

NORTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

Minutes of the Pouto Catchment Group meeting
Sub-Committee of the Environmental Management Committee
held at the Te Kopuru School,
Monday, 9 February 2015,
commencing at 7pm

Present:

Cr Graeme Ramsey	Northland Regional Council
Aleesha Bennet	Waikaretu Marae - Local Iwi and Hapu
Florence Thompson	Pouto Topu A Trust
Bruce Griffin	Northland Regional Council
Rawson Wright	Representative of Te Uri o Hau
Allister McCahon	Dairy farming interests
Chris Biddles	Dry stock farming interests
Logan Forrest	Public Position
Jock Wills	Public Position
Andrew Knock	Forest & Bird
Wayne Graham	Forestry
Peter Bullen	Forestry

In Attendance:

Mark Schreurs

Kaipara District Council

Natalie Blandford

Northland Regional Council

The Interim Chair (Rawson Wright) declared the meeting open at 7 pm.

KARAKIA MIHIMIHI Rawson Wright

Rawson Wright welcomed everyone.

Item 1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Henry Holyoake, Henry Kemp, Sheree Marlow, Tokorua Leaf, Ngareta Richards and Mikaera Miru.

Item 2 Minutes accepted

The minutes of the Pouto Catchment Group meeting held on 10 November 2014 were accepted with the correction that Barbara Searle be added to the list of members of the lakes planting working group.

Hence The Pouto Catchment Group establishes the following members as the Pouto Lakes Planting Working Group:

- Barbara Searle
- Wayne Graham
- Aleesha Bennet
- Logan Forrest
- Gary Treadgold
- Andrew Knock
- Mikaera Miru - to be confirmed

Matters arising from the Minutes

Decided that the role and responsibilities of the Pouto Lakes Planting Working Group will be revisited at the next meeting.

Action: Existing terms of the Pouto Lakes Planting Working Group to be circulated.

By acclamation, Allister McCahon was added to the Pouto Lakes Planting Working Group

Hence The Pouto Catchment Group establishes the following members as the Pouto Lakes Planting Working Group:

- Allister McCahon
- Barbara Searle
- Wayne Graham
- Aleesha Bennet
- Logan Forrest
- Gary Treadgold
- Andrew Knock
- Mikaera Miru - to be confirmed

Jock Wills reported on his approaches to local farmers requesting they share their bore, lake level and rain gauge data to feed into the studies being done. He has had little success.

Logan Forrest has had more success and has a map of bore locations.

Action: Logan to provide his map of bore locations to Bruce Griffin.

Barbara Searle was not present to provide an update on her attempts to source rainfall data from the automatic weather station on the Pouto peninsular.

Noted that the field trip was successful. A large turnout and everyone was impressed by the efficiency of the forestry harvesting operation.

The information promised to be e-mailed to members has been sent, including the Funding Options for Biodiversity Projects in Northland 2014 Guide.

Northland Regional Council are continuing to put together an aerial photo time sequence on land use and land form changes around the Pouto lakes.

Item 4 Dune Lakes Video Viewing

It was decided that the showing of the dune lakes video be moved up in the agenda due to the presence of a number of Te Kopuru School staff who were sitting in on the meeting to watch this item.

The dune lakes video was shown. (This video is available at this link: <http://www.nrc.govt.nz/Environment/Water/Lakes/>)

Discussion points:

- What is the response from farmers to dune lake restoration? The response is mixed but improving with some very supportive.

- School involvement: can we get the kids growing the plants and planting them. Some discussion with the school staff was had. They are interested in exploring this opportunity.

Item 3 Actions since last workshop and feedback from catchment member networks

- Pouto Catchment Group members

Jock Wills: mentioned that he was impressed with the forestry operation seen on the field trip.

Wayne Graham: suggested that we should distribute and share the Dune Lakes video.

Allister McCahon: expressed the need for good news stories in the dune lakes video. Need to demonstrate best practice not just give the impression of pointing the finger. Inspire people by showing what can be done.

Logan Forrest: suggested passing the dune lakes video on to all farmers who have a lake at the back of their farm.

Action: Bruce Griffin to e-mail a link to the Video to all catchment members

Action: The video is to be shared with local schools and Marae

Bruce Griffin: the focus of Northland Regional Council's tent at the Field days will be on Dune lakes this year with a display on community work at Rototuna. Andrew Knock offered to help with setting up the display, including supplying fish for the display. Bruce and Andrew to action.

Rawson Wright suggested that we could have targeted videos with different messages for farmers (best practice) forestry (best practice) Schools (get involved) funders (why you should fund these projects).

It was noted that Bruce Griffin has taken over the group from Gary Treadgold because Gary is too busy. The Group mentioned that Gary is a valuable member to have in the Group and that he should not be allowed to step back completely. Noted that Gary will still be involved in a support role and on the Pouto Lakes Planting Working Group.

It was raised that the Group has not had any recreational members present over the past few meetings. Noted that the e-mails are still going to them so that they can be kept informed and can participate as they identify the need.

- Proposed planting projects and Environment Fund applications for 2015.

Logan Forrest and Bruce Griffin explained:

A proposal has been put to the Environment Fund on behalf of the Pouto Catchment Group. Planting sites in the proposal are: Lakes Kahuparere, Kanono, Waingata and Upper Rototuna. The application will go through for approval at end of February. The actual funding is coming from the Land Fund due to timing of planting and financial years.

It was asked if it would be possible for the group to review the application before it goes however this is not possible this time due to deadlines.

Noted that there is still opportunity to put in further submissions for funding for other projects. Individuals can do this for projects on their land.

Logan gave an update on progress with planting projects so far:

Most of the existing planting projects have been released (that is to say that the plants which have been planted have had the weeds around them sprayed so that the young plants will not be smothered). Rabbit control has been undertaken at Upper Lake Rototuna. The recent dry weather was a threat to the plants but putting sheep dags around the plants has helped them thrive despite the dry (the dags trap moisture around the plants and also provide some fertiliser). An effort to control noxious weeds has also been undertaken recently. Logan gave thanks to all those involved in the recent restoration work.

There has also been an expansion in trapping. Trap lines now stretch all through the Department of Conservation lands. Inspection of trap lines has also been increased. On the whole more trapping and poisoning is being done and possums are being shot as well.

There continues to be problems with possums and rabbits at Upper Lake Rototuna.

Item 5 NRC Update of Recent Research

Bruce Griffin gave a summary of recent research on the lakes.

He noted that there is no depth gage on Lake Mokeno or Lake Wainui. There is a proposal to put these in soon.

Bruce also mentioned that Hydrological research around Lake Rototuna is currently based on a single bore.

NRC have a map of consented bores in the Pouto area but do not have a map of older bores or access to drilling logs. They have a researcher going around and asking local land owners for their records with regard to this. NRC are interested in bores that do not find water as well as those that do. These bores provide information on where the water table lies and where it is flowing to.

NRC are putting down three bores around Lake Humuhumu.

Bruce went on to explain that NIWA's work on nutrient limiting in the lakes has revealed that most are phosphorus limited. Full details of which lakes are nitrogen or phosphorus limited is contained in the NIWA report.

A Hydrological study by Jacobs has been done which looks at which lakes are window lakes and which are perched as well as monitoring inflows and outflows. The report contains a lot of assumptions at this stage but it is a start towards understanding the situation. It looks like the catchments of the lakes may be larger than was previously thought.

Bruce is looking into applying to Envirolink for funding to get Paul (a Hydrological Researcher) to come to Pouto for a day and have a look at the lakes with the Pouto Catchment Group.

Logan said that Paul will be doing research on the lakes in the third week of March and suggested that the group join in when they do this research. Bruce is looking into this.

Logan recently met with University of Auckland staff who are doing another project over the next three years to look at sediment cores from the lakes.

Furthermore, Dairy NZ are funding a one year project to look at changes in algal communities in the lakes over the past 1000 years. This will tell us how the nutrients in the lakes have changed with the coming of humans. By looking at pollen in the sediments it will also be possible to tell what kind of plant communities were present around the lakes in pre human times. Dairy NZ are open to suggestions as to which lake to do the research on. It must be one of Lake Karaka, Humuhumu, Rotokawau or Wainui. Dairy NZ want the study to be done on a lake that has pasture in the catchment and preferably that Northland Regional Council does water quality monitoring in as well.

Logan gave an overview of what the research team was doing in the field.

Bruce's power point was not working due to technical issues.

Action: Bruce's power point to be e-mailed to the Group.

Logan raised that the Pouto Catchment Group would like to see the results of all these studies and so would the farmers and land owners who assist or grant access to the lakes.

Action: Summary of findings from recent research to be shared with the Group and those involved particularly land owners.

Item 6 Mapping what we have learned about Pouto Lakes

Natalie Blandford led the Group members in working with maps of the lakes to identify what we have learned and what the information gaps are.

Natalie will use the findings of this exercise to help fill the gaps in the information so far supplied to the Group.

Item 7 Linking Indicators to your Freshwater Values

An introduction was given to the process the group will follow at the next meeting that will identify what indicators we need to measure in order to show progress.

Item 8 General Business

Logan Forrest noted that Paul Chapman (the Hydrological Researcher) can do a lot more than is within the scope of his present contract if more funding is made available. Logan has a list of things he would like Paul to look into. Graeme Ramsey advised that it can be done but not this year. Bruce said that if Logan writes to him then he can further it.

Action: Logan will e-mail a list of extra projects to Bruce who will e-mail it around the Group for their feedback. Then Bruce can work to further the Group's requests for additional research.

Chris Biddles said that we need to be more punctual about the timing of dinner and the meeting.

Item 9 Items for next meeting

- Linking Indicators to your Freshwater Values
- Roles and responsibilities of the Pouto Lakes Planting Working Group to be revisited

Next meeting to be held 6.30pm, 16 March 2015: Te Kopuru School

The Interim Chair declared the Meeting closed at 9:15pm

Aleesha Bennet closed the meeting at the request of the Interim Chair with a karakia.