

# Draft Lake Level Control Observation Monitoring Plan: 20 March 2022 (Version agreed between Applicant and LRCA)

## Introduction

This Lake Level Control Observation Monitoring Plan has been developed to provide clarity to the consent authority and community on how the temporary Lake Level Control Observation Proposal (**Proposal**) will be monitored and recorded. It is required as a condition of the consent variation granted to Bay of Plenty Regional Council (**BOPRC**) to enable the Proposal to proceed.

The Proposal is authorised by a change to the normal operating conditions of consent 65979, which (among other matters) allows BOPRC to artificially control the water levels in Lake Rotoiti. The Proposal allows for a temporary window to allow the lake to be brought down by 150mm below the consented minimum for a temporary period, and then to replenish to normal operating levels (**Replenishment Period**). The Proposal has been sought by Ngāti Pūkiao, to observe the lake at an historically low level to make observations of various aspects of the lake and lake shore. BOPRC has been working with Ngāti Pūkiao to facilitate the necessary consent variation to allow the observation, and to develop a clear monitoring plan to ensure observations are measured and recorded. The target low level has been selected taking account of historic lowest level previously recorded. In planning for implementation of the Proposal, BOPRC and Ngāti Pūkiao will be working together, in consultation with the community, to ensure that implementation is effective both in achieving the target low level and enabling the desired observations to be undertaken as efficiently as possible.

The consent variation requires this plan to be certified by the consent authority but also requires the consent holder to comply with any plan submitted for certification, pending certification. Terms in this plan generally reflect terms used in the consent variation, which should be referred to if assistance is required in understanding this plan.

## A. Monitoring Plan Components

Once the lake has reached the target low level provided for in the consent (about RL 278.850 m) a coordinated observation and monitoring process will be managed by BOPRC (**Observation Event**). This will occur during the observation opportunity provided for under the consent variation, which provides for a maximum of 7 days observation under the temporary draw down (**Observation Period**) as well as observation of any effects on Lake Rotoiti during the Replenishment Period. The key components of this observation and monitoring are:

1. **Observation and monitoring** of relevant beaches and cultural sites by the Consent holder, Ngāti Pūkiao, and other stakeholders identified in this Plan .
2. **Observation and monitoring** of public reserves and lake amenity areas, maritime facilities and structures such as jetties and boat ramps during the Observation Period and the Replenishment Period by the Consent Authority, Harbour Master, and / or other stakeholders identified in this Plan.

3. **Planning Observation Event and public notification** to ensure a well organised and publicised Observation Event.
4. **Community involvement** in the Observation Event and in observation of the Replenishment Period.
5. **Recording and sharing results** of observations and monitoring.
6. **Public Safety** will be ensured including but not limited to avoidance of any maritime safety hazards.
7. **Adverse effects caused by unforeseen circumstances** to be appropriately mitigated by the Consent holder.

## **B. Management of Key Components**

### **1. Observation and Monitoring**

- a. BOPRC currently undertakes regular monitoring of the following, on a 1 to 3 monthly basis:
  - Inspection of all public jetties and boat launching ramps.
  - Some Lake Rotoiti beaches (Ruato Bay, Hinehopu).
  - Hinehopu / Tamatea Street Wetland, Gisborne Point, Okawa Bay Marina and Resort, Ohau Weir and upstream beach on Lake Rotorua, Okere Gates.
- b. At each of these sites where there is a fixed staff gauge, water level is recorded, photographs are collected, and observations made of any effect of lake level. During the Observation Period all these regular sites will be monitored and any relevant observations recorded.
- c. During the Drawdown event when the lake is at or about RL 278.850m BOPRC will undertake a boat inspection of the regular monitoring sites listed in 1(a) above, as well as the following:
  - All public boat ramps on the lake, to assess any impacts on boat launching / retrieval.
  - Key cultural sites as specified by Ngāti Pīkiao people accompanying BOPRC staff. In particular, undertake observations at the entrance to Te Weta Bay, Hinehopu at the skids, various beaches including Ruato Bay, the western cliffs between Hinehopu and Honeymoon Bay.
  - Areas of the lake generally known to have limited draught for boating or requiring certain lake levels for boat safety including but not limited to the entrance of the Okere Arm into Lake Rotoiti and entrances to Okawa Bay, around Gisborne Point and around identified ski lane, Manupirua Hotpools and reserve areas regularly frequented by the Public.
  - Other sites identified by stakeholders which the consent holder agrees are of importance to the Lake Rotoiti Community.
- d. During the drawdown event the lake level recorded in Okawa Bay will be continuously monitored by the Regional Council.

- e. Additional monitoring may be undertaken and recorded by measurement of lake depth and/or photos at additional points of interest as the boat inspection is undertaken or during the Replenishment Period, either by the consent holder or by structure consent holders, by submitting such information to the consent authority on the prescribed observation template form.

## **2. Planning Observation Event and Public Notification.**

- a. As required by the consent variation, prior to any drawdown event for observation purposes BOPRC will consult with the Chairperson of the RTALOLG. In the event that the drawdown is programmed for post Easter, then the consultation will take place at least 7 days prior to commencing the drawdown. When the drawdown event is post Waitangi Day but before Easter BOPRC will endeavour to consult as soon as possible, although it may not be practicable for this to occur at least 7 days in advance. The purpose of this consultation is to enable the Chair of the RTALOLG to discuss the proposed draw down with the stakeholder members of the RTALOLG and provide any feedback to the consent holder prior to the drawdown occurring.
- b. Once the decision to commence drawdown is triggered, notification will be undertaken by BOPRC at least 2 days before commencing a Draw Down Attempt to the following stakeholders:
- i. The Chair of the RTALOLG.
  - ii. BOPRC Harbour Master.
  - iii. The Chair of the Lake Rotoiti Community Association (**LRCA**).
  - iv. The Commodore of the Trailer Yacht Squadron (**TYS**).
  - v. The Chair of the Lake Rotoiti Classic and Wooden Boats Association (**LRCWBA**).
  - vi. Rotorua Lakes Council Parks and Reserves Manager.
  - vii. Other identified tourism operators at Lake Rotoiti such as Manupirua Hotpools Managers, Charter boat operators, Kayaking tours, water taxis and scenic flights.
  - viii. All lake structure consent holders registered with BOPRC.

Notice will be provided by email to an email address obtained from the above parties by BOPRC.

- c. In addition to written notice the BOPRC will also, at least 2 days prior to commencement of any Draw Down Attempt:
- i. Place signage at all boat ramps advising of the Draw Down Attempt.
  - ii. Prepare and provide to the following stakeholders a written media release or other communication in a form that can be published on these entities' websites, membership newsletters, by email mail out and / or posted at public outlets:

Chair of the LRCA; Commodore of TYS; Chair of LRCWBA; and Manupirua Hotpools.

- iii. Publish details and updates about the Draw Down Attempt on the BOPRC website and other social media forums.
- iv. Provide notification to local news media likely to be viewed by lake users.

### **3. Community Involvement.**

- a. The objective of this lake lowering is to allow BOPRC staff and Ngāti Pikiao to make observations about the lake at the low lake level of RL 278.850m. To achieve this BOPRC is intending to charter a medium sized commercial boat that can accommodate Key Ngāti Pikiao observers and experts, along with BOPRC staff to undertake monitoring and observation over the duration of 1 day. The 7-day monitoring window allowed for under the consent variation provides for a reasonable opportunity for this to occur, taking into account weather conditions and other logistical arrangements.
- b. Council will also extend a limited invitation to representatives of the following stakeholders to also participate in the boat excursion to undertake monitoring and observation. In particular invitation to attend the boat observation will be extended to:
  - i. The Chair of the RTALOLG.
  - ii. The Chair of the Lake Rotoiti Community Association (**LRCA**).
  - iii. The Commodore of the Trailer Boat Squadron.
  - iv. The Chair of the Lake Rotoiti Classic and Wooden Boats Association.
  - v. Rotorua Lakes Council Parks and Reserves Manager.
- c. In addition, BOPRC will also provide an email address where groups or individuals may wish to send their observations and monitoring about the lowering event. These observations and monitoring will be included in the BOPRC Report summary.

### **4. Recording Observations and Monitoring**

- a. BOPRC will record all observations and monitoring proposed in section 1 of this management plan.
- b. BOPRC will review any record of observations and monitoring undertaken by individuals and groups provided to BOPRC as consent holder and shall include those in the BOPRC report summary.
- c. A report will be prepared summarising the above observations and monitoring. The primary records relied upon will be made available to the public upon request.

### **5. Public Safety**

- a. At least 2 days prior to the commencement of any Draw Down Attempt BOPRC will:

- i. Place signs at each public boat launching ramp informing the public of the event, the target lake level and warning of additional potential for navigation hazards as a result of lower lake levels,
- ii. Inform the BOPRC Harbour Master of the lake lowering event.

#### 6. Unforeseen Circumstances

- a. BOPRC will be responsible to address any unforeseen events that may come about as a result of implementing the Proposal.
  - b. If implementation of the Proposal results in any unforeseen safety situation, then BOPRC will be responsible to address any safety issue as soon as practicable in the particular circumstances. This may include abandoning the lowering event or taking action to remedy or mitigate the effects of any unforeseen safety issue.
  - c. Unforeseen matters may include changes in weather pattern that results in an undue extension of the time period required to lower the lake to the target level. This may require BOPRC to abandon the Draw Down Attempt and await another season to recommence.
  - d. If for any reason the Draw Down Attempt or Observation Event is abandoned or altered from that originally planned due to unforeseen circumstances, the BOPRC as consent holder will immediately notify BOPRC as Consent Authority. The Chairman of RTALOLG and other stakeholders shall also be advised of the relevant circumstances. Any responses or recommendations received by BOPRC (either as Consent holder or Consent Authority) will be considered by the Consent Holder, and appropriate changes implemented for any future Draw Down Attempts .
7. **Stakeholders:** This monitoring plan identifies various stakeholders for various purposes associated with the monitoring and observation activities. BOPRC will consider reasonable requests to add additional stakeholders where they can establish a particular interest in the monitoring and observation activities which is not already represented by an identified stakeholder.