

Attachment to HBRC 2021-2131 LTP Submission Form

Question 3. Upper Tukituki gravel.

On the 29 April 2015 a public meeting was held in the CHB Municipal Theatre to advise Upper Tukituki Scheme ratepayers on a review of the Upper Tukituki Flood Control Scheme (UTTFCS) being undertaken by HBRC: with major focus being taken on the scheme's future management. The outcome of the review was to ensure that the Scheme remains fit for purpose into the future and was funded through a fair and equitable rating system.

Following are amongst the points made :

- There was a scheme review in the 1980s, which was the impetus for not only today's infrastructure but also the rating scheme through which the UTTFCS is funded .
- Scheme rate payers have expressed concerns about gravel build-up in river beds, drainage issues, and the cost of their rates compared to the benefit they perceive to get.
- The need for a review & refinement of the current rating scheme.
- The HBRC was keen to work through this with a community group .

I volunteered to join the community group that was formed.

The build up of gravel in the rivers was discussed endlessly by the group. We always came back with the same answer –get the gravel out of the rivers. The next questions were how, and who pays?

According to Gary William's Report (1985), on which the scheme was largely based, it was recognised that aggradation in river channels would give rise to declining capacity between the stopbanks and a serious drainage problem.

The only solution was the removal of excess bed gravel, to be undertaken by commercial operators. Redirection and encouragement of greater rates of gravel extraction was proposed from serious aggrading reaches.

From the outset of the current scheme (1989), the cost of gravel extraction was not included in the UTTFCS targeted rates. Gravel was viewed as a resource. It must have been assumed that demand for it would be constant. It wasn't. Floods were expected to move gravel, also flawed thinking as they are random.

Now the gravel in river beds has built up so much that it is posing a serious risk to the effectiveness of the stop banks in the event of a big flood. Will they keep the community safe?

One would think that the sensible answer to question 3. Upper Tukituki gravel, in the HBRC LTP submission form would be "Go fast" and use the government funds, but if one were asked to pay an additional \$3700 in targeted rates per year for the next 30 years one might think differently.

As Class A and Class B ratepayers, this adds thousands of dollars to our already extremely high UTTFCS rates bill. It is held that we benefit most, despite losing production from land that is now waterlogged.

But what constitutes benefit?

Gravel is released from the top of the catchment s, accumulating in specific sections of the rivers downstream.

Removal of the gravel is a catchment wide responsibility . The rivers take the water from the whole catchment, that is, its storm water. In the highly modified agricultural landscapes where natural vegetation has been removed, wetlands drained, streams straightened and hard surfaces created, the ground is less permeable so rain water will run off more readily putting more pressure on the flood control system. Global warming will increase the risk further.

The rivers are also a corridor for weeds that are controlled as a cost of the scheme. They don't all originate from just over the stopbanks.

The first service that the stop banks provide is the protection of life and communities .(Asset Management Group Technical Report ISS 1174 3085 October 2017).

If the proposed mass extraction is an emergency, to protect life and communities, and goes ahead, the rates should reflect this with a fixed charge to all ratepayers in CHB as is civil defence , not tagged on the UTTFCS rates pro rata.

My preference would be to keep the status quo and stock pile at critical sections where the gravel is not being removed fast enough by commercial extractors. This would be no more unsightly than the dozens of irrigators that diminish the CHB landscape , milking sheds that look like industrial sites and the orchard on Wakarara road which takes the cake. As there is unprecedented growth forecast for Central Hawke's Bay, some 1500 new homes in the next 10 years, there will be a growth in demand for gravel locally. The global resource consent to extract gravel from the Ngaruroro ,Tutaekuri and Tukituki catchments should also lead to increased extraction from the UTTFCS. Let's not forget that gravel is a resource and that there are big projects on the horizon that will need it.

Surely the time has come , after 32 years, for another rates review and to address the inequities. Some matters to be taken into consideration were proposed by a discussion paper, Upper Tukituki Flood Control Scheme Assessment of Economic Costs and Benefits (March 2014) prepared by Sean Bevin.

The rating base for the Scheme is land value . Capital value would better reflect benefit. There are no dwellings or large structures on our property. If there were a milking shed, farm workers houses and central pivot irrigators we would pay the same UTTFCS rates .

Both the significant Waipukurau and Waipawa communities within the CHB district are closely adjacent to the direct impact areas of the UTTFCS. There are rate inequities between the urban and rural ratepayers and within the urban communities.

Land use continues to change in CHB. If a rates review were on the LTP Submission Form , I would choose the option, GO FAST.

Anne Wallace

