



Media Release

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Historic day for all guardians of the Waikato River

The Waikato River Authority, a co-governance body established between the Crown and Waikato River Iwi to restore the Waikato River, reaches an historic milestone today when it opens for funding applications for the first time.

The government has committed \$210 million over the next 30 years to ensure the Authority has the resources it needs to protect the Waikato River from further degradation.

The Authority is able to distribute funds each year for projects that will improve the health and wellbeing of the river. In this first year of funding, an allocation of up to \$6 million will be made.

The Authority is seeking funding applications, both large and small, from organisations the length of the Waikato River – from Huka Falls to Port Waikato – that have projects and initiatives they would like to implement for the betterment of the river and its catchment.

Funding criteria and six priority funding areas have been established to guide applicants and to ensure the effectiveness of the clean-up fund.

The co-chairs of the Waikato River Authority, Tukoroirangi Morgan and the Hon John Luxton, say they are immensely gratified that the day has arrived when the Authority can get down to the business of cleaning up the river.

“There has been a huge amount of work behind the scenes to establish the Authority and ensure it is both effective and enduring. Building strong relationships between the key groups that will have critical responsibility for the future of the river is well underway.

“We are now moving into a more public and practical phase of our journey to restore the Waikato River and we are delighted to be doing so,” says John Luxton.

“The task ahead of us is considerable. However the fact that we have reached such a significant milestone is tremendously encouraging. The Waikato River is precious to all who are part of the Waikato community and the Authority is certain that by

working together as a community we will achieve the goal of a healthier and cleaner river,” says Tukoroirangi Morgan.

The Waikato River Authority was formed late last year from 2 Acts of Parliament, The Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act, and the Ngati Tuwharetoa, Raukawa, and Te Arawa River Iwi Waikato River Act. The Authority is the sole trustee of the Waikato River Clean-up Trust.

The Waikato River Authority’s funding strategy is to see many projects requiring smaller amounts of funding in the tens of thousands of dollars range. It also expects to receive applications for higher cost projects in the hundreds of thousands of dollars and above, but will fund fewer of these applications

An application for funding of clean-up projects can be made to the Waikato River Authority from 1 October 2011 through until 16 December this year. Applicants will be notified in February 2012 regarding which projects are successful.

Because this is the Authority’s first funding round, it is setting up a register for signalling preliminary interest from organisations that may seek financial support for projects. Initial interest in implementing a project for the Waikato River can be submitted at www.waikatoriver.org.nz .

The Authority’s website also contains information about the funding criteria and application forms.

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