

Minutes for Lake Rotorua Catchment Stakeholder Advisory Group 22 October 2014

Rotorua District Council – Council Committee Room

1061 Haupapa Street, Rotorua, 9:00 am start

Chair: Tanira Kingi

Present:

- Collective members: Stuart Morrison, Jo Carr, Wendy Roe, Gisele Schweizer, Tony Cairns, Neil Heather, Christine Paterson, Hera Naera
- LWQS: Don Atkinson, Warren Webber
- RDC: Cr Karen Hunt
- TALT: Roku Mihinui
- Te Arawa land owner members: Te Taru White, John Fenwick, Clinton Hemana
- Small Blocks: Karl Weaver
- BOPRC: Cr Neil Oppatt, Anna Grayling, Sarah Omundsen, Stephen Lamb, Sandra Barns and Lisa Power
- Others: Simon Park (StAG Secretariat), Ben O'Brien (Beef + Lamb NZ), , Cr Arapeta Tahana, Lee Matheson (Perrin Ag), Gloria Zamora and farmers: Trish Hosking, Don Love, Sharon Love, Gina Butterworth, RF & PG Kean.

Action summary

1. Tanira Kingi: Begin process for two additional members on StAG
 2. Anna Grayling: Begin process regarding potential support person for iwi.
 3. Hariata Ngatai: Look at processes to further engage Te Arawa landowners.
 4. Sarah Omundsen: Present revised Farm Nitrogen Plan requirements to next StAG
 5. BOPRC managers: work with communications on better ways to engage with small block owners
 6. Simon Park: liaise with Andy Bruere on implications of a phosphorous limited lake.
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Item 1: Welcome, Karakia and Apologies

Chairman Tanira Kingi welcomed StAG members and attendees and Te Arawa landowner Clinton Hemana opened with a karakia.

Apologies for absence: Ollie Parsons, Gwyn Morgan; For lateness: Ben O'Brien, Giselle Schweizer, John Fenwick and Sandra Barns; For leaving early: Hera Naera

Motion: Apologies approved. Hemana/Roe, CARRIED
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Item 2: Minutes of previous meeting (16 September 2014)

Motion: Approved 16 September 2014 Minutes. Hemana/Roe, CARRIED
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NB: These minutes follow the agenda order, even though items were rearranged on the day.

Item 3: General business items to add

- a) Karl Weaver: resignation
 - b) Stuart Morrison: Acknowledgement of the current state of the lake
 - c) First Mover Strategy and Farmer advisory services – added to Item 7
 - d) Support for Māori Land Owners: to be covered after Item 6.
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Item 4: Current dairy farm nitrogen losses

- a) Lee Matheson of Perrin Ag discussed the findings of the Lake Rotorua SFF Project, comparing current N losses with historic levels (latter based 2001-04 Rule 11 benchmarks). This analysis is based on the 15 dairy farmers that volunteered farm data as part of the SFF and related projects, including the Farmer Solutions Project. Lee's presentation can be found here http://www.rotorualakes.co.nz/StAG_2014.

b) Discussion points:

- i) The study covered roughly half of all dairy land in the catchment.
 - ii) Farmers at the beginning (mid-2000s) were mainly reducing nitrogen losses due to other drivers, such as reducing farm input costs. Now N reduction choices are much more deliberate.
 - iii) Most dairy farms in catchment have reduced their N discharge since 2004.
 - iv) Forage cropping N losses are even greater in version 6 of OVERSEER® than previous version. A reduction in crop area appears to be a major driver of lower overall dairy N losses. Additional factors are reduced N fertiliser use and higher productivity per cow.
 - v) OVERSEER® version 6 increases in N losses (compared with version 5) are mainly due to improved science around the drainage sub-model – this has particularly affected drainage on pumice soils.
 - vi) Using version 6, average N loss across the 13 assessed dairy farms was 77 kgN/ha/yr in 2001-04; now it is 71 kgN/ha/yr.
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Item 5: Starting point options for NDA allocation

- a) Sarah Omundsen gave a presentation based on the pre-circulated paper. Feedback was sought on the position that will be used when determining the Nitrogen Discharge Allowances:
 1. Clarifying the starting point for getting down to the allocated NDA
 2. Determining the land use of a property when allocating a sector based NDA
 3. Determining whether allocation is based on effective area or total area.

Note that all properties over 40ha have been benchmarked and therefore 2001-04 is a logical starting point for those properties. The challenge is to establish a starting point for properties between 2 and 40 ha in the Rotorua catchment.

b) Discussion Points:

- i) Using averages on properties will not work if horses have a similar nutrient discharge to cows.
- ii) It was suggested that those landowners who have reduced on their properties should be given preference over farmers who have ignored it.
- iii) We have all lived in a capped environment under Rule 11 and are moving to another lower one.
- iv) A grouped approach was suggested: properties under 2 to 40 ha be split e.g. 2-5 ha, 5-10 ha and 10-30 ha.
- v) Given the inconsistencies with Overseer® 6, version 5 will continue to be used in draft policy work until the bugs in Overseer® are fixed.
- vi) The annual lake load RPS target is absolute at 435 tonnes of nitrogen. While the Overseer version change gives greater root zone N losses, there is no additional N entering the lake i.e. the increase is accounted for by natural attenuation between the root zone and the lake. Attenuation needs to be understood better.
- vii) Farmers want their environmental work done thus far on their farms to count toward their reduction requirements and not BOPRC's.
- viii) Suggested that the line needs to be drawn in situations where nothing has been done to the land. If capital has been invested to produce a business there is a true loss from mitigation work, but this isn't the case for land without stock i.e. people who have retired land are not the same as those who haven't done anything on their land

The Group specifically discussed options related to the three items that Sarah sought clarification on. Concerns were raised that agreement on the second item (determining land use where allocating a sector based NDA) could be seen as predetermining an allocation decision, and was therefore deferred to a later date.

Recommendation:

That the starting point for getting down to the Nitrogen Discharge Allowance will be the property benchmark. Where no benchmark exists the starting point will be nitrogen loss associated with 2010-2013 activities.

Item 6: Key messages from draft rules consultation

- a) No discussion given extension to consultation deadline.

Item 7: Incentive Scheme Update, First Movers Strategy and Advisory Service**a) Incentive Scheme Update - Stephen Lamb**

- i) There were 39 applicants and an independent firm is helping to select the board.
- ii) Board interviews are completed and will be confirmed on 30 October.

- iii) 1st Board meeting will be meeting in early November.
- iv) The scheme operations details are still being discussed.
- b) **First Movers Strategy** - Anna Grayling
 - i) All those interested in moving early on mitigation can speak to Council now.
 - ii) It is acknowledged that there are risks in moving early
- c) **Advisory service** – Anna Grayling
 - i) Tenders have closed for advisory service and Council is evaluating tenders now.

Item 8: A “solutions” event for early 2015 - Warren Webber

- a) Initial positive discussion on 15th October with Grow Rotorua, Anna Grayling, Tanira Kingi and Simon Park, with an agreement for Warren to update StAG
- b) 2 day symposium suggested: 1st day on land management options; 2nd day on land use change opportunities
- c) Several StAG members agreed that conversations need to start shifting to solutions.
- d) Suggested that we should look at recent local case studies on solutions.

Item 9: Updates - All updates maybe found on website.

- a) Land Technical Advisory Group - Simon Park
 - i) 1st meeting was 8th October 2014
 - ii) Multiple science and economics work topics suggested by Land TAG members.
 - iii) A prioritisation exercise will take place with BOPRC staff and LTAG members.
 - iv) Next LTAG meeting 26th November
- b) Catchment Economic Analysis progress - Sandra Barns
 - i) The project is progressing well and there has been good farmer participation
 - ii) A scheduled meeting with Rabobank will discuss debt servicing.
 - iii) The district wide analysis will take account of all sectors including a sensitivity analysis around tourism impacts.
- c) Section 32 progress - Sandra Barns
 - i) Beca is leading the s32 and has been provided with numerous reports and a data census. Beca will not compile new primary data.
 - ii) A summary of consultation feedback will go to the Section 32 team and StAG.
 - iii) Next s32 meeting will be 30 October.
- d) Farm Nitrogen Plans - Sarah Omundsen
 - i) Note a name change from “Farm Nitrogen Plan” to “Nitrogen Management Plan”. The working party has met twice and a revised FNP requirements was circulated to them 16th October.
 - ii) Draft FNP requirements will be presented at the next StAG meeting.
- e) Nitrogen Allocation Workshop - Warren Webber
 - i) Scheduled for 11 December 2014 – this will review previous NDA consideration by StAG, feedback received through the consultation and hopefully some preliminary catchment modelling results.
 - ii) Attendees (15) invited include some StAG members, external experts and staff.

Item 10: General Business

- a) **Karl Weaver Resignation** (NB this was discussed at start of meeting):
- i) Karl Weaver put in his resignation from StAG due to outside pressures, including:
 - His view that the StAG member “shoulder-tapping” appointment process is flawed, especially given the numbers and diverse make up of small block owners
 - Many small block owners only recently became aware of and angry about the draft rules. Some blamed StAG and Karl’s role as their “representative”. Some felt BOPRC was shifting the onus for the draft rules to StAG despite StAG being limited to advice, not decisions, and the restrictive Terms of Reference.
 - ii) Resignation was tabled by Chair and the role of StAG was clarified:
 - StAG only makes recommendations to Council, StAG does not make the rules.
 - Members of StAG were appointed and not elected.
 - There is no mandate from outside groups.
 - iii) Chair Tanira Kingi suggested that the resignation not be accepted.
 - iv) Karl received overwhelming support from the other members of StAG as to his contributions to the meetings and that it would be a huge loss to the group should he step down.
 - v) Sharon Love, a local deer farmer, requested a seat at StAG for the deer sector.

Recommendation: That two additional members be added to StAG, being one additional small block member and one new deer sector member.

Action: Tanira Kingi: To begin process for two additional members on StAG.

- b) **Māori Landowner Support** - A request was made for additional support for iwi. There is a concern that are not receiving the level of information needed to make decisions and that consultants are making decisions for Māori landowners. Marketing to iwi needs to be looked at in a method that the content is understood. Request from Council for support as Simon Park does for the Collective.

Action: Anna Grayling: Begin process regarding potential support person for iwi.

Action: Hariata Ngatai: Look at processes to better engage Te Arawa landowners.

- c) **Engagement** – Noted that dairy farmers are well engaged; large dry stock farmers are reasonably well informed; more work is needed for the under 40 ha landowners.
- i) More farmers and landowners are now engaged due to draft NDA numbers coming out i.e. they can visualize how they will be affected.
 - ii) The Collective does not feel the current communications plan is working well.

Action: BOPRC managers: work with comms on better engagement with small block owners

Recommendation: Additional resourcing is provided to reach all affected landowners.

d) **Lake Rotorua TLI** – Stuart Morrison noted that Lake Rotorua has now met it's target TLI for 3 years in a row.

- i) Farmers would like a clearer science explanation of why this has occurred, plus:
- ii) What does a P limited lake mean for catchment N and P targets and how does that affects the potential rules?

Action: Simon Park: liaise with Andy Bruere on implications of a phosphorous limited lake.

e) **StAG Review** – Tanira noted the recent Strategy Group discussion that given rules notification was delayed, it was logical to also delay the review of StAG.

Meeting close 12:20.