SPEAKING NOTES FOR LOGAN BERTRAM

North-Eastern Bay of Plenty Inquiry, Wai 1750, 24 March 2026

1. My name is Logan Bertram. I whakapapa to Whakatōhea Iwi, Upokorehe Hapū. I am the Te Aho Taiao environmental manager for Te Pou Oranga o Te Whakatōhea.

2. There are 4 members in the Tiaki Taiao team (including myself). One Biodiversity lead has a background in environmental sciences, 2 field kaimahi have been trapping and working in the bush for over 40 years, and 1 other started out as a community volunteer.

3. My role includes environmental planning, environmental conservation and resource management. I manage resource consents, concessions and permissions, as well as help build, develop and maintain relationships with community, hapū and crown partners. A part of this role enables me to provide environmental education opportunities through wānanga with tamariki and rangatahi.

4. I have a background in environmental and personnel management and have worked in the environmental sector for over a decade. With a vast knowledge of environmental pressures and impacts, I have worked for the Department of Conservation and contracted to regional councils all over the motu. A majority of my career has been in the restoration space and more recently planning and policy.

5. From my perspective, I will discuss the state of our environmental aspirations, issues, environment programs and current challenges.

Whakatōhea Aspirations

6. Our goal is to develop an environmental plan for Whakatōhea that weaves in the environmental priorities of hapū and enable hapū to be kaitiaki of their rohe.

7. Engaging hapū is key - allowing hapū to determine what their

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environmental aspirations and priorities are, will enable them to achieve their kaitiakitanga responsibilities.

8. Providing opportunities and educational pathways into environmental careers to support kaitiakitanga succession for generations to come will be a priority.

9. Environmental Advisory Forum – forum for environmental kaupapa - hapū representation important – need funding to make it happen formally.

Environmental issues in Whakatōhea rohe

10. Whakatōhea rohe corridor between Te Urewera and Raukumara ranges - large proportion in Department of Conservation (**DOC**) conservation estate – includes Waioeka and Urutaua conservation areas. There is a lack of investment within the Whakatōhea rohe.

11. ***Investment from crown*** – crown investment to enable meaningful partnerships through crown entities is critical – such as DOC, who is a majority landowner in the Whakatōhea rohe but lacks the budget to undertake meaningful stewardship of Whakatōhea whenua.

12. ***Lack of sustainable investment*** - reliant on contestable funding opportunities that may or may not align with Whakatōhea aspirations. This I believe to be the biggest barrier to enabling Kaitiakitanga values to be practised.

13. ***Capability and capacity*** - education and career pathways into taiao related careers. Gap analysis needing to be completed to ensure capacity and capability gaps are fulfilled within hapū teams to allow meaningful engagement and outcomes. Ensuring Whakatōhea Uri have sustainable jobs to move into and move home too.

14. ***Freshwater*** – rivers, gravel extraction – change of standards in roading material resulting in less material to be extracted.

15. ***Loss of wetlands*** – raupatu line drawn in straight-line - encompassed

wetlands and floodplain areas that have been drained and used for various land uses such as agriculture and horticulture – lack of wetlands affect filtering system into main water bodies as they act live livers – increased pollution and waterways. Policy changes undermining Māori values and framework such as the reform of the NPSFM 2020 and Te Mana o Te Wai.

16. ***Governmental incentives - carbon emissions scheme*** – incentivises planting of pine trees because fast-growing – pine trees that have had negative environmental impacts – native planting should be encouraged instead.

17. ***Climate change*** – single biggest environmental risk Whakatōhea will face in this generation and the next. Affected by severe weather events and rising sea levels - threatens coastal areas with impacts such as coastal erosion like at Ōpape. Vulnerable culturally significant areas, Ōpōtiki community sits between 2 rivers increased flooding risks. Increase funding for climate change planning and resilience.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi settlement

18. Return of land to Te Tāwharau - Treaty settlement redress – TToTW funding a baseline survey to redress sites to understand their environmental potential and issues – crown provided title information but lacking key information for management planning – potential liability issues for future management. Lack of funding for transitional timeframe 3-5 years

Current environmental programmes

19. ***Tiaki Taiao*** – funded through JFN jobs for nature funding DOC. This enabled Whakatōhea to increase capacity and capability in the iwi development team by initiating an environmental team. The focus was around restoration, pest control (animal and weed), planting, track cutting and rangatahi cadetships over a 3-year period. No post funding opportunities have emerged from this.

20. ***Pākihikura restoration work*** – one of, if not the largest, dune restoration

programmes in the country over 30 ha area associated with the harbour development. Purpose to restore dune structure and biodiversity and to remedy the impact of heavy machinery. Culturally important area – priority biodiversity area – planted over 80,000 plants, both dune and coastal forest species - pest and weed control. Funded through MBIE as condition of resource consents. Positive outcomes – protection of culturally sensitive areas, biodiversity return, breeding habitat for taonga species. Issues - environmental remediation only got 1% of budget (Operational).

21. ***Taonga species work*** – trapping and pest control around waterways for the protection of whio – Waioweka and Pākihi catchments - assisting in delivery of DOC programmes - funded by Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

22. ***Waiaua Scenic Reserve*** - 800 ha block squeezed between forestry and farmland – Kiwi habitat – trapping infrastructure on half of it – unfunded projects – voluntary community assistance.

23. ***Freshwater project*** – three-year programme that was condensed into an 18-month period with Maumahara Consultants - investigating Whakatōhea freshwater management - learned that need to work with hapū - ended up with Whakatōhea freshwater monitoring app – trained uri on tuna monitoring. (Risk is timeframes set in contracts not allowing for meaningful engagements- reduced timeframes due to funding claw backs.)

24. ***Rangatahi and community engagement*** - developing and running rangatahi wānanga and workshops tailored the needs for future kaitiaki and succession.

25. ***Resource management*** – cultural integration, cultural monitoring, Iwi and Hapū management plans

Challenges to kaitiakitanga and what needs to happen

26. ***Resource management regime*** – some recognition of kaitiakitanga but not perfect. RMA is a crown construct and when policy items such as this seek to compete with kaitiakitanga there needs to be adequate training and

capability build steps put in place.

27. ***Crown priorities*** – kaitiakitanga has been hindered since 1840 - Crown needs to prioritise environment so that better resourced – DOC majority landowner in rohe - budget for rohe very low, environmental restoration hugely expensive, crown investment into its own agencies.

28. ***Resourcing*** - no shortage of environmental challenges, but shortage of environmental resources – enormous challenge operationally – funding opportunities minimal and designed around Crown priorities, not tangata whenua priorities –

29. ***Current reforms to RMA*** – the RMA processes that require engagement with tangata whenua are being reformed – new reforms remove sustainable management – permissive regime that will degrade environment.

30. ***Conservation reforms*** – government regards Conservation Act as roadblock to commercial development – wants to introduce some permitted activities and generally make it easier to obtain permissions – removal of CMS - policy changes have potential for huge environmental harm.

24 March 2026

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Logan Bertram