



Report 08.315
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Committee Council
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Lake Wairarapa Wetlands - Establishment Group

1. Purpose

To approve the Terms of Reference for the Establishment Group charged with the role of setting up a Lake Wairarapa Wetlands Park on behalf of Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), the Department of Conservation (DoC), South Wairarapa District Council and Wairarapa iwi.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

In November 2005, the Council was informed of the development of a vision for the Lake Wairarapa wetlands, and updated on current progress toward implementing that vision (Report 05.617).

Since that time, officers from GWRC and DOC, along with representatives from South Wairarapa District Council and Wairarapa iwi Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa and Rangitāne o Wairarapa, have been working together to make that vision a reality.

In doing so, the parties have formed an informal Lake Wairarapa “Establishment Group” whose purpose is to facilitate the development of a Lake Wairarapa Park.

This group is an informal entity with no powers to act or make decisions. With this being the case, the group needs to seek approval for the work it undertakes from the organisations it represents. At this point, the parties would like to gain the formal approval of the group’s purpose from the individual parties to the arrangement. As such, the group is looking for GWRC to formally recognise the group, and endorse a Terms of Reference. (The Terms of Reference is attached as Appendix 1)

4. What is the purpose of the Establishment Group?

The parties recognise that it may take some years to develop a governance structure for the Park in the long-term. In the meantime, the parties wish to get the Park “up and running” by developing operational work programmes, communications and marketing strategies, and setting the strategic direction for the Park.

The Establishment Group will therefore have the following purpose:

- To facilitate the development of the long-term governance framework for the Park
- To develop a Management Plan for the park, and implement approved operational work programmes
- To develop marketing and communications initiatives to enable the Park to gather public momentum, support and funding.

It is envisaged that representation on the Establishment Group will be the same as the final governance structure and that the final Governance Body will adopt programmes developed by the group when it formally becomes the park’s manager.

4.1 Developing a Long Term Governance Framework

Due to the complex wetland system and competing land uses, it is seen by the parties that no area within the wetland area could be treated in isolation. As such, it would be beneficial if the management of all the publicly held land should be granted to one single management agency that represents the interests of the lake users, owners, neighbours and others that have a vested interest in its protection and development.

With that in mind, the Establishment Group will define an appropriate governance structure to ensure that a co-joint governance and management arrangement can be developed that is satisfactory to all parties with an emphasis on an integrated management approach, and shared governance and management structure.

4.1.1 Facilitate the transfer of the lakes and associated public land to the governance entity

One of the main difficulties to overcome is creating a structure that gives the managing agency the powers to legally hold the publicly owned lakes due to the way the land is currently owned and designated.

The largest blocks of land around Lake Wairarapa and Lake Onoke (and the lakes themselves) are held as *Stewardships*, which are administered under the Conservation Act. Parties other than DoC cannot legally manage these areas, as there is no mechanism to allow for this under the Conservation Act. Other lands around the lakes are held as *Government Purpose: Wildlife Management*

6. Communication

No communications are necessary at this point.

7. Recommendations

That the Council:

1. *Receives the report and notes its contents,*
2. *Recognises the establishment of the Wairarapa Moana Establishment Group, and its role in the development of a Lake Wairarapa Park, and*
3. *Approves the Wairarapa Moana Establishment Group's Terms of Reference.*

Report prepared by:

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Appendix 1: Terms of Reference