

Karakia/tauparapara

Pepeha

Ko Taranaki te mounga te mounga teitei

Ko Mimitangiatua te awa,

Ko Tokomaru te waka,

Ko Tama ariki te tangata o runga

Rakeiora te tohunga

Ka tau te waka ki te whanga o Tokomaru

Karapotia te Hika o te Ika

Ka ū ki Mohakatino

Whakatū tona whare

Ka Maraerotuhia

Hei whakapiritanga I tona iwi nei

Mai Titoki ki te Rau O Huia

Ko Ngati Mutunga te iwi,

Ko Te Kekeriwai te Hapu,

Ko au te uri o ngā whānau Baker raua ko McClutchie.

Ko au te matāmua o ngā mokopuna o Leo Baker raua

ko Thelma Baker.

Ko Paora Laurence au

Tēna koutou I ngā kaunihera hei whakarongo ki tēnei hui. Hei arahi a koutou te hui nei , te hui hirahira mōku me ōku whanau, nō reira tēna koutou, tēna koutou, tēna tatou katoa.

Today I stand before you all, with one outcome in my heart and soul, to ask for you all to stop this abhorrent desecration of the land and our 2 awa Haehanga and Mimitangiatua as well as the moana and reefs namely

Paparoa which is our traditional Mussel reef by the applicant Remediation NZ. In my mind there is no other outcome that can happen, as these significant landmarks/ kai resources need the healing to start today!

I now quote from NGATI MUTUNGA DEED OF SETTLEMENT: CULTURAL REDRESS SCHEDULE PART 5: STATEMENTS OF ASSOCIATION

The traditions of Ngati Mutunga illustrate the cultural, historical and spiritual association of Ngati Mutunga to the Mimi River. For Ngati Mutunga, traditions such as these represent the links between the world of the gods and present generations. These histories reinforce tribal identity, connection and continuity between generations and confirm the importance of the Mimi River to Ngati Mutunga. The tupuna had considerable knowledge of whakapapa, traditional trails and tauranga waka, places for gathering kai and other taonga, ways in which to use the resources of the Mimi River, the relationship of people with the river and their dependence on it, and tikanga for the proper and sustainable utilisation of resources.

All of these values remain important to the people of Ngati Mutunga today. The full name of the Mimi River is Mimitangiatua. The river was also known as Te Wai o Mihirau. Mihirau was an ancestress of the Te

Kekerewai hapu and was a prominent woman of her time. The name Te Wai o Mihirau is referred to in a Ngati Mutunga pepeha: Mai Te Wai o Mihirau (Mimi River) ki Te Wai o Kuranui (Urenui), koia tera ko te whakararunganui taniwha There are a number of pa and kainga located along the banks of the Mimi River. These include Mimi-Papahutiwai, Omihi, Arapawanui, Oropapa, Pukekohe, Toki-kinikini and Tupari.

There were also a number of tau pa (cultivations) along the banks of the river. Arapawanui was the pa of Mutunga's famous grandsons Tukutahi and Rehetaia. They were both celebrated warriors, especially Rehetaia who took the stronghold of Kohangamouku belonging to Ngati Mutunga's southern neighbours, Ngati Rahiri. Arapawanui is also where my mums' brother Bruce Baker is buried.

The Mimi River and associated huhu (swampy valleys), ngahere (large swamps) and repo (muddy swamps) were used by Ngati Mutunga to preserve taonga. The practice of keeping wooden taonga in swamps was a general practice of the Ngati Mutunga people. The Mimi River has nourished the people of Ngati Mutunga for centuries. Pipi, pGpu (cats eye), tio (oyster) and patiki (flounder) were found in abundance at the mouth of the river. Inanga (whitebait) were caught all along the banks of the river. The Mimi River has always been an integral part of the social, spiritual and physical lifestyle of the Ngati Mutunga people. Ngati Mutunga

also used the Mimi River for baptising babies. When members of Ngati Mutunga were sick or had skin problems they were taken to the river to be healed. All elements of the natural environment possess a life force and all forms of life are related. Mauri is a critical element of the spiritual relationship of Ngati Mutunga whanui to the Mimi River

My earliest memories extend back to the 1970s when I used to spend every holiday I could with my nan and koro on our whanau farm at the place I love and have always loved with my whole heart the Mimitangiatua awa. I would go so far as to bike out there from New Plymouth on a Raleigh 20 pushbike with bags on my back and fishing rods taped to the bar of the bike, this bike was later replaced by a healing 10 speed which made the peddle easier.

In 1975 I caught my first fish on my rod close to the Mangamaio Stream on the Mimitangiatua. This was taken by my parents to fish n chip shop at Strandon and cooked up for me. I was 5 years old. From then on I fished, hunted and gathered this awa for several decades of my life to feed the whanau and others.

I was my koro Leo Baker righthand man and would follow him up and down the awa pursuing kai for our

whanau as well as to our traditional kaimoana reefs. We would set the net for whitebait, hinaki for eels and net for flounder, kahawai, mullet and herrings. In fact when I was 11 my nan woke me up in the middle of the night, as rain was forecasted, which meant we could potentially lose our net too flood, we trekked over the paddocks with one torch between us, for me to swim across the Mimitangiatua to release the net. We caught 136 fish of those species forementioned and fed our whanau for many weeks/ months as well as others.

When I have been through challenges in life I have frequented this awa to cleanse my self and to get healing, which is what my tipuna did in the day as well as a place to bless my taonga. Nowadays this is not a viable option, the mauri(life force) and the wairua and integrity of my awa tipuna has been severely compromised by Remediation and their practices and this too has been enabled by the Taranaki Regional Council due to their lack of enforcement, monitoring and minimalizing of the catastrophic effects that Remediation and their stakeholders have incurred on my awa. At times, the awa stinks, whitebait stink and there are odd coloured slicks running down our awa. This has takahia / trampled on the ability of my awa to be used for these reasons of cleansing.

To show Remediations' lack of respect to our awa is highlighted on the 19th of March by Kerry O'Neill where he says

"We are remediating waste that does not just disappear because a group of so-called eco-warriors decide that it should. This waste needs to be dealt with in order to make it safe for the environment.

"We have a consent which is strictly adhered to - the water is tested on an almost daily basis and the ridiculous discharge to air consent is exploited by a bunch of locals who want our operation shut down."

We are not a group of so called eco warriors, we are Tangata Whenua! For Kerry to say this highlights his lack of respect for us as tangata whenua and our mana whenua. He also says he has a consent, that is strictly adhered too, wow last time I looked his consent had expired at least 2 years prior, therefor this is a non truth.

Another non truth is his statement in the same article, "We have a consent which is strictly adhered to" however the articles' reporter Robin Martin researched and says, "Remediation NZ has a history of non-compliance with consents and was the subject of eight incident reports, three abatement and six infringement

notices between October 2020 and January 31 this year.” And this is only in a short time frame of 4 months let alone the multiple other infringements they have incurred.

Another non truth this organisation has impressed onto us to believe is that there has been 20,000 tonnes of Drill mud waste dumped onto the Uruti Valley , however recently we have discovered its more like 40,000 tonnes now all this waste has been dumped onto a natural wetland with a high water table which is flowing into the Haehanga and then into the Mimitangiatua due to the layout of this land.

Furthermore Kathryn Hooper who works for Landpro ,Remediation NZs ‘scientific expert’ has stated on the 7 December 2020, “the Haehanga Stream has been degraded over time by the clearance of indigenous vegetation and subsequent grazing and farming practices. The completion of the riparian fencing and planting along the banks of the Haehanga Stream that will occur as part of the subject application will help to restore the balance between water, the environment and the community”.

This statement is used to defer blame to the farming practices for the contamination of the Haehanga Stream. Whilst this is the case for many awa/waterways

in New Zealand , I ask her where is her evidence for this? After all we the submitters against the consent ,are continually asked for evidence, yet she can come along and make a flippant statement which clearly highlights Remediations inability to accept responsibility and accountability for what they have done and for their lack of compliance to mitigate the destruction and disrespect of the Haehanga and thence the Mimitangiatua, which was supposed to be Riparian planting, now they say they will plant, however they should have planted 20 years ago at the beginning of their vile work practices.

Kathryn further reports,“It is also noted that this is a consent renewal process and the activity has been operating on this site under existing consents for some time, and the cost of re-establishing the necessary infrastructure to undertake this activity is significant. Accordingly, it is considered that the functional need for the activity has been well demonstrated.”

This to me is showing the relationship between the TRC and Remediation in that Remediation are clearly doing a service for TRC by hiding all their problems. The money Remediation has made to hide all these problems is nothing compared to the expense our awa has had to face!

The TRC relationship again is highlighted through Kathryn Hoopers’ statement, “the functional need for the activity has been demonstrated. A facility which can

receive waste of this nature means recoverable material is kept out of landfills, and nutrients are reclaimed and reused in the form of compost. The facility is necessary within the Taranaki Region so that transport costs are avoided. There is no other facility of this nature in the region, and the importance of the facility in achieving the Waste Management and Minimisation Strategy for Taranaki”.

To my way of thinking, Composting sites are not a place for Oil Muds, treated timber to be laid, after all Remediation has ‘organic’ waste on this site, which I would’ve thought would compromise the organic part of the site due to the close proximity of toxic materials?

I also see in the document, ‘Remediation (NZ) Limited Uruti AEE Resource Consent Application – Revision 9 ‘– that in Appendix 5, Ngati Mutunga the iwi of the area must be included in the monitoring of the site. Has this happened? If so when and by whom?

The Taranaki Regional Councils’ dealing with this continual desecration of our waterways has been a manner which , to me , shows lack of respect and aroha. In the same article just mentioned on the 19 of

March, the council say, "The council report recommends renewing consents for seven years under a slew of conditions." Another comment by Fred McClay TRC on the Nov 07 2020 in the Taranaki Daily News

"said the ponds which hold compostable organic material, including perished chicken, do not drain into the Mimitangiatua River.

The pond which discharges to the Haehanga Stream is a consented discharge from a wetland treatment system, which is discussed in the annual report, McLay said.

"The Council acknowledges there is local interest in this issue but would advise caution against conjecture and misinformation," he said. "The hearing in February 2021 will consider all the factual evidence."

From this I can conjecture that Fred has no idea of the layout of Remediation or no idea of the Haehanga Stream after all the consent is for discharge into the Haehanga Stream which thereby flows into the Mimitangaitua so who is the one that is using conjecture and misinformation to the public? It is definitely not me or other complainants.

Furthermore a nonconsented operation has been allowed to continue with no consent for 2 years, at a

prehearing I asked the TRCs scientist (Nathan Crook) where they were taking samples from the Haehanga Stream he showed me , the areas were from long straights on the stream, I find this interesting as well as an inaccurate place to record data due to the continual flow of water and its combustive nature in these areas, thus the best area of practice would be to take from the pools below these areas, where sediment is known to accumulate and build up.

On the Taranaki Regional Council site its purported “The overall quality of air in the Taranaki region is excellent. Nonetheless, the Council keeps a close eye on air quality as part of State of the Environment monitoring, and as part of resource consent compliance.”

However is this actually true as I have heard that the TRC will not investigate complaints after a certain time of the evening, yet is it not your duty to follow due process around complaints?

On this same site, “A major focus of the Council is to ensure the health of Taranaki's rivers and streams, and to monitor them regularly.”

If this is a major focus, I am sad to tell you, you are failing miserably in relationship to the rivers in question.

I also see in accordance of your new fresh water policies, • From July 1, 2021, you will need a resource consent to apply synthetic nitrogen fertiliser onto land

in pastoral The Council's existing recreational bathing monitoring programme already fulfills the amended requirement land use at a rate higher than 190 kg/ha/year...however Remediation has dumped 40,000 tonnes of oil rig mud on the land that is leaching into Haehanga then Mimitangiataua. This shows the contradiction of the TRCs policies and the truth.

Within the same site the TRC says, "The Council's existing recreational bathing monitoring programme already fulfills the amended requirement" how can you be fulfilling the requirement when we cant even swim in our awa, as currently we have a Rahui on it to ensure safety of people?

In regards to Riparian planting the TRC says, "The Council's clear message to farmers has been consistent – please crack on and get your TRC riparian plans completed". Remediation have been in operation for 20 plus years and a factor that was stated in the consent plans was for Riparian Planting to be completed, yet its obvious by looking at the plantings they are only a few years old and still no way near being completed! So how strong has your message been?

I ask you a question Taranaki Regional Council. Are you aware of your obligations under the Treaty Of Waitangi? In Article one , provides for the Government to govern, though not in isolation from other provisions of the **Treaty of Waitangi**. The

right to govern is qualified by an obligation to protect Māori interests. How have you, the TRC protected our interests around the whenua at Uruti, the awa of Haehanga and Mimitangiatua and our moana, by enabling the desecration of these places by Remediation and their dishonest practices?

“Article 2, guaranteed to Māori the undisturbed possession of their properties, including their lands, forests, and fisheries, for as long as they wished to retain them.” Our undisturbed fisheries of our awa has been seriously disturbed by the actions of Remediation and the non action of the TRC! Our pataka kai (food source) is uneatable and sick. Our whenua has been laden with toxins which are seeping into our water table, our Rongoa trees are uptaking these toxins, when talking of Mauri all aspects are affected and impacted on in a way where they are no longer safe to use or eat!

Article 3 guarantees tangata whenua protection yet where is protection when our food sources are getting contaminated and people unwell.

All in all in this example I feel that the TRC is failing in its principles of the Treaty Of Waitangi, Protection, participation and partnership and this whole situation reeks of a partnership with Remediation to hide Taranaki dirty secrets.

The only viable solution is to Cease all operations of Remediation NZ, make them remove their poisons, fine them and for some jail time would be appropriate afterall they have acted as environmental terroists. This definition aptly fits them as they have acted in a violent manner against our awa , afterall “ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au” which impacts violently on us a people and they have used threats from lawyers to intimidate those that have spoken out!

Kati, anei he whakatauki, Toitu te whenua, toitu ngā awa, toitu te moana, toitu ngā tangata!