

Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee recommendations around water allocation discussed at 26 March 2018 workshop

This paper includes details of agreements made by the Committee at its workshop on 26 March 2018 on transitioning the change in minimum flows on the Waipoua, Upper Ruamāhanga and Waingawa Rivers, transitioning to 100% cease take at minimum flow for Category A groundwater users, and its recommendations around small streams.

Waipoua River

Considerations

- A reasonably small number of surface water users, largest user is MDC for QE Park lake and sports field irrigation
- Category A takes cease take at minimum flow levels in 10 years' time

Recommendation

Increase the minimum flow level in the Waipoua River from 250L/s to 340 L/s over 10 years as follows:

- 5 years after plan change notification (or in 2024) increase minimum flow to 295L/s
- 10 years after plan change notification (or in 2029) increase minimum flow to 340L/s

Upper Ruamāhanga River

Considerations

- Large number of users who may need more time to transition
- Category A takes cease take at minimum flow levels in 10 years' time

Recommendation

No increase in the minimum flow level in the Upper Ruamāhanga River for 10 years then a three stepped increase from 2400L/s to 3250L/s over the next 10 years as follows:

- 10 years after plan change notification (or in 2029) increase minimum flow to 2685L/s
- 15 years after plan change notification (or in 2034) increase minimum flow to 2970L/s
- 20 years after plan change notification (or in 2039) increase minimum flow to 3250L/s

Note: the recommendation has been updated from the step change proposal suggested on 12 March 2018.

Waingawa River

Considerations

- The PNRP requires community drinking water supplies to cease taking water for supply to industry below minimum flow levels by 31/07/2022. The Committee has recommended extending the cease date for industry to seven years after the plan change notification.
- Community and group drinking water supplies need to reduce the take and use of water to the health needs of people at the minimum flow levels.

- Takes, other than for the health needs of people and animal drinking water, must cease at 1700L/s.

Recommendation

Increase the minimum flow level at which community or group drinking water supplies must reduce to taking and using water for the health needs of people from 1100L/s to 1700L/s over 10 years as flows:

- 5 years after plan notification (or in 2024) increase minimum flow to 1400L/s
- 10 years after plan notification (or in 2029) increase minimum flow to 1700L/s

Category A Groundwater Takes

Considerations

- The minimum flow levels at which takes must cease in the Waipoua and Upper Ruamāhanga Rivers are increasing over a 10 and 20 period respectively
- Economic impacts of a full cease take verse partial restrictions
- Further work is being undertaken by GWRC to delineate Category A boundaries to ensure those takes deemed to be Category A have a direct connection to surface water

Recommendation

No change for 10 years (i.e. Category A users will remain on 50% restriction when the relevant river reaches the minimum flow level).

Ten years after the plan change notification (or in 2029), Category A groundwater users will cease take when the relevant river reaches the minimum flow level for the relevant river.

Small Streams

Considerations

- The majority of small streams in the Ruamāhanga Whaitua have their allocation limits and minimum flow levels set by the larger parent catchment

Recommendation

Stream	Recommendation	
	Immediate	Longer term
Papawai and Otukura	Retain current allocation limits, policies and minimum flow levels in the PNRP	
Parkvale Stream and Booths Creek	Retain current allocation limits, policies and minimum flow levels in the PNRP	Carry out investigation to determine appropriate allocation limits and minimum flow levels within three years of plan change notification (or by 2022)

Makoura and Kuripuri	Separate out from the Upper Ruamahanga limits currently in the PNRP. Set allocation limit at current consented allocation. Set minimum flow level of 100L/s based on the management point Colombo Road on the Makoura Stream.	Carry out investigation to determine appropriate allocation limits and minimum flow levels within three years of plan change notification (or by 2022)
Tauanui and Turanganui	Separate Tauanui out from Lower Ruamahanga limits currently in the PNRP. Set allocation limit at current consented allocation. Set minimum flow level of 30L/s based on the management point Iraia on the Ruakokoputuna Stream (correlations indicate this represents 90% of MALF in the Tauanui and Turanganui)	Carry out investigation to determine appropriate allocation limits and minimum flow levels within three years of plan change notification (or by 2022)
Makahakaha Stream	Separate out from Middle Ruamahanga (upstream of Ruamahanga Category A groundwater boundary). Set allocation limit at current allocation. Set minimum flow at 90% of MALF.	Carry out investigation to determine appropriate allocation limits and minimum flow levels within three years of plan change notification (or by 2022)
Taueru River	Separate out from Middle Ruamahanga (upstream of the Kourarau Stream confluence - <i>upstream of this point river hydrology is quite different to downstream due to dam inflows and Category A riparian gravels</i>). Set allocation at current consented allocation. Set minimum flow at 65 L/sec at upstream confluence.	
Whangaehu	Separate out from Upper Ruamahanga (upstream of the Poterau Stream confluence- <i>hydrology of this catchment quite different due to no Tararua Range recharge</i>). Set allocation at current consented allocation. Set minimum flow at 18 L/sec at Whangaehu River at Waihi management site.	

Huangarua	Separate out from Lower Ruamahanga (upstream of the Ruamahanga River confluence- <i>hydrology of this catchment quite different due to no Tararua Range recharge</i>). Retain current PNRP allocation limit of 110 L/sec (equates to 30% MALF at catchment mouth). Set minimum flow level of 30L/s based on the management point Iraia on the Ruakokoputuna Stream (this site is in the headwaters of the Huangarua River)	
Unlisted Lake Wairarapa and South Coast streams	Retain existing default provisions in the PNRP (90% MALF minimum flow level, 30% MALF allocation limit)	
Tributary streams of the main stem Ruamahanga River that are not listed elsewhere (primarily in the Eastern Hills, Valley floor FMU's)	Separate from the Lower Ruamahanga limits currently in the PNRP. Set a default allocation limit of 30% MALF and default minimum flow level of 90% MALF	