

**BEFORE THE TARANAKI REGIONAL COUNCIL**

*under:* the Resource Management Act 1991

*in the matter of:* Resource consent applications by Remediation New Zealand for resource consents to discharge waste material, treated stormwater & leachate, and to discharge emissions into the air from composting operations, at State Highway 3 1460 Mokau Road, Uruti ("Applications")

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Statement of evidence of **Carol Anne Shenton** for  
Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Mutunga  
(24 March 2021)

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## STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF CAROL ANNE SHENTON

Tena koutou tena koutou tena koutou katoa  
Ko Taranaki te maunga  
Ko Tokomaru te waka  
Ko Mimitanga atua te awa  
Ko Ngati Mutunga me Ngati Tama nga iwi  
Ko Te Kekerewai te hapu  
Ko McClutchie te whanau  
Ko Carol Shenton taku ingoa

- 1 My full name is **Carol Anne Shenton**.
- 2 I grew up within a few kilometres of the awa of Mimitangiatua, and attended Mimi school. I grew up knowing of the significance of the Mimitangiatua, my mother and many of our whanau having been raised on the whenua alongside the riverbank. I have ownership of a small acreage at 265 Mimi Road, my husband or myself go there every day to check our flock.
- 3 I have very distinctive and happy memories of accompanying my mother as a small child, to the riverbank on many whitebait fishing expeditions, and no surprises all the aunts had their special fishing places too – the pear tree, the quince, the apple tree, the wire, the papa, to name a few.
- 4 As children my siblings and I had very strict instructions not to make noise or let our shadow fall on the water, where the net was. What was caught was shared among whanau as this was a welcome customary practice. It doesn't seem that long ago. Back then the mud wasn't smelly and we could freely mould and shape objects, decorating them with moss and other vegetation. My visits continued into my early adult years, it was then still a place of peace, tranquillity and beauty. One could feel the ihi, wehi and wano – the wonder and awe of the awa, the whenua, te taiao. Kahawai, flounder, tuna, and mullet were also plentiful, people used to fish off the bridge and at the river mouth. As a pupil at Mimi school we used to walk to the river mouth for swims, I have been devastated to see the changes there - the build-up of mud and silt. I am grateful to those who sensitive to the need of our environment and ecosystem and have taken the initiative to plant out this coastal area.
- 5 I have not seen any fish in the awa for a couple of years now, even white baiting is debatable. The habitat for these little fish (inanga) has vastly diminished, despite us fencing off and riparian planting the riverbank.
- 6 I've seen thick foam coming down the awa on two occasions, and witnessed greasy slicks and scum on other occasions. There was a particular day when the mud was smelly and sticky. There is no longer a sense of beauty, of awe, of serenity. Instead a sense of lifelessness, of something that is has been stolen, a brokenness, a pain. The awa is calling for help.

- 7 Traditionally the occupation of land for Maori was based on connectedness and belonging as opposed to direct ownership, it was paramount for maintaining a continual relationship for the well being of all people, the environment, ancestors and mokopuna. The image of Papatuanuku is a reminder of the provision for all environmental needs in order to maintain biological functions of the earth: streams of water are likened to her arteries, nourishing wellbeing on all creation, mankind, animals, birds, the air and eco systems.
- 8 The fact that a rahui has been necessary is proof of the desecration of the awa, and even the most basic activity of getting wet, is no longer safe. By being complicit we have marginalised our environment, ourselves, our health and sustainability that impacts our livelihood and for future generations.
- 9 If we fail to now recognise the slowing pulse, the ache of the awa and not act upon it quickly – this will be another awa lost – another prospective future in providing for our whanau gone, unrecoverable. Will we once again be able to bathe in the awa, be able to provide for ourselves and others? In my role as a counsellor, I'm fully aware of desperate needs of some of our Taranaki whanau, to be nourished by the environment, to gather food, even one meal makes a difference, one meal less they have to buy on what little they have. Remediation New Zealand's activities and continued non-compliance have determined the fate of the awa, the life, the energy, and subsistence.
- 10 It will take a long time to recover, restoration of the awa, of whenua, of tangata, if we get our priorities right, that is people and their health and wellbeing, paramount over the desire to receive and store toxic waste.
- 11 My grandchildren's whenua (placenta's) are planted in the whenua of Mimitangiatua.
- 12 My hope is that my grandchildren too will fish, not making too much noise and keeping their shadows off the water, and being in awe of rhythms of te taiao.

Carol Anne Shenton

24 March 2021