

Advocating for the awa and Te Ture Whaimana

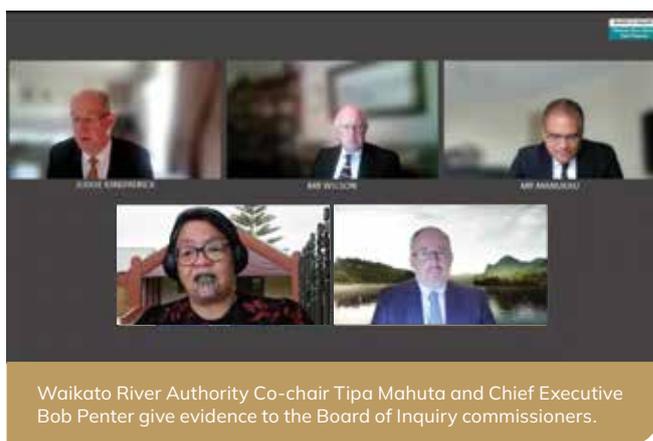
The Waikato River Authority has presented its submission to the Board of Inquiry which was called to consider taking more water for Auckland from the Waikato River.

The Authority is against more water being taken, on the basis that it does not help the health and wellbeing of the awa, and it is inconsistent with Te Ture Whaimana.

The Authority's submission was presented last month by legal counsel Paul Beverley of Buddle Findlay with supporting evidence from Co-Chair Tipa Mahuta and Chief Executive Bob Penter.

The submission and evidence from the Authority advocated strongly for the interests of Te Awa o Waikato and stressed the importance of Te Ture Whaimana in setting the direction for the restoration and protection of the river.

The Board of Inquiry was held on-line because of COVID-19 restrictions.



Auckland's Watercare is seeking consent to take up to 300 million litres of water per day from the Waikato River to reticulate through Auckland city.

The Board of Inquiry finished hearing submissions and evidence on 18 November 2021 and is due to release its decision on 7 January 2022.

Message from the Co-chairs

This calendar year has been an eventful one as we have navigated the wider response to the impacts of COVID-19 while also passing a number of important milestones for the Waikato River Authority.

We are adapting to COVID-19 restrictions which has been challenging for those delivering clean-up projects; we acknowledge their commitment. We would also like to acknowledge the efforts of our health providers, especially Māori providers in our rohe who are leading out vaccination and testing in our river communities.

The role of the Authority in presenting evidence to the Board of Inquiry for Watercare's take of water from the Waikato River was important for the integrity of Te Ture Whaimana and the future protection of the awa. Regardless of the outcome of the inquiry, the Authority was able to make its position clear in opposing extra water being taken from the river.

This past year also marked the delivery of the Authority's second Five Year Report to River Iwi and the Crown. While the report shows a lot has been achieved it also confirms that there is still much to be done.

Before the year ends, the Authority is looking to complete its own strategic plan that provides direction for the next 20 years in helping to achieve the Vision & Strategy.

We are looking forward to 2022 when work begins on the next stage of one of the biggest projects the Authority has undertaken to date, the review of Te Ture Whaimana. We look forward to working with our appointers and our stakeholders in this important mahi.

As we close the year we also remember whanau close to us who have lost loved ones. Our thoughts are especially with the family of John Luxton and we acknowledge his contribution as our Inaugural Crown Co-Chair. Haere rā e te Rangatira me tō ope, waiho kia mātou ngā mahuetanga iho ngā mahi mo te Awa.

Finally we also thank the staff of the Authority who have given so much effort this year. To them and to all our friends and whanau Meri Kirihimete.

**Tipa Mahuta and
Paula Southgate**

**Co-chairs Waikato
River Authority**



● Restoration begins on one of Waikato's most significant streams

One of the most significant streams to flow into the Waikato River has begun a journey of restoration with funding from the Waikato River Authority awarded in 2019.

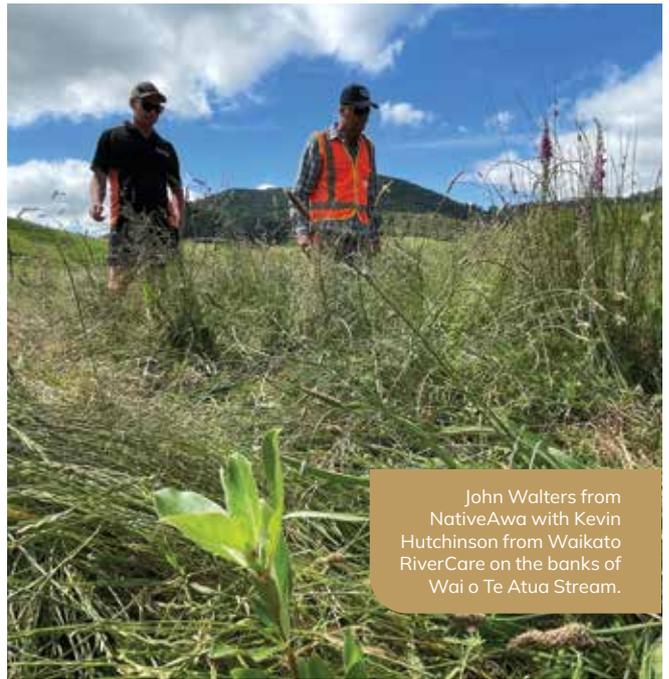
Wai o Te Atua Stream, which flows out of the northern Hakarimata Ranges opposite Taupiri has sacred significance as a place where fallen warriors were bathed prior to burial. The stream is also highly valued ecologically as it is a tributary waterway with no barriers between it and the mouth of the Waikato River, allowing for uninterrupted fish movement.

Waikato RiverCare are managing the project which includes fencing and planting stream banks that are in private and public ownership. Waikato RiverCare through Native Awa planters and other contractors have planted 12-thousand native trees this year and have put up about three kilometres of fencing.

The Waikato River Authority has so far contributed funding of \$133,000, with land owner John Holland and other funders adding another \$200,000 for the first stage of the project.

Waikato RiverCare's Operations Manager Kevin Hutchinson says a start has been made on what will be an intergenerational project.

"The funding from the Waikato River Authority for this project has been visionary, especially in the context of how significant this stream is for local iwi and the wider community. The fact that we are able to be so collaborative in our approach in restoring Wai o Te Atua Stream is very powerful," he says.



John Walters from NativeAwa with Kevin Hutchinson from Waikato RiverCare on the banks of Wai o Te Atua Stream.

"...a start has been made on what will be an intergenerational project."





Funding directed to wetlands and koi carp

The Waikato River Authority has completed its 2021 funding round awarding \$5.3 million to 37 projects.

Featuring in the list of successful projects are three major wetland restoration initiatives and an allocation of funding towards koi carp investigation and management.

While the Waikato River Authority is not the body responsible for managing koi carp in the waterways, it is supporting a project that has the backing of iwi through Te Riu o Waikato, the Department of Conservation, and the Waikato Regional Council in making more progress against koi carp. The three year project is focused on the Lower Waikato River and riverine lakes in the Huntly and Rangiriri area. As well as the removal of koi, the project aims to identify potential sites where barriers could be constructed to reduce their movements. The project is receiving \$488,000 in Authority funding.

Wetland restoration is again a feature of Waikato River Authority funding with three separate projects seeing a total of 200 hectares of wetland habitat restored. Combined these projects received nearly half a million dollars.

A full list of funded projects is available on the Waikato River Authority website www.waikatoriver.org.nz.



John Luxton

It was with much sadness that the Waikato River Authority whānau received the news of Hon John Luxton's death last month.

John was a founding co-chair of the Authority serving in the role for 10 years.

His leadership leaves a lasting legacy in many areas of New Zealand including his role in helping the restoration and protection of the Waikato River. John was presented with a tokotoko by the Authority at his home in Wellington earlier this year.

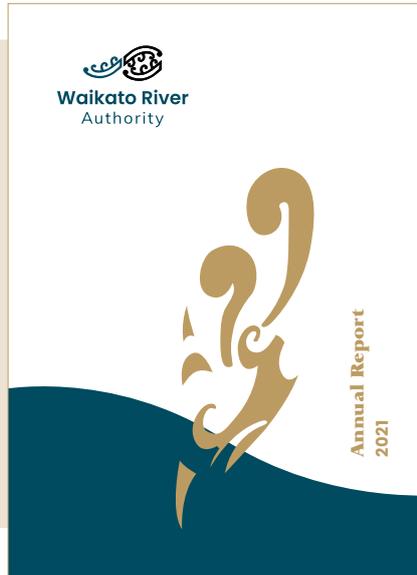
Stories in Brief

Annual Report

The Waikato River Authority's Annual Report for the 2020 – 2021 financial year is now available.

The report is on-line at www.waikatoriver.org.nz/annual-reports/

This year's annual report was published later than usual this year due to the audit process being delayed because of COVID-19 restrictions.



Authority Submissions

The Waikato River Authority continued to make submissions on parliamentary legislation and local government policy relevant to the Waikato River during the last quarter of the calendar year. This included a submission on the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. The Authority supported the purpose of the Bill but sought to protect the interests of Te Awa o Waikato and Te Ture Whaimana in its submission. Read the submission at waikatoriver.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/2021-11-05-Waikato-River-Authority-RM-Enabling-Housing-Supply-Amendment-Bill.pdf

AGM

The Waikato River Authority's Annual General Meeting will be held on-line this year to ensure safety is maintained during COVID-19.

The meeting is to be held on Tuesday 14 December at 3pm. An on-line link to attend the AGM is available on the website under news and notices.

River Awards winner

Pūniu River Care, which has received significant funding from the Waikato River Authority over a number of years, was a winner at this year's national Cawthron New Zealand River Awards. Pūniu River care was a winner in the River Story category.

COVID-19 operations

- The Waikato River Authority is establishing its management of operations through the COVID-19 traffic light system.

The Waikato River Authority offices will only be open to people who have been double vaccinated and are able to show their vaccine pass.

Unite
against
COVID-19

