



greater WELLINGTON  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

21 July 2010  
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**Minutes of the Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee Meeting held in the Committee Room, Greater Wellington Regional Council, 34 Chapel Street, Masterton, on Monday, 5 July 2010, at 3.30pm.**

**Present:**

Peter Gawith (Chairperson), Cr Ian Buchanan, Jamie Falloon, Emily Crofoot Andy Pottinger, Jenny Boyne, Michael Blundell.

**Apologies:**

*Resolved*

*(Michael Blundell/Jenny Boyne)*

*That the Committee accepts the apologies from Cr Fran Wilde, David Holmes and Wayne O'Donnell.*

**Officers Present:**

David Cameron, Ian Gunn and Scott Ihaka.

The Chairman welcomed a delegation from the Wairarapa Regional Irrigation Trust including Bob Tosswell (Chair), Bruce Geden and Geoff Copps, plus Peter Gaskin (Wellington Region Tb Free Committee).

**1. Confirmation of minutes**

*Resolved*

*(Jamie Falloon/Ian Buchanan)*

*That the minutes of the Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee meeting held on 3 May 2010 be confirmed with the removal of the second to last paragraph from Section 3 under the heading Climate Change presentation-NIWA.*

## **2. Landscape Plan**

Scott Ihaka briefed the committee on progress on this plan. The involvement of Peter Gawith and Jamie Falloon at the recent workshops was appreciated. Peter Gawith and Jamie Falloon then spoke positively about the recent workshops. Scott indicated that it was now the role of the three Wairarapa district councils to evaluate the landscape. The Regional Council was only involved now because of the coastal marine area. Attendance at the meetings had been reasonable with 20 - 25 at Masterton and Greytown and a full house of nearly 90 at Martinborough.

The meetings had shown consistency in identifying the following landscapes – including Wairarapa Moana, the first line of the Eastern hills, Coastal sites, the Hidden Lakes and Rangitumau.

Boffa Miskell, the consultants, is in the early stage of drafting a list of features and landscapes with outstanding or significant amenity value. Once completed key stakeholders, iwi and members of the community will meet and discuss the list. Prior to these workshops all landowners directly affected will be contacted. Peter Gawith endorsed land owners being given plenty of notice.

Scott outlined that there are 12 criteria used in the assessment. Landscapes did not have to achieve all of these criteria to be determined as special. The Wairarapa Combined District Plan is still to be completed. There are already rules in the plan which cover a number of sites. On confirmation of the final list a plan change could well be required.

A general discussion on the process followed. Points noted that this process is more robust than previously. This may result in some areas being removed from the District Plan and others being inserted. Landowners can represent themselves, involve Federated Farmers if they are members or work in groups. There are no specific rules for those areas identified as having significant amenity value however there are already more general rules that potentially address these values. Non regulatory guidelines may be developed to protect the values.

## **3. Wairarapa Water Use Project**

Bruce Geden gave a presentation on the proposed scheme to the committee. This has subsequently been forwarded onto the committee.

Basic details of the project are there is a potential to irrigate 30,000 hectares, currently the order of 8,000 hectares are irrigated. Capital cost is 2-300 million dollars. Offline storage is proposed, harvesting high flows at sites outside of the Forest park area.

A leadership group has been created including all four local authorities, the two local iwi and an environmental/recreational representative.

The project will consider wider water use than irrigation. Currently a survey is being completed of rural land owners.

A decision on the next stage is imminent. This will require obtaining funding (\$2-3mill) to complete a targeted investigation to obtain resource consents, investigate high value production crops etc. Funding for the total project will be a challenge.

Committee members discussed how the water might be delivered – this has not been determined, the requirement for a change of agricultural production to afford the water, probable gestation period is 10 years.

#### **4. Future Tb Funding**

Peter Gaskin outlined that there had been a change in strategy so the Animal health Board (AHB) was trying to do more with less dollars. So much so that funding for the South East Wairarapa is not guaranteed. As a consequence the rollback of the Tb free areas will be delayed. Peter is very concerned that all the partners stay in the funding formula because if any partner pulls out the Crown only matches the funding available. There is also the additional issue that the Minister is not increasing the Crown input. Peter is concerned that as the dollars decrease on Tb control that Regional Councils will increase funding to maintain the gains to keep possum numbers down.

Currently the programme of work in the region is \$4million which allows for 210,000 hectares to be treated. Trend monitoring which has been the cornerstone of work programmes is being reduced because of the reduced funding. This is the recent trend monitoring showing RTC's exceeding 3% for 162,000 hectares. The AHB's priority is the eradication strategy. The target for infected herds is 6 in 2013. At the present time there are only 5, with 4 having a clear test and the remaining 1 being the experimental bovine Tb herd owned by Ag Research.

\$500,000 is being spent on monitoring/surveying pigs. Tb has been recorded in the pig population at Akatarawa, Mataikona, Tinui and Bideford. Normally there is a period of 5 years before the wildlife is clear. Peter is most concerned about the illegal release of pigs. This delay means more funding requirements. Peter reinforced to the committee that pigs are not vectors. They are a dead end host.

In concluding Peter noted that on top of the decrease in funding there appeared to be a groundswell of opposition to 1080 use.

#### **5. Ballance Environment Awards Presentation**

David Cameron reported on the successful workshop held recently at Gladstone on Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and Carbon Farming. Organised as part of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards the meeting attracted 160-180 landowners and industry representatives. There was good participation and keen questioning of the four presenters. He considered the meeting to have been very

worthwhile and indicated that landowners were becoming more engaged on these matters as the time was fast approaching when agriculture would enter the ETS.

## **6. General Business**

A question was asked about the stock access guidelines and whether the names of the complainants could be released to the affected party. Due to the Privacy Act this is not possible. The meeting believed that any compliance visit needs to involve the land owner. The committee believed that there needed to be a “standard practise” for all compliance visits. The committee would like a response from Melissa Jessen.

The committee would like to have a presentation from John Dalzell and William McCook of the AHB on the new pest management strategy. Wayne O’Donnell has suggested any meeting needs to occur prior to the establishment of the new strategy to have maximum impact.

Meeting closed 5.40 pm.