

Maunga ki Tai

A newsletter from the

Waikato River Authority

Authority announces Vision & Strategy review

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY HAS ANNOUNCED ITS INTENTION TO BEGIN A REVIEW OF THE VISION & STRATEGY FOR THE WAIKATO AND WAIPAA RIVERS – TE TURE WHAIMANA O TE AWA O WAIKATO.

The Vision & Strategy has the highest legal standing as a policy and direction setting document in the Waikato River and Waipaa River catchments, with policy from other agencies required to give effect to the Vision & Strategy.

The legislation creating the Waikato River Authority specifically calls for a review of the Vision & Strategy no earlier than five years and no later than ten years after a previous review. The initial Vision & Strategy review took place immediately after the establishment of the Authority six years ago.

Following an evaluation by the Authority of its strategic direction, it has been decided that while the overall vision for the Waikato River will remain, namely for the health and wellbeing of the Waipaa and Waikato Rivers to be restored and protected, the objectives and mechanisms (for example targets and methods) for how the vision will be achieved are to be reviewed.

Waikato River Authority co-chairs Hon John Luxton and Tukoroirangi Morgan say comprehensive input from the Crown and River Iwi will be sought as part of the review.

“There are also many stakeholders with a very strong interest in the future of the Waikato River and we will ensure they are listened to as part of the review,” says Mr Luxton.

An important input into the Vision & Strategy review will be the final outcome of the Healthy Rivers Plan policy being undertaken by the Waikato Regional Council and iwi together with other stakeholders.

“The Healthy Rivers Plan is crucial for the future of the Waikato River. We support its goals to have a cleaner river, so much so, that any winding back of those goals would likely be counter-balanced by a more directive Vision & Strategy,” says Mr Morgan.

MESSAGE FROM THE CE

The opportunity to review the Vision & Strategy is significant with far-reaching consequences that will require careful, measured consideration. What will not change from this review is the primary direction setting role of the Vision & Strategy for activities that affect the catchment, and the vision statement itself. However, beyond this there is wide scope for the Authority to consider suggestions to amend the Vision & Strategy. These could range from establishing new targets and methods to achieve the vision, to addressing more complex issues such as water allocation. Most importantly, everyone will have the chance to express their views, and I encourage anyone with an interest in restoring and protecting the Waikato and Waipaa Rivers' catchment to do just that when submissions are sought.



Bob Penter
 Chief Executive



Restoration Strategy development nearing completion

ONE OF THE LARGEST PROJECTS TO BE CO-FUNDED BY THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY IS ENTERING ITS FINAL PHASES BEFORE COMPLETION.

The five to 15-year Restoration Strategy for the Waikato and Waipaa River catchments is an action plan designed to serve as a blue print for future restoration activities to achieve the objectives of Te Ture Whaimana (Vision & Strategy) for the Waikato River. The project complements the positive policy gains of Te Ture Whaimana which has led to the better co-ordination of all regulations and policies that impact the management of the Waikato and Waipaa Rivers. The Strategy does this by identifying effective and achievable projects which would deliver on improvement to: water quality; cultural values; fisheries; recreation; biodiversity; erosion and sedimentation.

The project has been underway for nearly two years and has involved significant input from iwi, community representatives, landowners, councils and other stakeholders with a direct connection to the catchment for the rivers.

The Strategy reaffirmed goals established in catchment management plans, iwi environmental plans and community stakeholder groups to develop over 250 priority projects. Each of the projects is prioritised in community and iwi



Keri Neilson speaking at one of the Restoration Strategy workshop sessions at Hopuhopu recently.

workshops held in each of the three unit areas including Upper Waikato, Central and Lower Waikato, Waipaa and Lakes.

It is anticipated that all funding entities consider the implementation of the Strategy where the prioritised projects fit within their current funding criteria. In some cases, the projects may impact public and private lands, however there is no expectation on landowners to contribute to project costs or agree to the project taking place on their lands.

If you would like information regarding the Restoration Strategy, please contact any of the project team on (07) 839 7966 or via email:

- **Keri Nielson** keri.neilson@envirostrat.co.nz
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- **Julian Williams** julian.williams@envirostrat.co.nz

Potential threat from Myrtle Rust

The Waikato River Authority has made contact with all managers of its funded projects regarding the threat from the plant disease Myrtle Rust.

The fungal disease, recently found in Waikato, can affect pohutukawa, manuka, and kanuka trees along with guava, feijoa and eucalyptus. No country has successfully eradicated Myrtle Rust. The Authority is urging managers in charge of planting to refer to MPI guidance regarding early action on dealing with Myrtle Rust, with special attention that planting is only carried out with plant stock from nurseries cleared of the disease.



The plant disease Myrtle Rust has been recently found in the Waikato.

More information is available at the Ministry of Primary Industries website: www.mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/responding/alerts/myrtle-rust/

Barry Harris appointed to WRA



Barry Harris

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY HAS A NEW BOARD MEMBER WITH THE APPOINTMENT OF BARRY HARRIS.

Mr Harris is a Crown appointee through local government nomination.

Other Crown appointees to be reappointed to the Authority are Hon John Luxton (co-chair), Traci Houppapa, Alan Livingston and Peter Buckley. The Crown appointment process has meant Jenni Vernon comes off the Board. John Luxton and fellow co-chair Tukoroirangi Morgan (lwi appointee) have paid tribute to Jenni Vernon's work for the Authority, which also included her membership of the Guardians Establishment Committee, the forerunner to the Waikato River Authority. Mr Harris, and his fellow Crown appointees, have been appointed for three year terms. Mr Harris is a professional director who is currently chair of DairyNZ and has recently been appointed chair of WINTEC.

Cyclone weather delays plantings

The impact from heavy rain producing cyclones to hit the central North Island during April and May has meant delays to planting programmes for a number of Waikato River Authority funded projects.

Because of flooding, in some cases planting has been delayed from early winter to early spring.

If you are managing a project with Authority funding that has been delayed because of wet weather, please contact the Waikato River Authority funding manager to discuss any change to work completion.

As well as high water levels in the lower Waipa and Waikato Rivers, a number of streams and lakes in the catchment were also flooded. In many cases this flooding prevented planned riparian planting taking place as scheduled.



Flooding of the Tunaekē Stream on the Raglan road.

Farm open day for environment award winners

THE SUPREME WINNERS OF THIS YEAR'S BALLANCE WAIKATO FARM ENVIRONMENT AWARDS, CHARLIE AND HELEN LEA, RECENTLY HAD AN OPEN DAY AT THEIR FARM, SHOWCASING THEIR WORK IN THE KARAPIRO CATCHMENT.

The Leas' have received funding from the Authority for some of their farm environmental improvement work.

In the past four years, they have put in 6.5 kilometres of fencing to protect native bush and gullies as well as planting more than 15,000 native plants.

Their work has also had an impact on neighbouring properties in the Buckland Road area near Cambridge with a number of other farmers looking to take on environmental improvement work that will improve water quality.

This year's Waikato Ballance Farm Awards also saw Rukuhia Farm Limited, Bob and Val Rigter, win the Waikato River Authority sponsored Catchment Improvement Award.



Waikato River Authority Chief Executive, Bob Penter, explaining the work of the WRA at the Leas' farm open day.

New funding round about to get underway

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY'S SEVENTH FUNDING ROUND WILL HAVE UP TO \$6 MILLION AVAILABLE FOR RIVER CLEAN-UP PROJECTS THIS YEAR WITH APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS OPENING ON 3 JULY.

The Authority has also confirmed its funding priorities for the coming year with the annual review of its funding strategy.

Among the areas the Authority is maintaining or giving increased priority to this year include:

- **Partnerships:** There is likely to be greater support for applications that involve strong partnerships and that have the ability to deliver significant outcomes from larger projects.
- **Iwi Engagement:** There will be an increased focus on bigger projects that incorporate iwi in the project delivery.
- **Restoration Strategy:** Projects that have been flagged as important during the development of the Restoration Strategy will be given funding priority.
- **Water Quality:** A strong emphasis on projects that can demonstrate a high level of certainty around water quality improvement.



To date the Waikato River Authority has provided more than \$30 million in funding to around 200 river clean-up projects.



FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Applications for funding will open on 3 July with funding applications again being managed online through the Waikato River Authority website www.waikatoriver.org.nz and will close on 16 August 2017. The Funding Strategy 2017 is available on-line or from the Waikato River Authority at 21 Rostrevor Street, Hamilton.

FUNDING TIMELINE

