



Wetland inventory and restoration potential



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Wetlands are widespread natural filtering ecosystems. Wetland types range from freshwater bogs, fens, swamps and springs/puna to salt marshes and estuaries. Over the past 100 years wetlands extent has significantly reduced in the Waikato. Wetlands continue to decline in spite of the RMA and regional planning rules.

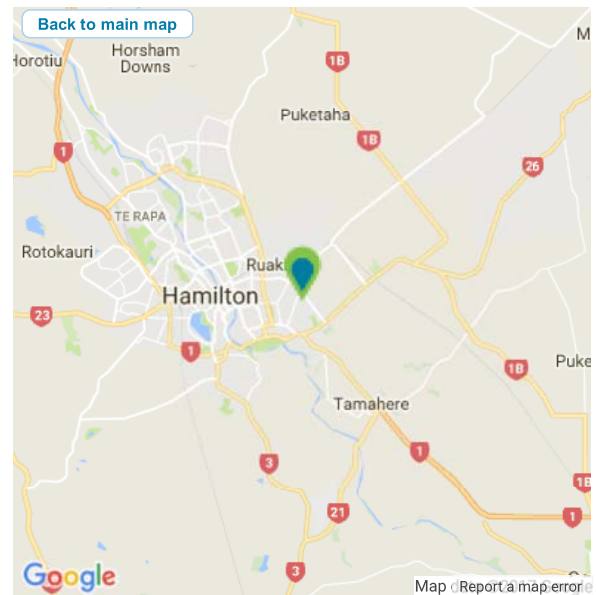
Primary industry, councils, non-governmental organisations, research institutes and community groups are all engaged with the Waikato River Authority (WRA) to restore wetlands. However, there is no strategic inventory of Waikato wetland sites, nor information on restoration potential and actions to enhance wetland extent and functioning for ecosystem health.

This project will develop the first such inventory of wetlands over the entire Waikato region; create a framework that assesses restoration potential; and provide wetland restoration resources.

The principle user of the wetland inventory and framework is the WRA, to prioritise and direct funds to wetlands that are of greater ecological reward, technically achievable and that have certainty of success. WRC and DNZ may use the inventory and framework to assist pastoral land owners and supply farmer-friendly resources on restoration. The action plans by wetland type will be used by councils, industry, landowners and community groups undertaking restoration.

The funding requested and timeframe proposed reflects the challenge of collating diverse datasets and expert knowledge; the novelty of creating and testing a restoration framework; creation of a resource kit; and implementation, monitoring and reporting on the project's capacity to positively influence water quality in the Waikato and Waipa catchments. This is a Waikato River Authority funded project (WRA 14-019).

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