

Make us a part of your team!

By Ngarangi Walker, Communications Partner at Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

“Council wants to be part of the landowner’s team to support landowners to make a range of decisions for the future. Where we fit and can be a part of [your] team is around land and water use and management. We want to fit into the farm’s long-term business planning, to help landowners’ achieve their goals,” says Simon Stokes, the Catchments Manager for the Eastern area of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

Simon describes his role to work with community, landowners, iwi and the primary sector within the catchments to improve and protect land, water and biodiversity for the future. “When I say I’m the catchment manager, I’ve also got my eyes and ears across everything Council does in the area.”

Simon and his operational team focus on providing a service to the communities within the catchment on land and water and biodiversity and biosecurity, “that’s the advisory service and it’s as easy as calling the Council or visiting our website and identifying who the Land Management Officer (LMO) is in your area, so get in touch with us.”

Key to Council’s operational staff and land

management officers getting our work done is landowners or businesses in our communities giving Council a call. Council staff can go out to meet you and have a chat on-farm about the range of services Council can provide.

“Building relationships is key to us all working together and thriving together” Simon says.

“Our other main activity is working specifically with landowners on their properties to make changes with regards to how they manage land, water, biodiversity and biosecurity”. An example of this is funding that is applied to farms through the Riparian Management Plan (RMP). The RMP focuses on keeping stock out of water and restoring waterways and wetlands. “For landowners the successful benefits of working with Council is two-fold; one is that they are future proofing their property with regard to their business or the land use and land management that they’re doing. They are also future proofing their properties to storms, climate change and also to environmental regulation”.

“The other benefit is in the improvements to water quality such as seen in the Nukuhou

River catchment flowing into Ōhiwa Harbour,” says Simon “where after 15-years of land owner contribution and work on their properties, monitored results are showing an improvement of water quality”. Contributing to the success of these outcomes is landowners working with the Council to have a planned approach to the environmental actions that need to occur.

“Māori businesses and iwi authorities are landowners that we work with too. We have working relationships with iwi to support their kaupapa and any mahi that they want to do. When it’s needed we do it”. There are opportunities for landowners, communities, iwi and the primary sector to access the advisory services that Council has to offer. Needless to say, Simon and his operations team are busy people!

Give us a call today and make us a part of your team! Freephone Bay of Plenty Regional Council on 0800 884 880 or visit our website www.boprc.govt.nz and search “land management officer” to get in touch directly with an LMO in your catchment now.



Visit www.boprc.govt.nz



SPRING 2016 IRRIGATION NZ NEWS

Water metering a no brainer

Glenn Ellery is the Data Services Manager for Bay of Plenty Regional Council and manages a team of people who collect information for the organisation. Glenn's team are out and about in the region, on the ground and in the water, getting the job done!

When Council talks about environmental monitoring it covers water levels, water quality, river flows, rainfall, temperature, and air. Data Services are your team on the ground collecting this information out in the field and bringing it back so it can be turned into "stuff" the rest of us mortals can understand. In the case of water samples, those actually go to our lab, that's also part of Glenn's team. The lab staff analyse samples and the results inform and support the work and planning our scientists and engineers do. So what does this all mean for people in our region?

With the introduction of Region-wide Water Quantity Plan Change, or rather Plan Change 9, the big game changer for Council and Data Services is the impact this will have on water metering. Council will be getting a lot more information from consent holders

about what they're actually using so we can better understand what is available within a catchment and how it is being used.

"This will provide Council staff with some really good detail that will give us a better picture on how to better manage our water resource; for both the environment and those in that catchment who are using the water," says Glenn.

"We all see there is a value in water, and this means we all need to understand how we're using it. A water meter helps provide that understanding. If you balance it against the value of the water, the cost of putting a water meter in and maintaining it – it's a bit of a no brainer," Glenn says "we're trying to make it as easy as possible; people can read their own meters and enter data through our website for their consents or get a third party supplier to do the work".

Glenn is optimistic it's about creating better understanding that enables better management for both consent holders and Council too.

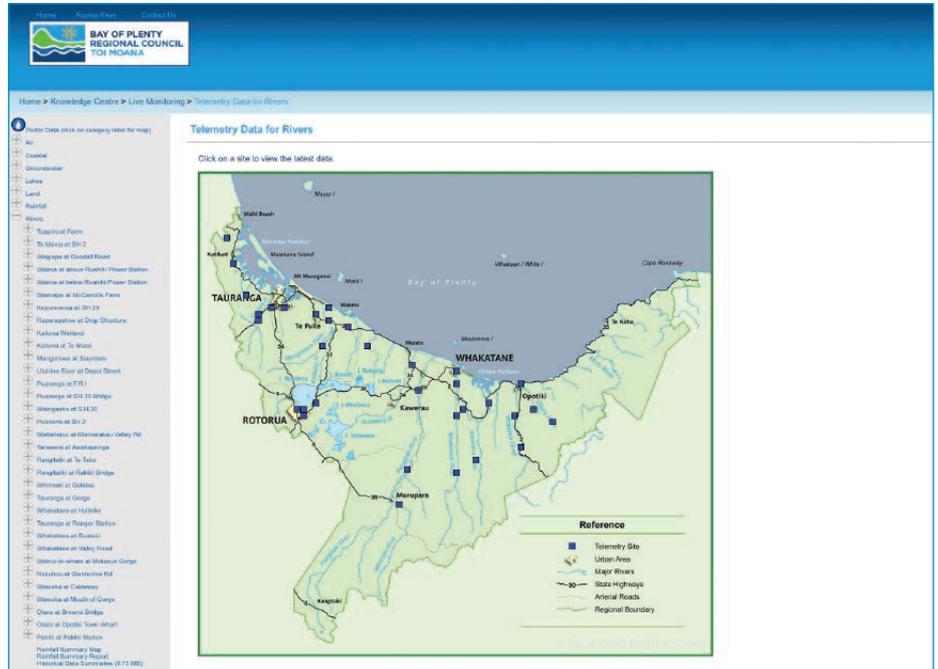
Bay of Plenty Regional Council is heavily involved in data monitoring work and ensuring monitoring standards are being met.

"One of our key services is data collection and we collect a lot of it and it's collected to a standard we can all have confidence in. Our data is measured against National Environmental Monitoring Standards so it can be used on a local scale through our Council website and a national scale through initiatives like LAWA. It's like comparing apples with apples, which is important for everyone to realise," says Glenn.

Data Services make the data available internally to Council scientists, engineers and policy makers.



Glenn Ellery the Data Services Manager for Bay of Plenty Regional Council – "back when I used to get out into the field rather than drive my desk" – at Puarenga at the Whakarewarewa Bridge.



Visit www.boprc.govt.nz and type in "live monitoring" to the search function. You can check the monitoring data for air, coastal, groundwater, lakes, land, rainfall and rivers. This screenshot is of the river sites in the region.

“This is so they can see what’s happening in the environment and can work out if there are any issues and how we all can manage the resources that we have. This is part of our long term work,” says Glenn.

“What were we trying to show on the live monitoring site is longer term pictures so you can actually see, for instance rainfall, against long-term normal so you can see if it’s dry and you can compare it against last year. For people in our farming community you might ask, ‘where was I at last year and what happened there and where am I now in relation to the information I’m presented with?’,” says Glenn. While Council knows a lot from the data we gather, we don’t know everything, “one thing we’re keen to find out from farmers is how useful is this to them and are we presenting it in way that’s simple and easy for them to use?” Glenn asks.

- Throughout the region, Council operates 110 automated sites as monitoring sites collecting all sorts of environmental data;
- Last year we performed 1,005 physical flow measures where our staff actually got into the water or were on the side of the bank measuring how much water is in the river;
- The laboratory received 6,100 samples last year and performed 38,200 tests on those samples!

“That’s an increase of 30% which is reflective of our focus on water,” says Glenn “so the more we can talk with farmers, landowners, communities, iwi and sector groups who are using the data the better we can understand what people need and want and share it with our communities”.

Visit www.boprc.govt.nz and type in “live monitoring” or check out the Land, Air, Water Aotearoa site that Glenn mentioned at www.lawa.org.nz



Water testing in the Kopurereroa at SH29 Bridge.



Testing the sludge.



Checking the water. Some of the data from the monitor ends up on our live monitoring site.

Region-wide water quantity plan change adopted

By Namouta Poutasi, Bay of Plenty Regional Council Water Policy Manager.

The Regional Direction and Delivery Committee of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council voted in August 2016 to adopt Plan Change 9 (PC9) to the Regional Water and Land Plan.

PC9 is the first step to implementing the water quantity requirements of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. The plan change addresses existing urgent regional problems:

- Inconsistent limits to water allocation especially for groundwater;
- Limited knowledge of actual use vs allocation;
- High level of allocation in some resources; and
- Unauthorised water use.

PC9 has been introduced to improve the efficiency of allocation and expand the collection of actual water use data.

Reinforcing existing limits to allocation will help us all to 'hold the line' until more local limits are set. This will be done in the second stage when we do the Water Management Area project plan changes. Unauthorised use of water by dairy farms is also addressed in the Plan Change. Council has an existing programme of work for unauthorised irrigators.

BETTER INFORMATION SUPPORTS BETTER WATER MANAGEMENT

The draft provisions introduce new metering and reporting requirements for all consented



takes to improve knowledge and efficiency of water use. Specifically:

1. Enhanced metering and reporting requirements including a significant increase in telemetry.
 - All consented water takes require a water meter. Electronic reporting is needed and the frequency varies (daily and monthly) depending on rate of take and whether it's a surface water or groundwater take.
 - Household, drystock farm and marae do not need a consent or meter (if they aren't on municipal water).
 - Metering is key to good water management. Ensures compliance, aids efficiency and understanding of resourcing capacity.
2. Introduction of a new rule encouraging water taken and used for dairy shed wash down and milk cooling processes to become compliant. The rule has a permissive controlled activity status for one year. Currently dairy sheds require a more stringent activity status consent.
3. New water take consents in under-allocated resources easier to obtain. New water take consents in over allocated resources will be more difficult to obtain.
4. Increased sharing of water resources by transfers and the likely associated increase in the establishment of Water User Groups.

There was a lot of feedback that supported the draft metering and reporting requirements, provided that the associated costs were reasonable. Council will be working with industry and sector groups to discuss metering and reporting requirements further. It's important for all us to thrive in our region and to do this we all need to better understand the data.

Plan Change 9 will be notified for submissions on 18th October until 29th November 2016. Further details will be contained on the Council's website www.boprc.govt.nz

Caring deeply for our water

WATER METERING

If you have a resource consent to take water, it's likely that you are required to submit your water take usage data daily, weekly, monthly or annually. National monitoring requirements kicked in late in 2010 for all abstractors of water greater than 5L/s, so even if your consent doesn't state it, you will now be required to record accurate daily water use and submit it to Council on a regular basis.

A water meter not only allows you to accurately measure the rate and the quantity of water being taken, but it is also a valuable tool in helping you to improve pasture or orchard irrigation efficiency. This can mean lower costs and higher yields. A win-win!

There are many water meters on the market, so choosing and correctly installing the right meter for your situation is essential. We encourage you to use an Accredited Installer to design and install your metering system. You can find these listed on IrrigationNZ's website at www.irrigationnz.co.nz.

To ensure meter accuracy, it's really important to have the correct meter for the water quality and quantity you are pumping, and also to ensure that the meter is fitted in accordance with manufacturers' instructions.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR MANAGING WATER IN OUR REGION:

- Quantity – demand for water is increasing
- Quality – resources are under pressure
- Land use – land utilisation effects water quality and quantity
- Climate change – and its adverse effects could impact on supply and demand.

He koha te wai na Ranginui raua ko Patuanuku ki a tatau katoa, mauri ora!