

Meeting record for the Waikato Regional Council – Forestry Liaison Group meeting held on Wednesday 7 May 2025 hosted by Manulife Forest Management Tokoroa

Present – Sally Strang & Karl Boobyer (Manulife Forest Management), Jackie Egan (NZ Forest Mgrs), Colin Maunder & Elise Hayes (Timberlands), Sarah Orton (PF Olsen), Simon Callaghan (Red Stag Forests), Matt Dodd (DFL) Andy Warren & Seamus Bardoul (Rayonier Matariki), Duncan Mills (Wood Marketing Services), Damita Mita (CNI Wood Council), Perry Empson, Sarah Miller, Naomi Crawford, Taylor Farr & Eliah Murdoch-Pike (Waikato Regional Council)

Apologies – Rafael Moradei (Foresta)

Meeting commenced at 10.05am with introductions around the room.

Minutes of the meeting held 13 November 2024

Resolution 1

That the minutes of the meeting held 13 November 2024 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Moved by Sally Strang

Seconded by Sarah Orton

Carried unanimously.

Action register –

	Action	By	Status
1	Process for reviewing ESC classification – follow up with Bridget Preston MPI/TUR to confirm where it specified that Councils can take account of corrections to the ESC (by qualified individuals) without having to go through a formal ESC change – and circulate it to the group	SS	Update – this was not a recommendation in the most recent review, but it could be in the next one which is due out in June and will focus on afforestation, slash rules and a purple zone to identify land with extreme erosion. WRC noted that what is currently happening is working and can be seen in GIS. Jackie to make contact Briget Preston
2	Planting/replanting notification – determine what is useful to WRC to receive and advise group	PE	Continue using the right forms and PDF reports. Perry's view is he does not require a copy of the Management Plan but this may change if there is a change of personnel.

3	Wildling Conifer Control Report – circulate to the group once received	DM	Completed – to discuss further today
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#1 Compliance/ Regulatory Updates

Commenced with Perry Empson, Waikato Regional Council advising there are no planned regulatory changes, this was followed with a regulation update presentation by Naomi Crawford and an RMA presentation by Taylor Farr (a copy of both presentations is attached).

- The Waikato Regional Council, freshwater policy review website at [Freshwater Policy Review | Waikato Regional Council](#), you can also subscribe to updates on our public facing website.
- Previous engagement reports including feedback from the forestry sector is also documented in the Round 1 and 2 feedback reports attached.
- Policy staff are planning on undertaking further engagement with the forestry sector in late 2025 into early 2026.

#2 Timberlands compliance training session for Waikato Regional Council Investigators

Perry Empson gave an overview of a recent workshop for their investigators designed to give their office bound investigators first hand insight a forestry operation. The workshop began with a session on 'what works and what doesn't' followed by a field trip hosted by Timberland Ltd to three different sites:

- an active harvesting skid observing machines in operation and logs processing,
- a decommission skid site to look at what controls in place after operations, and
- a cut-over area focussing on land disturbance.

Compliance, Peery noted, is often a matter of judgement that needs to consider regulatory requirements and the geology setting. The field trip was seen as very useful.

One action point under consideration is whether the Regional Council could establish a pool of industry experts to serve as technical expert witnesses in prosecutions. The was discussed by the meeting attendees.

#3 Regional Biodiversity Strategy – deferred to the November meeting.

#4 General discussions included:

Auditing - maintaining consistency in auditing. WRC is triaging all auditing through allocating internal resource but acknowledges it cannot visit every site.

Compliance -

Compliance summary statistics since 5 April 2024	Total	%
Individual Forests Visited	71	
Site Inspections	87	100
Full compliance	41	47.4

Low risk non-compliance	28	32.6
Moderate non-compliance	12	14.0
Significant non-compliance	6	7.0

- This shows that 80% of compliance events (FC & LRNC) require no further proactive follow-up or potential for enforcement.
- Of the 71 sites he would consider to be in the Woodlot space.
- One SNC recorded in the corporate/multiyear harvest forests making the woodlot SNC – 9.6% (n=5) and corporate SNC – 5.6% (n=1).

Key issues noted were; non-notification, working near water ways, steep slopes and operator well-being. Overall, an encouraging level of compliance in his view.

Fieldtrip options Regional Council consent officers & policy staff were discussed. Andy Warren of Rayonier Matariki offered to organise.

A recent prosecution at Ngutunui near Kawhia was discussed. Sarah O to forward link to the media release.

Water Quality Policy – an old study in the Hawkes Bay Region has been reactivated (Sally Strang & Jackie Egan are both involved), there is also a Scion study and another one at Whatawhata was also mentioned.

Management of Indigenous Cover – this prompted a discussion on biodiversity and the criteria for it then being deemed a SNA. it was agreed that Naomi Crawford will discuss this further with Judy Vanrossem ensure this is incorporated into her presentation for the November meeting.

CNI Wood Council Forestry Awards – are being held on Friday 31 October 2025. Sponsorship opportunities are available, and the meeting was encouraged to make nominations when they open later in the year.

#4 Other

Sally Strang reported that recently Manulife had to relocate a forestry crew three times due to sightings of Falcon nesting sites. Following an invitation to visit, Wingspan experts confirmed that the nesting had been successful, demonstrating the effectiveness of taking protective measures. Sally said it was a well worth exercise and a great learning opportunity. She encouraged others to do the same and involve as many of the team that you can.

Colin Maunder reported that the largest known NZ population of a rare orchid the *Gastrodia Cooperae* has been discovered in Kaingaroa Forest, specifically within a 4th rotation section of the forest. To protect this TLL is currently managing the site by not thinning whilst it is flowering. PHD students are set to undertake a further study on this population.

Andy Warren of Rayonier Matariki reported a significant increase in the population of long tail bats and morepork in the Riverhead Forests.

Meeting schedule and appoint next Chair -

Date	Chair/Venue
5 Nov	Elise Hayes/ Manulife Investment Managers Tokoroa (room has been booked)

Meeting concluded 12pm

Action Points

	Action	By	Status
1	ESC Review – contact Bridget Preston for an update	JE	
2	Send a link to WRC website information/update page	NC	Completed
3	Organise a Fieldtrip for WRC consent officers and policy staff	AW	
4	Circulate link to media release of a recent prosecution at Ngutunui	SO	Completed
5	Discuss including SNA criteria with Judy VR into her presentation to the November meeting	NC	