

## **JOBS FOR NATURE**

# **Horowhenua Freshwater Management Unit Water Quality Interventions**

## **Levin community meeting**

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022, Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō, Levin.

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## **NOTES**

**In Attendance:** Eloise and Gerry Barrett, Keith and Deb Mann, Peter and Deborah Feary, Deanna Pakai, Parekura Macgregor, Trevor Hinder, Frits and Lia Van Geldorp, Donald Hayes, Noel Procter, Ray and Frank Myers, Ken Archer, Mary Dacombe-Bird, Glynn Berry, Craig Krad, Bernard Long, Graham Lindsay, Charles Rudd, Brenda Sullivan, Viv Bold, Vivienne Taueki, Claudia Mason, Phil Stevens, Gemma McKay, Bep Knuvers, Gary and Susan Moss, Geoff Ritchie.

### **Horizons staff:**

Logan Brown, Charlotte Minnis, Lizzie Daly, Craig Columb.

### **Supporting:**

Cr Sam Ferguson, Cr Emma Clarke.

### **Welcome**

Logan welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **Introduction and Oranga wai: (Lizzie Daly)**

- Oranga wai is about community vision/s and values for freshwater management and planning (regulatory and non-regulatory actions) to work towards achieving those values and visions.
- The presentation outlined the changes in the RMA and National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management and Horizon's responsibility as environmental regulators to incorporate these changes into our Regional Plan to improve freshwater quality in the region.

### **Questions and comments:**

- There was a question around why the Oranga Wai presentation contained no coastal sites. **Response:** Lizzie clarified that Oranga Wai and the changes in the NPS-FM only consider freshwater and not the coastal environment. There is data for the coastal beaches available through the contact recreation monitoring programme which can be found on the LAWA website. Horizons does also monitor a number of coastal and estuarine sites on a monthly basis for the State of the Environment monitoring programme.
- There was some concern that the Horowhenua catchment is sitting in D Band for a number of freshwater attributes and yet we can still choose to exempt this area from national bottom line targets due to the NPSFM exemption clauses. **Response:** Lizzie confirmed that while Horizons can

choose to exempt the Levin growing area that this is a process that is still being worked through and a decision has not yet been made.

- There was a further statement on this topic that we are allowing the further degradation of freshwater to suit the market gardeners.

**Response:** Lizzie clarified that there are multiple contributing factors impacting freshwater in the region. Although horticultural land use is having an impact, there is also a dry stock, dairy stock and urban contamination influencing water quality in the catchment.

- Vivienne Taueki felt that Tamarangi hapū had not been consulted on Oranga Wai and requested further discussion with Lizzie in this area.

**Response:** Lizzie to follow up with Vivienne.

- Charles Rudd – why am I not on the governance group for the wetland project? **Response:** Logan addressed that this question is not relevant to the Oranga Wai presentation.

Key issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of hapū consultation.</li> <li>- <b>Action:</b> Lizzie to follow up with Vivienne Taueki.</li> <li>• There is some concern among members of the community that the market garden exemption is going to mean that water quality in the Horowhenua catchment is going to remain degraded.</li> </ul>



### Horowhenua Wetland Project: (Logan Brown)

- Update on the Jobs for Nature work in the Waiopahu catchment to date.
- Background to the wetland complex project, project partners and the selection of the constructed wetland complex site.
- The phases of the wetland complex construction and the environmental outcomes that the wetland is going to achieve for Lake Horowhenua.
- The wetland complex is one part of our freshwater management/interventions required for Lake Horowhenua and its catchment. A number of interventions will be required to restore the health of Lake Horowhenua.

### Comments/Questions

- There were some concerns that the landowners on Hōkio Sands Road had not been approached through landowner letters for consultation around the Horowhenua wetland complex project. **Response:** Those neighbours directly bordering the proposed wetland complex have been sent letters. Affected landowners were identified based on proximity to the proposed wetland location, and geological features of the area. Based on the topographic maps most of the Hōkio Sand Road community is at a higher altitude and quite a distance from the wetland complex site and were therefore not considered to be surrounding landowners. Due to the keen interest in the project from residents on Hōkio Sand Road the commitment was made that landowners on Hōkio Sand Rd will now be included in project update letter circulation (to be dropped into mailboxes along Hōkio Sand Rd).

- There was a suggestion that Kohitere stream, which is being reinstated as part of the wetland project, historically ran in Lake Waiwiri. **Response:** There is no historical or topographic evidence that this was the case as the water would have to flow in an uphill gradient to reach Lake Waiwiri. If information exists to support this please provide this through to the project team.
- There was concern that the input from the Hōkio Road drain (also referred to as the Racecourse Drain) into the Arawhata Stream and Lake Horowhenua was not being addressed in the current design. **Response:** The water from this drain will receive less treatment than the waterways that enter the property higher in the catchment. However, it will still receive treatment as it enters the Arawhata Stream above the current sediment trap. In the conceptual design, the Arawhata Stream will be pushed the entire way around the current sediment trap resulting in further denitrification and contaminate removal. Therefore, the inputs from the Hōkio Road drain will still receive some treatment before entering Lake Horowhenua. Further information needs to be collected around what contaminants are present in that drain when it is flowing. The design team also acknowledges that the community are concerned about the impact of industrial inputs in the drain and will take that into consideration when working through the detailed design process.
- The project team were also informed that Horizons have historically diverted water into this drain and the flows have increased significantly. **Response:** The design team will look into this historical work.
- There is a general concern that other major inflows that are contributors to the pollution of Lake Horowhenua are not being addressed such as the Patiki stream. **Response:** The Horowhenua Wetland Complex project is one initiative being used to improve the water quality of Lake Horowhenua. The design team recognise that the Horowhenua Wetland complex will not in isolation restore the Lake and that there are other inputs to the Lake that are affecting the ecological health of the lake. The Horowhenua Wetland complex is one intervention that is part of a larger body of work addressing the freshwater quality issues in the Waiopahu Freshwater Management Unit (FMU).
- The level of sediment in the Hōkio Stream and behind the Lake Horowhenua weir was mentioned and the design team have noted these concerns but also acknowledge that these issues sit outside the purpose of this consultation which is focused on the conceptual design Horowhenua Wetland complex project. The design team understands that sediment is a major issue within the Lake Horowhenua catchment and is having impacts within the Lake and Hōkio Stream. The wetland has been designed with the reduction of sediment input from the Arawhata stream in mind.

- There was some discussion around the level of treatment that the wetland will achieve at different levels of flow. **Response:** Wetlands are less efficient in high flow events and the project team have requested that further modelling is completed to give a better idea of what this loss in efficiency is. At mean flows the wetland is modelled to be highly efficient at removing nitrogen and suspended sediment.
- There was a brief discussion around the consenting process and the timeframes for consultation/notification of the consent. It was stated that "notification is not consultation" and that the community would like to be given sufficient time to process and comprehend the consent application for the Horowhenua Wetland complex.
- The most pressing concern from the community is around potential impacts of the Horowhenua Wetland complex on surrounding landowners. There is a concern that the wetland will cause increased groundwater levels and surface flooding. **Response:** The impact on surrounding landowners is at the forefront of the design process and is being thoroughly investigated.
- Is the wetland just a big project to appease the horticultural growers? **Response:** There are multiple contributing factors impacting freshwater in the region. Although horticultural land use is having an impact, there is also dry stock, dairy stock and urban contamination influencing water quality in the catchment.
- **Noel Procter** – What is happening with the purple loosestrife growing around lake? **Response:** Logan addressed that question falls outside the scope of the Horowhenua Wetland complex project but Charlotte will pass the enquiry to the plant biosecurity team.
- **Vivienne Bold** – the groundwater issues are being caused by the development higher in the catchment. The houses are putting pressure on the groundwater table and is causing water to be pushed up.
- The wetland planted by DoC is causing the flooding of properties on Hōkio Sand road. **Response:** Although this is outside the scope of the Horowhenua Wetland Complex project Logan will look into the DoC wetland and any potential issues it could be causing on Hōkio Sand road.
- **Donald Hayes:** Horizons altered the sediment trap when they took ownership of Geoff Kane's property and this has caused the flooding on Donald's property and surrounding land. **Response:** Logan clarified that the farm is still a functioning dairy farm and that no changes have been made since Horizons took the farm over. The flooding this year has been

particularly bad due to multiple extreme weather events and an exceptionally high groundwater table.

- **Charles Rudd** – Where are we sourcing the plants from? **Response:** Plant sourcing is something that will be confirmed in the detailed plans but they will be sourced locally/ecosourced.
- **Vivienne Taueki** – how much did we pay for the farm? **Response:** \$6.75 million.

Key issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of consultation of Hōkio Sands Road residents.</li><li>- <b>Action:</b> Hōkio Sands road will now be included in the landowner update letter circulation. Previous letters to be circulated to mailboxes on Hōkio Sand Rd.</li><li>• Hōkio Road drain pollution and lack of treatment in the current design.</li><li>• The impact of the Wetland Complex on the groundwater table and surrounding landowners. The concern that the wetland is going to cause flooding.</li><li>• That the wetland will not address the sediment issues in flood flow events.</li></ul>