

## Draft Catchment Management Strategy Update

A draft Catchment Management Strategy will be published late in October.

Copies will be sent to all landowners with properties over 4ha, and thereby affected by the new Tukituki plan change 6. Copies will also be available on request to all Papanui Catchment residents.

The draft was developed by HBRC in collaboration with a landowner focus group and local taiwhenua. The aim of the strategy is to guide catchment wide programmes for improving water quality through an integrated, non-regulatory approach.

The Papanui has by far the highest dissolved reactive phosphorus (DRP) load of any Tukituki sub-catchment. At any one time, it can be contributing up to 40% of the total DRP load in the lower Tukituki River. The stream also has excessive E coli levels, is choked with algae and weed in the summer, and is regarded as having poor biodiversity and recreational values.

The strategy document provides some geographical and historical context before outlining the major water quality issues facing the catchment's waterways. It then outlines a course of action for dealing with these over time. Understanding the cause of water quality issues, and agreeing on a course of action, will underpin a successful non-regulatory approach. For this reason, it is important to get feedback on the strategy from the wider landowner community.

Once the draft strategy has been sent out, we will organise a public meeting in Otane to discuss the strategy and present the findings from two years of water quality monitoring in the Papanui. This is an opportunity to have your say and provide further input into the final draft.

If you have any questions regarding the catchment strategy or its development, please call Warwick Hesketh at the Hawke's Bay Regional Council.

## From the Focus Group

Welcome to the third edition of 'Managing Water Quality in the Papanui Catchment'

A lot has happened since our last newsletter, perhaps most notably the EPA Board of Enquiry releasing their final decision on Plan Change 6.

The end result is significantly different from what was first proposed by the Regional Council over two years ago.

As farmers we've had a few wins, but now face the challenge of interpreting and complying with requirements for stock exclusion, nutrient budgets and farm environment plans.

If you still need to get your head around PC6 I would urge you to visit the Regional Council's website, or contact one of their Land Management staff.

Here in the Papanui our focus needs to remain firmly on phosphorus. Our catchment has the dubious honour of having the highest P load of any that feed into the Tukituki.

As part of a landowner focus group, we've met with HBRC scientists and land management staff to provide input into a draft Papanui Catchment Strategy.

The idea is for this to guide a non-regulatory programme for addressing P loss, rather than the prospect of facing more rules and regulation in the future.

A copy of the draft will soon be sent to all catchment landowners affected by Plan Change 6. We are looking forward to getting some feedback from the wider catchment community.

**Peter Tod**

Focus Group Chairman



## Looking for photos...

The first draft of the Papanui Catchment Strategy is almost complete, but it needs more photos! Have you taken any good shots recently that you'd like to see published? We are looking for photos that feature farming, landscapes, waterways and the general lifestyle in the Papanui Catchment and Otane District. Send any photos to Warwick at [warwick@hbrc.govt.nz](mailto:warwick@hbrc.govt.nz). All photographers will be acknowledged in the strategy.

## Recycled vineyard materials for riparian fencing

One of the questions we've put to our catchment focus group, is "how can we encourage early uptake of stock exclusion in priority waterways for addressing water quality?"

One obvious suggestion is providing financial assistance for priority fencing or supplying low cost fencing materials.

We have been asked by a representative of Sustainable Wine Growing New Zealand to assess the potential demand for recycled vineyard materials. Every year thousands of posts are removed or broken during redevelopment or harvest. Disposing of tanalised timber is a headache for many vineyard owners, despite the fact that many damaged posts are still an ideal length for stock fencing.

Supplying posts and possibly even wire for riparian protection may help the regions winegrowers to reduce their disposal costs while also promoting their 'sustainability' brand.

At this stage, we are looking to trial a register so that interested landowners can be put in touch with vineyard owners that have posts available. If you have waterways to fence and would like your name added to a register for recycled vineyard materials, please give me a call: **Warwick 06 833 8001**.



Recycled vineyard post - a possible option for excluding stock from waterways?

# Pukehou School Riparian Planting Project

Pukehou Primary School has teamed up with the Te Aute Trust farm to retire and plant up a problem section of stream near the school.

The stream which drains hill country on the Te Aute Trust farm passes through a paddock between the Pukehou School and Te Aute College. Cattle have tended to congregate at the bottom of the paddock and, as a result, this section of stream was badly eroded.

The Trust Farm is fencing out major waterways as part of an intensification programme. Because of its location, farm manager Ray Falcon decided to offer this section to Pukehou to use as a riparian restoration/education project.

Pukehou has been an Enviroschool since 2003 with 'education for sustainability' strongly embedded in the school curriculum. The 106 pupil school punches well above its weight.

Pukehou has won a number of national awards for its environmental programmes, including the Landmarks Trust Excellence award sponsored by Genesis Energy.

Principal AJ Eaglestone was keen to take on the new challenge and saw it as an opportunity for students to get involved with a local water quality initiative.

In May, students planted a combination of native grasses, flaxes and shrubs along the retired length of stream. Many of these were grown in the school's own shade-house. In time, these grasses will help to filter out sediment from paddock runoff, while the larger shrubs and trees will eventually shade the stream, reducing weed and algae growth and improving stream habitat values.

The project is going well (despite the attention of some pesky pukekos) and students will be back to do more planting this spring. HBRC's Land Management staff are impressed with what has been achieved so far. "It's a great little project and a



Pukehou School Principal AJ Eaglestone provides a planting demonstration.

good example of what we'd like to see replicated across the catchment", says Warwick Hesketh.

"Reducing phosphorus losses doesn't necessarily mean retiring and planting every meter of stream or waterway. It's more about identifying and targeting 'critical source areas like this where stock congregation or erosion result in sediment loss to waterways".

"It's a great little project and a good example of what we'd like to see replicated across the catchment."



Willing workers: Pukehou students planting their stream.



A more traditional approach: a fyke net set in the Papanui Stream.



Juvenile longfin and shortfin eels.



HBRC environmental scientist Dr Andy Hicks using electric fishing equipment

## Assessing Ecological Health in the Papanui

Earlier this year, HBRC scientists carried out Stream Ecological Valuation (SEV) surveys at 10 different sites on the Papanui and Kaikora Streams.

The survey looked at 16 individual parameters of ecological health, covering aspects of stream morphology, degree of modification and the presence and abundance of freshwater fish and invertebrate species.

Not surprisingly, there was considerable variation between sites. Ecological health tended to be better in the upper Kaikora Stream where there was greater natural variation in the stream and shade from native and exotic trees. Excessive weed growth in open areas was likely contributed by a combination of raised water temperature and lack of shade. However, ecological health was lowest where stock or land use had adversely affected the stream, regardless of its location in the catchment.

Scientists used fyke nets and electric fishing to establish the fish species present and their numbers. They were pleasantly surprised to see eels well represented across most sites. Even the longfin eel, which is in decline nationally, was present in good numbers at six of the sites. However, more sensitive native species including inanga (whitebait) and koura (freshwater crayfish) were only found at two of the sites.

The final SEV report won't be completed until later this year, but the data collected suggests that the catchment's waterways are not as 'dead' as many had suspected. It also implies that big gains in ecological health can be achieved through simple cattle exclusion. Improvement in habitat for more sensitive species can be achieved over time through improved water quality and some strategic riparian planting.

This newsletter is for the benefit rural landowners affected by the Tukituki Plan Change 6, and anyone in the wider Papanui Catchment community with an interest in water quality issues. If you know of anyone who is not getting this newsletter and should be, please let us know. The Papanui Catchment Landowner focus group members are:

- Don Cooper (Homewood Rd)
- Brian Gregory (Tapairu Marae)
- Nick Harker (College Road)
- Maitland Manning CHBDC Councillor (Elsthorpe Rd)
- Roger Maaka (Tamatea Taiwhenua)
- Shane Newman (Te Kura Rd)
- Brent Oliver (Brownrigg Agriculture)
- Hugh Ritchie (Drumpeel Rd)
- Peter Tod (Tod Rd)
- Neil White (Drumpeel Rd)

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