

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WAIPARA RIVER WORKING PARTY HELD ON MONDAY 13 JULY 2009 AT 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 66 CARTERS ROAD, AMBERLEY.**

**PRESENT**

Rob Gerard (Chair), Fred Murray, Ross Little, Leigh Love, Ross Williams, Gareth Renowden, Brent Maguire, Mark Forrester

**APOLOGIES**

Garry Jackson, David Beer, Paul Williams, Douschka Saunders, Greg Bennett, Jane Demeter, Tony Fitzsimmonds, Norton Hiller

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Amelia Dalley (Minutes), Helga Rigg, Andrew Parrish, Chris Rhodes, Julie Coster, Stewart Ward

**MINUTES**

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2009 AS CIRCULATED, ARE TAKEN AS READ AND NOW CONFIRMED.

Murray/Maguire

CARRIED

**MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The Council is unable to create a bylaw regarding fire control in the Waipara River as it is not within the Council's jurisdiction.

Landowners are only liable for the cost of fire suppression activities if it can be proven that they started the fire.

Army has yet to be contacted.

*Action Point: Mr Bennett to contact the NZ Army*

Rūnanga have been contacted and are keen to be on the Working Party. Council Officers are meeting with Ngāi Tahu on Friday to discuss the nohoanga sites.

**Access to the Rocks**

Chris Rhodes, manager of Teviotdale Estates attended the meeting. The Working Party pointed out that the vehicle access track to the Rocks crosses over the Teviotdale property boundary. Mr Rhodes advised that the owners of Teviotdale do not want to block public access to the Rocks and are happy for the status quo to remain.

The Working Party unanimously commended Mr Rhodes and the owners of Teviotdale for their display of public spiritedness in allowing vehicle access to the Rocks to continue.

## **WORKING PAPER FOUR**

### **Fire Risk**

The Working Party was advised that landowners would be billed for fire suppression activities as a result of fires caused by contractors to the landowner. This is because contractors are employed by the landowner and therefore the landowner is responsible for any action they take on their land.

Some members of the Working Party raised concerns about the risk of fire and the amount of property that could be potentially destroyed. As a result, these members of the Working Party would like to have a permanent fire ban in the river. However, it was noted, that the Boys Brigade light fires in the river for cooking and educational purposes. It was generally agreed that this activity was acceptable.

The Working Party noted that fire lighting is difficult to monitor in remote areas, particularly in the upper reaches of the river where there are large tracts of forestry. The issue of distance from the nearest fire brigade was also raised.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMENDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION THAT THEY PLACE A GENERAL BAN ON FIRES IN THE RIVER BED AT ALL TIMES SUBJECT TO SPECIFIED AREAS.

Murray/Renowden

CARRIED

There was some further discussion regarding the effectiveness of a total fire ban given that in the past people have lit fires during total fire ban seasons. The Working Party generally agreed that only a small percentage of people are causing problems and that it would be unfair to penalise the majority. It was also generally agreed that the upper reaches of the river have a far greater fire risk.

With respect to providing information and education through signage, the Working Party agreed that the issue of signage should be covered as a separate issue at a later date as it would be relevant to a number of management issues in the river.

### **Camping**

The Working Party next considered the issue of camping and determined that land ownership would need to be carefully considered when locating camping areas.

Mr Williams and Mr Ward from the Waipara Boys Brigade discussed their plans and negotiations with the Department of Conservation over the use of the two parcels of reserve land near the SH1 Bridge. One reserve currently has the Boys Brigade confidence course over it and the other is being leased to Camp David. This lease is coming up for renewal next year and Boys Brigade is looking to administer the reserve and keep it as open space. The Boys Brigade would not like to see it designated as a camping area as they have concerns for the safety of campers and the Boys Brigade Camp and also the noise for the surrounding residents.

It was noted that facilities had previously been located in the SH1 bridge area for campers to use but that these have been removed. It was noted that the owners/occupiers of the Waipara Hotel have offered to pick up rubbish bags left behind.

It was noted that the peak camping season occurs from 20 December to the end of January. During this time Waipara residents have to put up with noise nuisance, fire risk and litter. Residents have found that a Police presence helps to calm camper's behaviour.

There was some discussion with respect to people camping permanently in the river bed. This has apparently occurred on a couple of occasions. The Working Party discussed whether a restriction on how long people can camp in the river would help to prevent this occurring in future.

The Working Party noted that there were not many campers in the upper reaches of the river although some camping used to occur in the Stringers Bridge area. It was suggested that a survey of the areas where campers are located during the summer months would be useful to identify those areas that are popular.

Some members of the Working Party expressed concern regarding the effect of grouping campers together.

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMEND TO THE HURUNUI DISTRICT COUNCIL THAT THEY INVESTIGATE LAND ALONG THE SOUTH BANK OF THE WAIPARA RIVER BETWEEN GOLF LINKS ROAD AND WEBBS ROAD FOR CAMPING AREAS.

Gerard/Murray

CARRIED

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMEND TO THE HURUNUI DISTRICT COUNCIL THAT THEY INVESTIGATE LAND FROM WASH CREEK TO 1KM WEST OF THE STATE HIGHWAY 1 BRIDGE, EXCLUDING THE SOUTHBANK FROM SH1 BRIDGE WEST, FOR FREEDOM CAMPING.

Murray/Renowden

CARRIED

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMEND TO THE HURUNUI DISTRICT COUNCIL THAT FREEDOM CAMPING NOT BE ALLOWED EXCEPT FOR IN THOSE AREAS IDENTIFIED AS FREEDOM CAMPING ZONES.

Murray/Renowden

CARRIED

It was agreed that recommendations 1 and 3 from the Working Paper should be carried over until nearer the end of the process when the Working Party will be able to discuss a signage and information strategy.

#### **Rubbish**

The Working Party agreed that recommendation 6 from the Working Paper is to be carried to a subsequent meeting when the Working Party will be able to discuss a signage and information strategy.

The Working Party noted that the offence of dumping rubbish could be split into two categories: dumping and littering. It was suggested that a zero tolerance approach would be a good idea as it has worked well for the Waimakariri River. That policy is '*take it in, take it*

*out*'. The Working Party also considered it important that the environment be kept tidy to encourage others to do the same, that the public be educated and that the rules are enforced.

It was noted that the community already does a lot of work cleaning up the river bed and it was suggested that this be formalised by the Council to encourage this good work to be continued.

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMEND TO THE HURUNUI DISTRICT COUNCIL, ENVIRONMENT CANTERBURY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION THAT THEY SUPPORT VOLUNTEER GROUPS CURRENTLY WORKING TO CLEAN RUBBISH OUT OF THE RIVER BED.

Maguire/Williams

CARRIED

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMEND TO THE HURUNUI DISTRICT COUNCIL THAT THEY SUPPORT A TAKE IT IN, TAKE IT OUT POLICY ON RUBBISH.

Murray/Renowden

CARRIED

The next meeting was confirmed for the 17 August 2009.

Meeting Closed 9.06pm