

# Maunga ki Tai

A newsletter from the  

**Waikato River Authority**

## Authority looking to reach \$50m funding milestone

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY IS APPROACHING ITS 2019 FUNDING ROUND WITH THE PROSPECT OF REACHING A MILESTONE OF \$50 MILLION BEING ALLOCATED TO WATERWAY CLEAN-UP PROJECTS.

Applications for this year's funding open on 1 July and close on 22 August with up to \$6 million earmarked for allocation. In the past eight years of funding the Waikato River Authority has allocated more than \$44 million to 288 clean-up projects.

Authority Co-Chairs Hon John Luxton and Roger Pikia say the Authority's funding is reaching a level where considerable momentum is building on restoration activities. Roger Pikia says the Authority is encouraged by the approaching milestone and what has been achieved so far.

"Of course, there is much more to do in order to restore and protect the

health and wellbeing of the rivers but the range of clean-up projects completed to date gives us a lot of encouragement," he says.

John Luxton says the Restoration Strategy, which was released last year, will again provide strong guidance for applicants wanting to undertake projects and apply for funding.

"The Restoration Strategy provides an overall blueprint for restoration work in the catchment, even to the extent of prioritising individual projects, so we definitely recommend this as a resource for funding applicants," says Mr Luxton.

The Restoration Strategy is available at [www.restorationstrategy.nz](http://www.restorationstrategy.nz)

Funding applications can be made on-line at [www.waikatoriver.org.nz](http://www.waikatoriver.org.nz) where other funding information is also available.



### MESSAGE FROM THE CE

The Authority is on target to achieve the milestone of \$50m committed to restoration projects with \$6m available in this next funding round. The successful award of significant funding dollars across marae, iwi, individual landowners, community groups, NGOs, and private and public organisations has been achieved through the independent status of the Authority. This status enables a fair and contestable funding process. It is the foundation of the Authority and ensures our focus is on the river first and foremost both as a funder and guardian of Te Ture Whaimana. The wisdom of those involved in the Treaty settlement negotiations to ensure our independence will, I believe, be increasingly appreciated as we continue our journey towards realising the Vision & Strategy.

Bob Penter  
 Chief Executive



*The Waikato River is a traditional source of food, and even today, in the middle of Hamilton, mullet can be caught in the river.*

# Winners focus on water

Winners of this year's Waikato River Authority Catchment Award at the Waikato section of Ballance Farm Environment Awards have been improving the environment in difficult terrain.

Malcolm and Sally Lee by the Mangataru Stream which was fenced and planted in 2017.



The farm, in hill country towards the coast, west of Huntly, is a partnership between Sally and Malcolm Lee with Kevin Burke. The farming operation is 470 hectares and contains the headwaters to the Mangataru Stream, which eventually runs to Lake Whangape.

In winning the Catchment Award, the farming partnership has undertaken extra fencing to create riparian plantings and to create wetlands to help retain sediment loss.

The farm has planted more than 2000 trees in five years, helping safeguard the 17 kilometres of waterways on the property.

The sheep and beef farming partnership has a holistic approach.

"Being environmentally sustainable is more than just planting a tree, the whole farm plan, everything you do has an effect on the environment," says Malcolm Lee.

A major emphasis has been the farm's impact on water quality.

"When water leaves our place, we've done the best we can," says Sally Lee.

Waikato River Authority Board Member Alan Livingston presented the Catchment Award to the Lees and Kevin Burke.



## Putting the record straight

The Waikato River Authority had the chance to put the record straight last month following media coverage of a claim that 99 per cent of environmental restoration in and around Hamilton was carried out by old white privileged males.

The claim, published on Stuff, is in contrast to the Authority's funding figures as the largest funder of environmental projects in the region.

Waikato River Authority Chief Executive, Bob Penter, said he was "gobsmacked" at the reported claim given that of the \$44 million distributed by the Authority to environmental projects, a third had gone directly to iwi, and with iwi also involved in many of remaining projects.



## Growing well at Pūniu River Care

Iwi environmental organisation Pūniu River Care is seeing positive outcomes for its people and for conservation following its establishment near Te Awamutu.

The group has been involved in a number of environmental projects in the region following the creation of its own plant nursery.

Pūniu River Care has attracted funding from a number of organisations including the Waikato River Authority.

Chief Executive Shannon Te Huia says having a strong cultural connection to the Pūniu River has been instrumental in the development of an organisation with a strong values base.

Pūniu River Care has grown to an organisation of 20 staff and in the past four years has produced around 600,000 plants and now at 300,000 per year.

"When we first started we grew 8,000 plants in our spare time, with just a vision and definitely not funded. We didn't understand what nitrogen was, we didn't understand what phosphorus was, we didn't understand these contaminants, but we knew what dirt was because when we would swim in the water we knew it was dirt," he says.

He says it was a simple concept for them that by planting trees they would keep the dirt where it was supposed to be, and not in the water.

Shannan Te Huia says the key for him is increasing the health and wellbeing of the people as well as the river. He says it is not enough just to say that, but to see the results.



SEE VIDEO [www.waikatoriver.org.nz](http://www.waikatoriver.org.nz)

## Waikato River Authority helps connect environmentalists

The Waikato River Authority has been included in a training programme for 50 young environmentalists being run by BLAKE, formerly known as the Sir Peter Blake Trust.

The group, which came together from all around New Zealand, were introduced to the work of the Authority as part of the field trip.

The group visited Lake Rotokauri to look at the ecological enhancement programme which is run by Waikato District Council in partnership with Hamilton City Council and funding from the Waikato River Authority.

The programme of native habitat restoration has been ongoing at the lake for at least the past 10 years. Over \$1 million has been spent in the reserve to improve and maintain access and natural values.

Since 2015 a habitat creation/restoration programme funded by Waikato District Council, Hamilton City Council and the Waikato River Authority has been implemented which includes the installation of floating wetlands, native species planting and mammalian and plant pest control.



BLAKE programme participants visit Lake Rotokauri after background presentations from the Waikato River Authority.

# How-to videos for applicants

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY IS INCREASING ITS VIDEO RESOURCES BY UPDATING AND MAKING A SERIES OF "HOW-TO" VIDEOS TO HELP PEOPLE WHO APPLY FOR FUNDING TO THE AUTHORITY.

The videos will cover getting ready to apply for funding, making an application and guidance around project reporting.



The short videos are available on-line at the WRA website [waikatoriver.org.nz](http://waikatoriver.org.nz) and through the Authority's YouTube channel.



Videographer Thom Burton with Funding Manager Michelle Hodges during recording of the Authority's "how-to" video series.

## Community works together in Fairfield Project

*The Fairfield gully project recently completed a rubbish clearing day in readiness for this season's tree planting with about three cubic metres of rubbish recovered.*

Chair of the Kukuāruhe Education Trust, Vic Arcus, says much of the rubbish had been sitting in the gully for many years but was quickly gathered up in a community working day.

As well as restoring the Fairfield gully, the Fairfield Project has at its heart education, with an education centre planned for the area. The undertaking is also intermeshed with Aratiatia Marae which is at the head of the gully and the gateway for the project.

Another feature of the work that has been carried out is a community garden, which has become a significant point of engagement with the local community. This will be the second year of the garden with Tongan community last year having produced a significant harvest of kumara.



The Kukuāruhe Education Trust has established a number of funding partners along with the Waikato River Authority these include the Bryant Trust, Fairfield Rotary Club and the Hamilton City Council.