

KI UTA KI TAI

HEALTHY
CATCHMENT
HEALTHY
HARBOUR



TĒNĀ KOUTOU!

Ki uta ki tai – mountains to the sea is our new catchphrase as we continue to work with your community on your harbour and catchment plan (waikatoregion.govt.nz/wharekawa-hcmp).

With summer almost over, it's timely to do a stocktake of your backyard and check the health of the environment. Is it as you would like it? What more can we all do to help protect and preserve it?

In this newsletter, you will find information on work that has happened and is happening across the catchment.

Please take the time to read about our activities in your catchment. If you have any questions or comments, get in touch with one of the team. Our contact details are on the back page.

Ngā mihi,
The Coromandel Integrated Catchment Management team

CATCHMENT WORK IN YOUR AREA

The work we do helps to deliver your community's vision of a healthy harbour, and means we can all access, enjoy and connect to our catchment and coastal environment. So, what is happening around the catchment?



The Hill Country Poplar and Willow Pole Planting Programme has seen about 150 poplar poles planted on privately owned land to help with hill country soil conservation.



A harbour scale restoration plan has been produced for the Wharekawa catchment, identifying key habitat areas. The plan builds on work already completed by community groups and the regional council, and identifies new opportunities for restoration to be done in the next five years. The map shows two of the key areas where locals, Ōpoutere School, Waikato Regional Council and Rayonier are working on restoration works to enhance habitat for native flora and fauna.

Saltwater paspalum has been invading the estuaries of the Coromandel, outcompeting native saltmarsh species and covering over the intertidal habitat that many bird, fish and invertebrate species depend on. Waikato Regional Council controlled this weed in parts of Wharekawa Harbour for a number of years. The herbicide Haloxyfop was used, but it was found that repeated applications were needed to bring this weed under control and even then stubborn pockets were left. Currently, we are carrying out a trial to compare a new herbicide, Imazapyr, with Haloxyfop. While this new herbicide has the downside of not being specific to grasses, it has the advantage of even lower impacts on other organisms, including fish and invertebrates. We are trialling Imazapyr in 3m x 3m plots. We hope this new herbicide will be very useful in controlling stubborn pockets of saltwater paspalum and the broad and dense swathes outside our saltmarshes.



Before 2009: Saltwater paspalum covering intertidal habitat.

After 2018: Native species growing back.



The Mānuka/Baumea wetland is a regionally significant wetland that grades into saltmarsh. Banded rail, a species considered to be at risk and declining nationally, are present and breeding successfully in the wetland and adjacent saltmarsh.



View looking up Wahitapu Stream. The saltwater paspalum area is just below the bridge – this is one of the herbicide trial sites.

Work to protect Wharekawa River from erosion is ongoing and has included using rocks and installing groynes. Severe erosion sites were targeted and are now much more stable, with the works holding up well. Three hundred tonnes of rock were imported and put in place last year, and 200 tonnes of rock are currently being installed.



Rocks were placed along this outer corner of Wharekawa River to help prevent erosion.



The rock armouring in place, with followup planting to occur.

Kapara Stream sediment capture underway

A resource consent application is underway for a large-scale project to construct a series of inline sediment traps along the tributaries of Kapara Stream to capture sediment from adjoining forestry land. Construction of the sediment traps is planned to happen this year, and restoration planting to enhance the wetland habitat is scheduled for winter.

RIVER WORKS, STREAM PROTECTION, BUSH, STREAM AND WETLAND RESTORATION

In most cases, the cost of these projects are funded jointly by the council and landowners. If you're interested in carrying out work like this on your property, or to find out how we can assist, please contact the Whitianga area office on 07 866 0172 or freephone 0800 800 401.

ORRA

The Ōpoutere Ratepayers and Residents Association (ORRA) is starting to see the fruits of restoration efforts. Several banded rail chicks and adults have been spotted at the bridge from Waiponga Reserve on to the Ōpoutere spit, and the screech of kākā can be heard. The group regularly look after 140 DOC200 traps, 160 bait stations and 60 A12 good nature traps. Funding from the council's Small Scale Initiatives Fund helps with the purchase of equipment. Voluntary work around controlling the wild ginger has significantly reduced infestations and is stopping this invasive pest from taking over the spit. A grant from the council helped pay for a herbicide to paste on the ginger.



Banded rail with chick spotted at Kapakapa Wetland.



FORESTRY FIELD TRIP

Wharekawa Catchment Care group was among community groups invited to visit Rayonier's Tairua forest. The field trip was jointly organised by Rayonier and the regional council, and gave people the opportunity to go into a pine plantation and ask questions about forestry processes. Rayonier regional manager Andy Warren first led a discussion in the Ōpoutere Hall before giving a guided tour of the forest. The trip ended with lunch beside Wharekawa Harbour.

WHAREKAWA CATCHMENT CARE GROUP

For more than 12 years now, the Wharekawa Catchment Care Group in Ōpoutere has been restoring the estuary, river, tributaries and wetlands to clean up and preserve the harbour for generations to come.

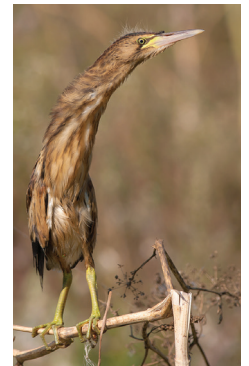
The group has been working hard to fix about 150 years of degradation due to land use activities and their flow-on effects. Willows have been cleared along the length of Wharekawa River by the council, and the group is planting along the waterways. Farmers have also been planting natives. The local school gets involved in planting days, and there has been good support by Rayonier Forestry. Traps have been laid for stoats, rats, weasels and mice. Habitats are being created and restored for fish and birds such as Australasian bittern, banded rail, tūi, kererū, bellbird, pīwakawaka, waxeye, kākā, ruru, shag, oystercatcher and, of course, dotterel.

The Kapakapa Wetland is the latest project being worked on. The land was a mess from felled pines, thousands of natives have been planted to provide a sedimentation buffer between forestry land and the tributary.

As Wharekawa Care Group chairman Allan Bridson says: "If we all sit on our hands and just thought about it, in another 50 years our great grandkids will say 'it's a pity those old sods didn't do something'."

Want to find out more about Wharekawa Catchment Care Group?

Contact Jethro Dyer, principal@opoutereschool.net.nz



PROTECTING THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE HAURAKI COROMANDEL

A new report has been released by Predator Free Hauraki Coromandel Community Trust, providing a snapshot of the scale and scope of community conservation projects across the peninsula.

The report highlights the work of over 57 community conservation groups and 600 volunteers who protect our special biodiversity in an area of almost 30,000 hectares – the size of the Abel Tasman National Park.

The trust was established in October 2017 to support and promote community conservation groups in the Hauraki Coromandel towards the national Predator Free programme.

Jude Hooson, chair of the trust, says the work provides vital insights into the scale of the work currently being undertaken, the needs of the groups, and what it will take to link and scale up current community group conservation effort within the wider aspirations for a predator free Hauraki Coromandel.

If you would like an electronic copy of this report or to get involved, please contact the trust at info@pfhc.nz.

WHAREKAWA HARBOUR AND CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

It's been 10 years since the Wharekawa Harbour and Catchment Management Plan was written, and we continue to use it to guide our decision making when it comes to our works programme for the area.

Ideas from community discussions over a map during the development stage of the plan – such as the region's first saltwater paspalum control programme, mangrove management and extensive river management works to make the Wharekawa River navigable once more – have been realised, and new works are underway!

Want to check out your harbour and catchment plan and other plans for the Coromandel Peninsula?

waikatoregion.govt.nz/hcmp

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

It's important that our region's environmental resources are protected for people now and into the future. We've created Healthy Environments | He Taiao Mauriora, a project that will review and combine the Waikato Regional Coastal Plan and the Waikato Regional Plan.

These plans set out objectives, policies and rules that the regional council will use to manage natural resources, including air, land, fresh water and coastal. We will be speaking to key groups to get feedback about coastal and other issues. The information collected will help guide plan topics for public notification, which is expected to happen in the first part of 2020.

Ultimately, the Waikato Regional Coastal Plan and Waikato Regional Plan will be combined and renamed the Waikato Resource Management Plan. We intend to have a fully approved and operative plan by 2028.

Learn more about the plan

waikatoregion.govt.nz/council/policy-and-plans/plans-under-development/waikato-regional-plan-review/

COROMANDEL ZONE PLAN

The Coromandel Zone Plan guides the work in the peninsula by Waikato Regional Council. Activities revolve around protecting the water, soil, air, geothermal areas and coasts.

The implementation of the zone plan, and its effectiveness, is monitored and reported on every year to the community through the Coromandel Catchment Committee. Further reviews are considered every three years to ensure the plan is in line with the long term plan and that progress is being made towards the goals identified.

View the The Coromandel Zone Plan

waikatoregion.govt.nz/your-catchment-coromandel-zone

SEA CHANGE – TAI TIMU TAI PARI

New Zealand's first marine spatial plan aims to secure and restore a healthy, productive and sustainable future for the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park and its contributing catchments. It's a non-statutory plan, which proposes actions for agencies to consider in their management of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park. Our harbour and catchment management work supports implementation of Sea Change in the following ways:

- We have undertaken extensive soil conservation risk mapping.
- Our Coromandel Focus Catchment Project identifies actions to minimise erosion and sediment deposition.
- We work with landowners to use best management practices to limit sedimentation.
- We work with forestry companies to ensure compliance with consent conditions during harvesting in the peninsula.
- We're looking to extend our Regional Estuary Monitoring Programme.

seachange.org.nz

OUR LOCAL TEAM, AND WAYS WE CAN HELP

Navigation safety	Moorings, safety on the water, jet ski registrations, concerns about others behaviour on the water.	Stephen Wise Harbourmaster
Catchment management	Restoring a wetland, stream or forest area? Want to reduce erosion, run off and improve water quality? Do you know there is financial assistance and we can draw up a programme of works specifically for you?	Rob Corkill Catchment management officer
Rivers or flooding	Eroding stream, in-stream blockages? Issues with vegetation choking a waterway? Our river staff can help.	James Ferrier-Kerr River management officer
Pest plants	Issues with pest plants? Not sure how to control a pesky weed? Just need some advice?	Benson Lockhart Biosecurity officer (pest plants)

Call 07 866 0172 and ask for:

Stephen Wise
Harbourmaster

Rob Corkill
Catchment management officer

James Ferrier-Kerr
River management officer

Benson Lockhart
Biosecurity officer (pest plants)