

Maunga ki Tai

Lake work underway



MESSAGE FROM THE CE

I recently attended the 10th Koroneihana Anniversary Dinner in honour of Kiingi Tuheitia. It was a wonderful evening with representatives and dignitaries drawn widely from across the community. The Authority appreciates that its task of restoring and protecting the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River is of the utmost important to Kiingi Tuheitia, Waikato-Tainui as a cornerstone of their Waikato River settlement with the Crown, and supported by Tuwharetoa, Te Arawa River Iwi, Raukawa and Maniapoto. We hope that our combined efforts achieve the objectives of the settlement, co-management agreements and aspirations of Kiingi Tuheitia.



Bob Penter
 Chief Executive

Pictured: The large floating wetland that has been installed at Lake Rotokauri as part of the lake restoration.

A LARGE SCALE RESTORATION OF LAKE ROTOKAURI ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF HAMILTON BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE WAIKATO DISTRICT COUNCIL IS NOW UNDERWAY.

One of the first stages of the restoration work has been to install two floating wetlands – a small one (approximately 75m²) in a main waterway leading into Rotokauri and a large one (approximately 340m²) one in the silt trap that picks up water flow from the Te Rapa area.

The floating wetlands were built and installed by Native Awa. The artificial wetlands accelerate the settlement of sediment coming into the catchment and provide bio-filtration and nutrient uptake to help with improving water quality.

Project manager Ben Wolfe from Waikato District Council says the wetlands are more than just the plants taking up nutrients.

“The benefit also comes from the root system of the plants providing a substrate for microorganisms to colonise, which is especially beneficial for bacteria that breakdown waste products. The system acts in a similar way to an aquarium filter, cleaning water through the microbial digestion of organic materials. Additionally the floating wetlands themselves provide habitat for birds and fish as well as providing shade in the summer months,” he says.

The Waikato River Authority funded nearly half a million dollars towards the project in 2015. The improvement of the water quality in Lake Rotokauri is seen as a direct benefit to the Waipa River.

Big benefits expected from manuka planting

A PROJECT WHICH IS CREATING SIGNIFICANT LAND CHANGE IN A LARGE GULLY BETWEEN MOUNT PIRONGIA AND OTOROHANGA IS EXPECTED TO HAVE SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS FOR THE WAIPA RIVER.

Approximately 36 hectares of farm land in a Moakurarua River gully which was previously grazed has been planted in manuka. The Waikato River Authority is funding the project which is being

undertaken by the Waikato Regional Council with important input from the farm landowner.

In total 64,000 manuka stems have been planted by the landowner. The gully is a high erosion risk which border both sides of the Moakurarua River.

The change from grazing the gully to planting manuka is expected to have a marked impact on reducing erosion and the resulting sediment entering the Moakurarua and onto the Waipa River.



Above: The Moakurarua River gully, formerly in pasture, which has been spot sprayed for the planting of 64,000 manuka stems.

Restoration Strategy gains momentum

Important workshops for the Restoration Strategy for the Waikato and Waipa Rivers have helped the project gain further momentum in the last few weeks.

Around 60 people, including river iwi, farmers and Restoration Forum members took part in a full day of prioritising projects for the Waipa catchment in Te Awamutu.

In addition, a goal setting workshop was held for iwi and community groups in the central and lower Waikato River catchment in Huntly.

The Restoration Strategy is due for completion by June 2017 and will create a blue print for restoration activities for the next five to 15 years.



A breakout group develop ideas at a lower Waikato River catchment workshop in Huntly. One of two Restoration Strategy workshops held recently.

Wetlands and lakes feature in projects seeking clean-up funding

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY HAS RECEIVED REQUESTS FOR \$11.5 MILLION OF FUNDING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAN-UP PROJECTS IN THE WAIKATO AND WAIPA RIVER CATCHMENTS FOR ITS 2016 FUNDING ROUND.

In total there were 56 requests lodged for funding when applications were closed off last week. The Authority has allocated up to \$6 million to distribute this this year.

Waikato River Authority Chief Executive Bob Penter says there is a strong focus on lakes and wetlands for this funding round with a spread of applications across the whole catchment.

"We've signalled that wetlands and lakes are priority areas for restoration so it is encouraging to have support for this strategy through the application process," says Mr Penter.

He says after five years of project funding there

are naturally some challenges for groups and individuals to continue to have capacity for substantial projects. "We are pleased to see that further capability and capacity is being generated in the community to deliver clean-up projects," he says.

"We are also pleased to see once again a strong showing of quality projects from iwi trusts and iwi based organisations in the funding applications. Iwi are particularly motivated to see the clean-up of Waikato and Waipa waterways progress and they are demonstrating this more than ever through projects they are putting forward," says Mr Penter.

The applications will now undergo an independent evaluation process. The evaluation panel will make recommendations to a sub-committee of the Authority who in turn will then make the final funding recommendations to the Authority's board. It is intended that successful project applicants will be announced by the end of October.

Dairy farm showcases environmental work

Lewisridge Farms at Pukeatua near Maungatautari Mountain has this winter completed planting 13,000 native trees on retired farmland and riparian areas.

The project has received funding from the Waikato River Authority.

Farmer Chris Lewis, also Federated Farmers Waikato Region President, says the environmental work has been used for an on-farm discussion group by DairyNZ.

"We are very pleased to be able to pass-on what we have learned through this project and the environmental value it can create. With the headwaters of the Punui River close by we hope the work done will protect the waters and create a habitat that enhances the ecosystem.

"I think we have a great story to tell about the partnership between the Waikato River Authority and farmers by improving the environment for future generations and delivering on the vision and strategy for the Waikato and Waipa River," he says.



Contractors finish planting some of the thousands of native trees on Lewisridge Farms. Prior to planting a significant weed eradication effort was required in riparian areas.

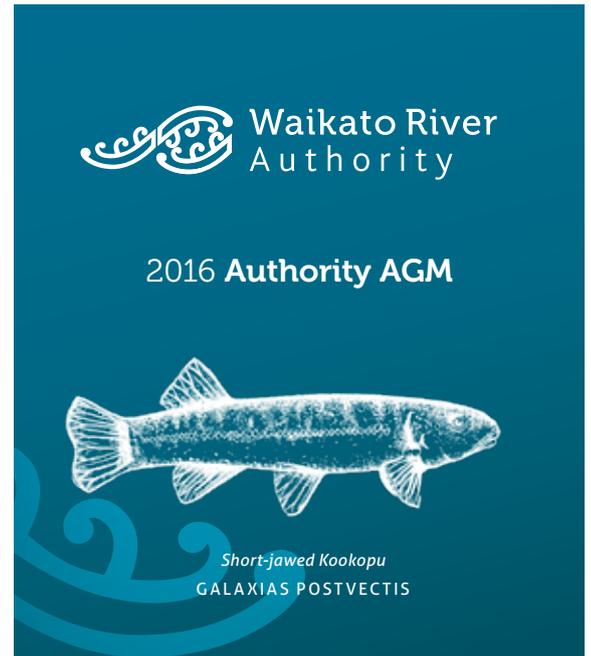
2016 Authority AGM

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY IS WORKING WITH MANIAPOTO WITH THE AIM OF HOLDING THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR THE AUTHORITY IN TE KUITI.

It is likely the AGM will be held in late November with a date and venue to be confirmed.

For the past two years, the Waikato River Authority has held its AGMs in Pukekohe (2015) and in Wairakei (2014).

Chief Executive Bob Penter says it is appropriate for the AGM to be held with Maniapoto this year, with so much of the Authority's funded work underway in the Waipa River catchment.



Planning underway for river conference

A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RIVER SCIENCE IS TO BE HELD IN HAMILTON NEXT YEAR WITH PLANNING NOW WELL UNDERWAY.

The 5th Biennial Symposium of the International Society for River Science (ISRS) has previously been held at locations all around the world (Europe, China and USA) and this will be the first for the conference in the southern hemisphere. The conference is being hosted by the University of Waikato and supported by the Waikato River Authority and Waikato-Tanui. It will be held 19-24 November 2017.

The conference theme is "Integrating Multiple Values" and will provide a forum for sharing knowledge underpinning management of rivers for multiple goals.

Further information including registration details are available at www.isrs2017.com

