

# Maunga ki Tai NEWSLETTER

## Waikato response to climate change

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY IS HOSTING A WORKSHOP TO DISCUSS CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES FOR THE WAIKATO RIVER AND WAIPĀ RIVER CATCHMENTS THIS MONTH.

Authority co-chairs Hon John Luxton and Roger Pikia say the workshop will provide valuable information and feedback for the Authority particularly in relation to the funding of restoration work in the wider catchment.

“When the Authority started its work ten years ago, there wasn’t the same urgency around Climate Change action as there is today. As a consequence, the Vision & Strategy for the river, which was established prior to the Waikato River Authority being formed, is silent on Climate Change,” says Mr Luxton.

Fellow co-chair Roger Pikia says the workshop is an important opportunity to hear from a range of experts and at

the same time apply a Waikato – Waipā lens to the issue of Climate Change.

“There is clearly strong interest by the Waikato River Authority to pursue more purposefully the challenge of Climate Change and further leverage the Vision & Strategy for the wellbeing of future generations,” says Mr Pikia.

Organisations presenting at the workshop include NIWA, Ministry of Primary Industries, and Waikato Regional Council. There will also be speakers on the iwi perspective on Climate Change with part of the day focused on science and Māori knowledge in relation to climate resilience.

### MESSAGE FROM THE CE

Looking back across this year it is perhaps one of the more significant for the Authority in terms of milestones. We presented evidence at the PC1 (Healthy Rivers Plan Change) hearing closely supporting River Iwi submissions, met with various crown agencies, and took every available opportunity to promote the Vision & Strategy in local and central government policy proposals.

We also completed funding for our 9th year reaching \$50 million in direct contributions to restoration initiatives across some 280 projects. The Office of the Auditor-General praised our approach and requested that we share our systems, processes, and experience with other funders (and we have started doing so). Before year end we will hold a Climate Change workshop to begin considering the opportunities to improve Climate Change resilience and adaptation in our long-term restoration efforts.

However, the most important milestone in my view has been our work with River Iwi and the Crown to discuss and develop a collective workplan that mutually supports our shared efforts to realise the Vision & Strategy. One of the River Iwi staff coined the phrase, “unity of purpose” to describe the collective workplan. I can’t think of a better description and look forward to the opportunities next year to develop our collaborative approach across many key areas.

On behalf of the team at the Authority we wish you a safe and relaxing festive season.



Bob Penter  
Chief Executive



The Waikato River Authority Climate Change workshop is being held at the Waikato-Tainui college in Hopuhopu.

# Authority welcomes OAG Report on freshwater funding

The Waikato River Authority has welcomed the release of a report from the Office of the Auditor General in relation to Crown investment in freshwater clean-up as a means of improving the work and value added by all freshwater funders.

The report focuses mainly on the various funds administered by the Ministry for the Environment but also makes detailed comments on the work and processes of the Waikato River Authority.

Waikato River Authority Chief Executive, Bob Penter, says while the report highlights the challenges of measuring the effectiveness of freshwater clean-up funding, it has never-the-less made a number of encouraging observations about the work of the Authority.

"We are pleased the OAG has asked us to share our stories with other funders of freshwater restoration, something we are always delighted to do," says Mr Penter.

The report from the Office of the Auditor General, which has been tabled in Parliament, has reiterated the importance of clean freshwater to New Zealanders and the crucial role it plays in our national image.



## More progress on River Cycle Path

*The Te Awa Cycle Way project, which has been well supported by the Waikato River Authority, passed another milestone recently with work starting on the Cambridge to Hamilton section.*

Associate Transport Minister Julie Anne Genter and Chair of the Te Awa River Ride Trust Simon Perry turned the sod on the first section from Tamahere Drive to Hooker Road, to be built by the Transport Agency. Other sections will be built by Waipa District Council, Waikato District Council and Hamilton City Council, with the entire path complete by mid 2021.



## NEW look website

**The Waikato River Authority has launched an updated and refreshed website.**

The site at [www.waikatoriver.org.nz](http://www.waikatoriver.org.nz) now has a more up-to-date content management system that is specifically designed to allow easier and more compatible browsing on mobile devices.

Authority Communication Advisor, Philip Burton, says more internet searches are now being carried on phones and tablets which means it is essential that the website is mobile friendly.

Further work on the mapping of Waikato River Authority funded projects on the website map will take place in the coming months.



## Reconstructed wetland **is proving its worth**

Back in the day, Gray Baldwin's grandfather drained what was a swampy area on the family farm near Putaruru. Five years ago the area was turned back into a wetland. In a project led by DairyNZ, with funding from the Waikato River Authority, the reconstructed wetland is proving its worth.



*Gray Baldwin says the new wetland has been a scientific and environmental success.*

The wetland captures runoff from 45 hectares of surrounding farmland and the race. DairyNZ and NIWA scientists have found that over 12 months, the wetland removed 45 percent of the nitrogen, 77 percent of the phosphorus, 80 percent of sediment and 88 percent of E. coli.

The project has also seen an increase in the biodiversity to the area of the farm where the wetland is located.

Gray Baldwin says there has been a lot of interest in the wetland from news media and agricultural industry organisations. He says he's delighted with what's been achieved and for the project to be a showcase for others.

## VIDEO STORIES

**The Waikato River Authority has embarked on a project to tell the stories of some of its funded projects.**

These videos will be online through the WRA website under Project Stories.

The latest video is about the Kukatāruhe Gully restoration. The Kukatāruhe Gully, located in the Hamilton suburb of Fairfield, is strongly supported by the Authority. The project to restore the gully and the Kukatāruhe Stream has seen strong collaboration between the nearby community, local hapu Ngati Wairere and local schools especially Fairfield College. The project also aims to create an environmental education centre in the longer term.

The gully is culturally important to local iwi and is ecologically significant as the only known place where the giant kokopu has been observed spawning.



## Waikato River Authority **Annual General Meeting**

Notice is given that the Annual General Meeting of the Waikato River Authority is to be held on:

**Date/Time:** Wednesday 11 December 2019  
at 3.00pm

**Location:** KPMG Offices, 85 Alexandra  
Street, Hamilton

The Waikato River Authority is a co-governance body established between the Crown and Waikato River iwi to restore and protect the Waikato River and Waipā River.

# Record co-funding for river *clean-up projects*

***The level of financial collaboration on projects to clean-up the Waikato River and its catchment has reached a new high this year.***

The Waikato River Authority has announced it will be funding 33 projects with \$5.8 million of funding, however this year the total value of these projects is over \$25 million, meaning an unprecedented co-funding ratio of more than three dollars to every one dollar funding by the Authority.

Applications for the funding saw 62 requests seeking nearly \$13 million. The funding round is also notable for the strong showing in iwi and marae projects which represent over half the successful projects.

Waikato River Authority Co-Chairs, Hon John Luxton and Roger Pikia say the willingness of groups, individuals and organisations to get behind projects with additional and significant funding is an excellent outcome.

"The Waikato River Authority has been working towards achieving a higher level of co-funding for projects and so it is heartening to see it at the level it is. We've said from the outset that our funds alone will not be enough to achieve the vision for the river," says Mr Luxton.

Successful projects this year include fast tracking of erosion and sediment control work in the Waipā catchment, access improvement to restoration work in the lower Waikato River and the extension of work to restore the mauri of the Mangaonua Stream and tributaries.

This is the 9th year of funding by the Waikato River Authority which has now allocated \$50 million towards 321 restoration projects.

## Annual Report 2018/2019

***The Waikato River Authority has published its 2018/2019 Annual Report.***

The report has been sent to Parliament and River Iwi. It is available on our website [www.waikatoriver.org.nz](http://www.waikatoriver.org.nz) under Key Documents or a printed copy is available from the Waikato River Authority offices.

