



Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee

Ki uta ki tai, he taonga te wai - From the mountains to the sea, water is life

Contact us: 0800 496734 | ruamahangawhaitua@gw.govt.nz | www.gw.govt.nz/ruamahanga-whaitua-committee/

National elections are over – it is business as usual for most of us in the Wairarapa. Dinner still needs cooking, lawns mowing, the kids are home for the school holidays. Another day begins. Will the laws and policies made over the next three years - until election time comes round again - affect you? Maybe.

Right now, most of us are anticipating Spring. It heralds the busy season on-farm, tea-breaks in the sun, DIY and garden jobs, summer sport and bbqs on the deck. Life goes on. And we choose to live it in the Wairarapa.

Why is that? We were born and raised here, eyed the country life from a windy Wellington office, made a new start from overseas, saw a business opportunity, liked the cheaper property prices - maybe even feel a deep, cultural connection to a piece of this land.

Wairarapa is our place. And I want to know what makes it special for you now and what you hope for in the future. Am I politician? No, just a dad, homeowner and Longbush hill-country farmer - an advocate

for good land management and very, very passionate about managing my family's farm with, and for, future generations.

I am also part of a new way of managing the natural resources that make our region so special – the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee. Sounds like another layer of bureaucracy? It's not. You, me, people you see every day in your community will be making choices about the place we share.

It is the first time our regional council have worked from within a community so closely. It is a huge shift in thinking for regional decision-making. And a long-term investment. Decisions about the way our rivers and land are managed are far-reaching for our environment, economy and our well-being as a community.

It's big! But we're starting our journey where the conversations that matter take place - with you, your friends, co-workers and neighbours around the Wairarapa. We are looking forward to hearing your questions and ideas.

Peter Gawith



Peter Gawith, Ruamāhanga Whaitua Chair

Wairarapa and the Greater Wellington Region, is moving to a new way of managing land and water.

Find out what it's all about and watch our video at: www.gw.govt.nz/whaitua-committees/

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee meets every six weeks at towns along the Ruamahanga River.

The next meeting committee meeting is:

Oct 20
MONDAY
 Featherston Kiwi Hall,
 62 - 64 Bell Street

The meeting time will be listed online at: www.gw.govt.nz/ruamahanga-whaitua-committee/ along with the agenda and any presentation papers. Or call us on 0800 496734.

Wairarapa people working together



The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee is a group of people that represents the community of the Ruamahanga River.

It includes householders, iwi, farmers, business owners, scientists, recreationalists and environmentalists. Peter Gawith, a third generation Longbush sheep and beef farmer, was elected Chair earlier this year, and Esther Dijkstra, a Carterton sustainable and ecological land-use consultant, was elected Deputy Chair.

Aidan Bichan, Andy Duncan, Mike Birch, Phillip Palmer, Rebecca Fox, and Vanessa Tipoki bring a valuable range of skills, knowledge and passion for land and water management in the Wairarapa.

Both iwi authorities within the Ruamāhanga whaitua are represented: Rawiri Smith, Kahungūni ki Wairarapa and Siobhan Garlick, Rangitāne o Wairarapa.

There are three representatives from our district councils: Colin

Olds, South Wairarapa, Mike Ashby, Carterton and David Holmes, Masterton. Greater Wellington Regional Council is represented by Chris Laidlaw.

What will the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee do?

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee has been established to make decisions on the future management of land and water in the Ruamahanga River catchment. They will find out what the people who live, work and play here value about the water and land they share.

The committee will find out how the community wants its water resources to be managed in the future and how they will achieve this aim. The committee will report this to the Greater Wellington Regional Council in a *Whaitua Implementation Plan* which will be built into the council's guiding document - *The Regional Plan*.

Central government introduced new freshwater management regulations for New Zealand in August 2014. The committee will support the Ruamāhanga whaitua community to understand these new rules and what actions need to be taken.

What is a whaitua?

The Māori word whaitua means a designated space or catchment. Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) is working closely with communities to manage land and water through new whaitua committees. GWRC is establishing whaitua across the region for: the Wairarapa Coast, Wellington Harbour and Hutt Valley, Te Awarua o Porirua and Kāpiti Coast over the next few years.

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee is the first to be established.

What have we discovered so far?

The Ruamahanga River catchment has a fascinating human and natural history. The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee have been learning about the cultural, scientific, geological, hydrological and complex inter-relationships of humans with Wairarapa's natural landscape.

"It's been an amazing journey so far. We have been introduced to endangered invertebrates at Mount Bruce and been surprised at the number and type of fish species in Lake Wairarapa," said Peter Gawith, Ruamāhanga Whaitua Chair.

"We have heard from kaitiaki from across the region and enjoyed meeting many interested – and interesting – people at our committee meetings to date."

Read some of the information this whaitua committee have looked at: www.gw.govt.nz/ruamahanga-whaitua-committee/.



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