



Annual plan submission by Lake tarawera ratepayers association

The issue

- 1 LTRA has been asking for a reticulated wastewater scheme for Lake Tarawera since 2012.
- 2 The Lake Tarawera Sewerage Steering Committee(LTSSC) was established in 2015. It identified five viable options and considered and consulted on those in depth. It was recommended unanimously by the LTSSC (made up of Tarawera ratepayers, iwi and Māori landowners) in 2018, and also at a ratepayers meeting in 2018, by over 100 ratepayers unanimously agreed that the Tarawera wastewater system should consist of:
 - 2.1 An on-site low-pressure grinder pump system for each property, and
 - 2.2 A connection from the system trunk main via Tarawera Road to the existing pumping station at Lake Ōkāreka (and then to the Rotorua Wastewater Treatment plant (WWTP) at Te Arikiroa).
- 3 However, the community is still waiting for the scheme to be decided on and implemented, despite agreement by all parties that reticulation is urgently required to mitigate adverse environmental effects on the water quality of Lake Tarawera.

Submission

- 4 LTRA is seeking that this reticulation to the WWTP is not deferred any longer and that it is included in the Annual Plan as:
 - 4.1 Lake Tarawera is iconic, a gateway to NZ tourism and to cultural tourism.
 - 4.2 Its water quality is declining and steps to reduce that decline are an immediate priority to protect this area of significance.
 - 4.3 The Council should not delay any further the reticulation to the WWTP. The community want certainty after a nearly 8 years of consideration.
 - 4.4 The WWTP has the capacity for this wastewater and this is a 'shovel ready' project that could be started quickly, with not only benefits to the community, but also the environment. It is unlikely additional resource consents will be required.
 - 4.5 A cultural impact assessment has been completed (with a second one partially completed) and mana whenua have been consulted.
 - 4.6 There is no legal impediment to proceeding now and Council should do so.
 - 4.7 Reticulation to the WWTP is the less expensive option (compared to an in-catchment treatment plant) - approximately \$25,000 per property compared to almost twice that much per property, with higher long term operating costs.
 - 4.8 It requires a low level of direct funding by Council, if the Council uplifts the funding already agreed to by the Government. This is because the Council is requiring the Tarawera ratepayers

to pay an upfront, one-off payment for sewerage, unlike other communities in the district who have had the opportunity of paying this off over 25 years (e.g. Lake Rotoiti and others).

- 4.9 The community will suffer financial harm if reticulation does not occur soon, as
- 4.9.1 The Government Freshwater Improvement funding of \$6.5 mill for this project may be lost. It is unacceptable that Council's delay could result in ratepayers having to make up that shortfall
 - 4.9.2 Residents will have to upgrade septic tanks, at significant (and unnecessary) cost. This could be avoided with reticulation.
 - 4.9.3 Building costs are increasing incrementally each year.
- 5 Accordingly, LRA seek an Annual Plan commitment from the Council to the reticulation of Lake Tarawera wastewater to the WWTP. This will ensure the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of the Rotorua people and its communities are provided for and that the natural environment is enhanced.

The LTRA requests the opportunity to present its submission in person to the Rotorua Lakes Council.

Libby Fletcher

Chair

libby@ultimatenz.com

021 670 774

10 June 2020