

Minutes of the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Operational Liaison Group annual meeting held at Bay of Plenty Regional Council, corner Fenton and Pukaki streets and online by Zoom, Rotorua on Tuesday 22 September commencing at 11:00 am

Chair: Jim Stanton (Lake Rotoiti Community Association)

Present: *In person:* Mary Stanton (Ngāti Pikiao and Ōkawa Bay Resident), Harry Carlson (Te Arawa Lakes Trust), Andy Woolhouse (contractor for Bay of Plenty Regional Council), Phill Thomass (Tamatea Street Ratepayers Association), Joe Tahana (Ngāti Pikiao), Andy Bruere (Bay of Plenty Regional Council), Mark Townsend (Bay of Plenty Regional Council), Graeme O'Rourke (Bay of Plenty Regional Council), Michael Gill (former Ōkawa Bay Resident)
By Zoom: Hilary Prior (Lake Rotoiti Community Association), Matt McKnight (Canoe Slalom Bay of Plenty)

Apologies: Justin Hutton (River Rats), Keely Schreiber (BOPRC)

1 Karakia

Joe Tahana opened the meeting with a karakia.

2 Introductions and welcome

Jim Stanton welcomed everyone to the meeting and those present briefly introduced themselves and their respective roles.

3 Apologies

Noted as above.

4 Minutes from previous meeting and matters arising

Some actions from the last meeting remain outstanding:

- Andy Bruere to follow up on request for Ian Kusabs to contact Mary regarding the issue of inanga passage. It is noted that the Council now has a contract with Tony Waiomio to keep the local iwi informed of fishery monitoring info for the diversion wall. This is an ongoing relationship.
- Graeme O'Rourke to put information about the purpose of stoplogs on the Regional Council website
- The Ōhau Channel flow records are not in the right area so cannot access. Possible survey through Ōhau Channel and delta on a 3 year basis. Mary tabled a folder about the Ōhau Channel history from 1970s and talked about the loss of kaimoana. Jim proposed that Ian Kusabs could talk to her about this also.

It is resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held 26 November 2019 be accepted.

Stanton/Tahana
CARRIED

5 Election of a Chairperson and Deputy Chair

It was moved that Jim Stanton continue as Chair for the next year.

Tahana/Thomass
CARRIED

It was moved that Joe Tahana continue as Deputy Chair for the next year.

J Stanton/M Stanton
CARRIED

6 Consent Holder Annual Report on Okere Gates (RC 65979) and Ohau Weir (RC65980) – August 2020

Graeme O'Rourke delivered a presentation on the Consent Holder Annual Report on Okere Gates and Ohau Weir for 2019-2020 which covers the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 (refer Appendix 1 for presentation slides).

Mary Stanton raised the topic of the flushing of the Ōhau Channel, and talked about further issues with a high water table and high flows down Ōhau Channel. Mary asked if the Ōhau diversion wall effects the flow down the Ōhau Channel.

Joe Tahana commented on minimum flow and water takes, and asked how the Regional Council manages the water takes to manage to minimum flow. Mark explained that this is the topic of the Freshwater Futures group. In summary, there are other inflows downstream that add to the flow. Water take consents should take this all into account, and this is not a topic for this forum.

Michael Gill commented that the gate settings on website are not working, this was deferred to discuss under General Business.

Discussion on the delta continued and Andy Bruere also gave an explanation on the Ōhau diversion wall and the clearing of vegetation as maintenance.

Michael Gill stated that on 27 January a letter of complaint about reflux occurring in January 2020 should have been reported as a complaint in Graeme's report.

It was moved the Consent Holder Annual Report on Okere Gates and Ohau Weir 2019-2020 be received.

Tahana/Thomass
CARRIED

7 Rotoiti Cultural Management Plan update and lake level trial update

On 27 July the consent was lodged, and has been put on hold by independent processors.

Trial consent change for 3½ years for the trial, 6 Feb to 30 June drop to 278.85m for 1 week subject to conditions.

Ōhau Channel condition is not effected (reflux), access to boat ramps and jetties is the concern raised.

Permanent changes:

- Bund of 80mm on Ōhau Channel
- Weed control, herbicide added to by steam and mechanical means
- Winter draw down not required anymore
- Date of reporting moved from 31 August to 30 June

Consultation: Yacht Squadron and Lake Rotoiti Wooden Boats Society, Rotorua Lakes Community Board

BOPRC is asking for non-notified consent. Jim talked about that we are essentially replicating a dry spell. Request that trial happens outside of peak lake use time.

How many submissions were received? Approximately 20 and 1 x affected persons form received, including from the rafting sector, F+G, and individuals all opposing around boat access issues. Discussion had around discarding the % conditions (aspirational limits) which are largely unachievable and dependent on a number of contributing factors. It was suggested that operations should be based on maintaining the operation range within 279.2m – 279.1m as the primary objective and where practicable.

Jim moved that:-

BoPRC consider removal of the aspirational limits from the Operating Conditions and replace with wording to reflect maintenance of levels within currently prescribed parameters.

Stanton/Thomass
CARRIED

Phill asked do we need to reapply for a change in aspirational levels, Jim summarised:

- doing away with %
- maintain inflow/outflow
- retain levels below RL279.20m

Action: Andy Bruere to send copy of revised condition re: aspirational range to all once prepared

Joe stated that he is supportive of the changes to consent. Monitoring: ensure lake users are informed of any low lake levels to assess effects. Phill talked about possibly asking for a week or until inspection takes place. Feedback was that this would be difficult to achieve given the issues encountered during consultation.

8 General business

Mary raised the need to look after water quality. Andy B talked about the latest results. He advised that he cannot report on this until Council has seen them (October meeting). The trial will incorporate the water quality requirements. Mary talked about there being issues with pollen issues, and Andy will ask Ian Kusabs to explain how this pollen affects game etc.

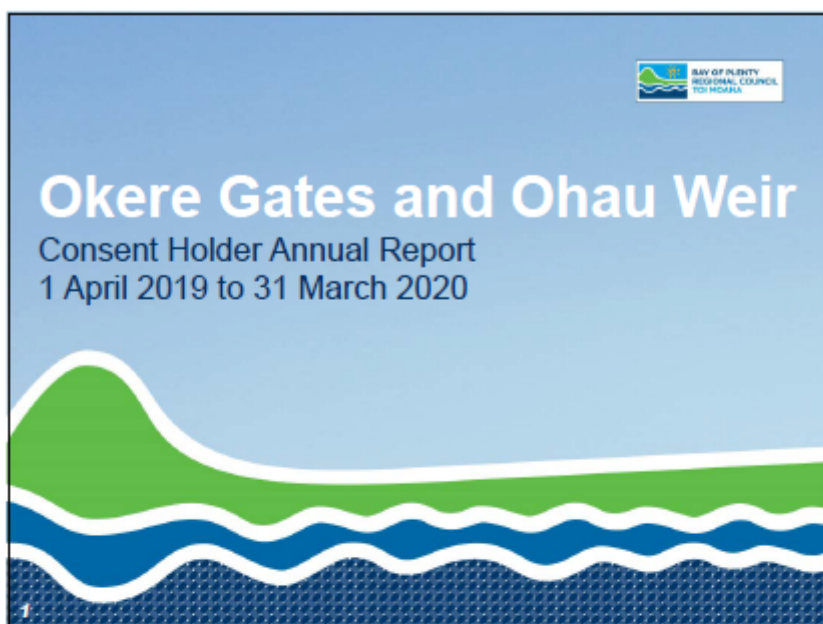
Website update – took meeting through the new data portal.

Action: Andy Bruere to send to Mary & Jim Stanton link to the dashboard (the lake health report)

9 Closure/Proporoaki

The meeting closed at 2:03pm

Appendix 1 – Presentation on the Consent Holder Annual Report on Okere Gates and Ohau Weir (Graeme O'Rourke)



Introduction (P.9-11 of report)

Consent/s requirement to report annually to the Consent Authority, Liaison and Kaitiaki Groups.

- Consent 65979 – Okere Gates (Condition 15.1)
- Consent 65980 – Ohau Weir (Condition 12.1)
 - Lake level distributions
 - Flow rates – Ōhau Channel and Kaituna River
 - Operational difficulties
 - Stakeholder consultation – General and CMP's
 - Complaints

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The Lay of the Land (P.10 of report)

Purpose of consents:

Ohau Weir

1. Lake level

Okere Gates (Rotoiti)

1. Water quality – Maintain outflow
2. Lake level control
3. Flood Management – Kaituna River

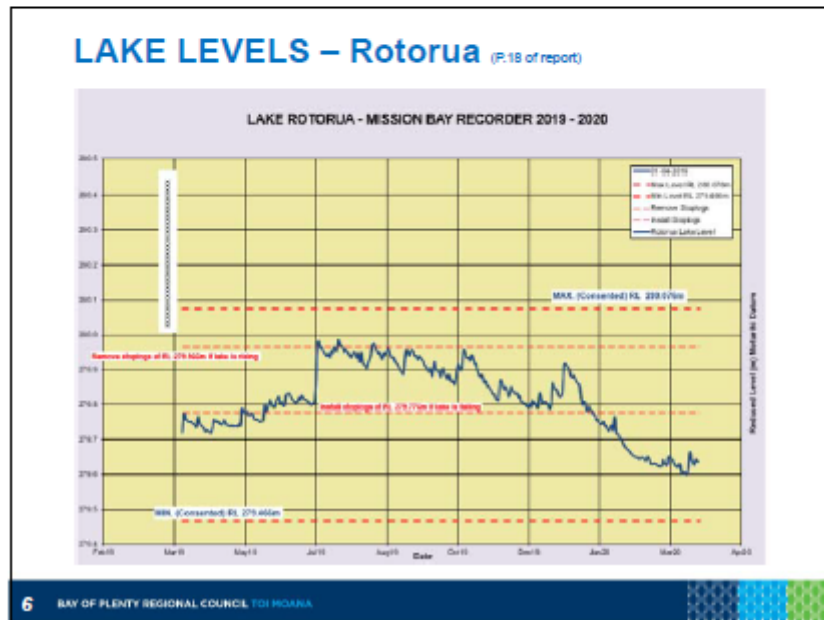
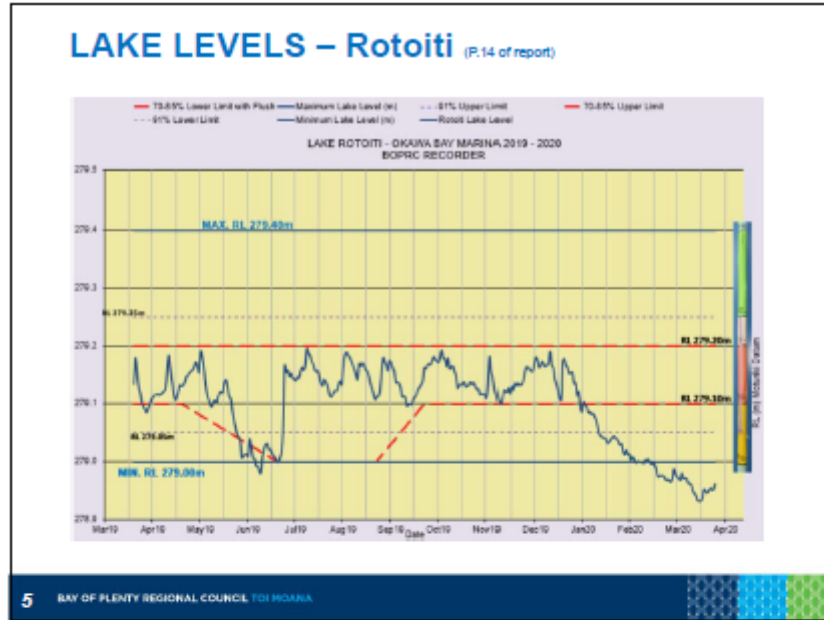
Some numbers:

- 113km² of lake above Okere Gates
- ~1.0m differential between lakes
- Okere Gates max flow = 40cumecs
 - normal flow = 20 cumecs
 - 10 year flood flow at Te Matai = 200 cumecs /

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Lake Rotoiti – Operating envelope (P.11 of report)

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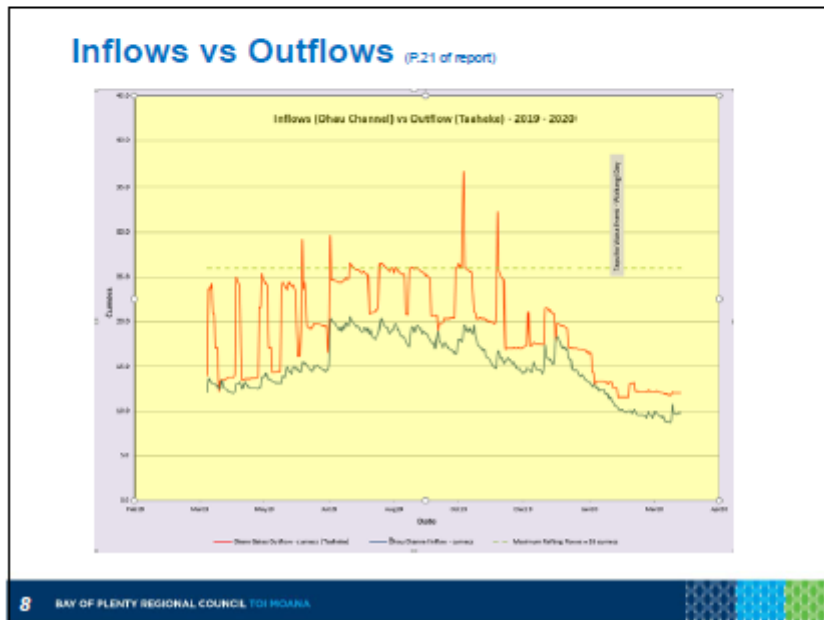
Flow rate conditions (7.4.f-k) (P.24 of report)

- **Okere Gates Outflow > Ōhau Channel Inflow (7.4.9)**
- Minimum 'consented' river flow 7.9 cumecs (7.4.f.1)
 - ~ 11.1 cumecs – 24 February 2020
- Seven day 'consented' minimum flow of 9.84 cumecs (7.4.f.2)
 - ~ 11.8 cumecs – 18 February 2020
- Okere Gates ramping rates - See P.24 of report for results
 - +10cumecs/hr when opening
 - -5cumecs/hr when closing
 - eg) (40cumecs – 35 – 30 – 20cumecs = 2hrs of transitional closures = 7am - 9am

Then once all other consent conditions met:

- Provide recreational river flows (7.4.I)
 - 2019-2020 = 100%
 - 2018-2019 = 81.6%
 - 2017-2018 = 49.3%
 - 2016-2017 = 95.6%
 - 2015-2016 = 98.9%
 - 2014-2015 = 97.8%

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Consultation (P.26 of report)

Maintain discussion and the free flow of information between
Consent Holder and community – Groups include:

- Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Operational Liaison Group (AGM - 26 Nov 2019)
- Ohau ki Rotoiti Kaitiaki Group – no meeting but invited to RTALOLG AGM
- Okere ki Kaituna Kaitiaki Group – no meeting but invited to RTALOLG AGM
- Other groups listed in Consent 65979 – 11.3 (p.48)
- Note – Cultural Management Plans from both Kaitiaki Groups have been received. Item for discussion later today.

Operations (P.27 of report)

- Structures and control systems
 - No issues
 - Ohau stoplogs
 - Last installed 17 October 2018 (Note - exit to play movie)
- Environmental challenges
 - Wet summer conditions
 - High rainfall = high inflows = high lake levels = high outflows (Ōhau Channel /Okere Gates – Kaituna River)
 - Maintaining > outflows will lower Rotoiti levels during dry months
- System improvements
 - Complete refurbishment of the Okere Gates (March to August 2020)



Investigations and monitoring (P.28-33)

- Monthly inspection of lake and structures
- Staff gauges – photos – any flood issues – settlement (tectonics / geothermal)
- Ōhau Channel Cross sections (17)
- Ōhau Channel velocities
- Ōhau Channel Delta survey
- Tamatea Street wetland levels



Concerns and Formal Complaints (P.30)

General Concerns:

- Low lake levels over summer months
- Rafting restrictions on the Kaituna River - (when lake levels are high)

Other:

- H&S of Kaituna River users
- Investigated audible warning system – not feasible
- Provisional measure is to only fully open Okere Gates after dark
- BoPRC web page updated – Live monitoring

Complaints:

- None - any non-compliance issues are addressed by Councils Regulatory Arm
- 5 day notification period of any non-compliance occurring

Summary

1. Priority remains maintaining water quality of Lake Rotoiti – but may compromise levels during dry months as occurred from January to April 2020.
2. Lake Rotorua levels remained within consented limits.
3. Flow rates (Outflows > inflows) maintained within consent conditions
4. Annual Report posted to Liaison and Kaitiaki Groups with 1 meetings held.
5. Cultural Management Plans received and under consideration.
6. Refurbishment of Okere Gates commenced March 2020.
7. No operational issues.
8. At this time, no recommendations in place until CMPs reviewed.

