

Lakes in the Waikato and Waipa river catchments

Lakes are one type of water body in the Waikato and Waipa river catchments the plan change will cover. Along with rivers, streams and groundwater, the plan change will reduce the amount of contaminants entering lakes in the catchments.

Types of lakes

There are 62 lakes in the Waikato and Waipa river catchments:

- 35 peat lakes
- 4 dune lakes
- 15 riverine lakes
- 5 volcanic lakes
- 3 geothermal lakes (which are outside the scope of Healthy Rivers: Plan for Change/Wai Ora: He Rautaki Whakapaipai).

The Collaborative Stakeholder Group decided to create freshwater management units for lakes and their catchment areas based on their type (refer to *Freshwater management units* infosheet for more information).

State of lakes

Most lakes in the catchments breach the *National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014* national bottom lines for total nitrogen, total phosphorus, and chlorophyll a, and significant improvement is needed to meet the bottom lines.

E. coli levels in the lakes are not currently monitored. The best water quality can be found in two of the dune lakes, and the worst in the riverine lakes, such as Lake Waikare.

What's being done for lakes

Healthy Rivers: Plan for Change/Wai Ora: He Rautaki Whakapaipai is one of a number of initiatives underway to help to restore and protect lakes.

Rehabilitating the catchment's shallow lakes (lakes less than 10m deep) is likely to be a multi-generational effort.

The *Waikato River Restoration Strategy*, a collaboration between DairyNZ, the Waikato River Authority and Waikato Regional Council, is developing a restoration strategy for the Waikato and Waipa river catchments, with a particular focus on shallow lakes.

Waikato Regional Council has recently developed the *Waikato region shallow lakes management plan* (available at waikatoregion.govt.nz) which sets out high level management actions to address key issues for these lakes, including water quality.