

MEMORANDUM

Job 10292

To: Stephen Heath, WDC
From: Hamish Lowe, LEI
Date: 20 November 2018
Subject: Wairoa Catchment Contribution C3

This memo identifies the range of opportunities that have been identified for the Wairoa District Council (WDC) to be involved in advocacy in the Wairoa River Catchment. This direction came from engagement with the community over the last two years and approval of the 'Package' concept that has been presented to the WDC.

Background

The Wairoa wastewater discharge consent is due to expire in May 2019. Wairoa District Council (WDC) staff have been working alongside advisors to develop options for a new discharge system, which has been informed with input from the Wairoa Wastewater Stakeholder Group and feedback received from the community.

It is clear that the condition of the Wairoa River is not great, to the point that its condition caused by upstream sources of contaminants (silt, nutrients, and pathogens) is potentially masking any effects of the treated wastewater discharge that occurs shortly before the Wairoa River reaches the sea. The community would like to see improvements to the management and quality of water in the river.

While removal of treated wastewater from the Wairoa River is desirable from an environmental and cultural perspective, alternatives have technical limitations and are expensive; to the point where they are currently unaffordable for this small rural community. A solution was developed to allow the discharge of treated wastewater, and recognition is also needed of the current state of the river.

Option Development

In its option package for Wairoa River and Wastewater, *A Big Picture Solution (LEI, 2017: B2A1)* LEI set out a range of options for the future for the way Wairoa manages its wastewater. It signalled a long-term goal of removing wastewater discharges from the Wairoa River – and a commitment to improving river health not just related to wastewater – but in a holistic way. This included implementing improvements not only for managing wastewater, but also opportunities for improving catchment water quality.

This report provided a summary of a package that brought together a series of treated wastewater options that could be enhanced over time as finances and technology allow; and at the same time create and contribute awareness of opportunities to improve the health of the Wairoa River catchment upstream of the urban Wairoa locality.



Wairoa Catchment Contribution

This stage of package development clarified the community's desire to not only identify a system(s) for wastewater discharge that is away from the Wairoa River, but also to provide for improvements in the catchment as a whole.

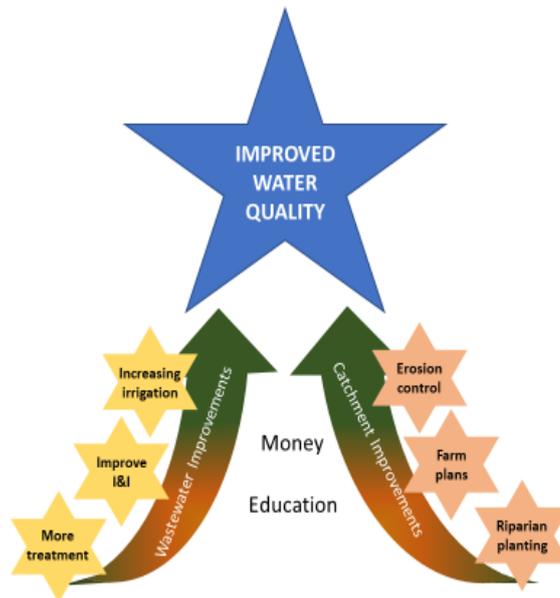


Figure 1: The Package Aspirations

The Package

There are many options and technologies to improve the wastewater system that meet the community's expectations of a sustainable wastewater discharge system and improved river health. But solutions must be practical, manageable, and affordable. After taking time to understand the issues in consultation with a Wastewater Stakeholder Group and the wider community, council was provided with *A Way Forward* (LEI, 2017:B2A2) which proposed a Package intended to signal the first step and a commitment to progress over the next 5, 10, 20 years to take every opportunity to achieve improvements and reduce the volume of wastewater entering the Wairoa River. The Package is not a single solution and covers three areas:

Wastewater Infrastructure Improvements	Wastewater Irrigation	Catchment Advocacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra treatment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filtration - sand/media to remove algae and particulate • Disinfection - Ultra Violet Light Treatment to reduce bugs even further than current treatment • Reticulation upgrades <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewer pipe replacement • Pump station upgrades • Discharge management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceasing illegal connections • Add storage to allow for continuous slower discharge rate • Maintain existing discharge • Make upgrades • Change to 24/7 discharge • Make changes over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigate neighbouring land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent land • Potentially council land including Landfill forestry • Other farmers in area as needed • Provide some storage to reduce summer river discharge • Develop over time based on willingness and funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to driving catchment improvements • WDC to be part of catchment decisions • Work with HBRC and community to make changes • Work with community to create opportunities • Partial funding of catchment administration

Figure 2: The Package Components



Wairoa Catchment Contribution

Cultural aspirations and community desires balance with affordability to produce a sensible, affordable solution in the short term, whilst creating a commitment to continuous improvement that will ultimately see the end to the discharge of treated wastewater into the Wairoa River and the health of the river improved.

In addition to the Wairoa wastewater project, it is proposed that WDC assist the community, including rural landowners, to implement land management changes across the entire Wairoa catchment that will improve the river's water quality and health in the long run. WDC would not fund or necessarily contribute to the wider catchment improvements, but assist with developing the management and administration support for various catchment programmes.

It is clear that the community as a whole would like to see an improvement in river water quality and it is considered appropriate the WDC should be involved at a strategic level and provide advocacy for catchment improvement projects.

Catchment Advocacy

In its catchment Advocacy role, within the first five years of the package, WDC could assist and contribute to the establishment of a **catchment plan**. This will be led by HBRC, with contributions from iwi, other catchment groups and WDC. While physical activities would occur (such as planting), initially it is intended that planning and funding applications will occur over the first 5 years with implementation of works to occur from 5 years onwards.

Within 5 Years	Within 10 years	Within 20 years	Within 30 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WDC to advocate for Wairoa River Catchment initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Catchment projects underway (i.e. riparian planting and retirement of grazing land in priority sub-catchments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Catchment project works have covered 50% of the catchment area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to 70% of the catchment area has had project works established and maintenance of these areas will be ongoing

Figure 3: Catchment Commitments in the Package

Implementation To Date

This summary has been prepared as part of the wider wastewater programme, and in particular resource consenting. However, as noted previously the issues of river health go well beyond the wastewater project. Ensuring activities occur outside the consent programme demonstrate WDC's commitment to the wider issue of river health. So far WDC has assisted with:

1) Eastland Group Wairoa Community Contestable Grants

This year (2018) WDC was asked by Eastland Group to administer the Eastland Group Wairoa Community Contestable Grants. This fund is worth \$150,000 with \$15,000 allocated annually for 10 years. It is for community led projects which sought the following outcomes;

- Support projects that encourage the following principles as they relate to the Wairoa River, PROTECT, RESTORE, HEALTH, WELLBEING;



Wairoa Catchment Contribution

Page 4 of 5

- Support education and community outreach initiatives that focus on the Wairoa River;
- Supporting young people to engage in activities that promote healthy relationships with the Wairoa River; and
- Promoting the relevance and importance of the Wairoa River in the lives of the Wairoa community.

5 projects were selected this year and included the following areas:

- Supporting tree planting activities and nursery establishment;
- Healthy relationships of young people with the Wairoa River through sporting and recreation activities; and
- Wairoa River monitoring using the Mauri Compass.

2) Provision of Council land and a Mayoral Grant for the establishment of a community nursery

WDC provided Council land for the establishment of a community nursery. The Wairoa Community Ngahere (Native Forest) Nursery was established in May 2018 and is a community led initiative that seeks to grow plants and trees for the purposes of supporting Wairoa River Restoration.

Their main goal is to establish a community nursery where native plants can be propagated. The native plants will then be planted strategically along the river bank to help alleviate the pollution and erosion of our waterways. "We are very grateful for the support that The Wairoa District Council have provided. They have given us land to establish our first Shade House, plus funding through the Wairoa District Council Mayoral discretionary Fund, this has enabled us to put security fencing around our nursery property."

Going Forward

The actions required for community engagement and WDC to contribute to the river are expected to evolve over time. To assist with this the LTP made the following allocation for catchment works:

18/19	\$100,000
19/20	\$51,400
20/21	\$52,650
21/22	\$53,950
22/23	\$55,350
23/24	\$56,850
24/25	\$58,450
25/26	\$60,150
26/27	\$61,950
27/28	\$63,900

Specific actions included to date include:

- Riverbank Planting – \$20,000 in current year
- Undertaking to work with HBRC – the WDC has worked with the HBRC and involved them in discussions about the wider catchment. This relationship is expected to continue. A letter from HBRC to this effect is appended.
- Commitment through Resource Consents – The resource consent process is suggesting WDC undertake and prepare a Catchment Enhancement Plan. This is intended to effectively what



Wairoa Catchment Contribution

Page 5 of 5

and how the WDC intend to commit to the wider issue of catchment enhancement. Specifically:

Within 12 months of the commencement date of this consent, the consent holder shall establish a Catchment Enhancement Plan detailing intended actions over the next 3 years towards facilitating the involvement of the Wairoa District Council in activities that improve the quality of freshwater within the wider Wairoa River Catchment. This shall include (but not be limited to):

- a. Progress on and assistance provided to establishing a catchment improvement group;*
- b. Financial and in-kind contributions to individual and collaborative catchment programmes;*
- c. The financial commitment given to various programmes, and that planned;*

The Catchment Enhancement Programme Plan shall include specific programmes (where known), timing of contributions and involvement and financial commitments.

The consent holder shall undertake the planned works as set out in the Catchment Enhancement Plan, within the timeframes specified. The Plan shall be reviewed and updated as part of preparing each System Improvement Plan as required by Condition ? and shall be submitted to Council.

Summary

The health of the Wairoa River is of paramount importance to the Wairoa community. Engagement with key community members, tangata whenua and the community as a whole has highlighted the need for WDC to do more than improve the wastewater system.

A series of steps and commitments are being developed that will require WDC to assist with what is happening in the wider river system, including working with the community and HBRC. Some of these commitments will be reflected in resource consent conditions associated with the wastewater discharge consent.

19/11/2018

Hamish Lowe

Low Environmental Impact

Dear Hamish

OUTLINE OF HBRC's CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY AND INTENT IN THE WAIROA DISTRICT

Hawkes Bay Regional Council (HBRC) has recently been through an organizational restructure and as a result, has formed a new team – Catchment Management. Catchment Management teams are now locally based in Waipawa, Napier and Wairoa. They have been tasked with the role of supporting the transition to more sustainable land use with land holders in the erosion prone areas of the region and in collaboration with local stakeholders and the community, develop non-statutory Catchment Management Plans that identify and articulate the communities aspirations, values, critical assets and approach to addressing the challenges within our rivers, wetlands, catchment landscapes and coast.

There is currently significant momentum around the need and desire to undertake this Catchment Management planning process sooner rather than later in Wairoa and for the community to be intimately involved in the planning process. On the back of –

- Work undertaken by WDC, local stakeholders and consultants in the development of the wastewater treatment plan.
- Projects and proposals to enhance the riparian margins of the river through the town to the mouth.
- The Waihi Dam incident
- Breaches in the Wairoa awa's swimmability status last summer
- Localized river bank erosion impacts on urupa and other cultural assets.
- Forestry slash issues.

To this end HBRC, WDC and other local stakeholders including representatives from Tatau Tatau, Wairoa Taiwhenua, The Wairoa Waikaremoana Trust Board, met on 4th October 2018 to discuss the progression of the Catchment Management Plan for the Catchment.

Wairoa District Council have been very supportive of the kaupapa and representatives from the 2 Councils have met on several occasions to discuss working together on the Catchment Planning process. While it is early on in the process – the Catchment team in Wairoa has only been in place for 4 months. There is a strong commitment by both parties to do this collaboratively.

Representatives from HBRC have met with the team developing the strategy for dealing with the Wairoa Wastewater issue on several occasions and acknowledge the work and effort that has gone into this process. We also commend the group for their aspirations and consideration of the wider catchment as part of this kaupapa, with a vision of a whole of catchment approach bringing all the issues and strands of work together to be progressed under a common umbrella.

I look forward to continuing on this journey with the community and Wairoa District Council.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. Heath', written in a cursive style.

Nathan Heath
Catchment Manager – Northern HB
Hawkes Bay Regional Council