

## MINUTES

SUBJECT **Meeting Minutes: Review of Ecological Assessment for Western Rivers Resource Consent Applications**

WHEN Wednesday 1 November 2017, 2.00pm – 3.45pm

WHERE Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC)

ATTENDEES **For GWRC Environmental Regulation:**  
Alex James (EOS Ecology)  
Kirsty van Reenen (GWRC, Environmental Regulation)  
Doug Fletcher (GWRC, Environmental Regulation)  
Michelle Conland (GWRC, Environmental Regulation)  
Anna Martin (GWRC, Environmental Regulation)

**For GWRC, Flood Protection:**  
David Cameron (Stantec)  
Tracy Berghan (GWRC, Flood Protection)  
Sarah Bevin (Tonkin and Taylor)

FILE NUMBER WGN130264, WGN130303, WGN140054, WGN150094

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### 1. **Welcome**

#### 1.1 **Introduction**

Everyone introduced themselves and explained their role.

#### 1.2 **Purpose of meeting**

We discussed the purpose of the meeting and agreed that it was to work through the table attached to the further information request which set out the points raised in the latest peer review of the ecological assessment in the application.

### 2. **Further information request table – dated September 2017**

The points below (a to am) relate to the points outlined in the further information request table (available at <http://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Resource-Consents/Western-Rivers/Table-further-info-request-EOS-Ecology-Sept-2017-Western-Rivers.pdf>).

#### 2.1 **Hutt River**

- a. NRWQN and GWRC SOE data. It was agreed that providing this information would not add value to the assessment of environmental effects. No further information required.
- b. Bluegill bully:

- The applicant agreed that there is further information available on bluegill bully and will provide this information in the response to the further information request.
  - With regard to bluegill bully spawning the applicant stated that because spawning is so widely dispersed in both space and time it may not be especially sensitive to localised short-term disturbance. The applicant agreed to a one-off study on bluegill bully spawning in the Hutt River. The results of the study would be used to inform the next review of the Code of Practice and constraints calendar. The applicant will propose consent conditions and a timeframe for the study in their response to the further information request.
- c. The applicant is to contact Fish and Game and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and seek to obtain information and statistics on commercial and recreational fishing. Any information obtained would be provided by the applicant in their response to the further information request.

## 2.2 Otaki River

- d. The applicant will enquire as to whether the vegetation information for the Otaki River Estuary will be updated during the review of the Otaki River Floodplain Management Plan. The applicant will provide a response to this concern in their response to the further information request.
- e. The applicant agreed to a one off study into the presence and abundance of freshwater mussels in the Waimeha River and tributaries of the Otaki River within the consent application. The results of the study would be used to inform the next review of the Code of Practice and GIS platform. The applicant will propose consent conditions and a timeframe for the study in their response to the further information request.
- f. The applicant has the trout drift dive data for the Otaki River and will provide the information in their response to the request for further information.
- g. The applicant agreed to update the Code of Practice to include operator education and procedures for identifying and protecting native macrophytes.
- . As above, the applicant will contact Fish and Game and MPI with regard to information and statistics on commercial and recreation fishing in the Otaki River. The information will be provided by the applicant in their response to the request for further information.
- h. The applicant will provide a response to the concerns about effects on the wetland and lagoon system in their response to the further information request.
- i. It was agreed that providing further information on the hyporheic habitat would not add value to the assessment of environmental effects and code of practice.

## 2.3 Waikanae River

- j. The applicant confirmed that there would be no work in the Waikanae Estuary which would result in vegetation removal. As such, no further information on the vegetation in the estuary is required.
- k. The applicant would contact MPI and Fish and Game to seek further information on commercial and recreational fishing and provide this information in their response to the request for further information.
- l. The monitoring undertaken by Te Ati awa ki Whakarongotai may have been for the Jim Cooke Stopbank consent. GWRC, Environmental Regulation will source the results of this monitoring.

## 2.4 Wainuiomata River

- m. The applicant would contact MPI and Fish and Game to seek further information on commercial and recreational fishing and provide this information in their response to the request for further information.

## 2.5 Code of Practice

- n. With regard to trout spawning periods, GWRC Environmental Regulation will continue to work with Fish and Game to determine what this period should be.

With regard to native fish, the applicant will talk with Alton Perrie in GWRC Environmental Science about the spawning periods and whether a key period can be applied which protects all species. The applicant will provide a response in their response to the request for further information.

- o. The applicant will check the inanga spawning restriction areas proposed in the resource consent application against the areas in the Proposed Natural Resources Plan and provide a response to this question in their response to the request for further information.
- p. The applicant will provide a constraints calendar for the Waikanae River in their response to the request for further information.
- q. The applicant will look at flood protection works which have been undertaken over the last 5 years and provide an assessment in their response to the further information request. The assessment will identify whether a site specific management plan would have been triggered for each piece of work and whether any changes to the triggers for a SSMP are proposed to address the concerns raised.
- r. The applicant will update the Code of Practice to include the requirement for a spill kit.  
  
The applicant will provide information about the wash bays at the Flood Protection depots in their response to the request for further information.

- s. It was agreed that there is no need to include district plan and Department of Conservation information on significant vegetation in the Code of Practice.
- t. The applicant will update the Code of Practice to make the ambiguous wording more directive.
- u. The applicant will provide further details on how the process for identifying opportunities for environmental enhancement will be undertaken and who will be involved to address the concerns raised.
- v. The applicant will add additional adverse effects and mitigation measures in the code with regard to stranding and relocating fish and megainvertebrates (koura and kakahi) and also check that this is covered off for all the activities.
- w. The applicant address the concerns raised regarding channel maintenance through updates to the code of practice.
- x. The applicant address the concerns raised regarding river mouth cutting through updates to the code of practice.
- y. As the point regarding restoration management plans was raised by the Department of Conservation the applicant will discuss this point with DoC.
- z. It was agreed that providing further information on the hyporheic zone would not add value to the assessment of environmental effects and Code of Practice.
- aa. The applicant will consider making the code of practice clearer about where measures will be implemented to mitigate for habitat loss for specific activities.  
  
GWRC Environmental Regulation will provide the applicant with some examples of where this has been used in other resource consents.
- ab. The applicant considers that the site specific management plan and Code of Practice are tools best kept separate. The applicant will provide a response in their response to the request for further information.
- ac. The applicant will consider the intent of the proposed triggers and responses and whether alternatives to 'statistically significant' need to be considered.
- ad. The applicant will fix the link.

## 2.6 Environmental Monitoring Plan

- ae. The applicant will provide a response to these concerns in their response to the further information request.
- af. It was agreed that the Wainuiomata River did not need to be included at this stage but there is the ability to include it at a later date.

- ag. The applicant will provide a response in their response to the further information request. It is likely that small patches of vegetation will be addressed through the terrestrial vegetation removal trigger and site specific management plan.
- ah. The applicant will discuss the frequency of inanga spawning habitat monitoring with Alton Perrie and will address these concerns in their response to the request for further information.
- ai. Macroinvertebrate monitoring is included in the site specific requirements but not in the baseline monitoring. It was agreed that there is enough information on macroinvertebrates so it doesn't need to be included in the baseline monitoring.
- aj. The applicant will address the concerns raised regarding habitat assessment in their response to the further information request.

## 2.7 Other

- ak. The applicant is currently undertaking an assessment of environmental effects on coastal activities.
- al. As above. The applicant will address these concerns in their response to the further information request.
- am. The applicant will discuss the management of pest plants directly with the Department of Conservation.

## 2.8 Conclusion

Alex James mentioned that Waikato Regional Council (WRC) has a similar consent framework to what GWRC Flood Protection are proposing and have a dedicated ecologist to assist with their monitoring requirements. Alex suggested GWRC Flood Protection would benefit from talking to WRC about their experiences. Alex has provided details of the WRC contact to GWRC Flood Protection via email to Tracy Berghan and David Cameron.

Meeting minutes will be made available to submitters.



**Kirsty van Reenen**

Senior Resource Advisor  
Environmental Regulation

Attached: Further information request table dated September 2017 available at <http://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Resource-Consents/Western-Rivers/Table-further-info-request-EOS-Ecology-Sept-2017-Western-Rivers.pdf>