

Memo – Errata Regarding Response to Hearings Panel questions

Date: 17 July 2019

To: Hearings Panel - Proposed Plan Change 1: Waikato and Waipā River Catchments

From: Matthew McCallum-Clark, Section 42A lead author

Subject: Errata – Corrected Answer to Question 14 (Īnanga Spawning Maps)

Purpose

1. The purpose of this memo is to correct the answer given to the Hearings Panel relating to Question 14 of the minute from the Hearings Panel dated 20 May 2019.

Introduction

2. The answer given to question 14, in relation to the mapping of Īnanga spawning sites has subsequently been found to be incorrect. A further technical report has recently been provided to me (WRC Technical Report TR201435 – Assessment of the Waikato River estuary and delta for whitebait habitat management: field survey, GIS modelling and hydrodynamic modelling)¹. A corrected answer to Question 14 is set out below – the original answer on this issue in the memo dated 15th July should be disregarded.
3. This memo has been prepared so that the Hearing Panel and submitters preparing a response to the issue² are aware of the correct position.

Question 14: Īnanga spawning maps

4. The Panel has asked: Are Īnanga spawning maps, held by WRC, able to be used in PC1? (In response to Kathryn McArthur’s evidence)? (20 May)

¹ Available at: <https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/assets/PageFiles/29308/TR201435.pdf>

² Ms McArthur has been telephoned and advised ahead of this memo being prepared.

Response

5. There are two parts to this response. The first part relates to the existence of mapping suitable for use, and the second part relates to a discussion of the scope of PC1 and the relevant submissions. I note that this question does not seek evaluation of whether mapping or other protection of īnanga spawning should be included in PC1.³

Does mapping exist?

6. Yes - a report completed for WRC (WRC Technical Report TR201435 – Assessment of the Waikato River estuary and delta for whitebait habitat management: field survey, GIS modelling and hydrodynamic modelling) records a detailed and technically robust study of the Waikato Estuary and delta, from which mapping could be derived.

Is this mapping able to be used?

7. In order to include mapping, there must be 'scope' to do so. I have considered the scope of PC1 and the submissions lodged. The Director General of Conservation (DoC) submission clearly raises the issue. The relevant part of the DoC submission states:

New Policies

īnanga spawn in the lower Waikato River, amongst riparian vegetation at the upper tidal extent during high spring tides. Early records suggest that this occurs on the Waikato River downstream of Tuakau, although modelling of the MHWS90, LiDAR data and any recent spawning records held by WRC would better predict the available spawning habitat for īnanga, similar to methods used by Canterbury Regional Council.

The Director-General is aware that some work has already been completed for Lakes Waahi and Whangape and the lower Waikato River (footnote 9 - <https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/services/publications/technical-reports/tr/tr201424>).

Policies and rules are needed to protect īnanga spawning sites.

Relief sought

The Director-General considers that additional policies and rule(s) are required to protect spawning habitat.

³ For the record, I support protection of īnanga spawning habitat - īnanga is listed as 'declining' at the national level and is a high value recreational species. Protection of spawning habitat would seem a logical and effective place to start.

8. Arguably, the reference to 'rules' in the submission could include mapping. However, while the submission raises rules, the content of a rule or the extent of any mapping is not indicated in the submission and the report referred to does not provide this. I am concerned that a person who may be affected by this mapping and any specific controls may not have reasonably anticipated the nature of mapping or specific rules that could result from the submission.
9. While ultimately it is up to the Hearing Panel to determine the scope of the submission, I do not recommend mapping at this time. However, I do consider that there is scope to include greater direction in policies, stock exclusion rules, and FEP requirements to require the identification and protection of Ūnanga spawning habitat with respect to farming activities. Further recommendations on this will be made in the final Officers' reply version of PC1.
10. In my opinion, mapping and a targeted set of rules that manages a wider range of riparian activities in the mapped areas should be considered for a future plan change or the wider review of the regional plan.