

Maunga ki Tai

A newsletter from the

Waikato River Authority

Authority funded project gets date with Country Calendar

THE MULTI-YEAR WHITEBAIT HABITAT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT CARRIED OUT BY STUART MUIR AND HIS FAMILY NEAR WAIUKU IS TO FEATURE ON NEW ZEALAND TELEVISION'S LONGEST RUNNING LIFESTYLE DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMME LATER IN THE YEAR.

The Muir family has received funding from the Waikato River Authority in each funding round since 2011. In that time the Muir family have worked with others in the local community to clear stream and river banks to establish better whitebait spawning conditions, planted trees and undertaken mustelid and possum pest eradication. The ongoing whitebait habitat project has been worked on while the Muirs have continued to run their dairy farm alongside the Waikato River.

The film shoot in February was Country Calendar's second visit for the programme, with another shoot planned

at calving time later in the year.

Country Calendar director Howard Taylor says the story was chosen as a great example of how dairy farming and conservation work could happen side-by-side. "It is a positive story for dairying which counters some of the bad environmental publicity the industry has had," he says.

The half hour programme is likely to screen on TVNZ later in the year, probably around October. Country Calendar has been on New Zealand television for more than 50 years and has always enjoyed a large audience.



A Country Calendar crew spent the day filming clearing and planting on the Mangatikitiki Stream (which flows into the lower Waikato River) last month with Stu Muir. The film crew includes (left to right) director Howard Taylor, camera operator Steve Fisher and sound recorder Don Anderson.

MESSAGE FROM THE CE

The recent launch by Environment Minister, the Hon Dr Nick Smith, of the new project to prepare a 5-15 year Waikato and Waipa Rivers Restoration Strategy was a significant milestone for the Authority. We are now approaching our 5th year since establishment in late 2010.

The task set of restoring the 11,000km² Waikato and Waipa river catchment remains sizeable, but the Minister's attendance at the launch and the number of community, industry, and local government groups in attendance signalled a seachange in the support and awareness of the Authority's efforts. We are already finding the restoration strategy project is acting as a catalyst for groups wishing to play a greater part in restoring the Waikato and Waipa rivers and catchments. Only by working together, pooling resources, and sharing knowledge will we be successful.



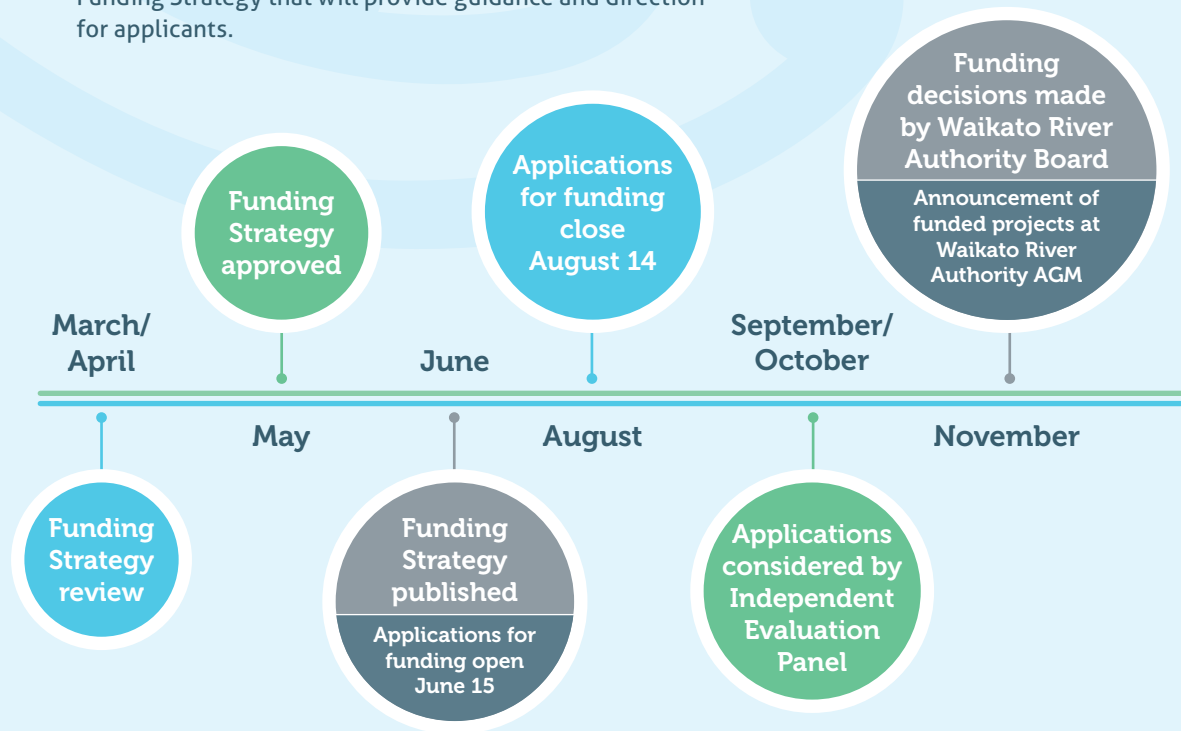
Bob Penter
 Chief Executive

Funding Process

and time-line for 2015

THE WAIKATO RIVER AUTHORITY IS UNDERWAY WITH PLANNING FOR ITS 5TH FUNDING ROUND TO BE HELD LATER IN THE YEAR.

The first task for the Authority is to review and publish the 2015 Funding Strategy that will provide guidance and direction for applicants.



Project delivers greater enjoyment

Otorohanga District Council has created better access and enjoyment of the Waipa River near Otorohanga township delivering a more enjoyable summer for local residents.

The project is part of a wider initiative close to the town funded by the Waikato River Authority to improve the water quality entering the Waipa River, provide for eel passage and also improve recreational access to the river. The old Waipa River bed that runs through the centre of Otorohanga adjacent to Lake Huiputea has had a wetland built along the southernmost stretch. Riverside access to the Waipa River has been improved allowing kayakers and swimmers easy access to the river and a safe place for children to play. There has also been a modification to the storm water system to allow the upstream movement of eels and a diversion of storm water into the newly created wetland.



Residents and visitors to Otorohanga enjoying the river access picnic area on the banks of the Waipa River. The Authority funded project has also included work to improve the river's water quality.

Guide to managing potential pest trees launched



Left to right: Melinda Dresser (NZ Landcare Trust), Terina Rakena (Waikato Raupatu River Trust) and Nardene Berry (NZ Landcare Trust) at the launch of the Willow and Alders Guide which received funding from the Waikato River Authority.

A joint project between NZ Landcare Trust and Waikato Raupatu River Trust to develop a guide for managing willows and alders in Waikato wetlands and waterways was launched last month.

The launch took place at Lake Koromatua which has been the subject of extensive willow clearing over the last 20 years.

Project lead from Waikato Raupatu River Trust, Terina Rakena, says the development of the guide was a great example of organisations working together to bring together the best knowledge

available for the benefit of lakes and waterways.

Willows and alders can form dense forests and in many places have replaced native wetland and river-bank vegetation in the lower Waikato region in particular. However, if they are well managed they can also contribute to bank stability and offer positive benefits to wildlife.

The guide is available in hard copy format and can also be downloaded from the web through www.landcare.org.nz, www.wrrt.co.nz and www.waikatoriver.org.nz

Attention for Lake Waikare

The Nikau Family Estate Trust is about to start their second Waikato River Authority funded project on the edge of Lake Waikare. While there is still the need for an over-all strategic plan for the restoration of Lake Waikare, the Authority has funded the Nikau Trust to carry out targeted projects. These have involved clearing pest plants and undertaking native planting on the southern edge of the lake. Lake Waikare is one of the most significant lakes in the Waikato catchment.



Lake Waikare is facing a number of environmental issues that result in severe dis-colouration at various times of the year.



Hamish Dean (Kessels Ecology), Jenni Vernon (Waikato River Authority) and Tawera Nikau (Nikau Trust) inspect an area cleared and recently replanted on the lake edge.

Collaboration key to milestone strategy



Minister of the Environment Hon Dr Nick Smith takes questions from the news media after launching the start of work on a five to 15 year Waikato River Restoration Strategy.

A ground-breaking collaboration between dairy industry body DairyNZ, the Waikato River Authority and Waikato Regional Council is regarded as a milestone project for the river.

The Waikato River Restoration Strategy project was launched near Hamilton by Environment Minister Nick Smith. It's believed to be the first collaborative initiative of its type involving such organisations in the country and will run till 2017. The Authority and DairyNZ are contributing \$200,000 each in

direct costs with the regional council contributing \$75,000. Other costs will be met by significant in-kind support, such as staff time, from DairyNZ and the council.

The three organisations involved in the strategy have all put major resources into helping protect and restore the river in recent years.

A key aim of the new Waikato River Restoration Strategy will be to ensure that this combined work – plus the work of other agencies – is carried out as efficiently as possible, whilst obtaining maximum benefit by ensuring it is integrated and co-ordinated.

The strategy will help guide investment decisions for improving the health of the Waikato River over the next five to 15 years. It is also designed to guide the work of other stakeholders committed to improving the health and well-being of the river. The strategy will be one of the key tools for delivering on the Vision and Strategy for a restored and protected Waikato River and its catchments.

A key supporting action has been the creation of a Waikato River Restoration Forum, involving the three strategy partners as well as all Waikato River Iwi, the Department of Conservation, Fonterra, Genesis Energy and Mighty River Power, along with local councils. The forum is chaired by the Authority's CEO Bob Penter, and will offer advice and input into the preparation of the strategy.

Geographic Information System

The Waikato River Authority, through a project led by consultancy group GHD, now has its own geo-spatial GIS mapping capability to help manage and monitor projects.

It is the completion of a project from the second funding round and means the Authority has a GIS

tool-box that allows it to map and use data to help set priorities for funding and future work.

The project was supported by Eagle Technology and the Authority's ability to access software through the Esri/Eagle Technology not-for-profit programme.