

Maunga ki Tai

A newsletter from the

Waikato River Authority

Funding priorities set for 2016



THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY HAS PUBLISHED ITS FUNDING STRATEGY FOR 2016 IN ANTICIPATION OF THIS YEAR'S FUNDING ROUND FOR CLEAN-UP PROJECTS OPENING ON 1 JULY.

Among the areas the Authority is maintaining or giving increased priority to is water quality, with a greater emphasis on projects that can demonstrate a high level of certainty around water quality improvement. Collaboration is again a key driver for funding, where the Authority will continue to support projects that involve a range of groups working together to address specific issues impacting the river and its catchment.

The Authority is again making available up to \$6 million for clean-up projects.

Applications for funding will close on 18 August 2016 with decisions on

successful projects announced at the end of November. Applications can be made online from July 1 at www.waikatoriver.org.nz.

In its first five years, the Authority has allocated funding of \$27 million to 170 projects.

The Authority's co-chairs Hon John Luxton and Tukoroirangi Morgan have again stressed the need for co-funding of projects for the long term clean-up of the Waikato and Waipa rivers. They say the money available to the Authority over the next 25 years will not be sufficient on its own to restore the health and wellbeing of the rivers.

MESSAGE FROM THE CE

The Authority's purpose is to restore and protect the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River catchment. We received two levers to support this purpose. In our first five years significant progress has been made via our ability to fund restoration initiatives. In our next five years we face ongoing freshwater and related legislative reform, and the process to make operative the Healthy Rivers Plan. Along with funding worthwhile projects, we will also continue to safeguard Parliament's intention that the Vision & Strategy (Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato) is the primary direction setting document for the Waikato and Waipa rivers and the activities within the 11-thousand square kilometre catchment.



Bob Penter
 Chief Executive

Pictured: Stream erosion in the Waipa Catchment was evident during a field trip in May organised for the Waipa Catchment Committee. Waikato River Authority, Otorohanga District Council and Waikato Regional Council staff and councillors also attended. Combating erosion in the Waipa remains a key issue for the health and wellbeing of the Waikato and Waipa rivers.

Waipa field trip

A recent field trip for the Waipa Catchment Committee to look at some key work in the Waipa area was also attended by the Waikato River Authority.

The trip looked at a number of erosion sites and some significant land retirement in the Honikiwi area (west of Otorohanga).



The group were also able to see progress on the Waipa Rerenoa River Restoration Project near Otorohanga part funded by the Authority along with the landowner and the Waikato Regional Council.

The project involves five kilometres of the Waipa River and includes removing pest willows and other invasive weeds from the riparian margin, re-installing a fence with a minimum five metre buffer average from the river bank and re-planting the riparian margin with native plants.

The project has been championed by Rosemary Davison (Waipa Catchment Committee member and landowner) who is a past winner of the Balance Farm Environment Award.

As well as the planting, the project will create picnic areas and swimming spots and it is also hoped to include a riverside cycle way.

Rosemary Davison explains progress of the the Waipa Rerenoa project to other Waipa Catchment Committee members, Waikato Regional Council staff and councillors along with Otorohanga District Council and Waikato River Authority representatives.

Major planting becomes legacy

One of the biggest planting projects to receive funding from the Waikato River Authority in recent times has created a legacy for the man whose vision it was to see it completed.

Te Pahu farmer Graeme Johnstone passed away last year when the farm, owned by him and his wife, was mid-way through the major wetland restoration.

The project is now nearing completion with fencing and planting of 22 hectares of gully wetlands in the lower Waipa. Approximately 160,000 native eco-sourced plants have been put on the site. The project planting has been carried out by Whaingaroa Harbour Care.

The farm gully and wetland system drains to the Paratawa Stream, which is a tributary to the Waipa River.



A recent gathering at the Johnstone's Te Pahu farm to see the nearly completed work.

(L to R) Fred Lichtwark (Whaingaroa Harbour Care), Tony Roxburgh (Waipa District Council), Dianne Johnstone (Graeme's wife and landowner), Tim Johnstone (Graeme's son), Bob Penter (Waikato River Authority), Fiona Edwards (Whaingaroa Harbour Care) and Keri Neilson (Waikato River Authority)

Rangiriri set for planting

Expect to soon see about half a kilometre of river side plantings funded by the Waikato River Authority taking place immediately south of the Te Kauwhata/Rangiriri State Highway One improvements.

The planted area between the river and SH1 has previously been grazed and is the designated spillway for when the lower river is in flood. The Rangiriri plantings will provide a riparian margin and a habitat for native bird and fish species.

The project is a continuation of the Tainui Development Agency project which is being managed by the Kanae Kakariki Trust. Until now the overall project has focused on clearing and planting riverbank near the Huntly power station. The northern part of the project was officially started with a blessing from local Kaumaatua Pat Kingi last month.



Rangiriri spillway planting project workers together with Waikato Regional council staff and Waikato River Authority representatives along with local Kaumaatua Pat Kingi (far left).

The group were present for the blessing of the site prior to the start of planting work.

Solid progress in Huntly

There has been strong progress for a Tainui Development Agency project, together with Kanae Kakariki Trust in Huntly to clear weeds and plant over about three kilometres of Waikato River bank.

The project has been underway for two years with another three years to run.

Project managers Te Winika and Victor Nikau are pulling together a number of resources to complete

the project including the use of local contractors; Waterside Planters from Taupiri. To date there have been 15-thousand native trees and shrubs planted at the site.

While continuing with clearing and planting there is also a considerable focus on maintenance work to ensure a strong growing start for the plantings.



Barn Haunui from Waterside Planters with Te Winika Nikau taking a break from a plant maintenance work day.



Some of the thousands of plants on the river bank between the Huntly power station and the Waikato River.



Success at farm environment awards for Authority regulars

Waikato River Authority board member Alan Livingston with Kim Jobson and Stu Muir, winners of the Authority sponsored Catchment Improvement Award at the recent Ballance Farm Environment Awards at Karapiro. The pair were also winners of the Farm Stewardship Award in partnership with the QEII National Trust and the

New Zealand Farm Environment Trust. Kim and Stu have carried out multiple projects, with Authority funding, at their dairy farm at Aka Aka in the lower Waikato River Catchment mostly to do with weed clearance and whitebait habitat restoration. Their environmental restoration work and farming was recently featured on TVNZ's Country Calendar.

Getting to know our fish

NIWA scientists and staff helped Hamilton celebrate World Fish Migration Day last month with a series of activities at Parana Park and Waikato Museum. It is the first time the day has been celebrated alongside the Waikato River.

The aim of the international day is to connect fish, rivers and people. There were a series of displays and special information during the day on Saturday 21 May.

New Zealand has about 50 native fresh water fish species, 17 of which are found in the Waikato.

NIWA is currently working with the Waikato Raupatu River Trust as part of an Authority funded project to restore and increase whitebait populations to the lower Waikato River.



Exhibits for World Fish Migration Day allowed a hands-on experience for some youngsters at Waikato Museum.