



The Peninsula Project

Working together to protect our people, property and environment

Kia mau ki te mauri o te taiao o Hauraki



Waiomu-Pohue flood protection update

Information for Waiomu-Pohue ratepayers and residents



Waiomu Stream

Background

In 2004 the Peninsula Project was established to improve the health of the environment and reduce flood risks on the Coromandel Peninsula.

Although work to address flooding problems has been carried out across the peninsula, Waiomu and other Thames coast communities have been an initial priority.

This newsletter gives you an overview of the stream maintenance works carried out in the Waiomu and Pohue streams over the 2009/10 financial year, and details work we hope to complete this year in relation to the former camping ground. It also provides information on recent rating changes.

Stream maintenance

A maintenance rate has been in place in the Waiomu and Pohue catchments since 2004. This rate enables us to regularly remove sand, gravel, built up silt, plant pests and other obstructions from the stream channel.

Work completed in 2009/10

The following maintenance works were carried out over the last financial year (July 2009-June 2010)

- spraying of unwanted vegetation (pampas and wattle)
- modifications to the gradient control structure immediately above the Pohue Road bridge
- gravel management in the Pohue Stream.

The \$39,000 budget for 2010/11 for Waiomu and Pohue will cover maintenance works, supervision, rate collection, depreciation and overhead costs. Any unused budget will remain in reserve to cover works that may be needed in the event of a significant future flood.

Please note that the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) covers the cost of removing sediment and other material that accumulates under the bridge.

Work proposed for 2010/11

In addition to ongoing stream maintenance works that may arise due to flood deposition, it is proposed that:

- further vegetation control be done in the stream channel and floodplain if required

- gravel near the State Highway bridge will be removed
- subject to agreement with the landowner, the floodplain next to the ford will be cleared of existing piles, which could divert flood flow down Waiomu Valley Road
- further improvements on the Pohue Stream, such as maintenance of rock riprap if needed.

Former campground

Since Environment Waikato and Thames-Coromandel District Council (TCDC) purchased the Waiomu Holiday Park and adjacent house due to the high risk to life that existed there, the following works have been carried out:

- removal of obstructions from the floodplain
- raising of the "higher" ground so that it is safer from flooding for eventual sale
- modifications near the bridge, to maximise the efficiency of flow under this structure
- construction of a floodwall to increase the protection to the flood prone properties north of Waiomu Valley Road.

This summer, it is proposed to remove further surplus material from the floodplain at the upper end of the property. It is hoped this material can be utilised as bulk filling for the Te Puru flood protection stopbanks. This will complete the floodway modifications. As

a part of the long term proposals, a carpark and various amenity developments will be carried out in this area.

It is proposed that the majority of the high ground on which the buildings sit (and including the buildings), be sold this summer to recover the cost of the original purchase.

State highway culvert

NZTA is currently investigating flood related issues in regard to the culvert under the state highway immediately to the north of the bridge. The culvert is currently not large enough to cope with increased water volume in a flood event. Environment Waikato will continue to work with NZTA on this matter.

Dehar's bend

Following the weather bomb in 2002, works at Dehar's Bend have been considered. One option is to line the bend with rock riprap, however, that is extremely expensive. We undertook a different method of gravel management at this site and the results have been encouraging. This area is looking relatively stable at present and it is proposed to leave it in its current state. Its condition will be monitored over time, particularly after a heavy rainfall event.

Building/planning controls

Proposed planning controls under TCDC's Natural Hazard Variation to the district plan to reduce inappropriate development in flood prone areas are due to be finalised this calendar year.

Government funding

In 2004 central government committed funds to support Thames coast communities with flood mitigation measures. Environment Waikato and TCDC received \$1.58 million towards 25 per cent of the cost of any engineering works (such as Waiomu channel protection) and 30 per cent of the cost of any property purchase (such as Waiomu campground).

The original contract was granted an extension this year, making the funding available to 30 June 2011 and providing more time for completion of works. Any part of the grant or interest that has not been used for the project must be returned at that time.

In addition, the Department of Conservation (DOC) was granted a \$4.7 million dollar package to carry out animal pest control on Crown land in the upper catchments of the affected communities.

For more information

If you need more information, please call Environment Waikato's freephone 0800 800 401 and ask for Julie Beaufill or Roger Spooner.

Alternatively, you can write to:
Environment Waikato
Box 4010
Hamilton East
Hamilton 3247

Animal pest control

Over the last five years Environment Waikato and DOC have carried out animal pest control operations between the Kauaeranga Valley and Whangapoua Road near Coromandel town. This work has been extremely successful, resulting in a reduction in possum and goat numbers, more leaves on trees and improved understorey. This is also supported by members of the public reporting increased bird numbers along the Thames coast. The project will now move into a maintenance phase, with operations occurring around every 5 years. Ongoing maintenance is crucial to ensure that pest numbers remain low, supporting stabilisation of the upper catchments and reducing flood effects downstream in smaller rainfall events. The next operation in the Waiomu-Pohue catchment is likely to be in 2014/15.



Rating changes

Last year it became clear the stream maintenance rating system at Waiomu-Pohue was not in complete accordance with Environment Waikato's funding policy which recognises direct and indirect beneficiaries. The rating system was changed as a part of the 2009-2019 Long Term Plan process to bring it into line with that policy. The result was a significant increase in rates in the 2009/10 financial year for properties receiving direct benefit in the Waiomu-Pohue communities. Community feedback was that people did not agree with the resulting rating impacts. It was felt that the change put an unreasonable burden on ratepayers in the direct benefit areas and did not recognise the benefit of the works received by the wider community.

A review was carried out and a proposal to return to the way in which the work was previously funded included in the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan. Overall this was supported and as of 1 July 2010 the entire community will fund the local share (65 per cent of the total cost) of stream maintenance work on a flat capital value rate basis.

It should be noted that the rates charged for this work from 2004 to 2009 were in accordance with information provided to the community during consultation in 2004, and Environment Waikato only collected the funding required to complete the agreed work programme over that time.

Te Puru bridge

NZTA hopes to have largely completed works on the state highway bridge by the end of August 2010. Following completion of the bridge Environment Waikato will commence construction of stopbanks and floodwalls in early 2011. This will see the completion of significant flood protection works on the Thames coast under the Peninsula Project.

The Peninsula Project partners responsible for flood protection are:

