

**MINUTES OF THE 127th MEETING OF THE SELWYN WAIHORA ZONE COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TAI TAPU COMMUNITY CENTRE ON
MONDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2024 COMMENCING AT 4.15 PM**

Meeting Agenda

Item	Time	Description
	4:00 pm	<i>Committee check-in</i>
		Opportunity for Committee members to provide non-committee related updates and for whakawhanaungatanga
		<i>Public meeting begins</i>
1	4.15 pm (10 min)	Meeting commences with Karakia and formal order of business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Apologies • Identification of Urgent General Business • Register of Interests review • Confirmation of minutes 12 August 2024 • Public contribution • Correspondence
2	4.25 pm (15 min)	Zone Committee Action Plan Budget – confirm recommendations – for decision The Committee will confirm projects for recommendation to Environment Canterbury to support using the Selwyn Waihora Zone Committee Action Plan Budget FY24/25.
3	4:40 pm (30 min)	Matuku-hūrepo – the Australasian bittern: a taonga we can save if we have a vision and work together – for information Peter Langlands and Ken Hughey will provide details of a proposal - A new 'farming' venture for Canterbury, with an initial focus around Te Waihora Lake Ellesmere: Matuku-hūrepo (Australasian bittern) farming.
4	5:10 pm (30 min)	Enviro Collective and Advance Mitigations – for information Richard Fitzgerald, General Manager of Enviro Collective will provide a presentation which includes an overview of Advanced Mitigation (AM) and how it builds on GMP practices, farmer responses to AM, changes at the farm level, insights into farmer engagement and measuring success.
5	5:40 pm (10 min)	Committee updates – for information and decision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selwyn Well Water Testing Events – Killinchy and West Melton • CWMS Chairs and Deputy Chairs – Zone Committee Review Update • Selwyn Waihora Zone Committee and Element Environmental – Selwyn Waihora Leaders Project and Catchment Support scoping project - update
6	5:50 pm (10 min)	General Business
7	6:00 pm	Meeting closed with <i>karakia</i> .
8		End of year kai for Committee members

PRESENT

Caine Tauwhare (Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke (Rāpaki) Rūnanga), Simon Bryant (Community Member), Cr Sophie McInnes (Selwyn District Council), Helen Troy (Community Member) Khan McKay (Community Representative), Les Wanhalla (Taumutu Rūnanga), Marie Pollisco (Christchurch City Council Representative), Cr Vicky Southworth (Environment Canterbury Council), Alannah Kidd (Deputy Chair / Community Member); Matt Dodson (Chair / Community Member); and Alice Docking (Youth Representative) online.

IN ATTENDANCE

Jaimee Grant (Facilitator, Environment Canterbury), John Benn (Department of Conservation), Peter Langlands (Wild Capture Research), and Richard Fitzpatrick (Enviro Collective).

Alannah Kidd welcomed everyone, and Caine Tauwhare provided a karakia. Meeting opened at 4:17 pm.

APOLOGIES

Received from Tayla Nelson-Tūhuru.

IDENTIFICATION OF URGENT GENERAL BUSINESS

None.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Matt Dodson noted he is still seconded to Ecan for another three weeks.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the 126th Meeting of the Selwyn Waihora Zone Committee (Water Management) held on 12 August 2024.

Moved – Councillor McInnes / **Seconded** – Les Wanhalla

'That the minutes of the 126th meeting of the Selwyn Waihora Zone Committee (Water Management) held on Monday 12 August 2024 be confirmed as circulated.

CARRIED

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

PUBLIC CONTRIBUTION

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

None received.

REPORTS

1. Zone Committee Action Plan Project Recommendations

J Grant noted the September workshop which led to the development of the recommendations outlined in the agenda paper.

Moved – Simon Bryant / Seconded – Alanah Kidd

‘That the Zone Committee:

- **Confirms** its decision to support the funding recommendations for the following projects:

1. RCS Tunnel House Irrigation Project	Rolleston Christian School	\$1,297.00
2. Fantail Trust Bird Sanctuary	Fantail Trust	\$2,500.00
3. Old Tai Tapu Bush Deer Fence	Queen Elizabeth II Trust	\$12,762.00
4. Halswell/ Huritini Wetland Restoration	Environment Canterbury	\$10,000.00
5. Scamander Swamp Wetland Restoration	Environment Canterbury	\$16,500.00
6. Te Ara Kākāriki Kids Discovery Plantout and Monitoring at Te Motu Huritini o Ahuriri 2025	Te Ara Kākāriki Greenway Canterbury Trust	\$6,941.00

CARRIED

2. Matuku-hūrepo – the Australasian bittern: a taonga we can save if we have a vision and work together

Peter Langlands provided a presentation on the Matuku-hūrepo. The species of significant ecological importance, particularly in wetland habitats and as an indicator of wetland health.

L Wanhalla noted that it is not considered a taonga species in this area and P Langland noted it holds cultural and ecological value in others, such as up north in New Zealand.

Their population is critically low, with only about 30-50 in Canterbury, a situation exacerbated by habitat fragmentation, predation, and environmental degradation. Females are particularly vulnerable due to their nesting duties, leading to male-dominated populations. The Department of Conservation (DOC) principal scientist has described this as a “perfect storm,” with factors like roadkill, wetland destruction, and predator pressures contributing to their decline. The loss of the Matuku-hūrepo could signify the collapse of wetland ecosystems, as these birds are top predators.

Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere) is a key wetland site, but it faces numerous challenges, including nitrogen enrichment, saltwater intrusion, human disturbances, and predators. Recent observations indicate a significant decline in food sources for the Matuku-hūrepo, such as bullies, contributing to starvation among juveniles.

Efforts to create large-scale wetland habitats at sites such as the Lower Huritini/Halswell and Ahuriri Lagoon, are critical. These projects could enhance breeding habitats, with raupō (bulrush) identified as a vital component for providing coverage from predators. While some juveniles have successfully joined local populations, the species’ survival depends on significant conservation efforts, including habitat creation on a larger scale. In Australia, they have survived to an extent in commercial rice fields as refuge habitat.

Potential restoration areas include Ahuriri Lagoon, Harts Creek, and Osborne Drain, but challenges such as willow invasions and fragmented wetlands must be addressed. There is also an urgent need for increased water flow and better management of Te Waihora’s ecosystems to support wetland productivity.

Advocacy from the Committee alongside collaboration with landowners, iwi, and agencies like Ngāi Tahu, is essential. The establishment of wetlands with public amenities could garner broader support.

Members thanked P Langland for his presentation to the Zone Committee, one the previous weekend and his mahi.

C Tauwhare noted over in Hickory Bay there was talk 10+ years ago of establishing raupō and might be of interest and get in touch with the family over there.

Cr McInnes asked whether he had been in touch with landowners or looked at land value in those key places. She noted there was low-level grazing land, areas owned by Environment Canterbury and Ngāi Tahu, and some flood-prone land near Ahuriri that might be suitable. At Coes Ford, Selwyn District Council (SDC) has been developing a constructed wetland, though land costs there were high, as with the Te Kuru wetland purchase.

L Wanhalla noted the ambition for Ahuriri Lagoon involves going across the side of Huritini/Halswell and some adjacent land. Muriwai once had Matuku-hūrepo (10 males, 1 female), but raupō has declined due to saltwater intrusion, though the opposite issue occurs on the leeward side.

M Dodson noted an upcoming bus trip to be undertaken with community groups and note that could be an opportunity to engage groups on this subject. He also noted the Committee is also connected with other groups who may wish to support this project.

Moved – Marie Pollisco / Seconded - Alannah Kidd

That the Zone Committee:

- 1) **Receives** the presentation *“Matuku-hūrepo – the Australasian bittern: a taonga we can save if we have a vision and work together”* in consideration of their Action Plan 2021-24.

CARRIED

3. Enviro Collective and Advance Mitigations

Richard Fitzgerald, Group Manager of Enviro Collective (EC), explained the ownership of EC noting their objective to help groups meet their consent requirements. EC are trying to broaden the impact of the farmers activities to a catchment scale and aim at getting the biophysical and farm management systems working together instead of looking at individual farms.

AM focuses on five key target areas outlined in the presentation. It operates alongside GMP (Good Management Practices), with the expectation that farmers achieve an A-grade standard. For the Barhill Chertsey scheme, all participants are assessed against AM criteria, which represent a higher level of performance and a more advanced set of credentials. Independent auditors evaluate the farmers' Farm Environment Plans (FEPs), including the thought process and rationale behind them. Participation in AM is voluntary, but achieving an A-grade is both a standard and a prerequisite for involvement.

A proactive approach has been taken in setting clear expectations for farmers to implement meaningful changes. Engaging and supporting farmers throughout this journey is critical to achieving success.

The key message they aim to communicate is that AM delivers tangible business benefits. The value proposition of AM goes beyond simply meeting consent requirements; it provides a strong, data-driven case for participation, which is crucial given its voluntary nature.

AM focusses on three areas: Irrigation, Nutrients, and Point Source. The thought process required ensures farmers are considering how they farm. The goal is to support farmers in adopting deliberate, informed practices rather than defaulting to what they have always done. Focus is on identifying outcomes to be achieved under the three areas and then then leave it to farmers to determine how to achieve them.

There are associated challenges which were detailed in the presentation for both working with farmers and also for auditors.

AM is forward facing and is looking both to the future and for those opportunities now. Initiating change for the right reason is important, if initiating due to regulations, those regulations can change and will probably see those changes.

Barhill Chertsey Irrigation noted as performing above the Canterbury average and attributed AM practices as being key in that.

Water monitoring was noted as being critical to ensure sufficient progress is being made quickly enough and enables the assessment of efforts and taking action to achieve the desired outcomes.

AM is a framework focused on nitrogen management, but in areas like Selwyn Waihora, it can be adapted to address different issues and guide the development and delivery of tailored outcomes.

The question was asked why not use ISO9001 certification as a framework to provide farmers with credibility and a clear benchmark for improvement? R Fitzgerald noted the focus is on helping farmers understand issues and deliver outcomes, whether through ISO9001 or other frameworks like AM. While ISO could be used, there is no strict preference, but AM currently has support and engagement.

It was commented that in terms of working in a catchment context, it seemed the focus was more around understanding key issues and then individuals working on their own 'patch'. Is there an opportunity for farmers to collaborate to achieve catchment-wide outcomes? It was noted that catchment context is largely captured within consents specific to their area and will vary across regions. Their catchment is their "scheme catchment". While there is currently no comprehensive alignment or coordination at the catchment level, there is potential and zone committees to take on the role to support/lead it.

M Dodson commended the presentation and EC's work. He asked if AM was EC's IP or if they were talking to other schemes to see if this works and if there is much uptake? He also noted that schemes were often held to a higher standard than independent irrigators and asked how that could be closed. R Fitzgerald noted it was not their IP. EC had had conversations with a number of schemes and the most interested are those in the Waimakariri. Most schemes would be familiar with this approach to the extent and may have similar approaches with their own customised versions.

A source of frustration is that attention is often on schemes given they capture large groups of people and can impact large areas whereas independent irrigators are not subject to the same rigour. Parity could strengthen the case for unified catchment management under a single scheme. It was noted there were irrigators who wanted to buy in to AM but not into a scheme.

Non-compliant members face robust performance management tied to their environmental performance and water access. Measures range from advice on land use changes to a hierarchy of penalties, with the most severe being water shutoff or expulsion.

S Bryant asked if the scheme was still linked to FEPs, and R Fitzgerald confirmed they were.

M Dodson thanks R Fitzgerald for his presentation.

Moved – Khan McKay / Seconded - Simon Bryant

That the Zone Committee:

- 1) **Receives** the presentation, "Enviro Collective and Advanced Mitigations".

CARRIED

4. Committee Updates

J Grant provided an update on the Selwyn Well Water Testing Days noting around 150-180 tests were taken. M Dodson the events were well organised and having suppliers and experts there to talk about results and solutions learnt itself to the events. S McInnes noted the Killinchy event was enjoyable. J Grant noted Dr T Chambers also attended one event and noted opportunities for future use of the nitrate sensors e.g. potentially having testing before or after Committee meetings.

M Dodson and A Kidd both attended the CWMS Committees Review Chairs and Deputy Chairs online update. Both noted key comments and themes heard at that meeting. The key date noted was 26 November and was when a paper would be going to the Canterbury Mayoral Forum to get their agreement on what happens next. L Wanhalla noted equal partnership as being important for any structure and ensuring mana whenua have sufficient representation.

M Dodson noted the Selwyn Waihora Leaders Project and Catchment Support scoping project did not get funding support from the Access to Experts fund however, noted those conversations the project would support will still need to be had with groups and organisations.

M Dodson noted a letter he was intending to be sent to Environment Canterbury requesting an update on the Near River Recharge project in Selwyn. Clarity was required around the Selwyn Infrastructure Rating from Environment Canterbury and what those funds were going to. There were no objections from the Committee to send the letter.

S McInnes noted a recommendation that the Selwyn District Council Annual Plan does not go out for public consultation. M Pollisco noted Christchurch City Council Annual Plan is coming up and may ask for early feedback from the Committee in December. L Wanhalla noted there was electric fishing coming up at Osbourne's drain.

C Tauwhare noted he has enjoyed the presentations provided at Committee meetings and wanted to put forward consideration for getting speakers in to talk about atua whakapapa and mātauranga Māori. L Wanhalla suggested some possible people to speak to.

Moved – Marie Pollisco / **Seconded** - Helen Troy

That the Zone Committee:

- 1) **Receives** the updates for its information and in consideration of its Action Plan 2021-24.

CARRIED

General business

C Tauwhare closed the meeting with karakia.

Meeting closed at 6:12 pm



CHAIRPERSON

17/02/25

DATE