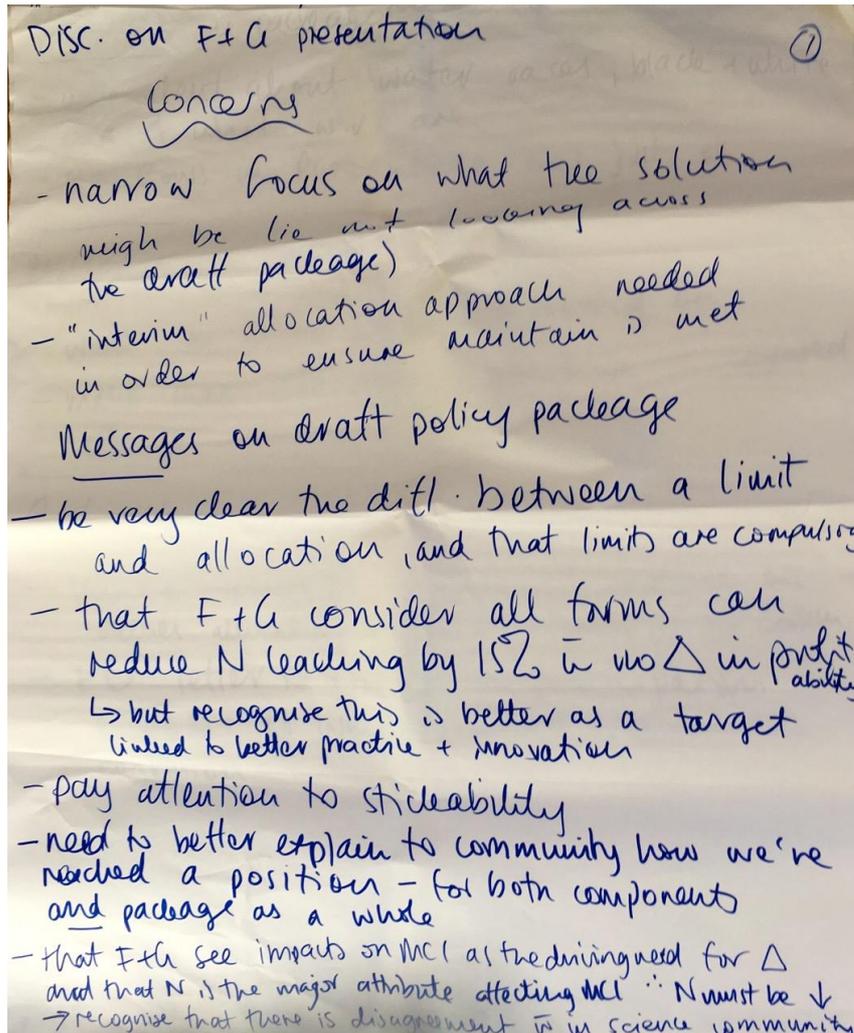
RWC members discussed ideas for the process on the day. The following points were made:

- Small group conversations
 - Circles not tables that separate people
 - Who wants to front?
-

Planning

- A planning meeting is happening on Thursday 7 September at 10:30AM – Ra, Mike, Horipo attending. Philip will attend from the Committee.
 - Kat to resend general logistic information for the hui to the Committee.
-

Appendix 1: Photos of flip charts



Messages on packages

- ambivalent about water races; black + white idea of what w.v. are
- min. rows in Ruamahanga was just ok

Messages on Comm. process

- want to know what is going on
- make sure relevant legislation is covered off

Actions

- Vanessa's request re Hearing 3 evidence on values allocation approach → provide to Comm.
- FU letter to thank for participation + point to way forward → acknowledge confusion

Recommendation Category A glwater.

* ↓^{to} 50% take as required in pNRP

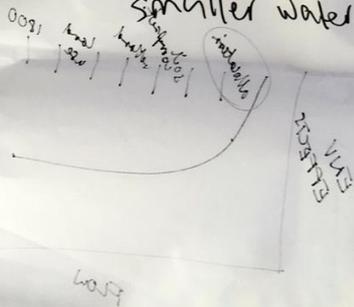
OR

* but what if other (future) investigations don't occur =

progressively step down until cease completely after 20 years.

50% now
75% in 10 years
100% in 20 "

* regime that takes into account higher risks of impacts in smaller water bodies



Rec for Community water Supply

- restrict to health needs of people
- minimum flow

... exception: continue taking water to supply industry for next 7 years.

or start of the plan change

• figure ^{250/300} 100 L / pp / day

water tanks in urban environment

• would an overall guideline proportion be preferable / as well as?

Water rarer

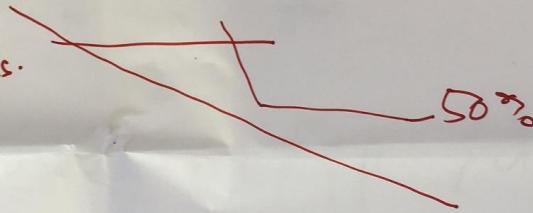
Committee
agreement w/
recommendation

allow to supply human
health needs and
animal drinking water

Agree.
unanimous.

Category A

50% now
75% 10 yrs
100% 20 yrs



* Mana whenua Engagement

What opportunities could the WIP provide through which they could be engaged with monitoring?

* Their perspectives on minimum flows and broader policy e.g. naturalising river management

* How would mana whenua like to be involved in sub-catchment groups and what do they think of that approach?

How important is approaching it from
a catchment wide perspective compared
with an issue by issue approach?

How can we ensure
equity in decisions across
the catchment?

Process on the day

- † small groups and conversation
- † circles not tables to
- † ^{separate} who wants to front

Thursday 10:30am
Ra/Mike / Harpo

Phil

† 11:00am Poudhiri
†

ENDS