

Te Kauru Upper Ruamahanga FMP  
Subcommittee workshop  
17 May 2016

**Part 1: Field trip**

**Stop 1**

**XS 39 Miller Property**

Alistair Miller is a scheme member who has been living in the area for 55 years. He owns a significant area of land on both sides of the river resulting in relatively long river frontage through his property

- This section of the river has experienced significant straightening since around the late 1940s. Locals find the narrow and straighter channel is the best way to manage the river. They consider it to be more efficient and better for transporting flood waters.
- This reach is and has been relatively stable for a relatively long period of time, no significant erosion issues.
- The channel is very narrow at some areas and doesn't have buffer. Design lines assume that the channel should be wider.
- Most protection works, in this reach involve mechanical gravel movement and planting to support and develop vegetated buffer strips.
- Higher expectations on environmental outcomes, recognized environmental values

Raised issues by Alistair Miller:

- Inefficient work of GWRC compared to old days (high number of staff, lot of bureaucracy)
- Dirty water in the stream
- Heavy boulders were left in the middle of a channel downstream from XS39. Some Inconsistency between Alistair's views of how river should be managed versus current GWRC management
- Reserve funding exist, but the way to use it is unclear
- Recently no money was put in the reserve, due to day to day maintenance expenses.
- No widening of the channel, current width is preferred
- Private crossings are not used these days much, due to current tenancy arrangement
- Alistair commented that his rates are paid to allow him to farm up to the river

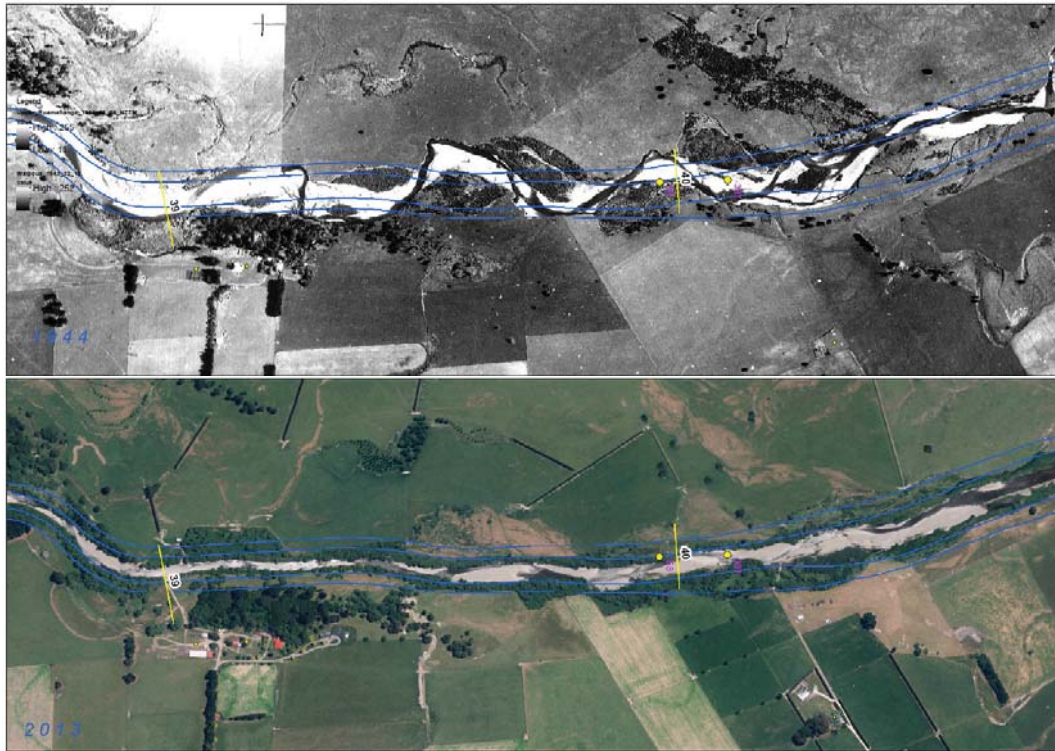


Figure 1: Aerial comparison of reach (1944 v 2013) – straightening of river

XS 37

The channel is meandering in comparison to upstream reaches.

No buffer zones

The channel is less stable and most works have been done here.

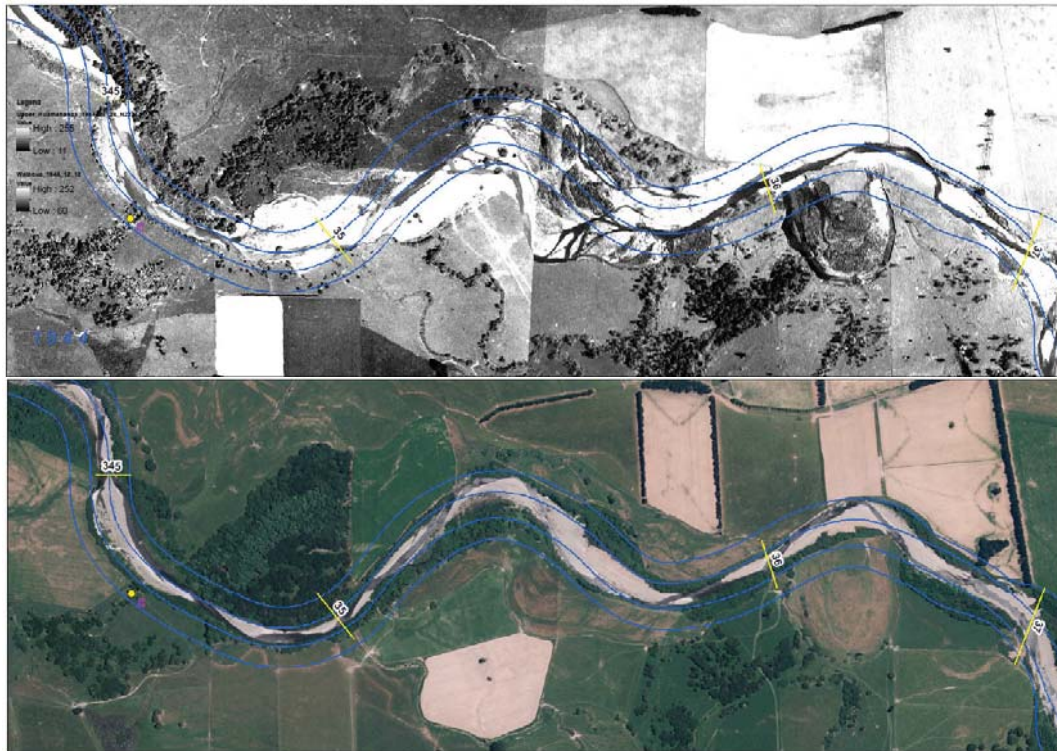


Figure 2: Aerial comparison of reach (1944 v 2013) – meandering but narrower river

## Stop 2

### XS 38 Lochore Property

- The river is approaching to the outside design line on the TR bank. There are gravel groynes to move the stream away from the bank. These are temporary groynes and will be washed away by a significant flood. Current approach – pushing up the gravel and planting to establish the banks.
- Weed control challenges – spraying and mechanical works are used to control the weed to keep the waterways clear. Weeding on the buffers is also an ongoing challenge.
- Buildup of gravel in the middle of the channel
- No buffer on the TR bank, design lines don't work well in this reach
- If the design lines are changed it affects the areas downstream and upstream as well as new buffers need to be identified.
- At one place the buffer works very well – annual floods go up to the fences but don't go to the property.



Figure 3: Private vehicular bridge (XS38)

### Stop 3

#### Garrod Property, XS 23

- Significant network of scheme stopbanks here. Their level of service and conditions are not explicitly defined but are historically referenced as being of a rural standard. Most of the stopbanks are directly adjacent to if not within the design fairway lines. Directions are desirable on what to do with them (establishment of guiding principles).
- Purpose and quality of stopbanks to be identified to assist future guidance.
- A section of the stopbank in this location was reconstructed further back from the river, around 2006, to provide the river channel more space and reducing the frequency of overtopping. This was evident by the geometry and uniformity of the stopbank compared to the others which probably date back to the early years of the Wairarapa Catchment Board, or even earlier.
- The river overtops the stopbank during relatively small flood events (c. 5year) and floods the pasture lands. If there was no stopbank at all, stock would be vulnerable and some property would be flooded. In a big flood event these small stopbanks prevent the flood water from going back to the river – increase of inundation time.
- Buffers are within properties and take up good land from landowners; however this increases pressure from landowners to protect this productive land and can lead to a requirement for more intensive operational river management.
- One of the small tributaries is very polluted (Serpentine Stream) – not sure of the veracity of this.
- There are houses and roads located within the flood and erosion hazard area. Should be addressed through Emergency Management outcomes. Particular attention should be given to the floods during the night. Even though roads are flooded occasionally may be useful to have permanent signage. Currently the roading contractor is engaged to put out temporary signage when a flood event occurs, however, any delay or failure to deploy temporary signage could be significant.. Even though depth of flood water could be relatively shallow, the consequences of vehicles hitting the water at speed could be very serious and potentially fatal.





Figure 4: Aerial showing location where stopbank was reconstructed in 2006

#### Stop 4

##### Garrod Property, XS22 at confluence of Serpentine Stream and Waipoua River

- A gap in the Waipoua stopbanks exists here, where the Serpentine Stream enters the Waipoua.
- The Serpentine has a relatively large catchment and contributes to flooding issues. A stopbank has been constructed on the southern side of the stream and ties into the Waipoua stopbanks.
- The mouth of the Serpentine blocks up from material buildup until a fresh can clear material away.
- The Waipoua and Serpentine both contribute to local flooding of property and roads during relatively small flood events.
- Heavy rock protection has been implemented over a period of years to increase protection a vulnerable bend (Gold's). Budget constraints prevented the necessary work being carried out in a single financial year.
- There are a number of houses in the flood hazard area.

#### Part 2: Workshop

During the workshop officers were given a clear message that the TKURFMP Subcommittee wish to see the work carried out to date in developing the preferred options to mitigate the issues identified in phase 1 of this process, along with any recommendations and endorsements given by the subcommittee, written up into a draft floodplain management plan document that

can then be presented to the subcommittee for review and endorsement. This document will then form the basis of the next stage of community engagement.

Subcommittee has agreed to proceed to the next phase of the FMP development and start to pull together preferred options for FMP.

#### **Governance and funding**

- BF recommended that a target of 12 month be set to develop and recommend a new preferred governance and funding framework. This will involve working with the scheme members and wider community groups and should promote a joined up and focused approach. Good consultation is key and this, it was suggested, should be carried out over the next 6-9months.
- In the last two years neighboring schemes have come together for their annual scheme meeting. This has proved successful, however, this is only a limited step change.
- There is an issue with reporting and GWRC staff involvement to work with each scheme individually. As well as Environmental subcommittee involvement.
- FMP sets up the level of service for the river maintenance. Then the operation team needs more flexibility of budget to manage the rivers.
- DN commented that reducing bureaucracy was important and that rather than looking too much at the past it was more important to look to the future.
- RG welcomed the desire to improve overall management efficiency, but felt that linking of schemes was potentially a negative, noting his view (in specific reference to the Waipoua) that river are individual and need landowner involvement, and that events dictate how much time is required to oversee governance.
- Noted that the Council's Environment Committee receive each advisory committee's resolutions and will receive the recommendation of the FMP Subcommittee. Cllrs Barbara Donaldson and Gary McPhee sit on each of the advisory committees to represent funding received through general GWRC rates.
- RS queried the funding model noting that it is GWRC centric. He asked if there was any opportunity in the future frameworks to obtain additional or alternative funding streams (e.g. DoC) and to develop a flexible/agile approach to take advantage of other funding opportunities.
- MP asked about status of discussions with TAs. This is yet to happen but will be required. The TA's act as the collection agency for the targeted scheme rates.
- DH commented that the Waitangi Treat Settlements may have a significant impact on future management and governance of River Schemes/FMP.
- DB noted that Levels of Service varies throughout the catchment and that this needs to be made clear and also added that a larger scheme (with larger budget) has more buying power and can better prioritize work programmes
- DN commented that he see there being 4 areas to look at in terms of the governance/funding discussion;

- Business as usual
- Discretionary activities
- Administrations
- Resourcing

He asked if it was possible to look at best practice examples from elsewhere in the country.

Derek also raised the issue of trust when it comes to management/governance of the schemes or future FMP. Need to step away from a micro-managed business-as-usual scenario to a place where people are confident that management is being carried out effectively and efficiently.

- Potential for a Wairarapa River reserve fund versus Local Scheme reserves fund – targeted to where the priority work is required in the event of significant flooding – useful discussion.

### **Mixed vegetated planting**

- Yes, the subcommittee agreed that we need to look into mixed vegetated planting
- Biodiversity is likely to be more resilient to climate change the mono culture
- Create opportunities for innovation and research with outsourcing of funds.
- RS reference Freshwater Management Units? Perhaps need some research/further discussion with Ra into what this is and what it could mean to the FMP
- May be opportunity to identify examples where this has happened in isolated locations along the river and to produce information on the implications and potential for success.

### **Emergency management**

- Emergency management is important for the areas that are cut off during the floods.
- Current warning and emergency management look sufficient.
- Recommendations on forecasting and improved warning can be included into FMP
- Installation of permanent flood hazard signage on vulnerable roads should be considered

### **Private bridges across the river**

- Not seen as a big issue for the FMP
- Useful to provide some guidance on where to place structure, abutments and piers etc...
- Owner responsibility should be understood
- Replacement bridges should provide sufficient capacity to convey flood flows

### **Community groups**

- The committee are supportive of this idea of creating opportunity to generate more interest in the river and floodplain, enfranchise the community to take on more responsibility around helping to deliver good social, recreational and environmental outcomes
- Can provide advice for river maintenance, assist in improving biodiversity through planting
- Opportunity to engage with a range of people and groups such as; DoC, the Territorial Authorities, Trails Wairarapa Trust, Enviroschools.

- Opportunity to have rural 'discussion' groups perhaps
- In town there is more potential to drive an 'Friends of' type approach.

### **Closing comments and Discussion**

The Chairman reiterated that the time had come to draft up the plan, based on the discussions of the last two years and the conclusions reached by the committee, followed by significant public consultation.

DN – Take away landowner centric approach and widen into the community, simplify ratings (e.g. Floodable/Lowland/Highland)

BF asked if the committee could be provided further information on what landowners actually contribute to the river management.

MP – Private property rights versus wider input from community and important issue to consider

BD – Change of thinking required FMP v Schemes, challenge to convey this to existing schemes

RS – Outside of Business as Usual there should be a place and framework for innovation and opportunity.

Attendance;

Bob Francis (Chair), Cllr Barbara Donaldson, Cllr Gary McPhee, Cllr Mike Palmers, Ra Smith, David Holmes (TKURFMP Subcommittee members)

Ron Garrod (Chair, Waipoua River Management Scheme Advisory Committee)

Derek Neal (Mt Bruce and Kopuaranga Scheme member)

Graeme Campbell, Alistair Allan, George Harley, Daria Golub (GWRC Officers)

Alistair Miller (Waipoua river scheme ratepayer) – met the committee on his property

Apologies were received from Graham McClymont, Siobhan Garlick, Steph Gunderson-Reid, Michael Williams Kate Hepburn, Janine Ogg.