

# Maunga ki Tai

A newsletter from the  

**Waikato River Authority**

## Feedback sought on update to Authority's 2018 Funding Strategy

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY IS ONCE AGAIN SEEKING FEEDBACK ON DIRECTION AND PRIORITIES AS PART OF THE ANNUAL REVIEW AND UPDATE OF ITS FUNDING STRATEGY.



*Gully clearing and plant maintenance work underway at a 2017 funded project in Fairfield, Hamilton (see story page 2).*

The 2018 Funding Strategy will be published in May this year, followed by the opening of funding applications in July. Applications will then close at the end of August.

The Authority is wanting organisations and individuals to have as long as possible to prepare projects for funding consideration.

This year's Funding Strategy will include direct links to the Restoration Strategy for the Waikato River and Waipaa River catchments, a two year project just completed, to set the restoration master plan for the catchment for the next five to 15 years.

This year's funding round will again be managed through an online process which will be accessed through the Authority's website at [www.waikatoriver.org.nz](http://www.waikatoriver.org.nz). The online system has undergone modifications since last year's funding process.

Waikato River Authority's Funding Manager, Keri Neilson, says while the detail of the 2018 Funding Strategy is still to be confirmed, project applications that show high levels of collaboration and co-funding are likely to have a much greater chance of funding success.

### MESSAGE FROM THE CE

Last year the WRA announced it was commencing a review of the Vision & Strategy. This document sets the primary direction for restoring the health and wellbeing of the Waikato and Waipaa Rivers, and their catchments. As such it is the 'prevailing document' for activities within these catchments that impact on our waterways, wetlands and lakes. The WRA is adopting an unrushed and considered approach to determine what changes, if any, should be made. This is appropriate given the far reaching consequences of an amended Vision & Strategy.



Bob Penter *Chief Executive*

### Launch of Restoration Strategy

The Restoration Strategy for the Waikato River and Waipaa River catchments is to be officially launched next month by the Minister for the Environment Hon David Parker.

The development of the strategy has been a partnership project between Waikato Regional Council, DairyNZ and the Authority and has involved multiple workshops with iwi and other stakeholder groups. The strategy is designed to be a blueprint for restoration priorities in the area for the next five to 15 years.

The strategy will be launched at the Waikato-Tainui College at Hopuhopu on Friday 13 April.



# Fairfield project has big vision

A WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY BACKED PROJECT TO RESTORE A HAMILTON INNER CITY GULLY HAS ASPIRATIONS TO ACHIEVE THIS AND A LOT MORE.

The Kukatāruhe Education Trust was formed to build an environmental education centre on the grounds of Fairfield College. Their idea was to use the land, surrounded by the Kukatāruhe stream (which runs into the Waikato River), to build an environmental education facility for students of all ages. The project, known as the Fairfield Project, would not only protect this rare urban green space and provide unique educational opportunities, but would give the school a point of difference and an opportunity for growth.

In developing their plan, the trust is proposing a full gully restoration and to that end has isolated a small area of gully to showcase their intent. Community working bees were organised to clear the weeds from this slice of gully, and Year 9 students from the school, with the help of a team from BNZ, planted 1,000 natives to get the project underway.

The wider plan proposes building an energy efficient, architect designed education facility, an orchard, a nursery, rongoā gardens, expanding the existing community gardens and ultimately a full gully restoration. This gully restoration will be an inter-generational project, designed to return the Kukatāruhe gully to its former glory, with an abundance of native trees and shrubs, and native bird life.



*Gully clearing and plant maintenance work underway at a 2017 funded project in Fairfield, Hamilton.*

Funding from the Authority will enable the trust to make significant progress with restoration of a large section of the gully. This section is home to the spawning sites of giant kōkopu. The Trust will employ a project manager for one day per week, to coordinate the efforts of volunteers, school students, and experts in the planning and implementation of the restoration effort. This work will take place alongside other work by the trust to develop a comprehensive site plan for the 12 hectares of land associated with the gully.



*The gully is undergoing major weed clearing as part of the restoration project. Here a section of the gully is seen before and after clearing and planting.*

# Artworks tell story of the river

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY, WAIKATO MUSEUM AND RENOWNED ARTIST FRED GRAHAM HAVE COMBINED TO ENABLE POWERFUL STORY TELLING ABOUT THE WAIKATO RIVER.

A collection of Fred Graham artworks are on permanent loan to the museum after being purchased by the Authority.

There are 14 of the multi-media artworks each of them telling a story about a different part of the river along its length.

The Waikato River is a major focus for the museum and will be exhibiting the works as part of a future programme. The collection is known as Tupuna Awa – My Ancestor the River.

Waikato Museum has other similar style artwork from Fred Graham which could be exhibited in association with the Authority funded collection.



*Artist Fred Graham talked about his artworks when handing over the pieces at Waikato Museum recently.*

## Further wetland development at Horahora dairy farm

A family owned dairy farm at Horahora near Maungatautari has accelerated work being carried out on wetland redevelopment, with a major goal of improving the quality of water leaving their farm.

The Williams family, who received two rounds of funding from the Authority, have so far restored around seven hectares of marginal land. More recent work has included earthworks to create wetland treatment weirs and associated riparian planting.

The family says funding from the Authority has enabled them to access ecological advice and ensure an appropriate level of planting.

The Williams have partnered with the Horahora school and others in the local community as part of the wetland development.



*Significant planting has been carried out at the Williams' dairy farm at Horahora as part of a project to return marginal land into wetland areas to improve water quality.*

## Team changes at Authority

There have been some changes in the team at Waikato River Authority.

Reremoana Stephens is new in the role of Office Administration with additional executive support from Susan Stephens. Michelle Hodges is now overseeing Project Health and Safety and upper Waikato River projects. Julian Williams has an expanded role as a Senior Policy Advisor along with Iwi Engagement. He is also taking the lead on the Vision & Strategy review. Others to make up the team include CE Bob Penter, Funding Manager Keri Neilson and Communications Advisor Philip Burton.



# Rowing NZ partnership

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY HAS EMBARKED ON A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP WITH ROWING NEW ZEALAND TO REACH THOUSANDS MORE PEOPLE ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WAIKATO RIVER.

The partnership will initially be over a three year period.

Authority Chief Executive, Bob Penter, says increasing the reach of the Authority to help promote the importance of the Vision & Strategy is an integral part of the Authority's work.

"We are pleased to be able to work with Rowing NZ to help get the message out about restoring and protecting the river. Rowing NZ's athletes are role models, for young people in particular, and as a consequence their active endorsement of the work to clean-up the river can be very powerful.

"The vast number of athletes that Rowing New Zealand has links with, including many thousands of secondary school students, will be valuable in helping spread the word on an improved health and wellbeing for the Waikato and Waipaa rivers," he says.

Rowing NZ has its headquarters on the Waikato River at Lake Karapiro and athletes have an intimate knowledge of the water with training taking place twice a day.

Waikato River Authority has provided Rowing NZ staff and athletes with a full background briefing on the Authority and its work. Many of the athletes have already expressed a desire to be involved in projects that have a tangible and positive impact on the river.



*Waikato River Authority management recently provided a briefing to Rowing NZ staff and athletes at Lake Karapiro on the Vision & Strategy for the Waikato River.*

## V&S promotion in action

A recent visit and field trip by Ministry for the Environment officials enabled a first hand look at river restoration work being carried out under the guidance of the Vision & Strategy.

The visit by Wellington officials, including Ministry for the Environment's Deputy Secretary for Water Cheryl Barnes, was hosted by the Waikato Regional Council and the Authority.

The Ministry for the Environment group were shown changes that have been made around the Karapiro Stream south of Cambridge through the work of the Ngati Haua Mahi Trust.

The collaborative project which has been supported and funded by the Waikato Regional Council the Authority and the Waipaa District Council. The project has resulted in dramatic improvement to the area from five years ago. Ngati Haua has reported improvement in fish numbers, water clarity and the community's ability to engage with the stream as a result of the planting and restoration work.



*MfE officials were able to see first-hand work carried out by the Ngati Haua Mahi Trust at the Karapiro Stream.*