HAWKE'S BAY
REGIONAL COUNCIL
TE KAUNIHERA Ā-ROHE O TE MATAU-A-MĀUI

# Meeting of the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee

**Date:** Wednesday 9 April 2025

**Time:** 11.00am

**Venue:** Council Chamber
Hawke's Bay Regional Council
159 Dalton Street
NAPIER

# Agenda

**HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee**

**Wednesday 09 April 2025**

## Subject: Public Forum

### Reason for report

1. This item provides the means for the Committee to give members of the public the opportunity to address the Committee on matters within its terms of reference (attached).

### Background

2. The Hawke's Bay Regional Council's Standing Orders provide for public forums as follows:

**14. Public Forums**

Public forums are a defined period of time, usually at the start of a meeting, which, at the discretion of a meeting, is put aside for the purpose of public input. Public forums are designed to enable members of the public to bring matters to the attention of the local authority.

In the case of a committee or sub-committee, any issue, idea or matter raised in a public forum must also fall within the terms of reference of that meeting.

Requests must be made to the HBRC Governance Team (06 8359200 or governanceteam@hbrc.govt.nz) at least *48 hours* before the meeting; however, this requirement may be waived by the Chairperson.

**14.1 Time limits**

A period of up to 30 minutes, or such longer time as the meeting may determine, will be available for the public forum at each scheduled Regional Council, Corporate & Strategic Committee, Environment & Integrated Catchments Committee and Regional Transport Committee meeting.

Speakers can speak for up to 5 minutes. No more than two speakers can speak on behalf of an organisation during a public forum. Where the number of speakers presenting in the public forum exceeds 6 in total, the Chairperson has discretion to restrict the speaking time permitted for all presenters.

**14.2 Restrictions**

The Chairperson has the discretion to decline to hear a speaker or to terminate a presentation at any time where:

- a speaker is repeating views presented by an earlier speaker at the same public forum
- the speaker is criticising elected members and/or staff
- the speaker is being repetitious, disrespectful or offensive
- the speaker has previously spoken on the same issue
- the matter is subject to legal proceedings
- the matter is subject to a hearing, including the hearing of submissions where the local authority or committee sits in a quasi-judicial capacity.

**14.3 Questions at public forums**

At the conclusion of the presentation, with the permission of the Chairperson, elected members may ask questions of speakers. Questions are to be confined to obtaining information or

clarification on matters raised by a speaker.

**14.4 No resolutions**

Following the public forum no debate or decisions will be made at the meeting on issues raised during the forum unless related to items already on the agenda.

**Decision-making process**

3. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision-making provisions do not apply.

**Recommendation**

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the *Public Forum speakers' verbal presentations*.

**Authored by:**

**Leeanne Hooper**
**Team Leader Governance**

**Approved by:**

**Desiree Cull**
**Strategy & Governance Manager**

## Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

**HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee**

**Wednesday 09 April 2025**

## Subject: Te Muriwai o te Whanga plan

### Reason for Report

1. This item provides an opportunity for the Mana Ahuriri Trust to present *Te Muriwai o Te Whanga Plan* and seeks a decision to endorse the plan.

### Officers' Recommendation(s)

2. Staff recommend the endorsement of *Te Muriwai o Te Whanga Plan* and support for the ongoing collaboration between Mana Ahuriri Trust and Hawke's Bay Regional Council to give effect to the plan and its implementation.

### Background / Discussion

3. *Te Muriwai o Te Whanga Plan* is a statutory planning document developed under the Ahuriri Hapū Claims Settlement Act 2021. It sets out a vision, values, and framework to restore and enhance the mauri of Te Whanganui-a-Orotu (Ahuriri Estuary).

4. Te Komiti Muriwai o Te Whanga was established under the Ahuriri Hapū Claims Settlement Act 2021 as a permanent statutory committee. Its primary purpose is to promote the protection and enhancement of the environmental, economic, social, spiritual, historical, and cultural values of Te Whanganui ā Orotū. HBRC is represented on te komiti by Chair Hinewai Ormsby.

5. On 14 February 2024 at Waiohiki marae, te Komiti Muriwai o te Whanga formally resolved to receive the plan. Staff has since initiated internal and partnership-focused steps to support its implementation. HBRC staff will provide a high-level update on progress and reaffirm the commitment to working in partnership with Mana Ahuriri Trust to embed the plan in Council planning and operations.

6. Today's presentation by Mana Ahuriri Trust aims to ensure that the Committee gains a comprehensive understanding of the plan, including the obligations and expectations of partnership between Mana Ahuriri and the Regional Council.

7. This presentation is an opportunity for members to engage in discussions around the implementation of the plan and its alignment with Council's environmental and catchment management responsibilities.

### Options Assessment

8. **Option 1** – Endorse and support implementation of *Te Muriwai o Te Whanga Plan* **(recommended)**:

    - **Advantages:** Aligns with Council's environmental and Treaty partnership responsibilities. Builds strong relationships with Mana Ahuriri and provides a framework for collaborative action to improve the health of Te Whanganui-a-Orotu.
    - **Disadvantages:** The plan includes Council's existing activities as well as future-focused activities. The cost and scope of this work is currently unknown. However, Council will have the opportunity to decide on resourcing needs in the future.

9. **Option 2 –** Receive *Te Muriwai o Te Whanga Plan* for information only:

    - **Advantages:** Allows time for further scoping to be completed.

- **Disadvantages:** Inconsistent with Council's obligations under the Settlement Act e.g. for collaboration and support of Te Muriwai o te Whanga. May undermine partnership and trust.

**Strategic Fit**

10. This item contributes to the Strategic Plan 2020-25 goals under the "Healthy Environment" and "Partnerships with Tangata Whenua" visions and approaches (pg5).

11. It aligns with Council's obligations to give effect to Treaty settlements and supports initiatives to protect and enhance the ecological and cultural values of significant natural areas.

**Significance and Engagement Policy Assessment**

12. This matter has **moderate significance** under the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy because:

    12.1. High tangata whenua interest

    12.2. High council strategic alignment

    12.3. Has public interest

    12.4. No immediate large financial commitments

    12.5. No change to council's strategic assets or core services

13. While it does not represent a significant change to service provision, it relates to the implementation of a statutory document and involves tangata whenua as Treaty partners. Ongoing engagement will occur through partnership mechanisms.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

14. Implementation of *Te Muriwai o Te Whanga Plan* will require both staff time and dedicated resourcing over time.

15. While no immediate budget increase is required, further scoping is underway to identify areas where funding may be needed for joint projects, monitoring, or restoration initiatives. Future funding may be sought through Long Term Plan processes or external sources.

**Decision Making Process**

16. Council and its committees are required to make every decision in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Staff have assessed the requirements in relation to this item and have concluded:

    16.1. The decision does not significantly alter service provision or affect a strategic asset, nor is it inconsistent with an existing policy or plan.

    16.2. The use of the special consultative procedure is not prescribed by legislation.

    16.3. The decision has moderate significance under the criteria contained in Council's adopted Significance and Engagement Policy.

    16.4. The persons affected by this decision are **tangata whenua, particularly Mana Ahuriri, and all persons with an interest in the management of Te Whanganui-a-Orotu**.

    16.5. Given the nature and significance of the issue to be considered and decided, and also the persons likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the decisions made, Council can exercise its discretion and make a decision without consulting directly with the wider community.

**Recommendations**

1. That Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and considers *Te Muriwai o Te Whanga Plan* staff report.
2. The Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee recommends that Hawke's Bay Regional Council:

   2.1 Agrees that the decisions to be made are of moderate significance under the criteria contained in Council's adopted Significance and Engagement Policy on the basis that the work and the relationship involved are important however no decision for resourcing is required and Council can exercise its discretion and make decisions on this issue without conferring directly with the community or persons likely to have an interest in the decision.

   2.2 Endorse and support implementation of *Te Muriwai o Te Whanga Plan*.

**Authored by:**

**Jack Smith-Ballingall**
**Māori Partnerships Manager - Central &**
**Internal Relationships**

**Approved by:**

**Te Wairama Munro**
**Te Pou Whakarae**

## Attachment/s

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1**⇨ | Te muriwai o te whanga plan | Under Separate Cover<br>***Online only*** |
| **2**⇨ | HBRC's Te muriwai o te whanga action plan | Under Separate Cover<br>***Online only*** |

**HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee**

**Wednesday 09 April 2025**

## Subject: The source, transport, and fate of sediment into Hawke Bay and the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle

### Reason for report

1. This report is a summary of the results from the hydrodynamic model developed by an HBRC funded PhD student, Ted Conroy, from the University of Waikato.
2. The hydrodynamic model was created to improve the understanding on the origin, transport, and fate of fine sediments in Hawke Bay.
3. The model will also improve our understanding of wind waves, as well as oceanic currents induced by tide and wind, as this data was not available for Hawke's Bay in useful spatial and temporal scales.
4. The ocean model that was developed from the PhD project simulated the period during and after Cyclone Gabrielle. The model was used to investigate the sediment transport into the ocean and the fate of sediments after the cyclone.

### Executive summary

5. As a part of the PhD project, multiple methodologies identified the ocean circulation and sediment transport patterns in Hawke Bay. These methods included the use of satellite remote sensing, the collection of oceanographic data, and the creation of an ocean model for the Hawke's Bay region.
6. An ocean model was developed for the Hawke Bay and surrounding coastal ocean. The model was calibrated and validated against a wide range of collected data, including from HBRC's coastal water quality monitoring buoy (HAWQi). Model outputs emphasized that riverine inputs of freshwater to Hawke Bay are a substantial feature of the general circulation of Hawke Bay.
7. An oceanographic dataset collected offshore of the Tukituki River highlighted the importance of wind on how water from rivers is transported in the coastal ocean in high detail.
8. Satellite remote sensing was used to develop a twenty-year catalog of the ocean surface suspended sediment concentration in Hawke Bay. This dataset revealed that suspended sediment from river plumes can extend up to 6 km from river mouths.
9. The amount of sediment that entered the ocean from Cyclone Gabrielle was modelled to be 20.12 million tons. The distribution and fate of sediment from the Cyclone was shown for periods directly after the cyclone and in the following two months.

### Strategic fit

10. This report contributes to our strategic goal of having community-agreed water quality limits by informing the sediment load in the waterways and delivered to the coast.
11. This work will contribute to the next State of the Environment report, including post cyclone impacts on the coastal marine area.
12. This work will contribute to the development of the Regional Policy Statement and management of the coastal marine area.
13. This work contributes to our understanding of present and future coastal flood and erosion drivers.

14. This work will contribute to our strategic goal of sustainable and climate-resilient services and infrastructure.

15. Coastguard Hawke's Bay will use this work for offshore rescue operations.

**Background**

16. One of the largest threats to coastal marine area is sediment from land both suspended in the water and deposited on the seabed.

17. There is a lack of current information regarding the transport and fate of sediment to the Hawke's Bay Coastal Marine Area. Research into the sediments of Hawke's Bay has been piecemeal and often spatially limited.

18. A limited number of oceanographic studies have been done in Hawke Bay, and the water circulation is poorly documented.

19. The present model can help us understand the amount and dynamics of river sediment deposits along Hawke Bay's coast, and their role in supplying our beaches. The insights on sediment supply and drift that this data provides can be significantly helpful for our coastal erosion and management strategies.

20. The purpose-built hydrodynamic model that has been developed for Hawke Bay allowed us to apply the model to the period of Cyclone Gabrielle.

**Discussion**

21. Satellite remote sensing data showed typical patterns of turbid river plumes and the relationship between suspended sediment concentrations and environmental conditions. Elevated concentrations of suspended sediment in river plumes ranged from 2 to 6 km from the river mouths.

    21.1. It was also observed that wave and wind events remobilize sediment from the seabed to the surface ocean.

22. From oceanographic data collected offshore of the Tukituki River, the response of a river plume to environmental conditions was observed in high detail. It was found that the river plumes responded strongly to wind variability, displaying distinct patterns in acceleration, stratification, and mixing with varying wind orientations. These results detail the oceanographic processes in Hawke Bay that are important for the initial transport of terrestrial substances that enter the coastal ocean.

    22.1. It was found that the relationship between various wind directions and oceanographic conditions in the river plumes differed from larger river systems, which have been more commonly studied, than the rivers found in Hawke's Bay. Large rivers are more affected by the Coriolis force, Earths rotational influence on moving objects. For the size of rivers found in Hawke Bay, the offshore wind is the most significant mechanism for transporting terrestrial material further from the river mouths.

23. The use of an ocean model for Hawke Bay enabled a detailed description of current patterns to be established. These patterns were described for annual, seasonal, and event-based timescales. The model also provided estimations of short-term and long-term sediment deposition in the coastal marine area.

    23.1. The typical circulation pattern in Hawke Bay at the surface was found to show outflow from each headland of the bay and inflow into the middle of the bay. This pattern is most impacted by varying wind and river plume features.

    23.2. From the model, sediment accumulation in Hawke Bay mostly occurred in depths between 20 and 60 m. Near seabed currents from waves acted to resuspend sediment in shallower regions less than 5 m deep.

24. The high-intensity winds and waves during Cyclone Gabrielle drove a strong ocean circulation in Hawke Bay. The peak in river discharge occurred after the peak winds, when the wind speed had lessened and changed directions. The directionality of the river plumes, and the initial sediment deposition to the seabed, was influenced by the wind direction following the cyclone.

    24.1. Following the cyclone, the mass of sediment transported into Hawke Bay deposited in varying depth ranges throughout Hawke Bay was quantified.

    24.2. By the end of April 2023, the mass of sediment from the Cyclone was mostly found in waters shallower than 20 m depth (~60%) but was also distributed throughout deeper waters (~20%) as well as transported outside of Hawke Bay (~20%).

    24.3. The model showed that the suspended sediment concentration at the ocean surface returned to pre-cyclone levels within one week, while the concentrations near the seabed returned to pre-cyclone levels within five weeks.

    24.4. The sediment deposition from the cyclone in the model showed deposits in the range of 125 mm directly offshore of river mouths to a few mm further offshore in depths greater than 40 m deep. These results broadly agree with the deposit thicknesses that were measured from NIWA's post cyclone sediment cores.

    24.5. The modelled deposits from the cyclone are concentrated within the vicinity of each river mouth, and no singular river's deposit footprint encompasses a majority of the seabed within Hawke Bay.

**Next steps**

25. The work presented today, along with all post cyclone monitoring in the coastal marine environment, will feed into the upcoming State of the Environment report and Regional Policy Statement.

26. The model data will be used for Coastal Management including the Westshore Renourishment Programme Review, and potentially for the next steps of the Clifton to Tangoio Coastal Hazards Strategy

**Decision-making considerations**

27. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision-making provisions do not apply.

**Recommendation**

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes *The source, transport, and fate of sediment into Hawke Bay and the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle* staff report.

**Authored by:**

**Ted Conroy**
**Coastal Oceanographer, ECoast**

**Joao Albuquerque**
**Coastal Specialist**

**Becky Shanahan**
**Senior Scientist Marine & Coasts**

**Approved by:**

**Richard Wakelin**
**Acting Group Manager Integrated Catchment Management**

## Attachment/s

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1** ⇨ | Conroy Ted Thesis - The Sediment, River Plume, and Inner Shelf Variability in a Bay with Multiple Fluvial Inputs | Under Separate Cover<br>***Online only*** |

**HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee**

**Wednesday 09 April 2025**

## Subject: Effectiveness of Trees for Landslide mitigation

### Reason for Report

1. HBRC contracted Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research (MWLR) to assess the effectiveness of individual trees in reducing the occurrence of rainfall-induced shallow landslides on farms in the region following the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle.

2. This information will help HBRC communicate to stakeholders how existing trees in pastoral areas affected the number of landslides triggered by the cyclone. It will also assist with targeting future tree planting to those areas on a farm that are most susceptible to landslides and where landslides are most likely to deliver sediment to streams.

3. The research assesses the effectiveness of trees on 50 selected farms in the region for shallow landslide mitigation with the delivery of spatial layers alongside a report. It was completed under the Extreme Weather Recovery Advice Fund for $80,000.

### Executive Summary

4. This research estimates the magnitude of reductions in the number of shallow landslides and the amount of landslide sediment delivered to streams that might have been achieved by the presence of individual trees of any description in pastoral areas during Cyclone Gabrielle.

5. The presence of trees in pastoral areas achieved an estimated median 7% (or 1,865 additional landslides) reduction in landslide numbers across the 50 farms analysed. When expressed as sediment yield, this equated to a median 10% decrease in landslide erosion.

6. The existing tree cover on pastoral land led to an estimated 9% reduction in landslide sediment delivery to streams when summed across all farms. This proportional reduction equates to approximately 16,150 t of sediment.

7. The main driver of the reductions in sediment delivery was tree density in pastoral areas highly susceptible to landslides, where landslide runout was likely to connect with the stream network. Modelling under the treeless baseline scenario showed only 5.7% (9.6 km²) of the total pastoral area on the farms is both highly susceptible to shallow landsliding and has high potential for sediment delivery to the stream network. However, due to the actual tree cover (real scenario), this class is reduced to 4.7% of the total area. The class reduction resulted in the prevention of an additional 1,865 landslides occurring (8.4%), or, when expressed as gross landslide erosion, $0.23 \times 10^6$ t of eroded material.

### Strategic Fit

8. This research links through to the Strategic Plan goals:

   8.1. By 2050, all highly erodible land is under tree cover;

   8.2. By 2050, there will be 50% fewer contaminants from urban and rural environments in receiving waterbodies.

9. It illustrates the success of some mature farm plantings to date.

10. The research links to the report by MWLR on 'Regional Shallow Landslide Connectivity Modelling.

**Background**

11. Cyclone Gabrielle triggered large numbers of shallow landslides that caused widespread damage to land across Hawke's Bay and delivered significant amounts of sediment to downstream receiving environments. HBRC wants to better understand the effectiveness of individual trees in pastoral areas for reducing landslide erosion on farms in the region.

12. The influence of individual trees on farm-scale landslide erosion and sediment loads was modelled for (a) the baseline scenario, whereby existing trees in pastoral areas were removed; and (b) the contemporary tree cover scenario. The analysis used a tree map produced for HBRC by MWLR as part of the HBRC–MWLR LiDAR partnership project (2022–2024) and a landslide inventory for Cyclone Gabrielle from the GNS-led mapping project.

13. The selection of farms for analysis focused on pastoral areas on farms that experienced high rainfall during Cyclone Gabrielle but varied levels of landsliding. The AgriBase data set was used to identify farm boundaries, and the New Zealand Land Cover Database (LCDB v5.0, 2018) was used to retrieve the farm-pasture polygons.

14. An existing statistical model, representing the influence of individual trees on landslide susceptibility, was updated using available data on individual trees and a 2020 LiDAR-derived digital elevation model (DEM) for pastoral areas with landslide scar area data. The landslide area data included scar-mapping data from the March 2022 storm events in northern Hawke's Bay.

15. -MWLR estimated sediment delivery to streams by shallow landslides for the two scenarios. The difference in landslide occurrence between the two scenarios was used to estimate the reduction in landslide erosion and sediment delivery to streams associated with the presence of individual trees on pastoral land.

**Effectiveness of trees on farms**

16. MWLR estimated 20,392 shallow landslides were triggered by Cyclone Gabrielle across the selected farms. The associated erosion was an estimated $2.54 \times 10^6$ tonnes, 7.5% of which reached the stream network. This equates to a median sediment yield of 723 t/km$^2$ on the farms being delivered to streams.

17. Under the scenario of all trees being removed from the pastoral areas, MWLR estimated 22,257 landslides would have been triggered, yielding $2.77 \times 10^6$ tonnes of sediment. Delivery to streams rises to a median 813 t/km$^2$.

18. Across the 50 farms and under the treeless scenario, MWLR found 5.7% of the total pastoral areas is both highly susceptible to shallow landsliding and has high potential for sediment to enter streams. The presence of trees reduces this area to 4.7%.

19. Overall, an estimated 1,865 landslides were prevented by the presence of trees, with a median farm-scale reduction in landslide count of 7%. An estimated 16,150 tonnes of sediment was prevented from reaching the stream network. It leads to a median 10% farm-scale decrease in sediment yield to streams. The latter rises to a 24% decrease in places where the trees are in close proximity to streams and on susceptible slopes.

20. The density of trees influences the reduction in shallow landsliding. On farms that achieved a reduction in sediment yield greater than or equal to 15%, the density ranged from 145-241 trees/km$^2$, with an average of 193 trees/km$^2$. Farms achieving less than 5%, had an average of 85 trees/km$^2$ (32-160 trees/km$^2$).

**Discussion**

21. The work by MWLR shows that planting trees, with reasonable density, can reduce the number of shallow landslides and the sediment yield to streams. The density appears key to improving success and planting vulnerable slopes close to streams is particularly beneficial.

22. A limitation of the work is that only 50 farms in the region were assessed and therefore not all

vulnerable properties were mapped. It is possible to scale up tree effectiveness mapping if there is demand for that work.

**Next Steps**

23. Further reductions in future landslide sediment delivery to streams could be achieved through additional tree planting targeting pasture areas that are highly susceptible and highly likely to produce landslides that connect to streams. These areas have been identified in the farm-scale landslide susceptibility and connectivity maps accompanying the published report.

24. Share information with Catchment Management and catchment groups to illustrate the reductions in sediment loss and delivery to streams of planting trees on erosion-prone areas of farms. Similarly, inform the Land For Life Programme of these learnings to aid in their future planning and modelling.

**Decision Making Process**

25. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision-making provisions do not apply.

**Recommendation**

The Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the *Effectiveness of trees for landslide mitigation* staff report.

**Authored by:**

**Dr Ashton Eaves**
**Senior Scientist - Land**

**Approved by:**

**Richard Wakelin**
**Acting Group Manager Integrated Catchment Management**

## Attachment/s

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1** ⇨ | Report of findings - Assessing the effectiveness of trees for landslide mitigation in Hawke's Bay 2024 | Under Separate Cover ***Online only*** |

**HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee**

**Wednesday 09 April 2025**

## Subject: Ahuriri Regional Park

### Reason for Report

1. This item is to introduce the Ahuriri Regional Park Joint Committee Chair, Deputy Mayor (Napier City Council) Annette Brosnan and accompanied by members of the Joint Committee who will be attending in person to present on the progress of the Ahuriri Regional Park Joint Committee.
2. Attached to this cover report is a Napier City Council report.

### Decision Making Process

3. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision-making provisions do not apply.

### Recommendation

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the *Ahuriri Regional Park* staff report.

### Authored and approved by:

**Chris Dolley**
**Group Manager Asset Management**

## Attachment/s

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1**⇩ | ARP NCC Paper | |
| **2**⇩ | Appendix 1 ARP - Engagement Overview | |
| **3**⇨ | Appendix 2 ARP - Draft Masterplan - March 2025 | Under Separate Cover<br>***Online only*** |

# 1. AHURIRI REGIONAL PARK MASTERPLAN UPDATE

| | |
|---|---|
| *Type of Report:* | Enter Significance of Report |
| *Legal Reference:* | Enter Legal Reference |
| *Document ID:* | 1841998 |
| *Reporting Officer/s & Unit:* | Paulina Wilhelm, Manager City Development |

## 1.1 Purpose of Report

This report seeks to update you on the release of the Ahuriri Regional Park Masterplan before it goes for public consultation.

### a. Officer's Recommendation

The Future Napier Committee:

a. Note the Concept Design of the Ahuriri Regional Park Masterplan for public engagement in April- May.

a. Note the comms and engagement plan attached to the paper.

## 1.2 Background Summary

Te Whanganui-a-Orotū, also known as the Ahuriri Estuary, is a unique wetland area that requires restoration due to years of stormwater discharge, wastewater discharges, and sediment runoff. To address these challenges, the Council aims to work closely with Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC), Mana Ahuriri Trust (MAT), and Te Komiti Muriwai o Te Whanga to develop the Ahuriri Regional Park on the Council-owned land known as Lagoon Farm.

These parties have been working since early 2024 developing options to be included in the Concept Design and now are ready to release the draft for public engagement.

Mana whenua input has been crucial in imbedding the recent adopted Te Muriwai o Te Whanga Plan into the Masterplan.

At the Ahuriri Regional Park Joint Committee meeting held 17 February the Committee endorsed the Concept Design of the Ahuriri Regional Park Masterplan for public engagement.

We are now providing an update for your visibility on this project before it is released out to the public.

## 1.3 Issues

The development of the Concept Design has not been free of challenges. Many considerations have been worked through in the draft and will continue refining the outcomes of this project.

An important consideration is the location of the Ahuriri Regional Park. The Lagoon Farm, where the park will be located, is situated under the airport flight path. This brings challenges with potential bird strike. Avifauna specialists have been contracted to assess and mitigate any potential risks of bird strike.

Another key consideration is the development of the Lagoon Farm Stormwater Diversion project which seeks to store and treat stormwater from the city, current information shows the solution through stormwater wetland ponds which have been integrated into the masterplan document. This project is being developed in parallel with the Ahuriri Regional Park Masterplan and officers are making sure there is adequate integration and alignment between them.

### 1.4 Significance and Engagement

A one-page engagement overview is provided in Attachment 2 outlining the process for engagement. This includes:

- Digital engagement via Facebook, Micro videos and Council website
- Community outreach through the Neighbourly newsletter
- In person, open day at the farm scheduled for Saturday 3rd May
- Targeted engagement via direct letters to stakeholders and community champions.

### 1.5 Implications

#### b. Financial

The costs of this project are covered by operational budgets

#### c. Social & Policy

NA

#### d. Risk

The project manager is keeping a risk register with mitigation measures put in place to address these.

### 1.6 Options

The options available to Council are as follows:

Note the content of the report

Note the content of the engagement plan

### 1.7 Development of Preferred Option

NA

### 1.8 Attachments

Nil

# Engagement Plan Overview

The purpose of this engagement series is to inform the public about the masterplan and gathering valuable feedback. Through this process, we will listen to community aspirations and concerns, acknowledge their perspectives, and clearly communicate how public input will help shape decision-making

## Who

General public

Will also specifically reach out to our Key Stakeholders, Forest and Bird, Waka Kotahi

## Key Messages

Stormwater infrastructure driver

Benefits for improved stormwater management, ecological enhancement and community facility offering for the benefit of Napier and the wider region

Wetlands form key infrastructure as a treatment facility to clean stormwater before entering the estuary

Passive recreation

Future complimentary commercial ti minimise cost to rate base

## Methods

Open day event at the site

Leaning into special interest groups

Neighbourly Newsletter

Urban market stall

Online material including:

- Micro videos (reels)
- Facebook Posts
- Facebook Live
- Napier Council Webpage

## Timeline

**PRIOR**
Website Updated
Micro video creation
SayIt Napier drafted
Media release with agenda

**WEEK 1**
Neighbourhood story
Social drive starts
Feedback opens 16th April

**WEEK 2**
Emmerson St pop-up
Facebook Live

**WEEK 3**
Onsite public day 3rd May
Social drive continues

**WEEK 4**
Final social push
Engagement closes
9th May

**WORKSHOP**
Consider feedback in design with Joint Committee late May

**HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee**

**Wednesday 09 April 2025**

## Subject: Erosion Control Scheme and soil conservation in Hawke's Bay - What's the end game?

### Reason for report

1. This paper addresses questions raised following an Erosion Control Scheme (ECS) update to the EICC in December 2024. These were in relation to the goals, methods, effectiveness and value proposition of the ECS, specifically:
    1.1. Does the ECS have a sediment reduction goal and when will this be achieved?
    1.2. What is meant by 'treatment'?
    1.3. How effective is pole planting and other mitigation?
    1.4. What is the context around waterways protected?
    1.5. What is HBRC's justification for a 30-million-dollar investment in the ECS over ten years?
    1.6. Why are we doing this? Is the programme working, and should we do something else?

### Executive summary

2. The ECS was first implemented in 2018 as part of the Hawke's Bay Afforestation Programme (HBAP). The HBAP has a goal to reduce sediment loss to our region's waterways by 50% through planting one third of the region's most highly eroding land. The current Long-Term-Plan has a more ambitious goal to have all the region's highly erodible land under tree cover by 2050.
3. The Catchment Management team collects data on 'area of land treated' for reporting purposes, with the understanding that measurable water quality outcomes will be realised over a longer timeframe.
4. Soil conservation planting and other interventions are based on well-established research.
5. A $30 million investment in the ECS over ten years recognises that the public/environmental good of soil conservation work is often at a disproportionate cost to landowners. The programme is achieving good uptake, however there is a need for a commercial instrument to enable the level of tree planting advocated for.
6. The ECS is a tool that the HBRC uses to manage erosion and sediment loss alongside other regulatory and non-regulatory methods.
7. Councils land and freshwater science programmes are essential for:
    7.1. Targeting areas for the most effective investment in erosion control
    7.2. Benchmarking and providing context for output-based reporting
    7.3. Monitoring long-term erosion control outcomes

### Strategic fit

8. The ECS and its supporting programmes align with the following HBRC Strategic Plan outcome:

> *"Hawke's Bay farmers and growers are thriving and maximising returns from resilient farming systems through smart, sustainable land use."*

9. It directly supports the strategic goals listed below:

   9.1. *"By 2050, all highly erodible land is under tree cover."*

   9.2. *"By 2030, flood risk is being managed to adapt to foreseeable climate change risks out to 2100."*

**Background**

10. Approximately 252,000 hectares of Hawke's Bay hill country has been identified as being at high risk of erosion. It is estimated that anthropogenic erosion contributes, on average, 3.27 million tonnes of sediment into the region's waterways yearly. That's an average of 136,000 truck and trailer loads of sediment per year.

11. High levels of sediment affects the region's water quality and aquatic habitats, as well as the biodiversity that depends upon them. Erosion on farmland also represents a loss of current and future productivity.

12. The ECS is a loan-funded grant scheme that enables non-commercial tree planting and other erosion control works on highly erodible land in Hawke's Bay. It has an operational budget of $30 million over ten years. This budget primarily funds on-ground erosion control works and leverages co-funding from landowners and other funding partners.

13. As of July 2024, the ECS had engaged with over 500 properties resulting in the direct treatment of 5,075ha of highly erodible land.

**Discussion**

**Does the ECS have a sediment reduction goal and when will this be achieved?**

14. The Hawke's Bay Afforestation Programme (HBAP), which included the ECS and a conceptual 'Right Tree Right Place' programme' was conceived under the Kahuta Accord in 2017.

15. The HBAP had a goal to plant one third of the region's most highly erodible land. This would achieve a 50% reduction in annual average sediment loss to waterways based on SedNet modelling at the time (i.e. a reduction of 25 million tonnes through the planting of 83,000ha). It was envisaged that the two schemes would plant an average of 2000ha per year.

16. The HBRC Long Term Plan 2021 – 2031 goes a step further, stating that "*by 2050 all highly erodible land will be under tree cover*". A high-level aspirational statement that somewhat over-simplifies the issue and solution. However, the intended sediment reduction outcomes would still be achievable through the '*widescale adoption of soil conservation best practice*' on highly erodible land. This will require further targeted effort and investment, informed by robust land and freshwater science programmes.

17. Other factors that will influence erosion control (and sediment reduction) effort:

    17.1. The uptake of land and soil management practices that do not necessarily include planting.

    17.2. Commercially driven land use change (e.g. The Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), production forestry conversion, market accreditation programmes)

    17.3. The voluntary protection and restoration of land for biodiversity (e.g. partnerships with the QEII Trust)

    17.4. Regulatory drivers (e.g. direct controls on land use, requirements to offset emissions/ leaching).

**What is meant by 'under treatment'?**

18. Area 'under treatment' refers to the direct footprint of an erosion control project (e.g. the total area planted/retired from grazing). For reporting purposes, an area is considered 'under

treatment' when a project has been completed to an acceptable standard for grant payment to be released.

19. HBRC and other scheme sponsors (i.e. the Hill Country Erosion Fund) require annual 'output-based' reporting, accepting that water quality outcomes will be measured over a much longer timeframe.
20. Area under treatment does not include land treated prior to, or independent of the ECS. Output reporting does not capture social and behavioral changes that result in more sustainable land and soil management.
21. There is limited geo-spatial recording of land treated prior to, or independent of the ECS. We rely on our land science programmes to capture land use/cover changes over time through remote sensing and aerial imagery (i.e. for benchmarking and targeting works).

**How effective is pole planting and other mitigation?**

22. Research shows that effective erosion control planting can reduce erosion by up to 70% for space planted poplar/willow, and up to 90% for closed canopy forest (Basher, L. 2016).
23. For much of our highly erodible land (i.e. land losing more than 1,000kg of sediment per hectare per year), sediment loss could be reduced by between 700 – 900kg per ha /yr.
24. Commonly used performance values for other soil conservation interventions include (Phillips C, Basher L, Spiekermann R, 2020):
    24.1. Sediment retention ponds, traps and bunds to manage surface erosion (60 – 80%)
    24.2. Buffer strips and cover crops to manage surface erosion (40%)
    24.3. Debris dams used to manage gully erosion (80%)
    24.4. Riparian fencing and/or planting to manage streambank erosion (50%)
25. Erosion control interventions that are known to be effective but difficult to quantify in terms of sediment loss, include de-watering/spring tapping and behavioral changes that lead to improved cultivation and grazing management.

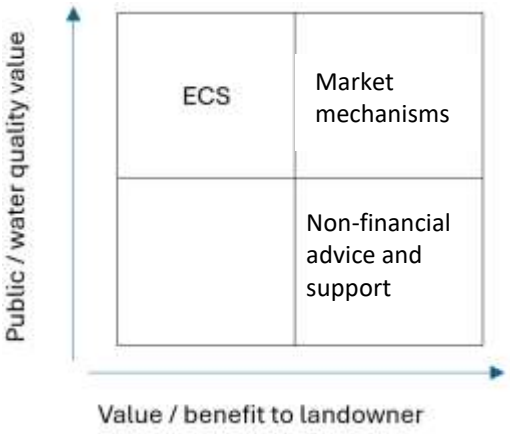
**What is the context around waterways treated?**

26. Metrics for waterways fenced and protected were recorded to satisfy the reporting requirements of the Hapara Takatu (shovel ready) programme, where the ECS leveraged close to $2 million of MfE funding toward riparian fencing between 2019 and 2023.
27. There is value in continuing to report length of waterway protected as it represents a level of protection over and above any regulatory requirements. However, we acknowledge that more work is required to provide meaningful context.
28. Streambank erosion in higher order streams is often innate and dynamic and therefore difficult to address through traditional riparian management and bio-engineering methods.
29. There is a need to benchmark and target waterways where riparian management interventions for stream bank erosion will be most effective.

**What is the justification for a 30-million-dollar investment in the ECS?**

30. The ECS represents a partnership between HBRC and landowners to achieve water quality outcomes. Landowners have a responsibility to be good land stewards, however there is often a disproportionate cost (and/or opportunity cost) for landowners to undertake works that have a

public good. The ECS co-funds erosion control where the cost of implementation outweighs the private benefit received by the landowner.




31. Prior to the ECS, HBRC's Land Management team operated the Regional Landcare Scheme (RLS), The RLS had an annual budget of ~$800k mostly to support soil conservation, but also included projects with a biodiversity focus. The HBAP was formed with the intention of accelerating water quality outcomes in line with local and national expectations.
32. Return on investment. To date HBRC has invested around $13.5 million toward the ECS. This has leveraged a further $10 million at least, toward planting and other related activities. In 2008, hill country erosion was estimated to be costing New Zealand between $100 and $150 million per year annually (Jones et al., 2008).

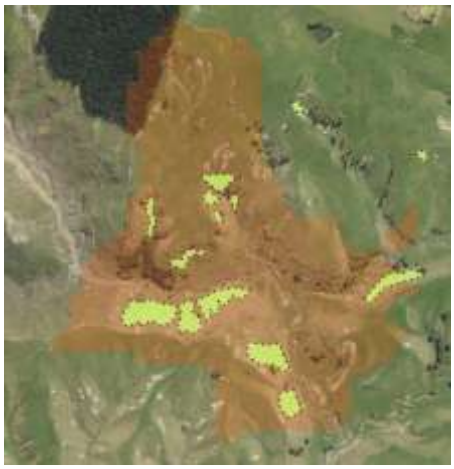
**Why are we doing this?**

33. HBRC uses a combination of regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms for meeting national and local water quality standards. Sediment is our regions foremost water quality stressor. As a non-point source contaminant, regulatory policy options for managing erosion-derived sediment are constrained and difficult to apply.
34. While the focus of the ECS has been on water quality, we know that during extreme weather events, huge quantities of erosion generated sediment is also deposited on land. The most significant and costly impacts of erosion are experienced not on hill country but on low-laying flat country.
    34.1. Damage to public and private infrastructure
    34.2. Damage to producing land and crops
    34.3. Reduced capacity of waterways / flood channels
35. *Cyclone Gabrielle deposited over 10 million, maybe closer to 20 million m3 on land. The cost to collect and safely manage is estimated to be between $40-50 per cubic meter"* (Darren de Klerk, 2024)

**Is it working and should we do something else?**

36. While the scheme is a long way off achieving the scale of planting proposed through the HBAP, this has been achieved without any commercial scale planting proposed through Right Tree Right Place.
37. We do sell ourselves short when we compare 'treated area' metrics with erosion modelling used to benchmark the scale of our erosion issue. Output based reporting will not necessarily align with, or capture, the total area that receives benefit from erosion control works.

*SedNet modelling output showing 56ha of highly erodible land*



*Actual area treated following and on-ground erosion control plan assessment (3.9ha)*

38. Since the ECS was established in 2018, Catchment Advisors have engaged with no less than 503 individual properties, covering roughly two thirds of the region's farmland identified as highly erodible.

39. The Catchments Team has begun a programme to review the effectiveness of planting and other works since the inception of the ECS. However, we are reliant on land and freshwater science programmes to monitor the long-term effectiveness of these works.

**Land for life**

40. We are beginning the process of recruiting 80 properties with highly erodible land for the next phase of the Land for Life project. This will extend to 300 in the coming years towards a ten-year goal of 600 farms.

**Should we be doing something else?**

41. While the ECS is our primary tool for facilitating erosion control work on private land, our catchment team are engaged in a range of activities for achieving behavioral change concerning erosion derived sediment.

    41.1. Providing advice and non-financial support to landowners outside of the ECS

    41.2. Supporting research and development (Crown Research Institutes and 'on farm' research programmes)

    41.3. Cross council collaboration (e.g. supporting our biodiversity and regulation teams)

    41.4. Promoting land management best practice through workshops and extension programmes

    41.5. Partnering with catchment and primary industry groups

42. Beyond 2050…?

    42.1. Erosion risk will be greatly reduced throughout the region

    42.2. Measurable improvements in water quality in our region's most sediment impacted rivers

    42.3. The need to financially incentivise erosion control work would be greatly reduced or restricted to case by case situations

    42.4. There will be an ongoing requirement for affordable high quality planting material

42.5. Catchment management staff would still require a specialist knowledge of erosion management, but will have greater capacity to commit to other emerging soil and water quality challenges

42.6. Continued tracking and monitoring of land use / cover change over time, in parallel with long-term water quality and sediment monitoring

**Decision-making considerations**

43. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision-making provisions do not apply.

**Recommendation**

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the *Erosion Control Scheme and soil conservation in Hawke's Bay - What's the end game?* staff report.

**Authored by:**

**Warwick Hesketh**
**Principal Advisor Catchment Management**

**Jolene Townshend**
**Manager Catchment Operations**

**Approved by:**

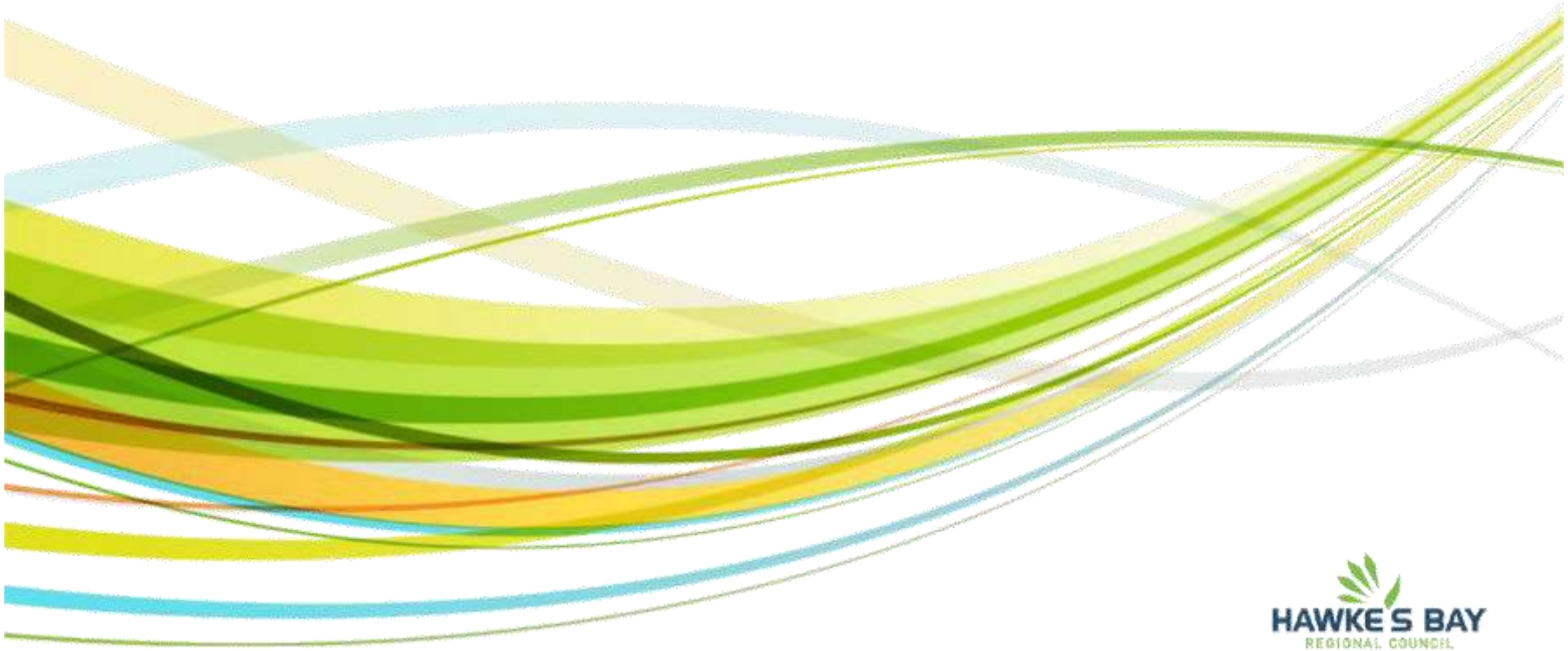
**Richard Wakelin**
**Acting Group Manager Integrated Catchment Management**

## Attachment/s

**1**⇩ The Erosion Control Scheme and soil conservation in Hawke's Bay - what is the end game?

# The Erosion Control Scheme and soil conservation in Hawke's Bay

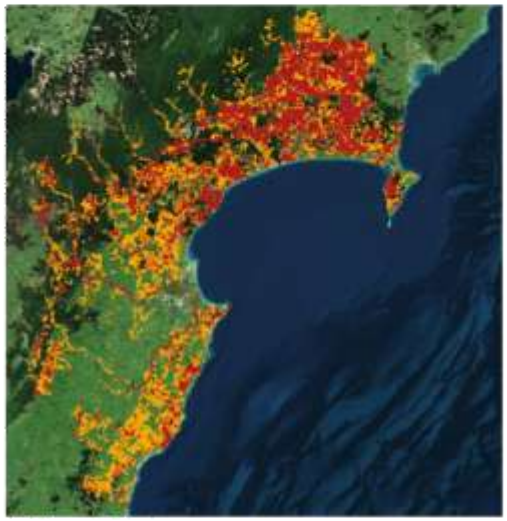
*What is the end game and are we getting there?*



# Does the ECS have a sediment reduction goal and when will this be achieved?

## Hawke's Bay Afforestation Programme

- *"To plant one-third of the regions most highly erodible land to achieve a 50% reduction (2.5 million tons p/a) of sediment in our region's waterways*



## HBRC Long Term Plan

- *"By 2050, all highly erodible land will be under tree cover"*
- *"By 2050, there will be 50% less contaminant from urban and rural environments into receiving waterbodies."*

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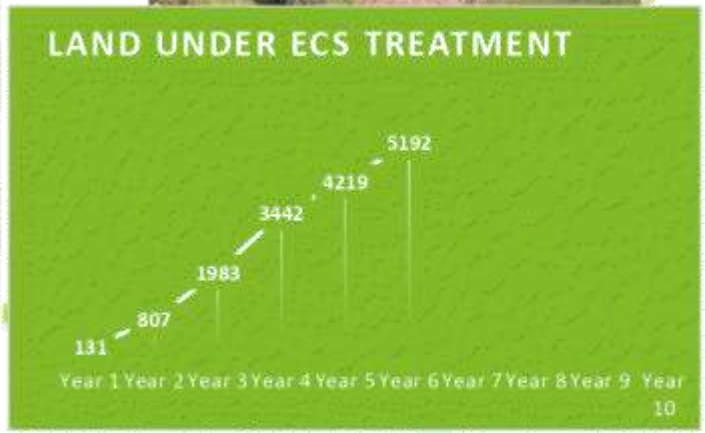
# What is meant by 'treatment'? How effective is pole-planting and other mitigations?

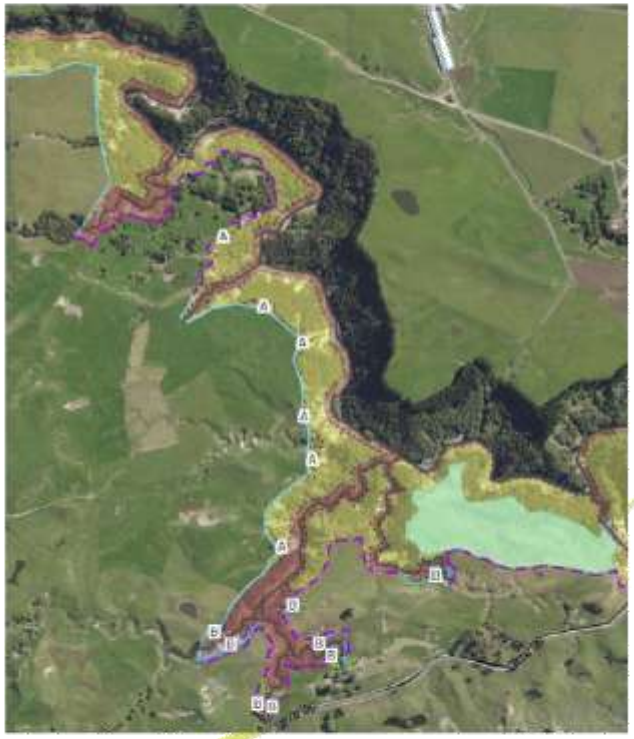
*'Area under treatment' = the direct footprint of an erosion control intervention (e.g. the total area planted/retired from grazing)*

| Erosion control intervention | Performance value (effectiveness) |
|---|---|
| Sediment traps/bunds/ponds | 60 – 80% |
| Debris dams (gully control) | Up to 70% |
| Closed canopy forest | Up to 90% |
| Buffer strips and cover crops | 40% |
| Debris dams for gully control | 80% |
| Riparian fencing/planting | 50% |



# Some context around waterways fenced/retired

- Generally refers to waterways that are protected through wider erosion control retirement
- Stream retirement metrics were collected for 'shovel ready' reporting
- A large proportion of stream bank erosion is natural and not 'treatable' under our scheme
- New tools will help us to better quantify and target 'treatable' erosion



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# Justification for HBRC's investment in the ECS

- **Cost/benefit**

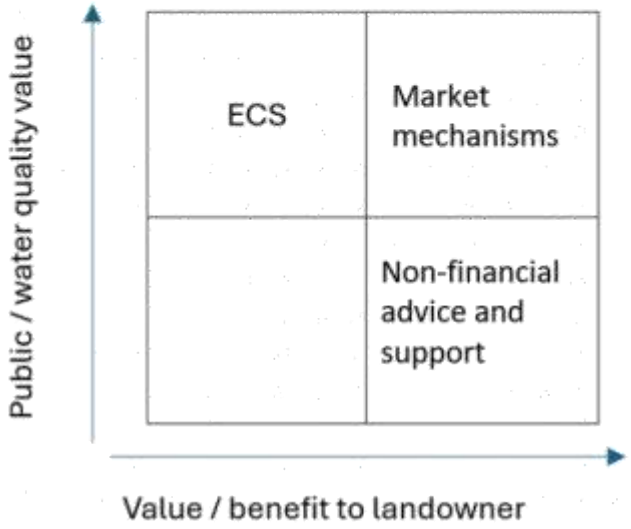
Recognition that there is often a high cost or (opportunity cost) for landowners to engage in soil conservation work

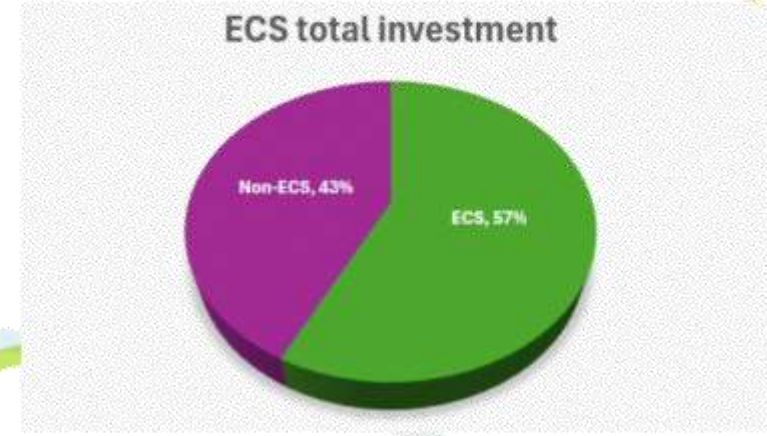
- **Value for money**

As of July 2024, our ECS investment had invested $13.5 million, leveraging a further $10 million toward erosion control works

- **Other leveraging opportunities**

e.g. Catchment groups, research and development



# Why are we doing this?

- High levels of sediment affects water quality, aquatic habitats and the biodiversity (both aquatic and terrestrial) that depends upon them

  *Regional councils will be required to implement policy for achieving 'National Bottom Lines' for deposited and suspended fine sediment in all wadable rivers.*

- Erosion on farmland also represents a loss of current and future potential productivity.

- Mitigating storm and flood damage

  *"Cyclone Gabrielle deposited over 10 million, maybe closer to 20 million m3 on land. The cost to collect and safely manage is estimated to be between $40-50 per cubic meter"* (Darren de Klerk)

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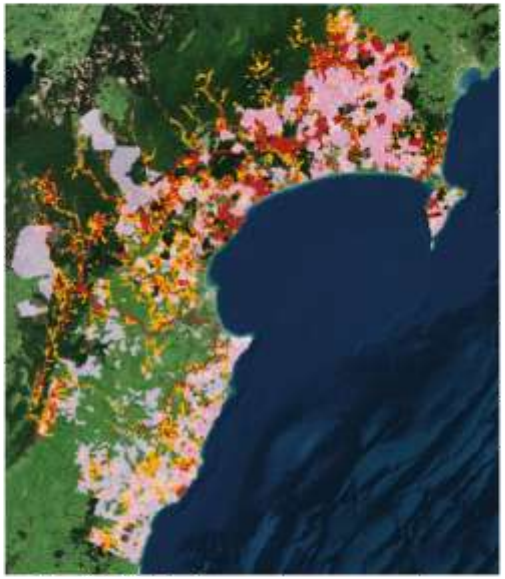
# Is it working and should we be doing something else?

- High rates of engagement and scheme uptake
- Tree planting aspirations unlikely without commercial scale
- Continuous improvement to maximise the targeting and effectiveness of scheme investment



**What else are we doing?**

- Providing advice and non-financial support to landowners
- Supporting research and development
- Cross council collaboration (i.e., Biodiversity and Regulation)
- Promoting land management best practice
- Partnering with catchment and primary industry groups

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# Beyond 2050?

- Erosion risk is greatly reduced throughout the region
- Measurable improvements in water quality in our region's most impacted rivers
- The need to financially incentivise erosion control work is significantly reduced or restricted to specific catchments
- An ongoing requirement for affordable high quality planting material
- Catchment management staff still require a specialist knowledge of erosion management, but have greater capacity to commit to other emerging soil and water quality challenges
- Continued tracking and monitoring of land use / cover change over time, in parallel with long-term sediment monitoring

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**HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee**

**Wednesday 09 April 2025**

## Subject: Connectivity of landslides to waterways

### Reason for report

1. To get a better understanding of the possibility of sediment delivery from shallow landslides to waterways at a regional scale. This can inform landowners of their susceptibility to slips and land use suitability.
2. Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC) contracted Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research (MWLR) to produce information on how the spatial likelihood of landslides connecting with the stream network varies across the region. This information, when combined with the regional landslide susceptibility layer, identifies at high resolution (5 m) those areas that are both highly susceptible to landslides and highly likely to deliver sediment to streams in the future. This combination provides the best available information at a regional scale for targeting erosion control to reduce both onsite soil damage or loss as well as downstream sedimentation and water quality impacts.
3. As part of this project, HBRC asked MWLR to estimate the topographic wetness index (TWI) to support land use planning.

### Executive summary

3. The combined regional rainfall-induced shallow landslide susceptibility and connectivity layer provide the council and the public with high-resolution spatial information. Its uses include land use suitability planning and erosion control activities, such as better targeting of tree planting on areas of pastoral land most susceptible to instability and likely to deliver sediment to streams.
4. Using the landslide morphometric connectivity model framework, MWLR estimated shallow landslide-to-stream connectivity for the Hawke's Bay region.
5. The high-resolution TWI estimates are based on the 2020 LiDAR-derived DEM to identify critical source areas to support land and water planning in the region.

### Strategic fit

This research links through to the Strategic Plan goals:

5.1. By 2050, all highly erodible land is under tree cover;

5.2. By 2050, there will be 50% fewer contaminants from urban and rural environments in receiving waterbodies.

5.3. By 2030 there is an increasing trend in the life-supporting capacity of all of the region's degraded rivers and major streams.

6. Contributes to healthy, functioning and climate-resilient biodiversity.
7. The modelling gives vastly improved detail to the Erosion Control Scheme on target areas than the Erosion Susceptibility Classification.
8. The research links to the report by MWLR on the 'Effectiveness of Trees for Landslide Mitigation'.

**Background**

9. Region-wide predictions of shallow landslide-to-stream connectivity were produced with probability- and class-based scales, while the TWI was estimated across the region and supplied as geospatial layers.

10. The probability and class-based scales describe the susceptibility to both landsliding and the landslide to stream connectivity. The seven classes range from "Low Landslide Susceptibility (Low LS)", which encompasses all levels of connectivity, to "High Landslide Susceptibility/High Connectivity (High LS/High Con)".

11. The Cyclone Gabrielle landslide data provided an independent validation of the mapped connectivity classes. MWLR found that 62% of all Gabrielle-related landslides that connected to streams had source areas located within the 'High' connectivity class area, while 21% occurred in the 'Moderate' class and 17% in the 'Low' class.

12. The TWI identifies areas that are prone to saturation and the generation of surface runoff. Following (2023) Ministry for the Environment guidance for critical source areas, MWLR estimated the TWI based on the LiDAR-derived DEM at 5 m horizontal resolution.

**Landslide-to-stream connectivity**

13. The class-based landslide-to-stream connectivity geospatial layer was combined with the previously supplied class-based shallow landslide susceptibility layer (HBRC – MWLR LiDAR Project) **attachment 1 (under separate cover)**.

14. To be landcover agnostic, all forestry land mapped in the New Zealand Land Cover Database (LCDB v5.0) was converted to grass cover for analysis to illustrate the possible susceptibility across the whole productive landscape. We modelled all forestry areas with grass cover (to recognise the post-harvest period of elevated landslide susceptibility) to allow comparison with pastoral land, but other areas (mostly those with permanent native woody cover) were modelled with their land covers as mapped in LCDBv5 (2018).

15. The resulting combined class-based layer may be used to identify areas that are both highly susceptible to landsliding and likely to generate runout that reaches the stream network.

16. Most of the land in Hawke's Bay lies in the Low Landslide Susceptibility (LS) class. Approximately 3.42% (539 $km^2$) of the region is within the High LS/High Con class.

**Discussion**

17. The work assists the Council with the assessment of forestry harvesting consents as it provides higher resolution vulnerability mapping than the Erosion Susceptibility Classification.

18. The work also assists Catchment Advisors and pastoral farmers in identifying where land treatments for erosion mitigation are required and would make the most impact on soil conservation and water quality. Treatments, such as space-plantings or native reversion, not only include the steep faces at the tops of hills but also where streambank and gully erosion are prevalent where riparian buffers may be more applicable.

19. These maps will be useful for farm planning and the production of farm plans to manage natural hazards.

20. These layers are already in use by the consent and compliance teams to identify hotspots for susceptibility and connectivity on forestry blocks requiring resource consent to harvest. Forestry companies are also using it for the same reasons.

21. Gisborne recruited MWLR for a similar assessment to develop their 'Overlay 3B' layer for returning land to permanent forest, **attachment 2 (under separate cover)** - Uawa Catchment Working Group Hui 6 Transition Advisory Group.

**Next steps**

22. Field validation of model outputs is to be undertaken later in the year by Land Science and

Catchment Management under the supervision of the Gisborne District Council.

23. Given the output is a high-resolution grid (5 m). Upscaling is required to define larger contiguous areas, or density analysis, for land treatments.

24. Is there an appetite from the council to apply rules similar to that of Gisborne District Council for reverting extreme risk to permanent forest cover?

**Decision-making considerations**

25. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision-making provisions do not apply.

**Recommendation**

The Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the *Connectivity of landslides to waterways* staff report.

**Authored by:**

**Dr Ashton Eaves**
**Senior Scientist - Land**

**Dr Kathleen Kozyniak**
**Team Leader Marine, Air & Land Science**

**Approved by:**

**Richard Wakelin**
**Acting Group Manager Integrated Catchment Management**

## Attachment/s

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1**⇨ | Regional Shallow Landslide | Under Separate Cover<br>***Online only*** |
| **2**⇨ | Uawa Catchment Working Group Hui 6 Transition Advisory Group | Under Separate Cover<br>***Online only*** |

**HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee**

**Wednesday 09 April 2025**

## Subject: Update on the Kānoa-funded flood control and drainage work programme

### Reason for report

1. This item provides the committee with an update on the IRG programme of work, including the status of all projects within this programme. It is not intended to be a comprehensive review of all activities that have been undertaken; however, it provides a formal update to the committee.

### Background

2. In the 2020 Budget, Cabinet agreed to provide a $3 billion investment in infrastructure to support New Zealand's economic recovery as part of the Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund.
3. New Zealand River Managers Special Interest Group collectively put forward an application to this fund for a programme of work associated with flood risk and climate resilience across New Zealand.
4. This bid was successful, resulting in total programme funding of $30m for Hawke's Bay Regional Council, including co-funding requirements.
5. As a result of Cyclone Gabrielle delaying the programme, in June 2023 Council staff commenced negotiations on a variation to the Kanoa funding agreement to extend the funding timeframes and modify the agreed programme.

### The IRG programme

6. The original IRG programme consisted of 4 main pillars as identified in the table below, together with co-funding requirements.

| Work Programme | Programme Cost | Co-Funding (HBRC) | Funding | Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme** | Up to $20,000,000 | Up to $7,200,000 | Up to $12,800,000 | Modified Programme |
| **2. Wairoa River Scheme – River Parade Scour Protection** | Up to $1,000,000 | Up to $360,000 | Up to $640,000 | Completed |
| **3. Upper Tukituki Flood Control Scheme – SH50 Bridge** | Up to $1,000,000 | Up to $360,000 | Up to $640,000 | Completed |
| **4. Upper Tukituki Flood Control Scheme – Gravel Extraction** | Up to $8,000,000 | Up to $2,880,000 | Up to $5,120,000 | Ongoing |
| ***Crown funding total: up to $19.2m*** | ***Local contribution: $10.8m*** | | | |

### Project 1: Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme (Levels of Service) - $20 million

7. The original programme of work sought to increase the rate at which works were complete to improve the level of service provided by the scheme to a 1 in 500-year flood level of protection, including allowances for climate change and sea level rise, together with improved resilience for the higher velocities anticipated from the increased flood flows.
8. The original programme of work has been modified to incorporate predominantly enabling works for potential future upgrades and/or scheme review related projects.
9. HBRC co-funding of $7.2 million matches IRG funds of $12.8 million.

**Project 2: Wairoa River Scheme – River Parade Scour Protection - $1 million**

10. The Wairoa River had gradually undermined the embankment immediately south of the Ferry Hotel. This had in turn compromised Wairoa District Council (WDC) water assets and, more recently, Carroll Street and River Parade.
11. This project provided steel sheet-piled erosion protection works on the left bank of the Wairoa River.
12. This project received co-funding from Waka Kotahi to the value of $180,000.

**Project 3: Upper Tukituki Flood Control Scheme SH50/Waipawa Erosion - $1 million**

13. The left bank of the Waipawa River immediately upstream of SH50 bridge had eroded significantly over the past five years.
14. In addition to stabilising the river, this project also provided a degree of protection works for the southern approach to NZTA's SH50 bridge.
15. This project received co-funding from Waka Kotahi to the value of $300,000.

**Project 4: Upper Tukituki Gravel Extraction Flood Control Scheme - $8 million**

16. Gravel aggradation across this scheme has been an area of concern for the last decade.
17. This project involved targeting the removal of 800,000$m^3$ gravel from Central Hawke's Bay rivers to maintain existing nameplate capacity of 1:100 level of protection from Upper Tukituki scheme.
18. HBRC co-funding of $2.8 million was required to match IRG funds of $5.2 million

**Social procurement**

19. In keeping with the purpose of the Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund as an economic stimulus following lockdown, key conditions of the funding agreement with the Government stipulated the requirement to achieve social procurement outcomes.
20. Acceptable social procurement outcomes include:
    - 20.1. New employment
    - 20.2. Preservation of jobs
    - 20.3. Redeployment of workers
    - 20.4. Supplier diversity
    - 20.5. Skills and training
    - 20.6. Environmental responsibility
    - 20.7. Investment toward more productive, sustainable and inclusive economy.
21. The realisation of these outcomes occurs predominantly in the construction phase of the project.

**Original Programme Timeframe and Deliverables**

22. The original funding agreement committed to funding a 3-year programme of work commencing on the date of execution of the agreement 20 November 2020 and ending 20 November 2023.
23. A summary of the original projects and associated costs are detailed in the following table

| **Project 1: Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme** | **Pre-Variation Spend $** | | **Project Status** |
|---|---|---|---|

| Projects | 20/21 | 21/22 | 22/23 | 23/24 | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Taradale Stopbank Upgrade** | - | 2,114,715 | 1,538,053 | 77,841 | **3,730,609** | Construction complete |
| **Moteo Stopbank Upgrade** | - | 176,789 | 448,507 | 17,686 | **642,982** | Detailed design complete |
| **Omarunui Road Stopbank Upgrade** | - | 79,036 | 238,582 | 20,746 | **338,364** | Preliminary design complete |
| **Ngatarawa Stopbank Upgrade** | - | 210,299 | 652,269 | 1,245,946 | **2,108,514** | Construction complete |
| **Planting Programme** | - | 382,265 | 330,889 | 261,421 | **974,575** | Planting complete |
| **Planning/Feasbility/ Programme Level** | 832,539 | 883,488 | 547,487 | 546,443 | **2,809,957** | |
| | | | | | | |
| **Total spent** | **832,539** | **3,846,591** | **3,755,787** | **2,175,452** | **10,605,000,** | |
| **Original Budget** | | | | | **20,000,000** | |
| **Funded by** | | | | | | |
| **Kanoa** | | | | | **12,800,000** | |
| **HBRC** | | | | | **7,200,000** | |

24. A summary of the original projects and associated costs are detailed in the following table

| | Project Status | Budget $ | Actual Spend $ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Project 2 :Wairoa River Scheme River Parade Scour project** | Construction Completed | 1,000,000 | 1,062,532 |
| **Funded by** | | | |
| **Kanoa** | | 640,000 | |
| **HBRC** | | 180,000 | |
| **WDC** | | 180,000 | |
| **Project 3 : Upper Tukituki Flood Control Scheme - SH50 Bridge** | Construction Completed | 1,000,000 | 1,183,484 |
| **Funded by** | | | |
| **Kanoa** | | 640,000 | |
| **HBRC** | | 60,000 | |
| **WDC** | | 300,000 | |

**Modified Programme Timeframe and Deliverables**

25. As a result of Cyclone Gabrielle the programme was delayed while the Asset Management Group supported the delivery of the rapid repair across the region.

26. In May 2024 a variation in the Kanoa funding was agreed for the remaining funding of $9,395,000 ($20,000,000 - $10,605,000) and this extended the funding deadline to 30 June 2025 and includes a modified programme for Project 1 - Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme component of the work programme.

27. The modified work programme predominantly targeted enabling works for potential future upgrades and/or scheme review related projects.

28. The details of the Variation to Project 1 - Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme are outlined in the table below.

| **Project 1 Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme** | **Programme of Work Deliverable** | **Budget $** | **Actual Spend to date $** | **Forecast cost to Complete By June 2025 $** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Moteo | To complete CIA | 40,000 | - | 40,000 |
| East Clive | To Fully consented | 475,000 | 140,121 | 475,000 |
| Omaranui Road | To complete CIA | 40,000 | - | 40,000 |
| Farndon Road Bank Erosion | Construction | 3,600,000 | 170,413 | 2,200,000 |
| Chesterhope Upper | To detailed design | 400,000 | 28,519 | 267,949 |
| Brookfield Lower | To detailed design | 475,000 | 89,078 | 294,240 |
| Pakowhai park | To detailed design | 475,000 | 3,477 | 134,390 |
| Raupare Lowe | To detailed design | 245,000 | 20,575 | 134,390 |
| Raupare Upper | To detailed design | 245,000 | 33,724, | 157,560 |
| Recommission of Maraenui Stopbank | Construction | 3,000,000 | 82,329 | 200,000 |
| Investigations to compile a catalogue of available borrow material | Final reporting | 400,000 | 21,619 | 181,346 |
| **Total** | | **9,395,000** | | **4,235,486** |
| **Underspend** | | **5,159,514** | | |

29. A rigorous procurement process has allowed HBRC to obtain best value for money and provided cost savings across the investigation and detailed design projects resulting in the majority of these projects being forecast to deliver under budget.

30. There is currently an identified underspend of $5,159,514 across Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme LOS Programme. This underspend is primarily due to the recommissioning of the Maraenui Stopbank not going through to construction due to challenges regarding land access, land ownership and the existing designation being misaligned meaning the project could not be completed in the required timeframe.

31. HBRC are currently working with our funding partners Kanoa on options of how the remaining underspent funding can be best repurposed to other projects within the region.

32. However, all the remaining projects within the Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme LOS Programme are either expected to be completed by the 30 June 2025 or have the funding committed to awarded contracts which is required for HBRC to retain the funding.

**Project 4 - Upper Tukituki Flood Control Scheme – gravel extraction**

33. This project is part of the original programme. Budget $8,000,000

34. Gravel extraction activities under the IRG programme were largely stopped immediately following the cyclone, as contracting resources were required to assist with the rapid rebuild of stopbanks across the region.

35. A summary of the completed and planned gravel extraction works and costs are outlined in the following tables:

| **Funding agreement Volumes** | | **m3 Gravel removal** |
|---|---|---|
| Original Agreement | | 800,000m3 |
| | | |
| Tranche of works | Contracted | Achieved m3 |
| Tranche 1 | 116,700 m3 | 101,410 |
| Tranche 2 | 483,500 m3 | 351,453 |
| Tranche 3 | 334,400 m3 | 339,776 |
| Tranche 4 (Underway) | 59,000 m3 | 35,454 |
| Tranche 5 (Underway) | 90,000 m3 | 2,243 |
| Achieved to date | | **839,663** |
| Tranche 6 | 225,000 m3 | To be awarded |
| **Estimated Total Extraction** | | **1,176,139** |

| Funding agreement $ | |
|---|---|
| Funding agreement to spend | $8,000,000 |
| Total spent to date | $ 5,826,025 |
| Estimate to spend | $ 2,173,975 |
| Forecast total spend | **$ 8,000,000** |

**Current programme status**

**Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme Status Update**

**Moteo stopbank upgrade**

36. This project was part of the original programme. This project has a completed detailed design and all tender documentation is completed for the original design. Consenting was due to be completed by March 2023 with construction completed by November 2024.

37. The revised programme now only includes advancing the completion of a Cultural Impact Assessment to support the future lodging of the Earthworks Consent Application with Hastings District Council.

38. Findings from the Heretaunga Scheme Flood Scheme Review and Independent Review will be assessed to determine what if any modifications to the original design are required and associated consent, prior to going to construction at some point in the future.

**Omaranui stopbank upgrade**

39. This project was part of the original programme. This project has a detailed design completed to 60%. Consenting was due to be completed by March 2023 with construction completed by November 2024.

40. The revised programme now only includes completing a Cultural Impact Assessment to support the future lodging of an Earthworks Consent Application Hastings District Council. A draft Cultural Impact Assessment has been completed for the first half of the project site, with the Cultural Impact Assessment for the second half of the project site to begin shortly.

41. Findings from the Heretaunga Scheme Flood Scheme Review and Independent Review will be assessed to determine what if any modifications to the original design are required and associated consent, prior to going to construction at some point in the future.

**Clive River erosion protection (Farndon Road)**

42. This project was part of the original programme. Detailed design was due to be completed by September 2023 with construction completed by March 2024.

43. The revised programme still includes completion of detailed design and construction of river erosion protection through large scale rock revetment.

44. This project is progressing with detailed design completed and resource consent submitted and being processed.

45. Procurement of the rock required to deliver the project has been tendered and awarded with rock currently being delivered to site.

46. The tender for delivery of the main construction works is currently out to market and closes Friday 4 April after which the tenders will be evaluated and the works awarded with works set to be completed by 30 June 2025.

47. Additionally, the project team is working with mana whenua and a cultural impact assessment is being completed to further support the resource consent for the project.

**East Clive stopbank upgrade**

48. This project was part of the original programme. Detailed design was due to be completed by August 2023 with construction completed by June 2024.

49. The revised programme now includes advancing the project to fully consented status and advancing the design to a level sufficient to support the consenting process. Due to the complex nature of the consenting requirements for this project, it is envisaged that consents will be lodged by June 2025.

50. This project is progressing with the detailed design of the stopbank upgrade now completed. While an additional assessment is nearing completion on the effects of this design on the leachate of contaminants from the landfill to support the consent process.

51. An ecological assessment has been completed and a cultural impact assessment is being progressed to further support the lodging of resource consent for the project.

52. Findings from the Heretaunga Scheme Flood Scheme Review and Independent Review will be taken into account when finalising the design associated with this project.

**Upper Tukituki Flood Control Scheme – gravel extraction**

53. Despite cyclone-related delays to extraction, the programme has already met the targeted volume of extraction with 839,663$m^3$ already extracted, at a cost of approximately $5.8m, well below the budgeted amount.

54. Tranche 4 is underway targeting the extraction of 59,500$m^3$ from reaches either side of the State Highway bridge in Waipawa and Makaretu River.

55. Tranche 5 has been successfully tendered with contracts awarded and work underway targeting the removal of approximately 90,000$m^3$ from the Tukipo and Mangaonuku Rivers.

56. The tender for Tranche 6 is currently being prepared and will be going to market soon. Tranche 6 is targeting the removal of approximately 225,000$m^3$ from numerous cross-sections on the Upper Tukituki and Waipawa Rivers.

57. It is expected that all remaining funding will have been either fully consumed or committed by June 2025 ensuring the full programme will ultimately be completed.

**Recommission the Maraenui Stopbank**

58. This project was not part of the original programme.

59. This project proposed to recommission the Maraenui Stopbank (previously decommissioned when the current Brookfields upper and lower stopbank were constructed) in order to provide a secondary level of protection from flooding to residential areas of Napier.

60. The work involved geotechnical investigation, detailed design and construction. It was envisaged that construction would be completed by June 2025.

61. The geotechnical investigations have been completed with the preliminary design completed and detailed design underway.

62. A cultural impact assessment has been completed to support the delivery of this project and inform the design process.

63. While undertaking the engagement for this project several challenges were encountered regarding land access, land ownership and the location of the designation that is in place for the existing stopbank. These issues are still being worked through but could not be resolved to allow the project to be completed in the required timeframe.

64. Detailed design of the stopbank is still being completed and is due in April 2025 allowing this project to be revisited for delivery in the future or reconsidered as part of the Awatoto Industrial area flood protection.

**Investigations to compile a catalogue of available borrow material**

65. This project was not part of the original programme.

66. Work completed pre- and post-cyclone has highlighted that, although there is an abundance of silt in the region, not all of it is suitable for construction purposes. Material availability will be a critical element of all successful future flood resilience projects in the region.

67. This project involves completing geotechnical investigation in all reaches of the Heretaunga Plains Flood Protection Scheme to identify the quality and quantity of available borrow material throughout the scheme.

68. This will enable the volume of suitable available borrow material to be quickly understood and targeted for all future stopbank construction projects.

69. A mapping tool has now been developed to capture this information, a summer student was employed who sourced and uploaded all the available geotechnical data records as baseline information.

70. The areas identified that do not have existing geotechnical records or testing information have been successfully tendered and awarded with works now underway to generate this information which will then be uploaded into the borrow catalogue tool.

**Investigation and design for future upgrade works**

71. These projects were not part of the original programme.

72. This projects involve the completion of geotechnical investigations and detailed design of stopbank upgrades for the following high priority reaches:

    72.1. Raupare Upper and Raupare Lower

    72.2. Chesterhope Upper

    72.3. Brookfields Lower

    72.4. Pākōwhai Regional Park.

73. The project team are currently working with the different mana whenua groups associated with each of these projects to get cultural impact assessments completed to help inform the detailed

design process and support obtaining resource consent in the future.

74. Geotechnical investigation and design support for all of these projects has been successfully tendered and awarded with works now underway across all projects.

75. Complete detailed designs for all of these projects will be received by June 2025.

**Undertake a partial Plan Change to the Hastings District Council District Plan**

76. This project was not part of the original programme, and at Kanoa's request has been removed from the programme variation.

77. The IPMO is advancing this work outside of the IRG programme to support land category and future stopbank related projects.

78. Assessments of both ecological effects and landscape visual effects were completed to support the lodgment of the private plan change.

79. An engagement plan was developed identifying all mana whenua partners and key stakeholders with the initial engagement process completed. However, engagement will continue throughout the plan change process.

80. The documentation for the private plan change has been completed and has now been lodged with Hastings District Council.

**Decision-making considerations**

81. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision-making provisions do not apply.

**Recommendation**

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the *Update on the Kānoa-funded IRG flood control and drainage work programme* staff report.

**Authored by:**

**Thomas Petrie**
**Programme Manager Protection & Enhancement Projects**

**Megan McKenzie**
**Senior Business Partner**

**Jess Bennett**
**Programme Finance & Controls Manager**

**Andrew Caseley**
**Manager Regional Projects / Programme Director IPMO**

**Approved by:**

**Chris Dolley**
**Group Manager Asset Management**

## Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

**HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee**

**Wednesday 09 April 2025**

## Subject: Hawke's Bay Future Farming Trust Annual report

### Reason for Report

1. This item introduces the HB Future Farming Trust presentation on its activities over the last year. The Chairman's annual report from the December 2024 AGM is **attached** for council information.

### Decision Making Process

2. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision-making provisions do not apply.

### Recommendation

That the Environment and Integrated Catchment Committee receives and notes the *Hawke's Bay Future Farming Trust Annual Report.*

### Authored and approved by:

**Richard Wakelin**
**Acting Group Manager Integrated Catchment Management**

## Attachment/s

**1**⇩ Chairman's Report

HAWKE'S BAY FUTURE FARMING
TE MATAU A MĀUI AHU WHENUA-HĪKINA TAIAO

## Chairman's Annual Report December 2024 AGM

HBFFCT's mission is to promote, inspire and celebrate profitable farming systems that enrich the environment and the community.

I am pleased to report on the trusts many achievements during the year while acknowledging the **Hawkes Bay Regional Council** initial funding and our core sponsors including **Port of Napier, Hastings District Council, Populous People** and **BM Accounting.**

### Community engagement

In 2024 we had monthly workshops at LandWISE to review the Carbon Positive project.
We also held two farmer workshops hosted by Becks Smith (The Whole Story and Quorum Sense) who with Paul Smith demonstrated and discussed healthy soils and how to carry out visual assessments of soil health.
These events were hosted and supported by **TukiTuki LandCare, Between Two Rivers** and **Ahuriri Tributaries Catchment Group.**
Our relationship with Catchment Groups throughout Hawkes Bay has strengthened during the year with four of our current trustees also serving on executives of catchment groups.

The major event was our second **Healthy Soils Healthy Profits** workshop which was well attended.
A Matauranga Maori workshop day was hosted with LandWISE and AgriSeaNZ where we discussed the traditional knowledge that can be used guide us toward sustainable land management in our agricultural systems.
Following the conclusion of our comms contract with Belford Communication our communications, social media, webpage content and regular newsletters were brought inhouse in conjunction with People & People and our subscribers and followers continue to increase.
Adding a donations button to our website and calling for donations has resulted in additional funding support from followers.

### Projects

**Carbon Positive. LandWISE**
During 2024 the Carbon Positive project has developed into a significant demonstration trial as the Tomato crop grew and the cover crops were established.
Weekly field walks are well attended and create plenty of discussion. The monthly field days have been attended by up to 30 industry people.
Two significant management changes will be made by Heinz to their tomato growing operation for the 2024/25 season as a direct result of learning from our Carbon Positive 2024 tomato crop trial which included reducing the use of some chemical classes and changes to row width so they can implement mechanical weeding to also reduce chemical use. This means the trial is already informing changes that can reduce the use of herbicides and fungicides and thereby improve the health of the soil and farm ecosystem.

**Land for Life.**
The HBRC and The Nature Conservancy have developed this project with 12 pilot farms.
The project reviews land use on each pastoral hill country farm and identifies areas best suited to intensive pasture production or Silvopasture with poplars and willows or retirement from pasture and indigenous tree planting or commercial forestry- exotic planting. The funding model demonstrates reasonable returns from the revised pastoral farming system combined with carbon income through the ETS from the trees.
The Trust have expressed interest in partnering in the next stage of this project where 100 more farms will be included in the project that has had $995K MPI funding announced this week.
As a partner in Land for Life the Trust can bring an added focus on soil health and soil carbon measurements and soil health improvement methods (using regenerative farming principles) to the farmers involved in the project.

**Farming for Carbon on pastoral farms.**
We have promoted this project with farmers, Industry bodies, CRIs and meat processors with widespread interest but no substantial funding has yet become available. This project idea closely resembles and will likely be superseded by the Land for Life pilot studies. A small soil health project has been outlined and offered to some of the B2R sub-catchments who have funds for such special projects. This project is being discussed with farmers in the catchment and has yet to be confirmed.

**Board Structure and Governance**.
The trust adopted a new meeting regime to streamline our governance. We now have bimonthly in person board meetings held at the HBRC offices in Napier. Our 3 sub committees and as required the whole board meet by Zoom on the alternate months.
Tom Belford, one of our foundation Trustees stepped down from his role as a trustee in August. Tom was on the HBRC at the instigation of the HBFFCT and Toms commitment to the Trusts establishment and operational success is recognised.
Di Roadley joined the board as the HBRC appointed trustee. We welcome Di's knowledge and experience to our governance team.
Scott Lawson's three-year term as a trustee ends in 2024 and the Trustee Appointments Committee have recommended acceptance of Scott's request for reappointment for a further term.

**Funding**
We continue to build relationships with our current sponsors and seek additional funding support using outlines and strategy developed in conjunction with Craig Ireson.
This work has yet to yield new funding in a tough financial environment but we continue to work with potential funders.

**Strategic Plan.**
With several new trustees on board during 2022 and 2023 we reviewed our Strategic Plan early in 2024.
We established 2 pillars to work with.

**Strategic Pillar #1**: Promote resilient farming practices including better use of technology, genetics, energy & strategic nutrition.
**Desired outcome:** Productivity that minimizes input and environmental footprint

**Strategic Pillar #2:** Champion the growth of soil carbon

**Trust Management**
The trust contracted France & Co to manage its projects and business for 3 years.
The board has reviewed the general management position implemented early in 2024 and up for review in December 24. The challenging funding environment for trust operational and projects funding were considered. The general manager contract will come to an end with a transition plan in place and the trust is currently seeking to contract an Administrator role.
I wish to recognise the effort Dave has put into our work especially with getting the Carbon Positive project started and exploring various options for a pastoral farming project.

**2025**

We look forward to finalising plans for the Land for Life project with HBRC and TNC early in the new year.
We also plan to have an administration contractor in place early in the year with Dave France continuing in a transition role until the next Carbon positive milestone has been completed in February.

I would like to thank the Trustees for their continued support and governance of our work during 2024.

**Phil Schofield**
**Chair**
**HB Future Farming Charitable Trust.**

**HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee**

**Wednesday 09 April 2025**

## Subject: Land for Life update

### Reason for Report

1. This item provides the Committee with a brief update on the Land for Life (LfL) project:
   1.1. Go-early milestone deliverables that were due by 28 February 2025.
   1.2. Progress against milestone 1 activity due for completion at the end of April 2025.
   1.3. Priority activity looking forward.

### Executive Summary

2. The LfL project was launched on 5 December by Minister McClay and the funding agreement with the Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures (SFFF) fund has been signed.
3. Deliverables for the go-early agreement with SFFF were completed by the due date of 28 February 2025 and include: project plan and governance arrangements signed off by the Steering Group, a competitive selection process to appoint key partners designed and initiated, and prepare and launch the Stage 3 project framework.
4. Milestone 1 deliverables of the SFFF contract are on track for delivery by 30 April 2025 including: project reporting against budget and timeline, communications and engagement plan, evidence that rural communities support the LfL vision and strategy, and documented outcomes of the partner selection process.
5. Activity on milestone 2 deliverables due for completion at end of August 2025 has commenced.

### Background

6. LfL is a public/private partnership approach that contributes towards the following goals in HBRC's Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025.
   6.1. Water quality, safety and climate-resilient security.
   6.2. Climate-smart and sustainable land use.
   6.3. Healthy, functioning and climate-resilient biodiversity.
7. As outlined in the update to the Committee in March and June 2024, Stage 3 of the project aims to validate that it can be scaled across Hawke's Bay and to other regions. The purpose, goal and objectives of Stage 3 were outlined in the June committee meeting.
8. The last update on the LfL project was provided to the Committee at their previous meeting on 4 December 2024. It covered early non-binding progress on the project ahead of Crown's announcement of funding support for the project on 5 December 2025.
9. This report focuses on work activity outlined in the Stage 3 project plan and funding contract with the SFFF fund and zeros in on activity outlined in the go-early and milestone 1 deliverables of the SFFF contract.

### Progress against the go-early contract

10. To enable the project to gather momentum prior to the formal contract signed on 5 December 2024, SFFF approved a go-early agreement on 31 October 2024. The go-early agreement covers the period from 1 November to 28 February. Activities for the go-early period were delivered as outlined below.

**Secure project governance**

10.1. The project governance structure was agreed and stood up. The terms of reference for the Project Steering Group and Farming Sector Advisory Group were approved by the Steering Group on 27 February 2025. These provide for farmer and Māori representation on the Steering Group with advice sought from the Māori Partnerships team for the latter.

**Update project plan and align with new milestones and timelines**

10.2. The project plan The Project Plan was approved by the Steering Group on 27 February 2025, which fully aligns with milestones in SFFF contract.

**Start to onboard implementation and finance partners**

10.3. An expressions of interest (EOI) process was approved by the Steering Group at meetings on 18 September 2024 and 5 December 2024. The Steering Group established an advisory panel with an associated terms of reference to assess proposals and recommend appointments.

In summary, the process and associated timeline included:

| | |
|---|---|
| EOI documentation released | 20 Sep 2024 |
| Opportunity for initial Q&A and Meeting with Project Team | 14 Oct – 14 Nov |
| Final date for receipt of expressions of interest | 22 Nov 2024 |
| Shortlisting | 29 Nov 2024 |
| Interviews/conversations with potential partners shortlisted | 2 - 20 Dec 2024 |
| Formal assessment, advice and preferred partner selection confirmed | 27 Feb 2025 |
| Discuss partnership arrangements and prepare partnership agreement(s) | Feb – April 2025 |

The short-listed applicants were approved by the Steering Group on 5 December 2024 and the panel interviewed shortlisted financing and implementation partners between 2 – 20 December 2024. Discussions continue, preparing to finalise partnership/procurement agreements.

**Prepare and launch the project**

10.4. This activity covers project management and communications for the 4-month period of the go-early contract 1 November to 28 February. Aside from driving the EOI process and other project start up functions, a highlight of the period was the official announcement and launch of the project by Minister McClay on 5 December 2024. The event was held at Holt's farm and attended by regional leaders, LfL pilot farmers, project stakeholders and wider project team.

**Recent progress against milestone 1 deliverable**

11. Deliverables for milestone 1 of the SFFF contract are on target for completion by the due date of 30 April. Progress on these deliverables include:

**Project reporting against project budget**

11.1. Work continues to integrate the project within the operations of HBRC:

11.1.1. Project budget entered into TechOne and tracking of HBRC in-kind contribution

11.1.2. Project operating framework established including Gantt chart breakdown of activity

11.1.3. Regular project Steering Group meetings scheduled including reporting by project dashboard and risks register

11.1.4. Firming up on contract/project obligations and risks with appropriate contracts in place with partners

11.1.5. Building the project team through the partner selection process and integration with appropriate teams within HBRC

**Project Plan**

11.2. The project plan was signed off by the Steering Group as part of the go-early agreement.

**Communications and engagement plan**

11.3. An EOI process is underway to onboard communications and engagement advisory for the project's comms and engagement plan. This will be supported as appropriate by the HBRC comms team. This piece of work is specifically focused on engaging with farmers and landowners.

**Evidence that rural communities support the LfL vision and strategy**

11.4. Significant engagement is underway by the Senior Rural Advisor (LfL) with pilot farmers, catchment communities and industry stakeholders. The aim of this engagement includes to build awareness and support for the vision of LfL with farmers, catchment groups, mana whenua and industry stakeholders. Topics covered and themes emerging from this engagement include the following:

11.4.1. Land for Life provides the opportunity to build resilience into farming practices

11.4.2. Land for Life provides the opportunity for a strategic review of farming systems and practices

11.4.3. The opportunity for Land for Life to add value to biodiversity outcomes

11.4.4. What value do farmers gain from participation in Land for Life?

11.4.5. The barrier of finance to implementation at scale

11.4.6. Equitable outcomes for Māori landowners

11.4.7. Achievable, practical action steps in the business plan process will be a critical success factor to farmers implementing recommendations in the plans

11.4.8. Land for Life needs to be about people, as well as outcomes

11.4.9. Pilot farmer status against their draft farm business plans

**Documented outcomes of the EOI partner selection process**

11.5. Documented outcomes and formal decisions relating to the identification of financing and implementation partners are ongoing as part of developing partner arrangements.

**Looking forward**

12. Aside for the current focus of delivering on milestone 1 deliverables, the project team is beginning milestone 2 activity, due for delivery by 31 August 2025. This includes:

12.1. Confirming the farm business plans for the pilot farmers

12.2. Development of project policies, standards and assurance

12.3. Further work with the financial and implementation partners to develop the detailed design documents for the LfL model including financing and operating models

12.4. Design of the monitoring, reporting and verification plan and theory of change model

12.5. Extension programme designed

12.6. Spatial planning and reporting framework and tools in place

12.7. Research and development plan developed with proposed research opportunities

**Recommendation**

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the *Land for Life update staff report*.

**Authored by:**

**Michael Bassett-Foss**
**Land for Life Project Manager**

**Approved by:**

**Richard Wakelin**
**Acting Group Manager Integrated Catchment Management**

## Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.