

# LAKE ROTORUA CATCHMENT STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP

## Minutes from Inaugural Meeting, Tuesday 6 November 2012, 1-4pm

Venue: Ngongotaha Community Hall (Conference Room), 5 School Road, Ngongotaha

### 1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Tanira Kingi and Arthur Warren got us started with a whakatau and karakia respectively.

Simon Park explained his role as interim chairman until StAG chose its own, and introductions followed:

#### Present

Collective reps: Stuart Morrison, Tanira Kingi, Gisele Schweizer, Robbie Moore, Joanna Carr, Hera Naera

LWQS reps: Warren Webber, Don Atkinson, John Green

Maori landowners: Arthur Warren, Tina Ngatai

Councillors: BoPRC Cr Neil Oppatt; RDC Cr Karen Hunt

Forestry: Colin Maunder (Timberlands)

Maori Trustee: Arapeta Tahana

Small Blocks: Darren Florence (alternate for his VetPlus colleague Karl Weaver)

RDC staff: Paul Skinner, Paul Spurdle

BoPRC staff: Lisa Power, Anna Grayling, Sarah Omundsen; consultant Simon Park as StAG secretariat.

**Apologies:** Wendy Roe (Collective), Kit Richards (PF Olsen/forestry), Karl Weaver (VetPlus/small blocks), Hera Smith (TALT), Liam Dagg (RDC), Ian McLean (LWQS).

Apologies were accepted by consensus. [Simon should have included Warwick Murray]

### 2. CLARIFICATIONS ON MEMBERSHIP AND VOTING RIGHTS

Simon noted that the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) were flexible but that for our own clarity and for any voting we needed to specify (if possible) primary and alternate reps – key points:

- ToR state 12-15 members possible
- 5 Collective primary reps are: Stuart, Tanira, Gisele, Wendy and Joanna; alternates are the other four Collective exec member i.e. Robbie, Tony Cairns, Murray Scott and Hera Naera
- 2 LWQS primary reps: Warren and Don; alternates John Green and Ian McLean
- 1 BoPRC Councillor: Neil Oppatt, alternates Lyall Thurston, Jim Mansell
- 1 RDC Councillor: Karen Hunt, alternate Glenys Searancke
- 1 TALT rep: Roku Mihinui, alternate Hera Smith
- 1 Forestry rep: Forestry have not agreed who the primary member will be. The forestry rep should be a nominee of the NZFOA and the StAG will need to recognise that other (significant) forest interests are also already represented on the Group (i.e. Maori) who are probably not members of the NZFOA. Rep options include Colin Maunder, Kit Richards and Sally Strang.
- 1 Small blocks: Karl Weaver, alternate Darren Florence
- 1 Maori Trustee: Arapeta Tahana, alternate?
- 2 Maori landowner reps: Arthur Warren (Kaharoa Mangorewa Trust) and Tina Ngatai (Ngati Whakaue Tribal Lands), alternate Hera Naera. Plus related discussion:
  - Such reps can only speak directly for their respective trusts, not for all
  - Better to refer to Maori landowners, not iwi as in ToR

- While TALT is a Te Arawa iwi entity, its mandate is specific to the lakes and lake beds, not the land in surrounding catchments. This parallels the shift in emphasis of in-lake solutions to catchment solutions and the associated funding reallocation request to Govt.
- Need to be flexible on this issue and adapt representation if desirable
- Tina and Hera are Collective members too, with Hera an exec member
- StAG “representation” should not be seen as conclusive as any StAG recommendations (especially on RMA rules) will need to go through a separate public consultation process where any party can make their case / submission etc
- Positive to see two Councillors at the table – better than Land Use Futures Board setup
- ACTION: each Group to confirm to secretariat their primary and alternate reps to avoid confusion – this to be done in response to circulating these minutes i.e. confirm or amend names as above.

### 3. SELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Simon called for nominations: Tanira nominated **Stuart Morrison**, seconded by Gisele. No other nominations. Stuart was endorsed by the floor with acclamation! Simon handed chairing over to Stuart.

### 4. WHY ARE WE HERE: SETTING THE SCENE ON WHERE WE ARE AT AND WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

Simon spoke briefly to this, noting:

- We have a large catchment nutrient reduction target – this is challenging and needs wide input to develop solutions that deliver a clean lake and maintain farmer and wider community prosperity
- Members present has worked on developing a collaborative approach, including the stakeholder workshop on 31 August which endorsed setting up a StAG-type entity
- On 28 September the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group formally approved the StAG and its terms of reference
- The StAG purpose is clearly set out in the ToR – to advise on “rules and incentives”, with secondary purposes to facilitate engagement and advise on progress.

### 5. UPDATES FROM STRATEGY GROUP PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

**Funding Deed** – Anna and others noted:

- Cabinet agreed to an Outcomes focused approach in 2011 but placed caveats on changes to significant decisions, specifically the Hamurana wall and sediment capping proposals, hence the need to get a further decision – now scheduled for December, timing up to Govt
- The decision relates to a \$19m reallocation from Hamurana and capping to land-based actions, within the proposed \$45.5m fund approved in BoPRC’s 10 Year Plan (with caveats)
- The decision sought relates to: (i) reallocating \$19m; (ii) multi-year funding; (iii) extend from 8 to 10 years.
- While the original \$9.5m land use budget is in place, including a current year allocation of \$1.7m, BoPRC has advised staff they want a comprehensive package / business case, not one-off mitigation proposals. This has contributed to the deferral of any “interim funding policy decision (at BoPRC’s Operations, Monitoring and Regulation Committee 1 Nov mtg) along with Govt uncertainty and desire to hear from StAG
- BoPRC want staff to come back with a “master plan” after talking to farmers, with incentives integrated with rules
- Acknowledge uncertainty of Govt funding and political risks of precedent, local govt reform, coveting of Tauranga Port shares, regulatory-only approaches proposed for Canterbury, Manawatu and Otago regions.

- Neil noted the perceived cross-subsidisation is modest as 50% of the regional rate contribution comes from a Rotorua-specific targeted rate, plus Rotorua's share of the region-wide 50%.
- Delay allows an opportunity to influence Minister Adams, build a case
- All StAG members are asked to be cautious regarding above until decisions are finalised
- In recognition of uncertainty, please refer to the "incentives fund", not the \$45.5m fund.

**District Plan** - Paul Skinner and others noted:

- The Proposed Plan has incorporated feedback and was notified on 30 October – see <http://www.rdc.govt.nz/our-council/council-publications/Districtplanproposed/Pages/default.aspx> especially Subdivision and Rural chapters
- Submissions are welcome and due by 18 January 2013
- StAG cannot submit but members can in their own name, or group entity
- Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) have been incorporated, and form part of the incentive to change to lower nutrient loss land uses. This is a "starting point" and needs development
- RDC are scheduling open sessions on the plan – see above link – plus the StAG or farmers could seek an additional meeting
- In response to farmer queries about expanding the TDR zones, especially the "donor" zone to the whole catchment, Cr Hunt and Paul noted Council was taking a staged approach to a novel tool and RDC want feedback on this
- RDC have agreed there will be a "rolling review" District Plan approach
- Warren proposed that we dedicate a session to the District Plan and TDRs so we can advise before Christmas – general agreement this should be part of the next StAG agenda for 3 Dec
- John and others sought that the District Plan take an enabling approach to anything that reduces nutrient losses, not just TDRs – Paul confirmed Rural chapter policy is favourable to nutrient reducing activities
- Neil noted that any nutrient reductions from "no cost" land use change (e.g. TDRs) make overall targets more achievable

**Lakes Strategy** – Lisa Power noted:

- RTALSG agreed in 2011 to update the 2000 vintage Lakes Strategy document
- 3 broad themes – Connected (=management); Iconic; Prosperous – linked to goals and targets that apply across all 12 lakes at once
- It will still cover non-nutrient issues like recreational, lake closures etc
- A revised and more concise Lakes Strategy will be submitted to RTALSG in December

Stuart commented that taking a four well-beings approach can influence both statutory RMA processes and non-statutory documents like the Lakes Strategy

**Proposed Regional Policy Statement** – Sarah noted:

- Next Environment Court mediation workshop is 21 November, 10-5, at Princes Gate Hotel, on:
- time frames and what happens at 2022
- Feds will present a case for revisiting the 435 tN/yr target – some discussion on this included:
  - 435 was not appealed because farmers accepted the science. But given the TLI improvement, farmers want to ask if the science still supports 435, and/or are there alternatives i.e. phosphorus control
  - Acknowledge that alum dosing has helped drive the good recent TLI – but not seen as sustainable

- All parties want to proceed on the best science – a meeting has been scheduled for 16 November with David Hamilton, Kit Rutherford, DairyNZ's Tom Stephens, Stuart and others
- Despite timeframe and funding uncertainty, we will still need nutrient rules in the catchment.

## 6. IDENTIFYING THE GROUP'S KEY TASKS, TIMELINES AND MEETING SCHEDULES

The StAG's work must be scheduled to fit with District Plan timing (as above) and BoPRC development of RMA rules (led by Sarah) and incentives/criteria (led by Anna). Anna and Sarah tabled copies of a Gantt chart showing a draft multi-year work programme. Discussion points included:

- Rules and incentives development are integrated, although rules are more time-bound in terms of RMA requirements
- A critical part of the rules is allocation i.e. how does the sustainable 435 tN/yr get allocated across the catchment – as this is a critical and contentious issue, consider dedicating first January StAG to allocation. Simon to give introduction at next meeting.
- Overall it is a busy StAG meeting schedule – more than the 11/12 meetings per year envisaged i.e. challenge re member time commitment, \$30,000 meeting allowance budget
  - Scope to revisit StAG budget if needed
- Need to get up to speed collectively – currently disparity in knowledge of various issues
- Need to table options to achieve 435 target, start with worst case and improve to maintain viability for farmers and wider community
- Tanira noted the Farmer Solutions Project (due 30 Nov) will provide vital info – timely for next StAG
- Benchmarking (BM) update needed – Simon to liaise with BoPRC staff and report back, plus:
  - BM gives a useful total catchment picture, and variability, even if dated
  - Useful to know performance e.g. lower/upper quartile N leaching
  - Highlights problems with grand parenting, no recognition of past actions that reduce nutrient loss
  - Some farmers cannot reduce N loss while servicing a mortgage
  - Each farmer/farm unique
- Want clarity on lifestyle blocks but not assessed (yet) under Rule 11 – considered dubious use of resources given high cost (~\$5k) per BM assessment – also:
  - Many blocks carry winter dairy grazers, some from out of catchment
  - ROTAN assumed similar N loss to drystock i.e. 16 kgN/ha/yr
  - Can RDC advise on “lifestyle” numbers, area? Too much uncertainty.

## 7. OTHER BUSINESS

**Forestry status** – Colin noted that although not landowners, they had interests as leaseholders with multi-million dollar investments, including the Te Ngae nursery and Whakarewarewa Forest (land owned by CNIHL and the forest by Kaingaroa Timberlands). Also:

- Keen interest in allocation and opposed to Taupo style grand parenting.
- Need forestry expertise, including multiple options (species, silviculture, investment structures etc), just as we assess multiple pastoral options – advice from Graeme West
- May need to consider farm forestry interests – quite different from corporate forestry
- StAG has forestry owners, notably Arthur Warren

**Interim funding** – given delays notes above, defer consideration till at least 3 December, possibly 2013

**In-lake options** – Simon noted pre-meeting circulation of grass carp emails and the need to have some forum to address such issues – comment:

- Consensus that such issues are outside StAG ToR
- Desire for information on various in-lake options, including capping and aeration, so that landowners understand the spectrum of solutions and justification of land use focus

**Language and communications protocol** – Raised at Collective AGM and early in StAG formation, noting:

- Respectful and courteous language desirable
- Avoid clumsy terms e.g. turn down the taps, not “off” as latter implies no farming
- Simon to adapt possible language protocol from similar groups, report back to StAG
- Any StAG communications should come from the Chairman, not other members

**Farmer Solutions Project** – BoPRC staff and others keen to see this report - Simon to organise a report for StAG 3 December

**Stream and groundwater data** – Robbie requested update on stream and groundwater trends, monitoring schedule, and alignment with predictions. Simon to check.

**Room and meeting logistics**

- Ngongotaha Hall was noisy from 3pm – check alternatives, including RDC committee rooms
- Minutes due Friday after StAG, papers and agendas to be emailed one week prior to next meeting

**These minutes were revised by Simon Park 27 November 2012**