

# WAIROA RIVER CATCHMENT ACTION PLAN

**OUR RIVER  
OUR RESOURCE  
OUR RESPONSIBILITY**

*Tō tātou Awa, Tō tātou Rauemi, Tō tātou Tūtika*

# CONTENTS

**pg.2**  
**THE WAIROA RIVER CATCHMENT**

**pg.4**  
**VISION AND VALUES**

**pg.5 & 6**  
**ISSUES**

**pg.7**  
**OBJECTIVES**

**pg.8 & 9**  
**PROJECTS**

**pg.10**  
**INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

**pg.11**  
**OPPORTUNITIES**

**pg.12**  
**CONTACT US**



*The need for the management and protection of Wairoa River and its tributaries has been recognised for many years, originally with the development of the Wairoa River Catchment Management Strategy by the Auckland Regional Council in 2002 and subsequent formation of the Wairoa River Landcare in 2010.*

*With the support of the Franklin Local Board, the Wairoa River Steering Group formed in 2016 to oversee the development of the Wairoa River Catchment Action Plan to provide strategic direction to the development and delivery of projects that will bring immediate and long term benefits to the protection and restoration of the Wairoa River and surrounding environments.*

*The Action Plan has been written with reference to the historic Wairoa River Catchment Management Strategy and other reports related to the Wairoa River Catchment, without replicating the comprehensive information contained in those documents.*

*The Steering Group and Wairoa River Landcare have now come together as Friends of Te Wairoa Catchment Inc to re-energise the effort to improve the wellbeing of the Wairoa River catchment.*

*Friends of Te Wairoa Catchment would like to recognise and acknowledge the role of Ngai Tai ki Tamaki as kaitiaki of the Wairoa River.*

*The Action Plan is intended to be an organic and living document, with projects being developed and delivered in response to available resources, motivation and energy within the catchment from landowners or stakeholders, and/or issues and opportunities that need to be addressed.*



# THE WAIROA RIVER CATCHMENT

The Wairoa River is the second largest river in the Auckland region. Its headwaters are in the Hunua Ranges, where it is impounded to form one of several reservoirs that supplies Auckland's domestic water needs.

The Wairoa River runs through a predominately pastoral catchment with some native forest and scrub in the steeper upper catchment areas. The River is fed by a number of tributaries.

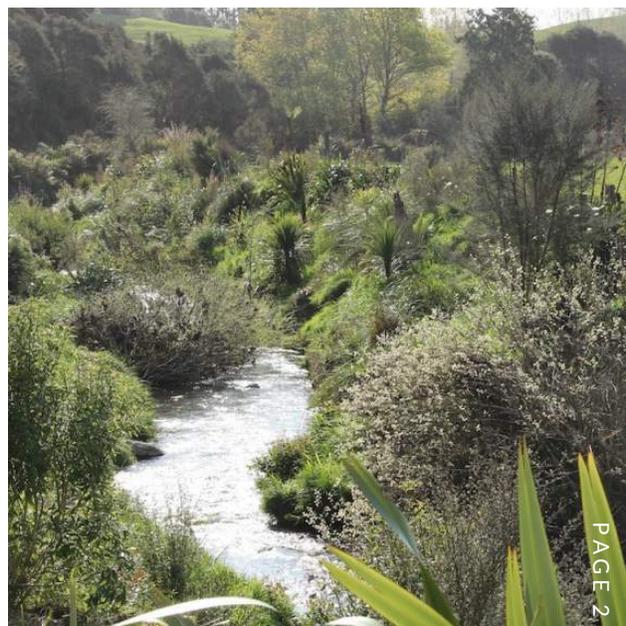
The Wairoa River catchment has been modified by extensive reduction of natural vegetation cover. The establishment of large municipal water supply dams in the catchment has brought about changes in low, mean, and flood flows in the Wairoa River and Cosseys Creek

Similar to other rural areas in Auckland, the Wairoa catchment is experiencing a change in landuse, with larger farms being subdivided into smaller lifestyle blocks.

Many landowners are taking positive steps to protect remnant stands of native vegetation, and to replant and fence riparian margins, taking advantage of programmes such as Auckland Council's Trees for Survival programme and Waterway Protection Fund.

The Wairoa catchment and surrounding area are the ancestral lands of Ngai Tai and Ngati Paoa, while Ngati Tamaoho are associated with the headwaters of the Wairoa River.

*Refer to the Wairoa River Catchment Management Strategy 2002 for detailed information regarding the catchment.*



# WAIROA RIVER CATCHMENT



# VISION

**AUCKLAND'S MOST SWIMMABLE RIVER**

# MANDATE

**OUR RIVER; OUR RESOURCE; OUR RESPONSIBILITY  
TŌ TĀTOU AWA, TŌ TĀTOU RAUEMI, TŌ TĀTOU TŪTIKA**

# VALUES

**WE VALUE AND WANT TO PROTECT, EACH IN THEIR  
OWN RIGHT AND IN BALANCE WITH EACH OTHER:**

## **THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE WAIROA RIVER CATCHMENT AND SURROUNDING ECOSYSTEM**

The environmental health of the Wairoa River catchment has been affected by changing land use patterns, removal of native vegetation, proliferation of plant weed species, increased levels of sedimentation and contamination and changes in the flow regime. The causes of the problems are historic and current, and in some cases finding a balanced solution will be complex. All values and uses of the River are intrinsically linked to the health of the catchment.

## **THE VALUES OF MANA WHENUA**

This Action Plan and subsequent development and implementation of projects, recognises and acknowledges that Ngai Tai Ki Tamaki are the kaitiaki of the Wairoa River and as such should be consulted and collaborated with. Additionally the history that the Wairoa River has with both Tangata Whenua and European descendants is recognised. It is important to protect and share this history, to be able to learn from the past and to ensure future generations recognise and respect the values and connection to the river of mana whenua.

## **THE RECREATIONAL USES OF THE WAIROA RIVER**

The Wairoa River catchment has the capacity to be enjoyed by many for recreational pursuits including boating, fishing and walking. By improving public access and navigability of the River the recreational capacity and ability of people to enjoy the River is enhanced. However the impact those activities may have on the environment, the values of mana whenua and property rights needs to be managed. It's important to ensure a meaningful connection between the River, the local community and visitors alike.

## **THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES OF THE WAIROA RIVER**

The Wairoa River catchment provides actual and potential, direct and indirect economic benefits. The realisation of these benefits is interlinked with improving the environmental health of the River and its tributaries.



# ISSUES



## ▲ FLOODING

The impacts of flooding during periods of high flow in the Wairoa River and tributaries are exacerbated due to land clearance and development of the flood plain.



## ▲ DESTABILIZATION OF RIPARIAN ZONE

Destabilization of the riparian zone of the Wairoa River and streams has consequential effects on stream life, water temperature, erosion, and proliferation of weed species.

## ▼ MAURI



The mauri of the Wairoa River has been adversely affected by inappropriate uses of the River, both historically and currently, and lack of regard for mana whenua being the kaitiaki of the River.

## ▼ SEDIMENTATION

The high level of sediment in the Wairoa River and streams affects water quality and also causes problems in the lower reaches and estuary as it settles.



## ▼ PUBLIC ACCESS

Public access to the Wairoa River and its banks has been restricted over time due to proliferation of weed species and private ownership of much of the land adjoining the Wairoa River.



# ISSUES



## ▲ AWARENESS

Many people may not be aware of the problems facing the Wairoa River catchment, or how they can make a positive difference and get involved.



## ▲ WEED SPECIES

Proliferation of weed species (aquatic and land) in the Wairoa catchment is affecting the biodiversity and balance of the natural ecosystem, values of mana whenua and recreational uses of the Wairoa River.



## ▲ FISH PASSAGE

Poorly designed man-made structures such as dams and culverts create barriers to fish passage or migration of fish accessing spawning and rearing habitats.

## ▼ WATER QUALITY

The water quality of the Wairoa River catchment has degraded over time due to many factors such as failing septic tanks, rising levels of sedimentation, contaminants and pollutants, all which affect native aquatic species, the values of mana whenua and the ability of people to enjoy the River. The lack of baseline water quality data is also an issue.



## ▼ PEST ANIMAL SPECIES

Proliferation of animal pest species in the catchment (aquatic and land) is affecting the biodiversity and balance of the natural ecosystem, mana whenua values and recreational uses of the River



## ▼ FUTURE ISSUES

The Wairoa River and catchment will be affected in the future by changing land use, increased pressure on the catchment from housing developments and subdivisions



# OBJECTIVES

- 01** To enhance and maintain the quality of water in the rivers and streams for environmental, mana whenua, recreational and commercial values and uses, as well as meeting National freshwater standards
- 02** To work with mana whenua to develop and implement projects that will restore and protect the mauri of the Wairoa River
- 03** To preserve and protect the natural character of the wetlands, rivers and streams, their margins and the estuarine environment in the Wairoa River Catchment so that there is no further loss or degradation of key indigenous species and habitats
- 04** To encourage soil conservation and to minimise sedimentation
- 05** To increase local knowledge and appreciation of the Wairoa River, its tributaries, wildlife and habitat, mana whenua values and European history
- 06** To increase the number of people involved in projects that protect and restore the Wairoa River Catchment
- 07** To rectify or remove barriers to fish passage in the catchment
- 08** To maintain (where it currently exists) and develop (where appropriate) public access to and along the river and streams of the Wairoa River Catchment
- 09** To actively engage and work with local, regional and national agencies to ensure all future developments meet environmentally sustainable best practice standards

# PROJECTS

*The following project themes deliver on the values and objectives of the Action Plan. Implementation of the projects will be prioritised according to available budget and resources, desires of the community and issues facing the catchment. Full project details are provided as separate project implementation plans*

## CREATING LONG TERM GOVERNANCE

Recruit leaders to form a new visionary organisation to lead the implementation of the Wairoa River Catchment Action Plan

## EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Engaging, educating and inspiring the local community and others to support the Wairoa River Catchment Action Plan.

## TALKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Keeping in contact with big groups such as Auckland Council, Watercare and Department of Conservation to ensure they know about the project and have opportunities to be involved.

## INFORMATION RESOURCES

Development of resources that provide information that is specific to the conditions and land types of the Wairoa River Catchment.

## RIVER ACCESS

Working with council or private landowners to identify opportunities for sections of the Wairoa River to be restored or developed for public access

## CITIZEN SCIENCE

Development of a community water monitoring programme as a way to generate water quality data for the catchment and as an important community engagement tool.

## UNDERSTANDING THE CATCHMENT

Undertaking research projects that will help us understand more about impacts on the River and tributaries.

## WATER QUALITY DATA

Working with Auckland Council's research and evaluation unit (RIMU) and other agencies to ensure relevant and useful water quality data for the catchment is available.

# PROJECTS

## PEST AND WEED CLUSTER PROGRAMME

Support and resources provided to assist neighbours to form groups to tackle weed and pest species as a combined effort

## FISH PASSAGE PROGRAMME

Project to identify fish passage barriers on private and Council land, including prioritisation of barriers that need removing

## PRIVATE LANDOWNERS PROGRAMME

Support, advice and resources provided to aide landowners with riparian planting projects

## COMMUNITY PLANTING EVENTS

Community planting days and events where people can come together to help restore the river.

## WORKING ALONGSIDE MANA WHENUA

Working with mana whenua to identify projects of significance, that both groups can collaborate on to bring to fruition

## SOURCING NATIVE PLANTS

Creating sources of locally grown plants for planting within the catchment.



# INDICATORS OF SUCCESS



## OBJECTIVES 1,3,4

- Number and size (area) of riparian management projects completed each year
- Metres of riparian margin fenced each year
- Water quality indicators

- Indicators agreed with Ngai Tai (tbc)

MAURI

## OBJECTIVE 02



## OBJECTIVE 05

LOCAL  
KNOWLEDGE

- Indicators specific to actual communication campaigns - ie number of people attending workshops

- Number of volunteers attending projects in the catchment

COMMUNITY  
INVOLVEMENT

## OBJECTIVE 06



## OBJECTIVE 07

FISH  
PASSAGE

- Number of fish barriers removed or rectified each year
- Native fish counts/monitoring

- Number of and quality of public access points or routes along the River and tributaries (tbc)
- Community surveys

PUBLIC  
ACCESS

## OBJECTIVE 08



## OBJECTIVE 09

FUTURE  
ISSUES

- Water quality indicators
- Resource consent conditions on future developments

# OPPORTUNITIES

*The restoration of the Wairoa River Catchment will require the involvement of all and making the most of opportunities to work together*



Pest Free Auckland 2050

Collaboration with Neighbouring Landcare groups



Auckland Council Biosecurity programmes



Community Planting programmes

Auckland Council Watershed Management Plans



Motivated property owners

Te Araroa Walkway

NIWA Managing Mud Research project

Million Metres Crowd funding campaign



Hunua Cycle Way



# CONTACT US

## Friends of Te Wairoa Catchment Inc

[www.tewairoa.org.nz](http://www.tewairoa.org.nz)

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### What's in a name?

In the report "ŌTAU A NGĀI TAI CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF CLEVEDON VILLAGE, WAIROA VALLEY", prepared by Nat Green on behalf of Ngāi Tai ki Umupuia Marae & Ngāi Tai Umupuia Te Waka Tōtara Trust (2010), the following explanations are provided:

Ngāi Tai names for the land now known as Clevedon District and Clevedon Village include Te Wairoa, and Ōtau.

Te Wairoa describes both the Wairoa River and its wider surroundings, including the broader Clevedon District.

Te Wairoa means the Wairoa River, its Riverbed, Estuary and outlet at Te Maraetai/Tāmaki Strait (including Whakakaiwhara to the west & Kōherurahi to the east), Wairoa Valley, Upper Wairoa, Lower Wairoa, 'Wairoa South' & 'Clevedon District'.

Thank you to Nat Green for providing the inspiration for our name.

Friends of Te Wairoa Catchment Inc

