



Wānanga at Te Rangimarie

## **Mana whenua values - summary**

During the past three years members of the committee have visited marae throughout Wairarapa, meeting with mana whenua and local kaitiaki. These hui have provided detailed information pertaining to the relationship of Wairarapa whānau and hapū with Te Awa Tapu o Ruamāhanga – the revered Ruamāhanga. Mana whenua perspectives are specified in the Ruamāhanga whitua values gathered in committee’s conversations with communities and informing the values document through use of Māori concepts and terminology. Wairarapa kaitiaki also informed the objectives, policies and schedules in the Proposed Natural Resources Plan.

The attached documents describe mana whenua relationships with the Ruamāhanga in some detail. Schedule B of the PNRP “Ngā Taonga Nui a Kiwa” provides a description of mana whenua relationships over time including aspirations for the future.

Schedule C sites in the PNRP identify some specific sites and their values that require specific protection.

At wānanga at Te Oreore, Papawai, Rangimarie and Hurunuiorangi marae and other engagements invited kaitiaki to share their personal relationships with water and those of their whānau and hapū. It has been agreed not to publish this information but I have provided a few key points and a summary of mana whenua values below.

Key points from the wānanga:

- Hapū need to be engaged at catchment scale
- Hapū monitoring of Ruamāhanga
- Educate our children as kaitiaki
- Kaitiaki plans to sit alongside farm plans and catchment environment plans
- Wairarapa mana whenua associate the Ruamāhanga system with the human body; the rivers are the veins and arteries, the wetlands, lakes and estuaries are the kidneys and liver that cleanses the water
- Ruamāhanga should be swimmable everywhere – and this is the same as drinkable
- Ruamāhanga should be reconnected with Wairarapa Moana
- Better managed gravel take especially on Ruamāhanga

- Set objectives and limits in sub catchments
- User pays
- Better manage forestry on steep and erosion prone land
- Have permanent forest on marginal land to protect it from erosion
- No sale of “left over” water from allocation process
- RWC needs to address Henley Lake and water quality issues
- Actions to improve: reduce stock, increase shade, avoid disturbance of the bed
- Values don’t exist alone in Mātauranga Māori, but are inter-supporting e.g. Whakapapa links between sites and uses with emphasis on linkage
- We want behaviour the community adopts, a vision to the community that enables change

## **Mana whenua**

Mana whenua are Māori with ancestral claims to a particular area. Rangitāne and Ngāti Kahungunu are mana whenua iwi of Wairarapa as are their associated hapū and whānau. Kaitiakitanga is the role of mana whenua in sustaining mauri and upholding their customary responsibilities including their relationship with te taiao (the environment). These relationships are fundamental to the identity and well-being of mana whenua, who derive their status as mana whenua and their responsibilities for maintaining customary authority over their tribal area directly from their whakapapa (familial) relationship with their environment.

## **Whakapapa**

The relationships of mana whenua with their ancestral water and land are based in a Māori cosmology that describes a shared genealogy (whakapapa) as the basis for what is a familial relationship between te ira tangata (mankind) and te taiao (the environment). The elements making up the environment are embodied in the form of ngā atua, ancestral deities whose individual attributes and dynamic relationships are readily observable and play out in the day-to-day interactions of land and water, wind and sky.

Māori relationship with the environment is governed by the direct identification of the physical world as being fundamental to and synonymous with human identity and well-being. This is reflected in the direct association of individual hapū and iwi with specific rivers, mountains and other natural features as entities that define and support their existence. The proposed Plan captures this relationship in Schedule B Ngā Taonga Nui a Kiwa that recognises the mana whenua relationship with Te Awa Tapu o Ruamāhanga as the most important water body within the whaitua.

## **Mauri**

Another pre-eminent principle is the concept of mauri being inherent in all elements, both physical and metaphysical. Mauri is regarded as a prerequisite for life to exist and is pervasive in that it is present everywhere. The importance of the mauri of fresh and coastal water is emphasised by iwi and is also the best example of how mauri is inherent in the

environment. The mauri (life-giving property) of water supports all life including human well-being.

This is shown in the following whakatauaiki;

*Ka ora te wai            If the water is healthy*

*Ka ora te whenua      The land will be nourished*

*Ka ora te whenua      If the land is nourished*

*Ka ora te tangata      The people will prosper*

Mauri is the life force that exists in all things in the natural world, including people. Mauri comprises both physical and spiritual qualities and can be harmed by pollutants and by development which diminishes the natural character, life-supporting capacity and ecosystem health. For example, the health and vitality of the sea, streams and rivers and the plants and animals they support can be threatened by activities such as discharges of pollutants, storm water, sewage and runoff of contaminants from land; excessive water use; changing the course of water bodies or diverting water between catchments or rivers.

### **Kawa and tikanga**

The relationship of mana whenua with their environment is governed by principles and practices (kawa and tikanga), which include such elements as tauututu (reciprocity), kaitiakitanga (duty of care) and karakia (spiritual invocation). Whilst kawa and tikanga stem from common precepts, they are interpreted differently by individual hapū and iwi in determining and directing what resources are used and by whom, when they are used and the manner in which they are used.

### **Kaitiakitanga**

The role of kaitiaki is held by whānau, hapū and iwi over specific areas determined by whakapapa (genealogy). Kaitiakitanga is the responsibility of mana whenua to sustain the familial relationship with the environment. This is done by maintaining enhancing and restoring natural and physical resources including cultural rituals and practices for current and future generations.

*“Ko Waiohine ko Ruamāhanga ēnei e wairua tipu mai*

*i Tararua maunga e oranga e te iwi”*

*“These are Waiohine and Ruamāhanga*

*They are like mothers milk flowing out of the Tararua mountains for the*

*prosperity of the people”*

Na Whatahoro Jury 1841 -1923

### **Cultural landscape**

The loss of a Māori cultural landscape in our waterways occurs in many ways, mainly through changes of ownership and land use and the attendant impact on water quality. Mana whenua sites are often inaccessible or unusable to iwi for their traditional purpose. Place names and their meanings have been lost through the overlay of British names and mistranslations in the official records. Yet despite these changes the places themselves do not lose their importance to mana whenua who regard them as fundamental to their well-being and identity, past, present and future.

Mana whenua inhabit a cultural landscape informed by several hundred years of habitation and celebrated in waiata (songs), karakia (invocations), pepeha (representations of identity) and pakiwaitara (stories). Waterways, landscapes, hills and wetlands are redolent with meaning, each referencing its significance from the experience of mana whenua. Places in and contiguous with water bodies were and continue to be of importance as sites of homes, harvesting and industry and all the attendant and supporting usages of human life; kauhoe (swimming), wāhi horoi (washing), ūrunga waka (canoe launching) to name a few. Wetlands and estuaries are regarded as important places for gathering food and building materials and rivers and large stream systems provided access for transporting people and materials between coast and hinterland.

The confluences of waterways are places of special significance to mana whenua as this is where the individual mauri of each water body joins to form a new and distinct entity. All waterways had particular sites identified for special purposes based on historical context, i.e. consecrated for a particular religious function, or their natural characteristics; a source of a particular type of clay, species of mahinga kai (natural food source) or quality of water.

The cultural landscape of the Ruamāhanga also includes those places associated with ngā atua (deities), taniwha and kaitiaki (guardians and protectors of places), as well as places discovered, visited and or named by ancestors and explorers. The many coastal places in our region that reference the life and times of Kupe, one of the first visitors to Aotearoa are an important example as are the many landmarks including the Wairarapa rivers named by his grandson Haunui a Nanaia.

Places are also referenced, named and remembered for what happened there; battle grounds, agreements, love stories, visitations and accidents all form part of the cultural landscape experienced by mana whenua.

### **Mahinga kai**

Mahinga kai – The customary gathering of food and natural materials, the food and resources themselves and the places where those resources are gathered.

Mahinga kai species and places are fundamental to this relationship and observation of their health is the primary way that Māori assess the health and well-being of their aquatic environment.

Threats to mahinga kai and natural resources include degradation of water quality in freshwater and marine environments through poor stormwater, sewage and runoff management; loss of water resources and associated ecosystems through water abstraction, drainage and flood management works; and exclusion from access to sites where cultural resources are found.

The threats to the health, quality and quantity of mahinga kai in our fresh and coastal waters are affected by a broad range of activities. This means that mahinga kai rely on the achievement of outcomes for water quality and land-use management.

Please refer to Caleb Royal's report on Cultural Values for Wairarapa Waterways for detail on the relationship between instream flows and mahinga kai values.

### **Māori customary use**

Māori customary use – The interaction of Māori with fresh and coastal water for cultural purposes. This includes the cultural and spiritual relationship with water expressed through Māori practices, recreation and the harvest of natural materials.

Māori customary use of water is not well understood in the wider community, particularly the reality that customary use of water is not a thing of the past but a current practice that underpins health and identity. Whilst mana whenua share many places and uses for water with the general public, there are customary values and associated practices that are peculiar to Māori and expressed differently by individuals, whānau, hapū and iwi. Examples include the ritual use of water along with karakia (prayer) to begin and end processes and journeys, baptism and dedication of infants in water that has a particular association with them through whakapapa, the use of water for blessings, healing and removing negative elements from people and places.

Mana whenua customary use of water underpins Māori health, wellbeing and identity. The ability to access water for physical and spiritual cleansing and specific water bodies for association with whakapapa and identity is a priority that has been identified by every marae visited by the committee.

Water utilised for customary use can be associated with a particular place. Iwi have identified these in schedule C in the Plan in order to ensure that they are provided greater protection from direct effects of resource use. Providing for water quality that supports customary use requires a catchment and regional approach in order to implement changes to land use practices necessary to improve water quality. Schedule B, Ngā Taonga Nui a Kiwa which emphasises the relationship of mana whenua with extensive water bodies and more broadly the inclusion of Māori customary use as a primary management objective for all water in the region addresses this.