

**IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL  
OF NEW ZEALAND**

IN THE MATTER OF: The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER OF: The Wairarapa ki Tararua Inquiry  
**Wai 863**

AND

IN THE MATTER OF: The claims of Rangitāne o Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua  
**Wai 166**

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF LORRAINE STEPHENSON**

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## **Introduction**

1. My name is Lorraine Stephenson. I am the eldest daughter of Tai Hoera and Kuini TeTure. I am the wife of David Stephenson and we are the proud parents of 4 children and 6 mokopuna. We farm 800 cows on TeRehunga North Road.
2. Paora Te Rangiwhakaewa's land at Kaitoki was passed down to his son Hoera, who passed it down to his son Te Aohia, who then passed it down to my father Tai Hoera and his siblings. Children of my father's sisters Mary Watson and Rachel Holm, and my sister and her whanau still live on our Tupuna land. My father is 65 years old. He has lived all his life in the rohe of Rangitāne working the land. Our whakapapa and mahi whenua demonstrates our ahi kaa. My whakapapa is set out in the whakapapa booklet at page 25.
3. My evidence will concentrate on issues around local government, in particular our relationship with the Tararua District Council, the Resource Management Act, how we have handled this legislation and its impact on us, and issues around Conservation.

## **My Role and Responsibilities**

4. In 1991 I was appointed Kaitiaki by Rangitāne kaumatua to manage the Local Government, Resource Management and Conservation portfolios. I had no experience in any of these fields but I have a strong respect and love for the whenua and environment.
5. The following are responsibilities I have undertaken in this role:
  - 1990-1997 – Chief Executive Officer of Rangitāne o Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua;

- 1990-1994 – Appointed to the Tararua District Council Māori Advisory committee;
- 1991 – Member of the Māori Local Government Association, I assisted in establishing Te Waka Awhina Aotearoa;
- 1994-1997 – Appointed to the Rangitikei/Hawkes Bay Conservation Board;
- 1995 – Appointed to the New Zealand Conservation Board;
- 1995-1998 – Appointed to the then Manawatu/Wanganui Regional Council Iwi Committee comprised of the recognised Iwi of this Region and 1996-1998 – Appointed Chairperson of this Committee;
- 1995-1998 – Member of the Regional Council Resource Management and Environment Committee;
- 1997 – Appointed by horizons.m.w Regional Council as a Hearing Commissioner. I have presided over at least three Hearings per year since my appointment;
- 2001 – Appointed as a Trustee to the Queen Elizabeth II Trust;
- Current member representing Tararua District on horizon.m.w Environment Committee He Tini Awa.

6. I have also been actively involved in:
- Implementing resource legislation in partnership with existing local authorities;
  - Developing programmes to restore ecological environments;
  - Developing conservation education programmes, an example being the Native Plant Nursery at the Kura Kaupapa.

### **Kaitiakitanga**

7. The traditional institution of Kaitiaki does not stand alone it is part of a complex social, cultural, economic, and spiritual system that has been established through long tribal association with land and waters. To know kaitiaki is to know the Māori world – the tribal structures of iwi, hapū, whānau, tangata whenua, manawhenua, ahi kaa, kaumātua, kuia, tohunga and whānaunga. These make up a dynamic and thriving Māori community. These all characterise Rangitāne o Tāmaki-Nui-a-Rua. Kaitiakitanga here for us today is still ably demonstrated in a number of ways, I will share a small sample of some of those today.
8. The Tribunal will hear evidence from our whanaunga from Te Hika o Papauma (WAI 420). This parcel of land with its extensive coastline has been incorporated since 1973. I was lucky enough to have spent a number of my childhood years horse riding the hills of Oahanga to Mataikona and fishing for crayfish along the rugged coastline. I heard the stories of the people and their struggles, saw firsthand the challenges of the land and the changing status of the seas and the foreshore. As a shepherd my Dad worked this land always knowing that this was a land of our people.

9. Today my family and I still have active ties to Aohanga and Te Hika o Papauma. We take a team of whanau and ride the 75 kilometres to the station to participate in a coastal circuit of horsesports. It is a cultural and spiritual trek we take as a whanau, with the opportunity to retell the stories of our people. In fact we often try to retrace the tracks of these tupuna.
  
10. On average Rangitāne receive about two requests a month to bless new construction sites. I have participated in numerous events where Rangitāne kaumātua have undertaken an active kaitiaki role in the blessing of new sites and other spiritual and ceremonial occasions, examples being the Alliance Freezing Works, the Dannevirke Warehouse, the Rabobank premises, Autumn Lodge Resthome and the Knox Church. In requesting the services of our kaumātua local people have recognised the kaitiaki responsibilities Rangitāne have.

### **Input in Local Government**

11. Prior to the Tararua District Council being established, Rangitāne asserted a presence at local body level, examples being:
  - Lui Paewai Snr was elected onto the Dannevirke Borough Council in 1962-1968;
  
  - Hepa Tatere was elected onto the Dannevirke Borough Council in 1980-1986, Dannevirke District Council in 1986-1989 and a member of the Tararua District Council until 1995;
  
  - In the early 1990s Rangitāne appointments participated in the Tararua District Council Māori Community Advisory Committee.
  
12. I along with others have continued to take a very strong position in Tāmaki-Nui-a-Rua in regard to having a voice, small though it may be,

at the various levels of local government. We are proactive in making submissions on District Plans, participating in Resource Management applications and other general matters.

13. Rangitāne currently have an appointed member onto the Economic Development Committee to ensure our view and input into the growth and wellbeing of this region is clear.
14. We have a Memorandum of Partnership with the Tararua District Council. This document was certainly developed with the best intentions from both parties, but it is yet to be fully tested.

### **Resource Management Act 1991**

15. It is not my intention to spend time on the mechanics of the Resource Management Act 1991 or other relevant legislation. These have been comprehensively submitted to this Inquiry in evidence given by:
  - Janine Hayward on behalf of the Crown Forestry Rental Trust ‘Maori and Local government’,
  - Report co-authored by Cathy Marr, Philip Cleaver and Lecia Schuster ‘The taking of Maori Land for public works in the Wairarapa Ki Tararua Inquiry District, 1880-200
  - Murray Hemi on behalf of Nga Hapu Karanga o Wairarapa and others
16. Others have also made reference to the Resource Management Act and relative legislation. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate these presenters on their full and thorough reports.
17. In my role as Rangitāne kaitiaki I am requested to process on average between three to four consent applications per month. These require a

considerable amount of time and research, preparing for hearings, follow up and monitoring.

18. Approximately 20% of the consents considered are to do with gravel extraction. On the whole these are straightforward, the only real issue being around the length of time of the activity. I have negotiated with applicants and Regional Council staff on agreeing to consents for a period no longer than five years.
19. The bulk of the consents I process are in the area of water take for irrigation and other activities. This includes applications predominantly from dairy farmers and meat processors. This is an area where I have actively monitored these applications because of our concern for the perceived degradation of the Manawatu river. I am currently working with horizons.m.w. scientific staff and resource consent staff on ascertaining the current status of water quality and the ecological environment of the Manawatu river. Until such time as this research has been completed on behalf of Rangitāne I am declining all water take applications for the foreseeable future.
20. We also receive a large number of land activity consent applications. This is an area of great activity and where applications will vary hugely all the way from Transit NZ who wished to widen roads to Meridian Energy who wish to erect 54 wind turbines on the ridges of our maunga. This is a diverse area and often involves issues of commercial sensitivity. It is in this area where the majority of my time is spent in actual processing.
21. A special example of this is when Transit NZ applied to widen a section of road at Matamau, which was going to involve the exhumation of several graves at a small roadside cemetery. There were two key issues, the first being the actual activity of realignment, the other being the matter of exhumation. Because of the excellent working relationship

with consultants and staff, Rangitāne were able to ensure protocols took place with the outcome being a positive result for all.

22. A recent and high profile activity has been the Te Apati Meridian Wind Farm. This process took 2½ months to work through, the big issue being the affect on the environment. The extent of the excavation work was a concern because of the affect on the adjoining ngahere. The fact that the ngahere area holds cultural significance also had to be worked through. Because of the professionalism and transparency of Meridian Energy this application was one of the most satisfying I have had to process.
23. We have also worked through a negotiation process to arrive at memorandums of understanding with Transit NZ, Ernslaw One Limited (Forestry Consortium) and OPUS Consultancy.
24. I receive monthly Council minutes and am invited to appropriate training, workshops and seminars. I continue to meet regularly with the Mayor, Mayoress and Council staff. I have made submissions to most District Plans, Annual Plans and Development Plans. I have presented the Rangitāne submissions at nearly every hearing held in the Tararua district.
25. From 1993 to 1999 Tararua District Council consulted and sought the advice of Rangitāne on a regular basis.
26. Between 1994-1996 I was involved in the Section 30 case before the Māori Land Court on behalf of Rangitāne, Manahi Paewai will discuss this further in his evidence.
27. In 1999 a consultancy group, James Barnes & Associates were engaged to give the Tararua District Council training on tangata whenua issues. Following consultation carried out by James Barnes & Associates a



memorandum of partnership between Rangitāne o Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua and the Tararua District Council was entered into in March 2000.

### **Māori Land Ownership in Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua**

28. In 1995 I worked on a project with the Māori Land Court staff on land still owned in Māori hands in Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua and the issue relating to those lands. Findings from the research included:

- Aohanga Station was the largest Māori owned block, approximately 18,000 acres;
- Māori land had poorer quality soils and more limitations for intensive agriculture;
- The majority of the land was in sheep and beef farming, however there was a definite swing towards dairying;
- Most farms had formed Trusts;
- Eighty-two percent of the owners had leased their land;
- Ten percent of the owners had never seen their land or walked over it;
- Seventy-four percent wanted better control of their land.

29. After discussion with other Māori farmers we called together a Māori dairy farmers discussion group. The 12-25 members met on a regular basis to share ideas, pass on information and support each other. We are called the Ikaroa Rawhiti Māori Discussion Group.

30. A joint venture proposal with Rangitāne o Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua, Te Runanga o Raukawa and Manaaki Whenua Massey University was submitted to the Māori Business Start Up Service. The project purpose was to provide a resource base for Māori regarding land issues, regrettably the project was declined.

### **Conservation and Environmental Responsibilities**

31. In accepting the Conservation portfolio I began a journey that today I am thankful I took.
32. In Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua, Rangitāne have actively engaged in our conservation responsibilities. We have successfully developed a relationship with the Department of Conservation that has allowed both parties to work together on conservation initiatives. Some examples are:
- The planting of native trees at Mohangaiti Lake, and its establishment as one of the first Nga Whenua Rahui reserves. Much of this land remains in Rangitāne ownership today through the Chase whānau;
  - The establishment of a native nursery at Te Kura Kaupapa Maori O Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua for the purpose of not only educating our tamariki about our native flora but also to serve as a depot for such plantings;
  - We initiated and have an agreed process for accessing native plants from DOC land for Rongoa purposes;
  - Protection of the cultural landscape of Tangata Whenua project.

33. Because of a lot of my mahi on behalf of Rangitāne has been in relation to this work and that of resource management, I accepted an appointment to the Rangitikei/Hawkes Bay Conservation Board in 1994-1997. The following year I was appointed by the Minister of Conservation to the New Zealand Conservation Authority. I am currently in my second term here.
34. More recently, I have accepted an appointment as a Trustee onto the Queen Elizabeth II Trust, again with a keen focus on conservation and encouragement of biodiversity.
35. I believe our presence at these board tables has ensured that the values we hold dear to our hearts as descendants of Rangitāne, and conservators of our natural resources have assisted in the strength of these organizations today. It feels absolutely right that we actively participate at these highest levels of decision-making.

### **Conclusion**

36. Preparing my evidence for today has been one of the hardest tasks I have been faced with in my adult life thus far. I feel compelled to share with the Tribunal, counsel, Crown representatives, claimants, whānau and others present how a Ngāti Pakapaka member has been affected by historical and contemporary events and how these have impacted on my life and the lives of many Rangitāne whanaunga today.
37. My motivation to work with my iwi and Māori has always been my kids. My beautiful moko, all six of them have been what has got me through these past few months. A very good friend of mine Lui Paewai told several of us one day that whatever we do in our work for Rangitāne whānau, hapū and iwi, we must start making “mokopuna decisions.”

38. My final comment to the Waitangi Tribunal is that in your deliberations over the Wai 166 claim you keep firmly in your mind the importance of your decisions for Rangitāne mokopuna.

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