

**MINUTES OF THE KAIKŌURA ZONE WATER COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 12.30PM ON WEDNESDAY 5 JUNE 2019 AT
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 96 WEST END, KAIKŌURA.**

PRESENT: T Howard (Chair), J Murray, N McArthur, T Blunt, R Roche, T Sonal (arrived 1:00pm) Councillor S Lowndes,

IN ATTENDANCE: B Cowan (DOC), M Harding (Consultant), M Bell (Wild Life Management) P Bradshaw (ECan), D Marris (Amuri Helicopters), K Heays (Ecan), S Bragg (ECan), S Palmer (ECan), S Bowman (ECan), C McConchie (Kaikōura Rūnanga – observer)

APOLOGIES: G Solomon, A Boyd and M Griffin

Moved by J Murray, seconded by T Blunt and resolved that apologies be accepted.

KARAKIA

1. COMMITTEE CHECK-IN & ORDER OF BUSINESS

Tony Blunt informed committee he wished to discuss the nitrate probe proposal and decision made to discuss this at the end of the meeting.

URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent business.

CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Corrections

- a) Page 5, paragraph 2
S Smith explicated to R Roche that the problem, in his eyes, lay with a piece of the law and he will be taking legal action on that – to be changed to 'advice'.

- b) Page 7, paragraph 4(b)
At the Frosts site (Wood Grove, Kanuka Terrace – Hartnett's Creek Protection), the aim is to create a Kiwi2 covenant around the secondary Kanuka/mixed broad leaf alluvial forest – to be changed to QEII.

Moved by S Lowndes, seconded T Howard and resolved that the minutes of the Kaikōura Zone Water Committee meeting held on 1 May 2019 be confirmed a true and accurate record.

TE REO PRACTICE

Local place names in Māori led by Brett Cowan.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK

There were no public in attendance at this meeting.

3. WAIAU TOA/CLARENCE RIVERBED WEED CONTROL STRATEGY - BRIEFING

Mike Harding gave a briefing per a Powerpoint presentation.

- Project set up in the 2017/2018 year, with a further survey follow-up 2018/2019.
- **Mapping method:**
 - **Points:** single plants/small infestations; live/treated/dead; from GPS or aerial photos/flights
 - **Polygons:** density – scarce to dominant; less accurate away from riverbed; indicative (to guide control effort)
 - **Shape files:** final maps by ECan
- **Coverage** – weeds that affect the ecology and functioning of riverbed habitats:
 - Excludes pines, hawthorn, wattle
 - Excludes sweet brier
 - Excludes some herbaceous weeds
 - Other weeds noted in report

Known uppermost extent of weeds

From consultation:

- Aerial photos
- Flights
- Ground survey

Limited by budget/time

- Weeds identified to be controlled:
 - Broom
 - Gorse
 - Willow (Crack, Grey, Golden)
 - Poplar (Lombardy, Black, Silver)
 - Tree Lupin
 - Buddleia
 - False Tamarisk
 - Stonecrop
- **Other weeds**
 - Alder; Russell Lupin; Spearmint; Spanish Heath; Lotus/Bridsfoot Trefoil; White Stonecrop; Montpellier Broom
- **Eradication**

Species that:

 - are only small isolated infestations
 - pose a significant threat to riverbeds
 - can feasibly be eradicated from a geographically distinct area
 - achievable with limited resources

Mike outlined the priority areas for eradication.

- **Containment**

Species that:

 - pose a significant threat
 - can feasibly be contained to part of the catchment e.g. Spanish Heath

- **Priorities for Surveillance and Monitoring**
 - Monitor all broom, gorse, Russell Lupin and Tree Lupin control sites annually
 - Monitor all other control sites regularly
 - Monitor the spread and vigour of Birdsfoot Trefoil along Acheron River
 - Monitor the spread of stonecrop and White Stonecrop
 - Survey weed-free parts of the upper catchment regularly (especially vehicle tracks) to detect new infestations of existing and new weed species

- **Priorities for Advocacy and Investigation**
 - Encourage continued co-operation between agencies and land owners/occupiers
 - Investigate release of additional bio-control agents for the control of broom and gorse
 - Investigate issues associated with eradication of willow from the upper catchment
 - Restrict spread of weeds by vehicles by erecting barriers to prevent vehicle access to smaller valleys, and by better signage/advocacy
 - Liaise with Transpower to ensure weed seeds are not introduced during servicing of electricity pylons, and to ensure effective weed control occurs at pylon sites
 - Investigate options for seeding or planting of native vegetation at broom control sites

- **General Recommendations for Control of Riverbed Weeds**
 - All riverbed weed control should be undertaken by experienced operators who are well briefed on the nature and likely locations of sensitive native species and habitats
 - Small isolated infestations of all shrubby weed species (broom, gorse, tree lupin, Spanish Heath, Buddleia, Alder) and Russell Lupin should be controlled by ground based methods, or helicopter-based wand spraying provided native species are not affected
 - Control of large dense infestations of broom or gorse (for riverbed weed control) should only occur where required for the urgent protection of riverbed habitats, or where post control site rehabilitation is proposed. Helicopter based control may be appropriate, provided native species are not affected
 - Helicopter based control of tall weed species such as Crack Willow and Poplar, provided native species are not affected

Teri Sonal commented that perhaps more native trees should be planted in the catchment.

Mike Harding advised that the maps in the Powerpoint presentation were in draft format and there was still some work to do to update. He would pass on to the committee the updated maps. He also advised that public access to this information was available on the Environment Canterbury website.

Steve Palmer gave a vote of thanks to Mike stating the information is very beneficial to the Kaikōura zone committee.

4. WAIAU TOA/CLARENCE BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN - UPDATE

Steve Palmer presented his update by a Powerpoint presentation

- This project commenced 5 years ago
- Riverbeds – working bank/bank with Immediate Steps funding
- Methodology – rafting – whole of Clarence area the focus

- *Area 3*: is the biggest with responsibility shared with Marlborough District Council and DOC. This restricts the expenditure for Environment Canterbury and working within parameters. However, Marlborough District Council have improved their contribution
- *Area 1*: gorse, broom and old man's beard – shelved at the moment. Monitoring/spraying is done by rafting in the gorge areas and aerially
- *Area 2*: this falls into the zone committee's boundary and pleased with progress. Hawthorne and another weeds control with DOC
- *Area 4*: gorse and broom
- Funding 2/3^{ds} landowners and 1/3rd zone committee
- Rowan Trees are a focus too, plus Wilding Conifers

Tony Blunt commented that farmers should be encouraged to plant natives and gain carbon credits.

2:25pm – 2:41pm Afternoon Tea

5. WAIAU TOA/CLARENCE PREDATOR CONTROL UPDATE

Mike Bell

- In the braided river areas, habitat is important
- Predators: cats/hedgehogs/stoats and ferrets are another big pest
- Three – four-year research was done to identify predators and there are different species for each river
- Predator control operating in the Upper Clarence
- Habitat creation is done by bull dozers to change the flow around islands and create deep channels on each side. Bull dozing should not be undertaken in the breeding season Oct-Jan. The islands require little maintenance with hand pulling weeds and spraying.
- Decoys have been used on the various islands to ward off predators without a lot of success, but these are becoming more realistic
- Breeding (particularly Turns) success on islands as predator free, but this does not apply to the mainland. Mike would like to see more islands created
- Turns are doing well in the Clarence catchment, but disappointing in other areas. Struggling on ways to save
- Braided rivers are dynamic and are hard to work with as they are ever changing
- Hedgehogs are difficult to control and cause a lot of havoc, necessitating to expand area of monitoring. Dogs are currently being trained to seek out hedgehogs
- Black-billed gull are a major predator and if they could be controlled this would save a lot of species. Numbers are out of control caused by agriculture and refuse disposal. Cost is a factor
- The Kaikōura earthquake has changed the area in the Clarence river and there has been lots of flooding
- A five-year term plan has given a good picture for this type of project and has exceeded Mike's expectations
- Mike advised that this is the last season of funding and where to next?

Nicky McArthur brought up the subject of climate change and the effect this will have on predators/habitat/biodiversity – massive consequences.

Steve Palmer commented he would like to assist as much as possible to enhance Mike Bell's work. The encroachment of weeds ruin habitat. Create buffer zones in broom, as this is where the predators hide. Even natives harbour predators.

6. COMMITTEE UPDATE

Kevin Heays introduced the new Land Management Advisor, Peter Bradshaw, based in Kaikōura.

The 3 Waters update was carried over to the next meeting to be held on the 3rd July.

Next regional meeting 11 June 2019.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

Ted Howard asked Tony Blunt to present to the committee his nitrate probe proposal.

Tony handed out a paper written by Lincoln Agritech on the conceptual model and approach. The committee were requested to consider the possibility of monitoring ground water nitrates in the Kaikōura region. The estimated cost is approx. \$8,000 per site. Five to six bore holes would have to be tested to provide a good scientific result. Ted commented that the outcome should be more about the science.

Steve Lowndes voted in favour of this proposal and said it would lead the way for other catchments. To look at ear marking funding in the next financial year through Environment Canterbury and to perhaps incorporate partners like farmers/businesses.

Tony advised that he is prepared to fund one bore, together with neighbouring farmers if they were interested.

This item to be further discussed and placed on the agenda for next month's meeting.

Closing Karakia

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3.45pm.