



KARĀPIRO AND MANGAONUA CATCHMENTS NEWSLETTER

May 2022

Kia ora

If you are receiving this newsletter, you are a landowner in the Karāpiro and Mangaonua catchments (see the map over the page). These two catchments have been identified as being some of the most important for funding activities to improve water quality in the Waikato River catchment. Water quality is big focus for not only Waikato Regional Council but also for landowners living in these catchments, and for iwi.

The amount of funding available for restoration work in these two catchments has increased significantly over the last five years – from about \$140,000 in 2017/18 to

about \$700,000 for the next financial year beginning on 1 July 2022. Some of this funding is coming from your Waikato-Waipā (Watershed) targeted rate, but a significant portion is from other funders, including Waikato River Authority and the Ministry for Primary Industries via One Billion Trees and the Hill Country Erosion Fund.

For landowners, this has translated to an average funding incentive of 65 per cent of the cost of most activities and as much as 90 per cent for planting, compared to 35 per cent in 2017/18. Over the past five years, increased funding has led to a significant

increase in the amount of restoration work being done in the catchments, with twice as many landowners retiring land, fencing and planting. Some of this work features in this newsletter.

Landowners are encouraged to take advantage of these high funding incentives. Please talk to your catchment management officers (see back page for contact details) from between mid-July to November 2022 to be considered for funding.

Hei kona mai,
Central Waikato Zone Team

Catchment community group for Karāpiro catchment



Retired farmer Graham Pinnell is on a mission to get landowners in the Karāpiro catchment motivated and on the same page to achieve better water quality outcomes for the Waikato River.

“It’s about farmers supporting farmers, a collective direction about where we should go, and it should be motivating for those involved, says Graham, ahead of a community workshop to form a catchment group, to be

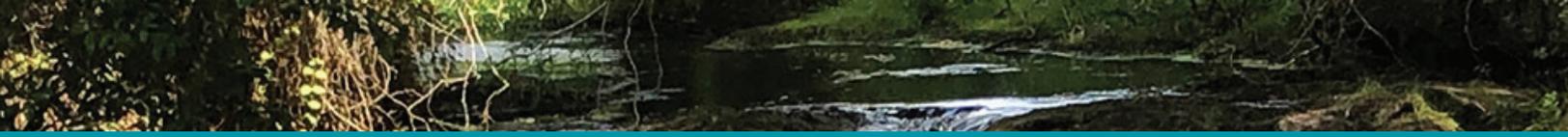
held in Whitehall on 24 May 2022.

Graham, who has been trying to get such a group up and running for a couple of years now, but COVID-19 got in the way, says the meeting will be to gauge enthusiasm for forming the group.

“The group will be about learning from each other, including how to apply the water regulations that are underfoot. The regulations are a moving feast at this stage but that’s no reason for farmers to stop and do nothing. There are things we can keep doing.”

The Karāpiro Stream feeds into the Waikato River at Cambridge and has been identified

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as a priority catchment by Waikato River Authority in its implementation of *Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato – The Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River*, the primary direction-setting document for activities that affect the Waikato River. There is funding support for restoration projects that support *Te Ture Whaimana*, which Graham says the group should be able to tap into with the regional council's help.

“Farmers in recent years have been getting generous financial support from the council as it has managed to get more funding

together to assist with this kind of work.”

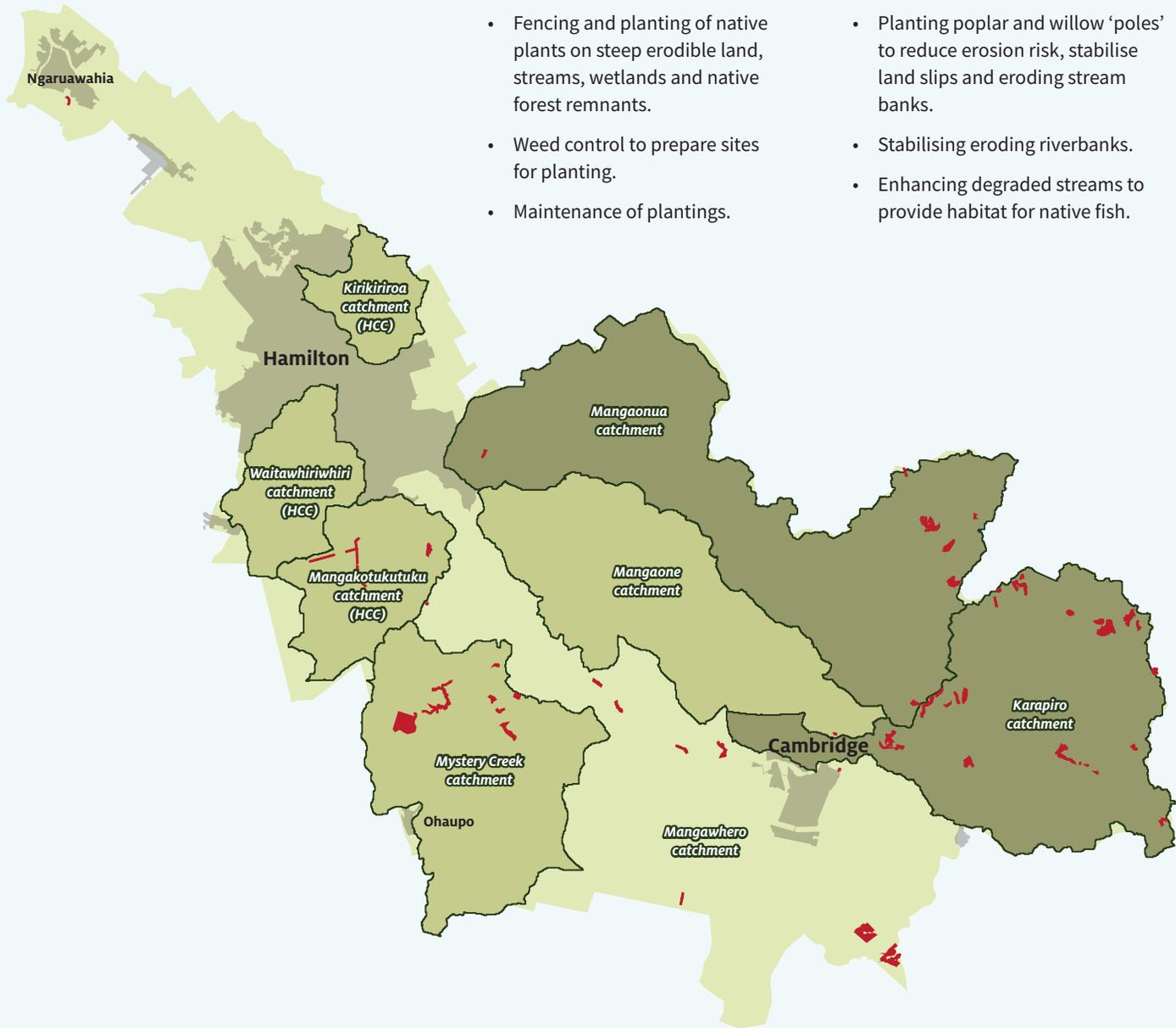
With some funding support by Waikato Regional Council, Graham started riparian planting and fencing along the Karāpiro Stream on his property 25 years ago. He also protected his bush blocks by fencing, infill planting and weed and pest control at his own cost.

“Perhaps it goes back as far as 30 years ago when I was talking to one of the senior managers at the council and they said every time it rained the Karāpiro Stream would cause the Waikato River to become murky in colour and there were complaints by city folk.

“That just made me pretty sensitive to doing what we can to control that. Most of the causes are natural processes, but we can do better if we learn from each other and from the experts to avoid unintended consequences.”

The B+LNZ Catchment Community workshop will be held at Whitehall Settlers Hall, 11 Brunskill Road on 24 May from 5.30pm to 9pm and includes a light meal. Please register by emailing maria.shanks@beeflambnz.com.

Your catchments within the Central Waikato Zone



Funding assistance is available to landowners for the following restoration activities:

- Fencing and planting of native plants on steep erodible land, streams, wetlands and native forest remnants.
- Weed control to prepare sites for planting.
- Maintenance of plantings.
- Planting poplar and willow ‘poles’ to reduce erosion risk, stabilise land slips and eroding stream banks.
- Stabilising eroding riverbanks.
- Enhancing degraded streams to provide habitat for native fish.



Poplar planting helps repair and prevent slips



Poplars were just the ticket for Te Miro landowner Shane Blair to address a slip the size of a rugby field on his steep hill country farm.

Over the past few years, with help from Waikato Regional Council, Shane has been planting out the entire gully affected by the slip with noticeable results.

“It’s stopped moving,” says Shane, who runs sheep and beef on his 387-hectare hill country property with five streams on it.

“Slips cause a hell of a lot of sediment in the creeks down below for years on end and you lose grazing ability.”

Slips on steep pasture slopes also remove the topsoil, making the land less productive, and the sediment carried down a hillside can endanger tracks and other infrastructure.

“I went and talked to the council about it and attended a field day on poplars,” says Shane.

He says poplar pole planting was recommended to provide root reinforcement to the erodible slopes and any overland flow paths.

The council secured \$3.7 million in government funding for landowners in the lower Waikato, central, west coast, Waipā and Coromandel areas to spend on hill country erosion management work from 2019 to 2023.

The council can currently fund the cost of poplar poles by up to 65 per cent.

Shane has also taken advantage of other funding available through Waikato Regional Council and QEII Trust to fence off remnant bush blocks (which include flowering rātā), streams and wetlands, and for riparian planting.

He says the council’s catchment management officer for his area, Melinda Dresser, “is awesome”. “I tell her what I’m doing, ask what I need to do, and she tells me.

“I’ve planted thousands and thousands of trees. I’ve ring fenced three bush blocks and am about to do a fourth. It’s a huge cost. If I didn’t get funding from the council, I probably would only have done half of what I’ve done.

“I do it to set it up for the next generation. I’ve noticed the regeneration of small plants coming through now that land has been fenced from stock and with predator control; a lot of the ferns are coming on again.”

There are also operational benefits.

“With careful management you can help stock movement. And also for animal health: if stock are sick they will go in the bush and hide, so they are easier to find.”

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/2021	2021/22	Totals
 Fencing	7km	17km	16km	18km	24km	82km
 Native plants	18,500	42,400	72,500	72,200	69,500	275,100
 River erosion control structures	2	2	2	4	4	14
 Steep erodible land retired	12ha	27ha	31ha	76ha	67ha	213ha
 Fish habitat enhancement structures	2	3	3	3	2	13
 Willow/poplar poles	700	458	366	1388	945	3857

Funding boosts reputation and restoration

Ngāti Haua Mahi Trust worked out it would take over 20 years to restore the mauri of the Mangaonua and Karāpiro catchments.

“Every year we would put in 30,000 plants. That was our long-term vision,” says general manager Keri Thompson.

That was until the trust, in partnership with Waikato Regional Council, got \$637,500 from Te Uru Rākau’s One Billion Trees fund as part of the Government’s economic recovery response to COVID-19.

“This funding ramps it up and now we can make a massive difference. The funding allows us to grow and supply an extra 100,000 trees over three years and upgrade our nursery to meet this increased demand. Our staff are guaranteed work moving forward, and we’ve been able to double staff numbers from nine to 18.”

Keri says the funding allows the trust to build on its reputation. “Our capacity is strengthened, so we can leverage that and go ‘hey other funders, we have been doing this mahi for a while, let’s get some more native plants in the ground’”

The Mangaonua and Karāpiro catchments are identified as priorities in the *Waikato Waipā*



Restoration Strategy and the *Central Waikato Zone Plan*. They are catchments of historical significance for Ngāti Haua.

“You can see the remnants of pā sites and borrow pits. We used to use the rivers for travel, bathing and gathering kai.

“We want to see more natural habitats, native trees growing and more life thriving on the land in a way that complements the farming.

“We work using mātauranga Māori values, understanding the connection to the land. And our partnership with the regional council means we also learn from their work and experience. This work improves the water quality, that’s a given; it also creates more habitat for the fish life such as tuna, freshwater mussels and yummy watercress ... and the birds come back and will do half of the work for us in the future.”

Ways we can help

Activity	For assistance with	Ask for
Catchment management	Restoring a wetland, stream or forest area? Want to reduce erosion, runoff and improve water quality? We can provide financial assistance and draw up a programme of works specifically for you.	Melinda Dresser Senior Catchment Management Officer Jairus Wano Catchment Management Officer 0800 800 401
Stream erosion	Eroding stream, in-stream blockages? Issues with vegetation choking a waterway? Improving habitat for fish? Our river staff can help.	James Linehan River Management Officer 0800 800 401
Talk to your Waipā-King Country and Ngā Tai ki Uta constituent councillors		Stu Kneebone, 021 943 055 Andrew MacPherson, 021 932 624 Kataraina Hodge, 027 450 8905