

Commitment to serve the iwi

THE culmination of a two-month process to discuss and consider hapu endorsed nominations for three seats on the post-settlement entity for the Whanganui River settlement, Ngā Tāngata Tiaki o Whanganui, took place at Ngapuawaiwaha, Taumarunui, on Sunday, May 17.

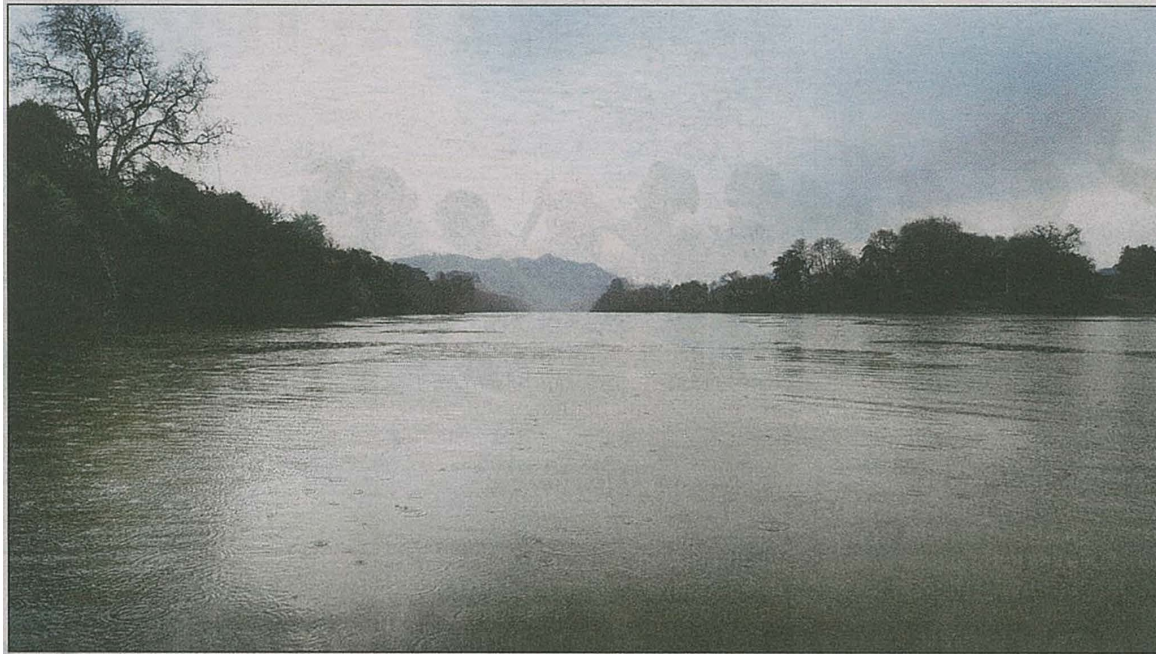
In March nominations had been sought from Whanganui hapu for three trustee positions, each with a three-year term.

Previous to this hui, the hapu had considered a range of options to decide how its collective forum, Te Runanga o Te Awa Tupua o Whanganui, would make a final decision on endorsement of candidates — from calling on our kaumatua for guidance right through to an assessment panel.

In the end it was agreed that at Ngapuawaiwaha the nominees or their hapu representatives would make a short presentation to the hui. All candidates expressed their commitment to serve the iwi, to promote the protection of Te Awa Tupua, and to utilise their skills for the wellbeing of the people.

After this, the hui turned its attention to endorsing three nominations.

At the time of writing, Ngā Tāngata Tiaki o Whanganui is awaiting the written resolution of the three nominations endorsed by Te Runanga o Te Awa Tupua and finally for the results of the standard trustee



by the Ministry of Justice and the Police before notifying the result.

The next stage of the nomination process will begin in June to fill the remaining four seats on Ngā Tāngata Tiaki o Whanganui.

This time nominations will be called for from registered adult members of Whanganui iwi generally, and valid nominations will be put to a postal vote of individual registered adult Whanganui iwi members before the results of both processes will be formally announced in September at the first annual meeting of Ngā Tāngata Tiaki o Whanganui.

The full seven-member trust will take office from this date.

Thus an unprecedented blend of tikanga and legal-based process will have served to ensure seven capable trustees serve both Te Awa Tupua and Whanganui iwi while continuing to seek guidance from hapu through Te Runanga o Te Awa Tupua. The tikanga-based side of the equation will not have been free of robust debate or challenge.

The key thing, and one that sits at the heart of tikanga, is that iwi learns from our experiences to ensure this process is enhanced for the benefit of future generations.

Top trustee vote results

Te Pūtake understands the three people who topped the trustee election vote at Ngapuawaiwaha, Taumarunui, on May 17 were Gerrard Albert, Mavis Mullins and Susan Osborne.

However, at the time of going to print, these three nominations had not yet been endorsed by written resolution from Te Runanga o Te Awa Tupua.

Kaumatua's kohanga reo realised

A new kohanga reo was launched in Whanganui in a dawn ceremony on May 16.

On the corner of Brunswick Rd and Hylton St, it was a dream of the late kaumatua Te Otinga (George) Waretini.

It has been named Nga Manu Tui Te Kohanga Reo by his wife Piki, a stalwart of the kohanga reo movement and who lives on the property.

The kaiako (teacher) will be Marama Warera, helped by Te Rina Ponga, Sharna-Leah Whittaker and Teira Warera.



Te Otinga and Piki Waretini

Aotea District Te Kohanga Reo manager Ruka Broughton is supportive of the new venture.

The kohanga reo can take up to 30 tamariki and the roll is already full, although it is in the process of being licensed and won't be ready to open until the middle of June.

Mr Waretini was a senior kaumatua of the Whanganui region and always wanted a kohanga reo on the two-hectare site in Aramoho. More development is envisaged for the site.