



2.0 Managing Slime and Algae

The use and protection of the Tukituki River has long been a topic of debate.

Since 2008 Hawke's Bay Regional Council has been working on a range of plans and actions in the catchment to provide positive environmental, social, cultural and economic outcomes for the region, now and into the future.

A combination of water storage and higher minimum flows set by HBRC will release the potential for the Lower Tukituki River to be returned to more natural flows in summer, especially if current irrigators can be moved to storage.

A significant amount of work has gone into a wide range of investigations assessing the possibility of large-scale water storage in the Ruataniwha basin.

The Ruataniwha Water Storage Scheme (RWS), coupled with the Proposed Tukituki Plan Change provisions aims to improve water security for farmers, unlock economic potential for Hawke's Bay and improve water quality and quantity in the Tukituki River.

Less slime and algae caused by Phosphorus

The Tukituki River is different to others around the country because phosphorus is the main cause of the slime and algae seen in the river.

Our research has shown if the amount of phosphorus in the river is reduced, it will limit the ability for slime and algae to grow. This will give us a more attractive river for swimming, fishing and other recreational activities.

We could manage nitrogen to reduce algae and slime, but it would be more costly and take a lot longer.

Other factors causing the slime and algae include the amount of light reaching the streambed, what the bed of the river is like, and the frequency of floods in the river.

Ways to reduce phosphorus in the river:

Stock exclusion rule

- Keeping stock out of the water. New stock exclusion rules will reduce the amount of sediment, bacteria and pathogens entering the water.
- Fonterra also requires stock exclusion from waterways as part of its milk supply agreements

Waipukurau and Waipawa oxidation pond discharges

- A significant reduction in in-river phosphorus will be achieved when these discharges meet the requirements of the current consent, by September 2014.

Farm management plans

- Environmental Farm Plans will be required for all farmers that are signed up to the RWS. This will help farmers to identify and minimise areas of risk for their farm and farming system.
- Any other farmers who intensify farm use will also require farm management plans.

Targetting hot spots

- Through working with farmers and the community in hotspot catchments to identify sources of phosphorus and finding ways to deal with it. HBRC will also be focusing financial incentives in these areas.



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