

## Minutes of the Kopeopeo Canal Remediation Project Community Liaison Group meeting held at Eastbay REAP - Putauaki Room, on 23 January 2018 commencing at 10:00am

---

<b>Chair:</b>	John Pullar
<b>Scribe:</b>	Hazel Ryan (BOPRC)
<b>Members present:</b>	Eula Toko (Cultural Monitor), Hayden Power (Federated Farmers), Rene de Jong (Whakatāne Harbour Care Group), Tui Edwards (CS2 representative), Brad Bluett (DOC), Neal Yeates as proxy for Amanda Austrin , Gary Searle as proxy for Shane McGhie
<b>Others present:</b>	Bruce Crabbe, Abby Tozer, Ken Tarboton (BOPRC), Matt James (Independent Monitor Field Observer), Des McCleary (Envirowaste Services Limited), Mark Reider (Media), Tracey Godfery, Barbara Brown, Dr. Paul Butler, Margi Martin
<b>Apologies:</b>	Brendon Love (BOPRC), Clint Savage (DOC), Shane McGhie (WDC), Amanda Austrin (CS1 representative), Andrew Kohlrusch (Independent Monitor)
<b>Absent:</b>	Tani Wharewera (CS3 and Hokowhitu Marae representative), Scottie McLeod (Whakatāne-Tauranga Rivers Scheme)

---

### Action summary

No.	Actions of 23 January 2018	Responsible	Status
1	Project Team to forward Rene de Jong copy of fish catch record for Harbour Care work (enhancement of fish habitat).	Hazel Ryan	<i>Completed</i>

---

### Item 1: Welcome and karakia

- i. Brad Bluett said the opening *karakia*. The Chair welcomed all those present and thanked them for attending. He also reiterated the purpose of the Community Liaison Group (CLG) meeting as a forum to discuss matters relating to the Kopeopeo Canal Remediation Project. Considering the project is now well into the physical works stage, the CLG meeting is not the right place to revisit the already defined methodology.

### Item 2: Apologies

Apologies were received for Brendon Love, Clint Savage, Shane McGhie, Amanda Austrin and Andrew Kohlrusch.

<b>Motion: Apologies approved</b>	<b>Power/ Yeates</b>	<b>CARRIED</b>
-----------------------------------	----------------------	----------------

---

### Item 3: Minutes of previous meeting

**a) Matters arising:**

- i. Tui Edwards asked for an update on the noticeboards outside Containment Site 1 (CS1), suggested at the CLG in November. Abby replied that the boards are still being planned but it was decided that Keepa Road near the entrance to CS3 would be preferable given greater pedestrian traffic and relative safety compared to SH30 and Kope Drain Road. Tui suggested Shaw Road as an alternative location to install the proposed noticeboard.

No.	Actions of 21 November 2017	Responsible	Status
1	Project Team to look into suggested informative noticeboards.	Abby Tozer	<i>In progress</i>

**Motion: That the minutes of the Community Liaison Group meeting of 21 November 2017 be accepted as a true and correct record.**

**De Jong/Toko**

**CARRIED**

**Item 4: Communications**

During the presentation given by Abby Tozer (Slide 3), the following points were commented on:

- i. This week there will likely be radio interviews with the Project Team to announce the start of dredging.
- ii. There is a growing list of people receiving the newsletter and for anyone wanting to sign up, there is a sign-up button on the *News and events* page on the website ([www.boprc.govt.nz/kopeopeo](http://www.boprc.govt.nz/kopeopeo)). The Project Team keeps CLG members informed about project progress via weekly email updates so that they are able to share this information with the groups they represent.
- iii. Users of the BOPRC website should now find it easier to find information on the Project following the development of a new project page which is intended to be more user-friendly and where news snippets and photos are posted more regularly. There is a link to the project page in the January edition of the newsletter and an option to sign up and receive alerts whenever new material is posted. The existing webpage will still be used for historical documents and those with feedback and suggestions can get in touch with the Project Team by email ([kopeopeo@boprc.govt.nz](mailto:kopeopeo@boprc.govt.nz)).
- iv. The closure of the access track from Keepa Road to CS3 will soon be effective, and this has been widely advertised using 1XX radio announcements, public notices and signage.
- v. A site visit will be organised for CLG members to visit CS1 in a few weeks' time.
- vi. The date and arrangements for a community open day will be confirmed once determined.

Questions and comments that were raised during the presentation:

- a. Des McLeary mentioned that he is using the one-pager project handout at inductions and asked when it would be updated to reflect the current programme of works. Abby Tozer responded that the team is in the process of updating that resource.
- b. Dr. Paul Butler introduced himself as a General Practitioner doctor in Tāneatua who was present at the Environment Court hearing<sup>1</sup>. He questioned the use of agricultural land for a containment site, and stated that it would be deemed illegal by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)<sup>2</sup>. He expressed concern about the effect of this news on New Zealand's trading partners and discouraged the Project Team from publicising the recent milestone of starting dredging and the Project in general. He also referred to the presentation by Prof. Ron McDowall and reiterated previously voiced concerns about Prof. McDowall not being listened to by the Resource Consent Hearing Commissioner. Abby responded that it is preferable for sediment to be contained rather than being uncontrolled in an open drain and felt that it was an exciting milestone for the local community that should be shared. Chairman John Pullar disagreed with the statement by Dr. Paul Butler and stated his belief that the process had been robust and the outcome correct. Dr. Butler continued by recommending not widely broadcasting news and milestones from the Project. Ken Tarboton stated that at the hearing a range of material had been presented and that the RMA commission panel decisions were made by those most qualified to do so. He added that Brendon Love, the Project Manager, had presented internationally on the Project since the adoption of the new dredging methodology and that there had been considerable international interest in the success of the project. He added that people like the late Joe Harawira and all those involved in the Project, have moved the project forward to a methodology where there is a safe, controlled process to reduce the health risk to the community and the environment. Tui Edwards agreed with the Project Team and shared her experience of people requesting more, rather than less, information about the Project in order to use the lessons learnt to remediate their own local rivers. Bruce Crabbe stated that as the Regional Council had purchased the land for Containment Site 1, it is no longer considered agricultural land. Margi Martin cited concern for possible effects on the Fonterra share price due to the containment site location and said that Fonterra didn't want news about the project being known internationally. Eula Toko shared her experience of a

---

<sup>1</sup> For background information on the Project's resource consenting process, please see <https://www.boprc.govt.nz/our-region-and-environment/pollution-prevention-and-compliance/kopeopeo-canal-contamination-remediation-project/resource-consents/>

<sup>2</sup> The issues around treatment method and containment location were raised at the 28 March 2017 CLG meeting and subsequently responded to by the Independent Monitor at the 16 May 2017 CLG meeting. It was concluded that incineration of dioxins was not suitable as a remediation method for the project because it required a substantial budget and would result in sterilised sediment. Furthermore, the Project Manager highlighted that the UNEP toolkit for dealing with Persistent Organic Pollutants was not intended for the relatively low levels of contamination found in the Kopeopeo Canal which are well below the 50mg/kg concentrations governed by the Stockholm Convention. It was emphasised that the consented methodology complies with the UNEP principles.

Chinese delegation visiting Whakatāne to find out more about the Project and felt that they were encouraged with the steps being taken to clean up contaminated sites. Matt James (Independent Monitor Field Observer) cautioned against concealing information as suggested, given that lack of transparency would be more disastrous for reputation than full disclosure. Neal Yeates noted an improvement in the extraction method from the original methodology<sup>3</sup>. John Pullar noted the importance of removing contamination from the Canal where it could affect other agricultural land.

---

## Item 5: Project Update

During the presentation given by Ken Tarboton (Slides 5-31), the following points were commented on:

- i. Ken acknowledged the hard work of those from the Project Team, the Contractor (Envirowaste) and their Subcontractors to reach this point in the project.
- ii. He gave an overview of progress since the last CLG meeting in late November and presented a slideshow of photos. He also pointed out a link to drone footage on slide 8 showing the liner being rolled out at CS1.
- iii. Ken described the dredging process and how sediment is pumped into the Water Treatment Area where it flows over a screened shaker and into a sediment tank before being pumped into sealed geobags. The Cultural Monitor is able to observe material at the shakers or in a control room via CCTV footage.
- iv. Truxor dredging took place in November to prepare the footprint for the flood control structures. This material was pumped into an area of the canal screened off with silt screens. This sediment will later be picked up by the main dredge.
- v. Ken referred to challenges encountered in the previous FCS design including the proximity to the main Whakatāne sewer line which led to the re-design and reincorporation of sheet pile at a more reasonable cost.
- vi. He described the location of turbidity monitors along the length of the canal and at the compliance point mounted on a small floating platform outside the contained canal area to ensure turbidity of any water released from the canal is below the background levels of the adjacent Orini Stream and Kopeopeo Canal upstream of the project area.
- vii. Flood management enabling works are now all complete including the Kope Control Gate Culverts, Kopeopeo Canal East Stopbank Topup and eel removal.

---

<sup>3</sup> For information on the consented methodology, please see <https://www.boprc.govt.nz/our-region-and-environment/pollution-prevention-and-compliance/kopeopeo-canal-contamination-remediation-project/consented-methodology/>

- viii. Eula described the discovery of bones during a CS3 survey and activation of the discovery protocol with relevant parties coming to site and engaging an archaeologist to give an assessment of the discovery which was confirmed to be of animal origin. She felt it was a good test of the discovery protocol procedures.
- ix. Ken reinforced that, as already indicated to the public via newspaper and radio, CS3 access at Keepa Rd will soon be locked. Initially this will be at night and then completely once works are underway. This is for the safety of the public and also to prevent vandalism, fly-tipping and theft.
- x. Gates were installed at Kope Canal Rd and locked before Christmas, but bollards may be needed at the Shaw Rd end where some individuals have driven around the locked gate.
- xi. Dredging started on 22 January with a deliberate slow controlled start-up. There have been some minor issues that are being worked through and resolved before dredging gets up to full speed. At the same time as continuing with dredging, there is a focus on finalising the CS3 design, and undertaking preliminary works at CS3.

Questions and comments that were raised during the presentation:

- a. John asked if the floodgates were open. Ken responded that they are closed to prevent water flowing in (west) from the Whakatāne River, but can be opened to let water in. John asked what would happen to the sand plug in the Flood Control Structures in the event of a flood event. Ken answered that if there is flooding west of the project site, the sand plug will be removed to allow water in. Ken confirmed that the plug would be in place for the project duration.
- b. Neal asked if the turbidity monitors were online and live. Ken responded that they are online and monitored on a daily basis.
- c. Rene asked if other species were caught during eel fishing.  
***ACTION (1): Project Team to forward Rene de Jong copy of fish catch record for Harbour Care work (enhancement of fish habitat).***
- d. Neal asked what would happen to dredged material over 4mm and Ken responded that given that dioxins attach to finer sediment, larger particles which are unlikely to be contaminated could be used as filler material and covered with topsoil.
- e. John asked if poplars would be planted once moisture drained from geobags in order to break sediment contamination down. Ken explained that the first stage involved injecting a wood pellet sludge going into geobags, and the second “bioremediation” stage involved fungus being added and trees being planted. Funding is yet to be approved for bioremediation. Neal asked if the rupture of bags was still under investigation and Ken responded that the process has been defined and that bioremediation (if approved) would involve puncturing the bags, effectively breaking the seal.
- f. Dr Butler asked about the containment method used and Ken responded that the Flood Control Structures effectively contained any disturbed sediment

within the remediation site. Silt screens are also being used within the site to contain sediment where needed.

- g. Dr Butler asked how fine particles would be dredged and Des responded that a cutter head brings sediment to the centre of the vacuum point where it is sucked up and pumped into the water treatment area and geobags. Manual probing is used to check dredging down to hard clay layers has been achieved with validation sampling being carried out every 100 metres.
- h. Neal asked how deep the dredge head would operate. Des replied that there was on average 500mm of sediment and the dredge penetrates up to 2.3 metres below the water surface.
- i. John asked Dr Butler if it is helpful to know contamination will be reducing. Dr Butler responded that there is no way of testing or validating reduction of contamination, because there may still be hotspots.

---

### **Item 7: Independent Monitor**

During the presentation by Matt James (slides 33-35), the following points were commented on:

- i. Matt referred to slide 33 and indicated that as the Independent Monitor Field Observer, he is on site every day, taking photos, checking validation, and other activities.
- ii. He commended the emergency response of NZPGS who provided Police with equipment during a rescue of an injured police officer from a ditch adjacent to the site during a police chase.
- iii. He stated that there had been no further dust exceedances since trigger levels changed and a dust complaint registered on 12 January was not an exceedance nor was it project-related. He noted that Kope Drain Road was still being watered regularly and monitored even though there are no longer heavy truck movements from the project.
- iv. Matt referred to turbidity monitoring on slide 33 and stated that the Independent Monitor and Project Team were not yet confident in the data as the monitoring equipment was still undergoing initial calibration and there were some external signal interferences being investigated. He added that because both FCSs are in place and there is no water currently being released from the site, there is no concern about turbidity. He also stated that the issues around turbidity monitoring are now being resolved.

Questions and comments that were raised during the presentation:

- a) No questions or comments were raised.

---

### **Item 8: Health, Safety and Monitoring**

During the presentation by Des McCleary (slides 36-39), the following points were commented on:

- i. Des reassured those present that health and safety are emphasised every day on site and as a result the project had a sound safety record. 178

inductions have been carried out to date for those working on the project. He explained the work zone process that is being used on site whereby areas are allocated to appropriate contractors and are restricted to others in the interest of safety and prevention of cross contamination. The number one priority is always operator safety, followed by the environment.

- ii. In terms of environmental controls, the dredge is flushed at the end of every day using clear (low turbidity) canal water.
- iii. In accordance with the Traffic Management Plan (TMP), the 30km speed limit will be maintained on Kope Drain Rd when there are truck movements and the original speed limit will be reinstated once FCS construction is complete.
- iv. Waitotahi Contractors Limited (WCL) manages traffic on behalf of Envirowaste Services Ltd and the TMP is governed by NZTA rules. Other traffic management mechanisms used included pointsmen at the CS3 entrance off Keepa Road advising the public of the CS3 area closure for works. Upcoming crane lifts on smaller road would be regulated by independent TMPs.
- v. Des noted that there are a number of issues that come up within the project area but are not project-related and asked for acknowledgement of time taken to resolve these issues.
- vi. He stated that the Contractor was aiming for a six-day dredging schedule which means there is a lower likelihood of the containment site drying out and creating airborne dust.

Questions and comments that were raised during the presentation:

- a) Margi Martin praised the work of the WCL stop/go workers helping people navigate roads when there were closures.
- b) Dr Butler asked if there was a filter to catch particle-sized matter when water entered the sump at CS1 before returning to the canal. Des responded that the software system would catch sediment at low levels of the liner and clear filtrate would overtop back to the Canal. He added that there is a turbidity monitor at the discharge sump which is closed during commissioning. That water would go to the water tank and reticulated water runs overnight so there is little chance for evaporation.
- c) Neal asked if the Contractor and Project Team were now confident with the redundancy in place for turbidity meters. Des responded that they are confident with the calibration and monitoring results provided by the three main monitors (two outside project area and one at sump discharge).
- d) Neal asked how obstructions were managed within the Canal. Des replied that a GPS mark was made and the object left behind for later retrieval if light and small enough, with a procedure in place for washing material off.
- e) Tui asked if there were plans in the TMP to extend the 80km zone to Bunnings because she had witnessed traffic backed up there. Des offered to share feedback with WCL and crane operators so that recommendations can go to approving authorities. Bruce highlighted that roadworks on Keepa Road unrelated to the project may also be causing the hold up.

- f) Margi asked if a decision had been made on how far along the Canal material will be dredged and contained in CS1. Des responded that they will not have a confirmed volume and extent until dredging is further advanced. Margi expressed concern that sediment with higher contamination will be contained at CS1.
  - g) Barbara Brown asked if residents would be notified when roads are closed for removing the dredge and lowering it back into the Canal. Des confirmed that as required by the TMP, letters would be distributed to affected parties.
- 

**Item 9: Other business and date of next meeting**

- i. No other business noted.

**Next meeting:** Placeholder for Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018

**Meeting closed at 12.35pm**