

Recovered Water Project Update

Submissions open again

The submission period for ideas on the long-term management of recovered water from the upgraded wastewater treatment plant has been extended.

The Working Group has reopened a platform where people can submit their ideas and would love to hear from you.

The decision was made at the working group's monthly meeting on April 7.

This is your opportunity to think beyond constraints and explore what *could* be possible with recovered water: restoring land, supporting the environment, creating long-term value for future generations.

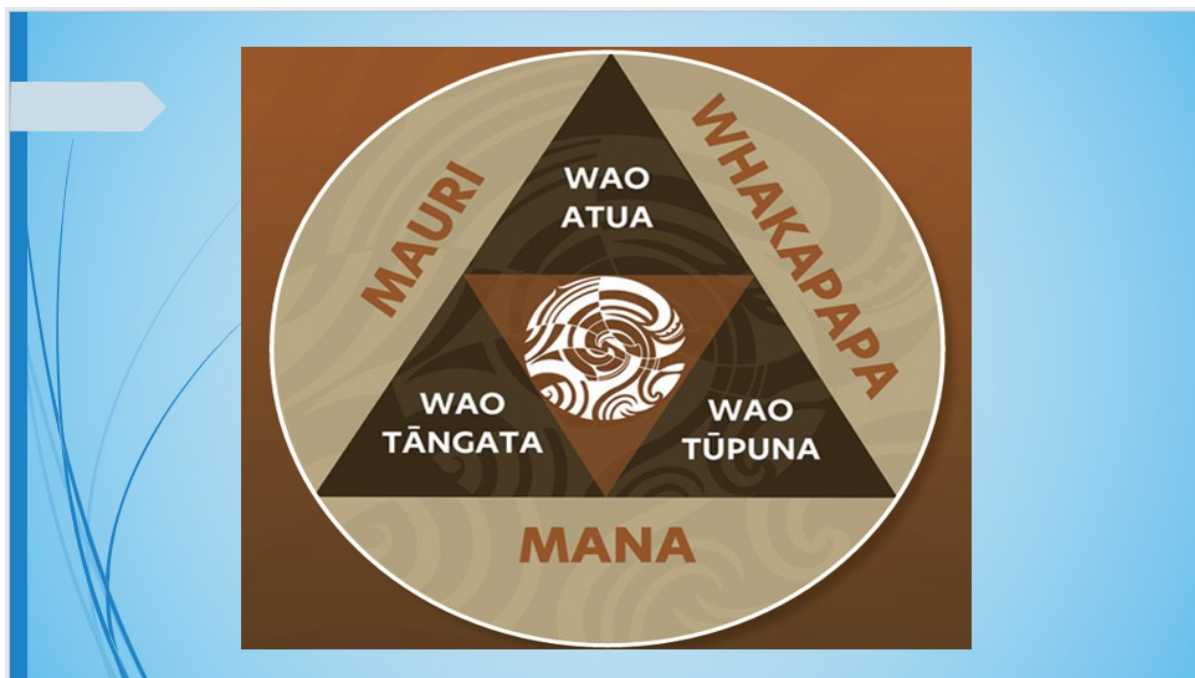
Submissions are open **until April 26** through the Participate Rotorua platform.

All ideas will be reviewed as part of Stage 1 of the assessment process, with recommendations to Council expected in June 2026. Subject to approval, shortlisted options will undergo further investigation later in 2026, ahead of identifying a preferred solution.

So, if you have ideas, insights, or innovative approaches — big or small — now's the time to share them.

Have your say: rlc.net.nz/rwp-solution

Recovered Water Management Solution Working Group Meeting (March 10)



The Working Group received a presentation from Mātauranga Māori Specialist Te Rerekohu Tuterangiwhiu, who grounded the discussion in the Te Ao Tūroa framework of whakapapa, mauri, and mana, as well as wao atua, wao tangata and wao tūpuna.

Te Rerekohu explained how kaitiakitanga was an active, relational responsibility—enhancing natural processes rather than merely stewarding them.

He encouraged the group to consider how recovered water can be reintegrated into whakapapa in a way that restores its function, rather than being treated as a sterile by-product.

He emphasised the importance of solutions that reflect local whakapapa, catchments and marae. Members of the Working Group acknowledged the need to find a solution that honours both mātauranga Māori and technical requirements.

These insights will guide the next phase of assessment as the Working Group prepares to shortlist discharge options for Council consideration.

Stage 1 Screening Criteria

Following the presentation, the Working Group began its first assessment of past options against the Stage 1 criteria:

- Technical feasibility
- Regulatory feasibility
- Budget alignment

This first pass provides an early indication of which options may be viable to progress into Stage 2.

Next Steps

Over the coming weeks, the Working Group will undertake site visits and continue to assess the long list of options and submissions against the Stage 1 criteria. This work will inform the Group's recommendation to Council, which is scheduled for June 2026, identifying which options should proceed to Stage 2 for more detailed technical, cultural, and environmental assessment.

You can view the Working Group presentation [here](#).

Visit the Recovered Water Project Page: www.rotorualakescouncil.nz/our-council/projects/recovered-water-project

Information Sharing Event – Te Papaiōuru Marae (March 9)

Te Tatau o Te Arawa hosted an information-sharing event for the Recovered Water Project at Te Papaiōuru Marae, Ōhinemutu, on March 10.

Rotorua Lakes Council staff provided an overview of the project and responded to pātai on lake health, tikanga, governance, and engagement and encouraged attendees to submit their ideas for potential solutions.

The hui was attended by Te Arawa uri, hapu and iwi representatives, Te Arawa organisations, Rotorua Lakes Council representatives, and Maori Ward Councillors.

The hui was also livestreamed.

Strong messages were shared about:

- protecting the mauri of the wai,
- recognising mana whenua roles, and
- ensuring Te Arawa involvement in shaping long-term solutions.

You can view Rotorua Lakes Council's presentation [here](#).

Have a question about the Recovered Water Project? Please email recoveredwater@rotorualc.nz

Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade – Video Tour

Council has recently released a short educational video explaining how the upgraded Wastewater Treatment Plant works.

The video provides an overview of the treatment process and the improvements made to strengthen performance and environmental outcomes.

👉 You can watch the video here: https://youtu.be/j_bwMYAQyl

