

11 Opuatia catchment

Use these insights to develop a farm environment plan that reduces impacts on fresh water and protects what matters in your catchment. For more details or support, call 0800 800 401 or visit waikatoregion.govt.nz/farm-environment-planning.

Prioritise these actions in your farm plan to improve water quality:

- Manage or retire erosion prone land.
- Stabilise steep land through space-planting.
- Capture contaminants before entering waterways using grass or vegetated buffers.
- Manage livestock around **critical source areas**.

Actions to include in a farm environment plan

Farm menus

Steep and rolling land make up 84 per cent of the Opuatia catchment, with extensive hill country properties consisting of large-scale rural land, lifestyle blocks and sheep and beef breeding stations. The catchment is home to a range of natural features, including the Te Karamu, Moewaka, Poporo and Opuatia streams, and areas of taraire-tawa forest. These features provide recreational opportunities and support community wellbeing.

The Opuatia catchment and surrounding environments hold deep cultural and spiritual significance for Waikato-Tainui, the primary iwi for this region. Waikato-Tainui regards its coastal areas, rivers, lakes and streams as living ancestors whose mauri (life force) and mana (authority) must be actively protected and restored. Hapū and marae act as kaitiaki (guardians) at a local level to preserve and sustain the waterbodies and taonga (treasured) species for future generations.

While the catchment is shaped by past and present land use, it continues to provide important ecological, recreational, community and cultural values. Protecting and enhancing the health of its waterways is therefore essential for both people and the environment.

Taonga (treasured) species found in the Opuatia catchment


Longfin-eel, Tuna


Inanga


Common smelt


Taraire-tawa forest


Swamp mosaic

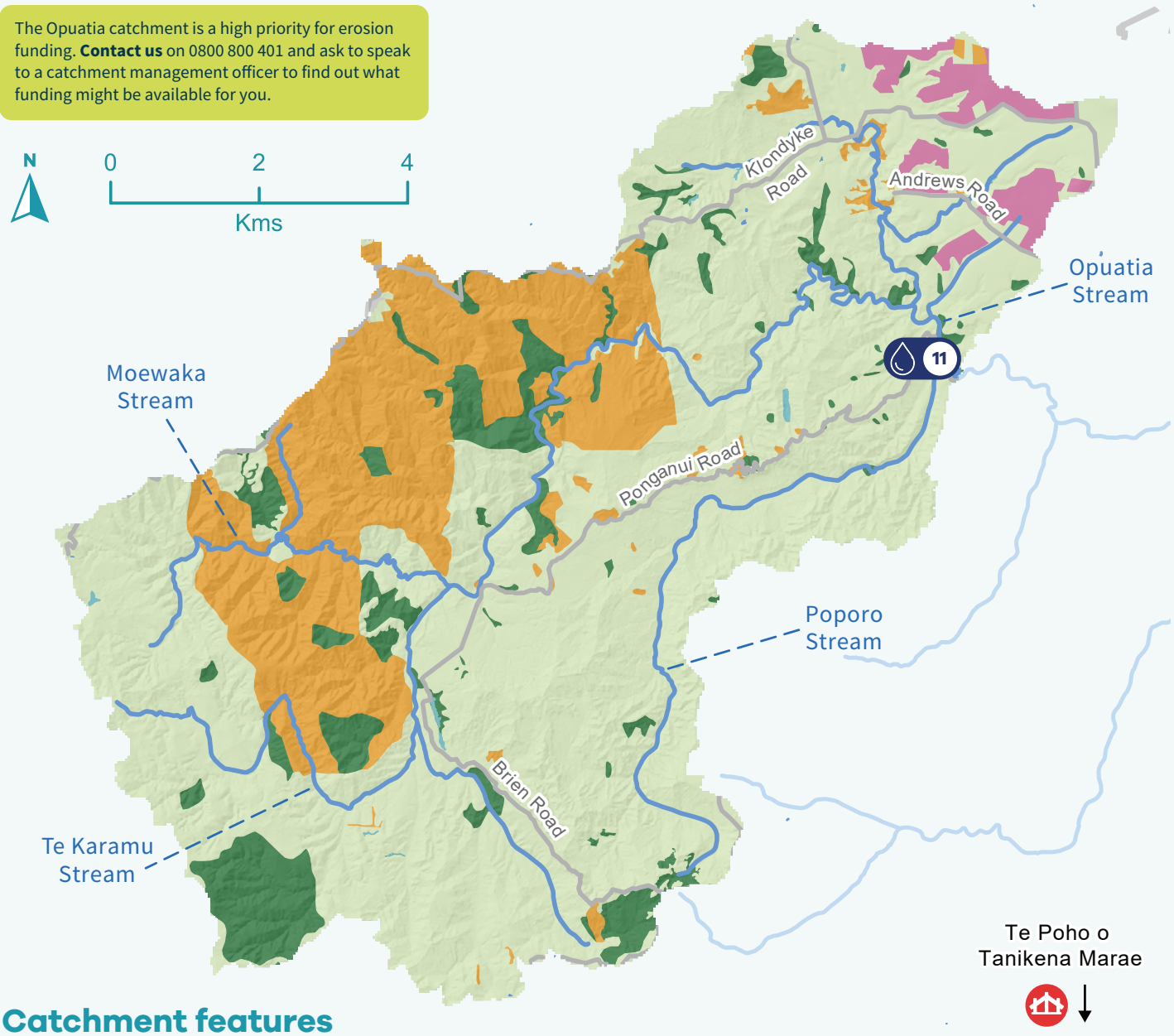
Consider your farm's location in the catchment

The table shows how landform and soil characteristics shape primary risks and contaminant losses specific to the Opuatia catchment.

Landform	Main soils + properties	Primary risks	Primary contaminant loss
Flat to undulating land (0-7 degrees) 16% of catchment	**Granular:** Moderately to well drained clay.	Slight to moderate sheet and rill erosion risk when cultivated. Moderate nitrogen loss risk	Nitrogen Sediment
	Allophanic: Well drained clay.	Slight to moderate sheet and rill erosion risk when cultivated.	
Rolling land (8-20 degrees) 37% of catchment	**Brown:** Imperfectly drained clay.	Moderate risk of sheet, shallow slips and gully erosion, particularly during heavy rainfall events.	Sediment *E.coli*
Steep land (>20 degrees) 47% of catchment	**Brown:** Imperfectly drained clay.	Moderate to severe risk of shallow landslides, particularly during heavy rainfall events. Moderate risk of sheet and gully erosion.	Sediment *E.coli*
	Recent: Imperfectly drained loam.		

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The Opuatia catchment is a high priority for erosion funding. **Contact us** on 0800 800 401 and ask to speak to a catchment management officer to find out what funding might be available for you.



Catchment features

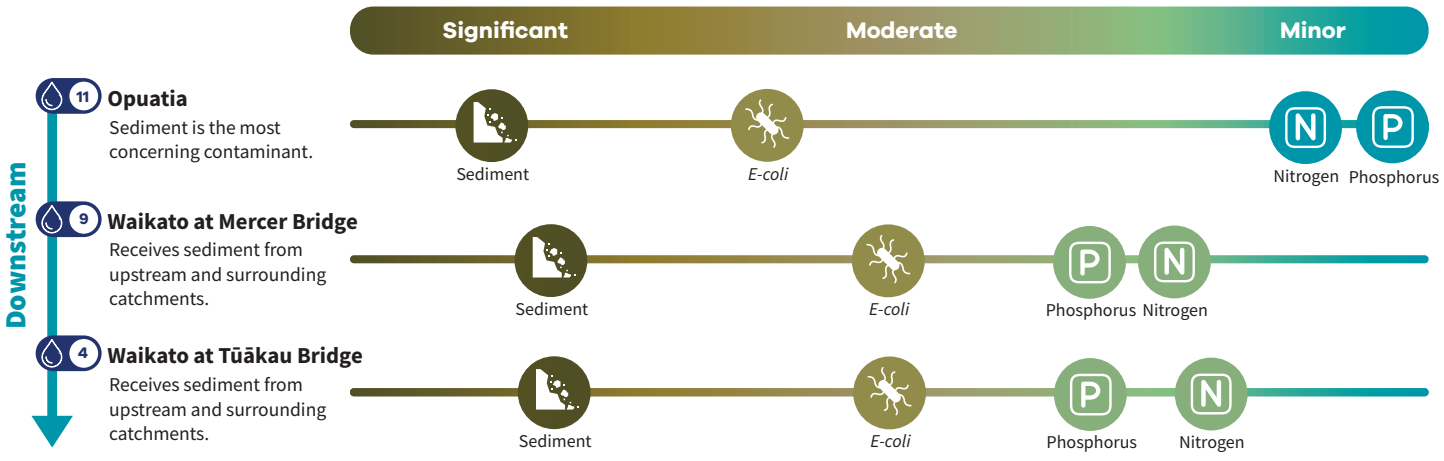
Opuatia catchment: 7067ha

- Exotic forest (20%)
- Native forest (9%)
- Orchard or cropland (3%)
- Pasture (68%)
- Urban areas
- Roads
- Rivers and streams
- Marae
- Water quality monitoring point

The national land cover database (LCDB, version 6) was used to define land cover in this catchment.

Water quality improvement for the four contaminants

This diagram shows the level of collective effort needed to positively impact water quality in the Opuatia catchment and further downstream. Focus on best practices within your farm and catchment, while keeping your downstream neighbours in mind.



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