

July 2018

WHANGAPOUA: HEALTHY CATCHMENT, HEALTHY HARBOUR

PŪAHA ORA, RIU WAI ORA



TĒNĀ KOUTOU!

It's hard to believe another year has gone by, and in that time there has certainly been a lot of great catchment work carried out by various agencies and community groups. Our newsletters have taken a bit of a hiatus due to staff changes, but we have been busy in the Whangapoua catchment.

The water quality of our streams has been at the front of our activities. This includes an investigation into contamination sources and a lot of in-stream works following severe weather events.

Please take the time to read more about some of our many activities which contribute to the implementation of your harbour and catchment management plan.

If you have any questions or comments, please get in touch with one of the team. Our contact details are on the back page.

Ngā mihi

Hauraki Coromandel Integrated Catchment Management team

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WHANGAPOUA HARBOUR AND CATCHMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

In 2015, following extensive local engagement, the Whangapoua Harbour and Catchment Management Plan was formally signed off by our council. To think it all started off as an idea over a map, discussing with the community the protection of the land-sea interface and coastal vegetation areas. Now the plan is an integral part of our programme – it sets the direction and priorities of our work. Did you know the grazed harbour margin around Whangapoua is now almost totally fenced? Thanks to all those who were involved in helping to achieve this.

Want to refresh yourself with the plans? Check out waikatoregion.govt.nz/hcmp.

OUR NEW SUMMARY DOCUMENT

Want to learn more about the Whangapoua Harbour and Catchment Management Plan but don't have the time to read a few hundred pages? To make this piece of work more accessible, we're producing a snappy summary. Out shortly, you'll be able to find it online (at waikatoregion.govt.nz/hcmp) or request a copy from our Whitianga office. They will also be available at the Whangapoua Store and Lukes Kitchen.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Whangapoua catchment was selected last year as one of two focus catchments in the Coromandel to showcase best practice works in relation to water quality and sediment management. The Coromandel Focus Catchment Project, which also includes the Wharekawa catchment, will look at key methods of minimising erosion and sedimentation in sensitive environments. The two catchments were chosen based on risk of sediment contamination, types of land use and connections with the coast. Also, there is good community engagement in the catchments, along with demonstrable good practices.
- The Owerā Stream is protected from cattle access in its entirety thanks to the awesome efforts of surrounding landowners. Retiring stream banks benefits waterways by removing cattle access and creating a filter between the land and water. It also allows for better grazing management and fertiliser applications.
- A belated congratulations to the Rings Beach Wetland Group for the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network Community Group Award! Great to see this work being recognised. We highly commend the work at Rings Beach – check it out to see the power of community conservation efforts.

BIOSECURITY NEWS

TAONGA TREES UNDER THREAT

Kauri dieback is a soil-borne organism which is threatening the wellbeing of this mighty native tree.

In 2014, the disease was detected in the Coromandel Peninsula in Whangapoua and Hukarahi. A comprehensive aerial survey to check for other possible cases was completed last year, and following soil sampling confirmed a new kauri dieback site near Tairua. Our biosecurity team is working with the landowner and close neighbours to prevent the spread of this disease. While the disease is not widespread, there are lots of areas to be kept disease free to protect our kauri.

Our catchment management staff continue to work with landowners to help protect kauri. This has involved activities such as fencing off stands of kauri, while our biosecurity team helps manage feral animals and promote on-farm biosecurity such as good cleaning of machinery.

Meanwhile, the Department of Conservation has been carrying out ground truthing at priority sites on public conservation land.

WE ALL HAVE A PART TO PLAY

It's important we all play our part protecting kauri.


Some simple things you can do when bush walking are:

- making sure you clean your gear before and after going on a track
- keeping to the tracks
- checking with landowners before accessing private property.

How you can protect kauri on your property:

- Fence stock out of bush areas.
- Ensure contractors clean their gear before coming onto and leaving your property.
- Undertake pest and pig control.
- Keep people out of your bush or off the ground near your kauri.
- The less soil you move on and off your property the better.

 kauridieback.co.nz

 0800 800 401



FOREST HEALTH – YOUR SAFETY

There is nothing quite like the majestic glory of a kauri forest, let alone sharing this experience with our children. We know we have kauri dieback already in our Whangapoua forests, and it's critical to the protection of this taonga that we reduce the risk of further spread. A key way we can do this is by limiting access to our private kauri stands and knowing who and what is coming and going from the forests.

Due to changes to the Health and Safety Act, it is critical that you check first with the property owner before venturing onto private property. It's also just good manners. By doing this you comply with health and safety regulations, as well as reduce the risk of spreading diseases such as kauri dieback and *Mycoplasma bovis*.



THORN IN OUR SIDE

Kuaotunu west continues to be monitored and controlled for evergreen buckthorn. This pest plant can quickly take over stream and forest margins and disturbed forests, changing the structure of native ecosystems. It is a serious threat to coastal areas as it can form thick stands and interfere with native plant regeneration. This pest plant is common in Auckland and on islands in the Hauraki Gulf, but is limited in the Waikato region. It is classified as an eradication pest in our regional rules, which makes it our responsibility to carry out control. Visit our website for identifying features and report sightings to 0800 BIOSEC (0800 246 732).

 waikatoregion.govt.nz/evergreen-buckthorn



BE ON THE LOOKOUT

Myrtle rust has just been found for the first time in the Coromandel Peninsula, on a pōhutukawa in Colville. The Ministry for Primary Industries needs your help to keep an eye out for this disease.

Myrtle rust spores are microscopic and can easily spread across large distances by wind. Its symptoms are harder to detect over winter, but when spring arrives you may start to notice it.

The fungal disease affects plants in the myrtle family, including iconic native plants pōhutukawa, mānuka, rātā, kānuka, swamp maire and ramarama, as well as commercially-grown species such as feijoa, eucalyptus and guava.

Symptoms to look out for on myrtle plants are:

- bright yellow powdery eruptions appearing on the underside of the leaf (young infection)
- bright yellow powdery eruptions on both sides of the leaf (mature infection)
- brown/grey rust pustules (older spores) on older lesions.

Think you've seen the symptoms of myrtle rust? Don't touch it! Call the MPI Exotic Pest and Disease Hotline immediately on 0800 80 99 66.

THANKS, PROJECT CRIMSON

Project Crimson has sponsored pōhutukawa in the peninsula since 2013. But now that myrtle rust is in New Zealand, a decision has been made to not source pōhutukawa from outside the Coromandel as a way to reduce the risk of further incursion. Project Crimson has been a fantastic programme, and everyone's support and enthusiasm in helping plant trees has been greatly appreciated.

DIVING FOR PESTS

Marine pests are species which are not native to New Zealand and are harmful to our natural environment and our aquaculture industries.

Their principle pathway, or means of spread, is via biofouling on vessels. Unfortunately, Auckland is home to many of these marine pests and home to many of the vessels that visit the Coromandel Peninsula over summer.

Last October, a vessel was turned away from Whitianga after being found with Mediterranean fanworm on its hull. Another fanworm-infested vessel that arrived in Whangamata for Beach Hop in March was also turned away.

As part of our marine surveillance programme we hire the Bay of Plenty Regional Council dive team to inspect a number of sites around the Coromandel (including marinas, moorings, structures, common anchoring bays) each year.

Earlier this year, the Whangamata, Tairua and Whitianga marinas were surveyed and found to be free of marine pests. The Tairua moorings were inspected in April and no marine pests were found. Whangamata, Tairua and Whitianga moorings, Slipper Island and Home Bay at Great Mercury Island were also clear.

If you have a vessel on a mooring or in a marina, make sure it is cleaned or antifouled before heading away.



FLOOD AND RIVER WORKS

With the sudden end of summer, it is a timely reminder to check that our streams and waterways are flowing well, active erosion is minimal and they are in generally good health.

When you are out and about on your property, please have a closer look at your streams to see what shape they are in. If you have any concerns, contact Mike Theobald, our river management officer. He will look to see what support we can provide in our upcoming works season to remedy any issues to keep your stream flowing freely.

The following works were carried out in the Whangapoua Catchment area in the past summer:

- In-stream works for Waitekuri and Mapauriki streams, with a focus on the removal of blockages.
- Inspections of the Opitonui River and Oweria Stream for areas of erosion and possible blockages.

This winter we will follow up with erosion planting.

COROMANDEL STREAMS INVESTIGATION

In January and February 2015, we investigated the water quality at several stream mouths throughout the Coromandel Peninsula. We found that some were particularly susceptible to excess nutrients and faecal bacteria washed from the surrounding land, particularly 24-48 hours after heavy rainfall.

A follow up study was carried out by our scientists in January and February last year to identify the source of contamination and whether it was human or ruminant animal derived. We also investigated how the concentration and source of contamination might change during dry and wet weather and during spring and neap tides.

Our focus was on four catchments: Stewart Stream (Opito), Kuaotunu Stream, Taputapuatea Stream (Whitianga) and Pepe Stream (Tairua).

The findings from this investigation have been published and help us to better understand the range and source of contamination at these locations following different weather and tide events. In turn, this is helping us to develop targeted investigations and responses to coastal water quality issues throughout the Waikato region. It may also inform the development of catchment management initiatives to reduce contamination into these streams.

 waikatoregion.govt.nz/tr201725



MARITIME SAFETY NEWS

CROSS LIKE A BOSS

Crossing the Whangapoua bar is one of the highest risk activities in the Waikato! Having the right attitude and knowing what to do before you cross will help to ensure the safety of everyone on board. Good practices when crossing the bar will set a good example and lead others to cross responsibly and safely, too.

There are two key ways you can 'cross a bar like a boss':

- Go to waikatoregion.govt.nz/barcrossing to watch the Tairua bar crossing video, which talks you through the key steps to making a safe crossing.
- Sign up for one of Tairua-Pauanui Coastguard's fantastic bar crossing awareness days. These include an in-classroom session and a trip across the bar. Register your interest by emailing pauanui.coastguard@vodafone.co.nz.

MARINEMATE FOR YOUR SMARTPHONE

Heading out, but not sure where the closest boat ramp is, what the local rules are, what time low tide is, or which VHF channel you should tune into! You can have all the important boating information available in the palm of your hand. MarineMate is a FREE smartphone app that gives you access to information to help you navigate safely on our waters. The app is updated regularly to take account of feedback.



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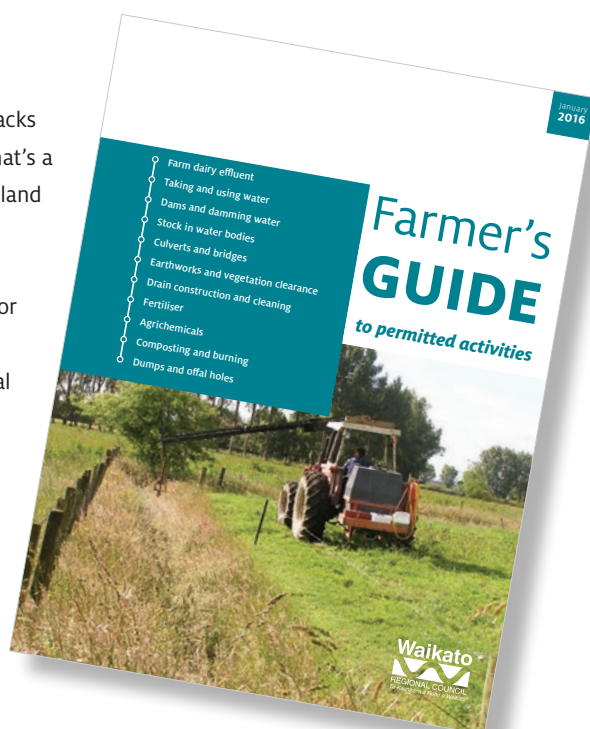




DIGGING IT

A key tool for maintenance of drains and tracks on-farm is the digger. The lines between what's a drain, stream, a seep, water course and wetland are often blurry, particularly where they join the coastal areas. To save you and our environment stress, there's a handy guide for works in the rural space called the Farmer's Guide to Permitted Activities on the regional council's website. We encourage you to check it out and, if you're in any doubt, call our regulatory team in Hamilton.

☎ 0800 800 402.



YOUR LOCAL REGIONAL COUNCIL CONTACTS: PHONE 07 866 0172

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HE TAIAO MAURIORA HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT
HE ŌHANGA PAKARI STRONG ECONOMY
HE HAPORI HIHIRI VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

For more information call
Waikato Regional Council on 0800 800 401
or visit waikatoregion.govt.nz

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REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera ā Rohe o Waikato