

**Waikato
RiverCare**



Waikato RiverCare Inc.
ANNUAL REPORT
2017/18

Our Vision

To make a positive difference to the wellbeing of our River

Kia whakapakari te mauri o to tātou Awa

Our Purpose

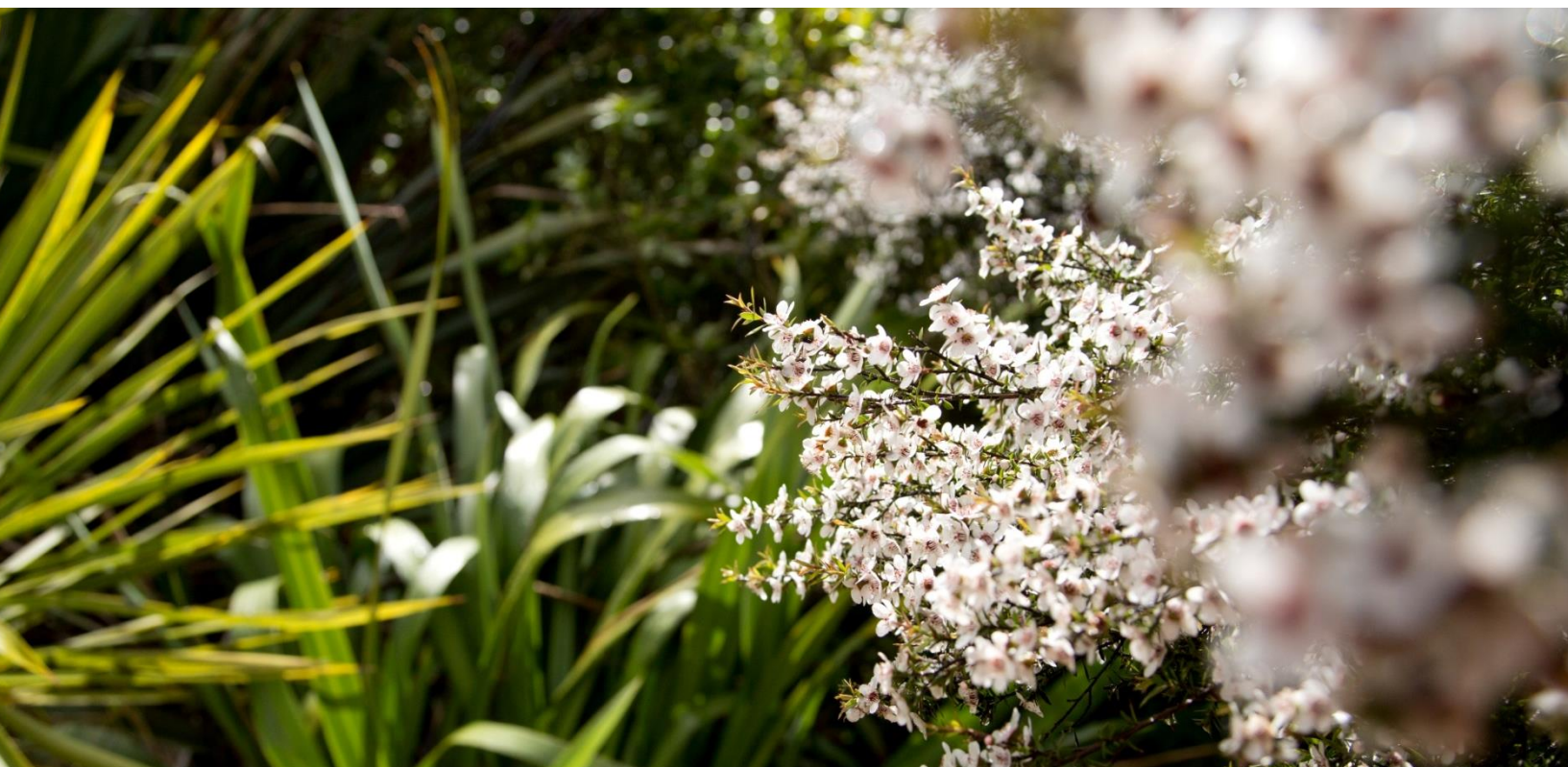
To implement an enduring programme to establish self-sustaining native plant-based communities in and around the lower Waikato River and associated catchments.

“The Waikato River is a national and regional icon holding significant cultural, economic, social and environmental values. Waikato RiverCare Incorporated (trading as ‘Waikato RiverCare’) links these values with interested organisations and provides a vehicle for riparian habitat restoration using a base of native plant species. Waikato RiverCare Inc. was established in 1999, incorporated in 2001 and became a registered charity in 2008. The organisation is supported by a range of community stakeholders with a common vision and purpose.”



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Introduction

Waikato RiverCare Incorporated is pleased to present our Annual Report for the 2017/18 period. The report documents achievements in relation to established projects and new projects initiated in this period.

Waikato RiverCare has been operating since 1999, officially becoming an incorporated society in 2001 and a registered charity in 2008. Members include a range of organisations and people who all share a similar passion for the lower Waikato River.

Waikato RiverCare is the leading riparian restoration charity focusing on preparing, planting and maintaining areas of native plant habitat on the banks of the lower Waikato River and associated catchments, and sourcing funds and support to carry out this work. Sound science, cultural understanding, sustainability and a cooperative approach are essential to Waikato RiverCare's operation.



Well established plantings at the Genesis-funded Hopuhopu Riparian Enhancement

Sponsors

Waikato RiverCare sincerely thanks its supporters, partners and clients, who enable us to keep up the momentum of restoration work along te awa.

Major Sponsors:



Sponsors:



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



LEN REYNOLDS TRUST



Chairperson's Report

Despite challenging environmental conditions leading to high river levels and soggy paddocks, Waikato RiverCare Incorporated (RiverCare) has delivered another year of tangible outcomes for its project partners and funders. Our staff and contractors have done a great job balancing delivery of project outcomes with health and safety considerations and the concerns of landowners wishing to minimise pasture damage to successfully plant over 41,000 plants across 7 different sites.

The organisation continues to face significant long-term funding challenges with deficits accrued over the past two financial years (-\$23,190.00 2016-17 and -\$58,058.00 2017-18). Prudent leadership and sound financial advice will deliver long-term success for Waikato RiverCare. To this end, the executive committee has taken the opportunity to internally review its structure and delivery of restoration outcomes via a process of strategic evaluation and planning. The committee is fortunate to have a diverse range of expertise to call upon which has allow for a comprehensive self-assessment to occur. I've no doubt that findings from this assessment will be applied to the organisation, future-proofing RiverCare and allowing continued growth.

After many years of supporting RiverCare's work and representing the Raupatu River Trust, Tim Manukau resigned from the executive committee in September 2017. Tim has been an excellent advocate for the awa and a key driver on a number of projects. His passion for waka ama provided him with a unique view of the health and condition of the awa and first-hand knowledge of activities causing significant degradation to the awa. The executive committee wish him all the best in his new career.

In early 2018 Taroi Rawiri, RiverCare's Waahi Whaanui Trust representative, accepted a position as Environmental Manager for Waikato Tainui. The executive committee wishes him well in his new role and looks forward to developing new partnership opportunities between the two organisations.

The new financial year brings with it new challenges and opportunities including our biggest ever project covering 12 hectares of wetland restoration and hillside plantings, continuation of planting preparation works at our highly visible Gateway project at Meremere, and a new crowd-funding partnership with the Million Metres programme.

Again, my thanks must go out to the committee for all their hard work and, above all, our excellent staff who continue to deliver projects, on time and within budgets without fail.

David Klee

Chairperson, Waikato RiverCare Inc.

Operation Manager's Report

The 2017-18 year will be remembered by many for the extreme volatility in seasonal weather patterns which varied between torrential rains through to furious heat in a matter of days. The start of the new financial year coincided with the second major flood in the lower Waikato basin in as many weeks resulting in significant damage to many RiverCare projects; particularly those projects planted just six months earlier. Several projects had plant losses between 35%-40%, well above the normal 15% which is expected when planting within a dynamic and changeable riparian environment. However the damage sustained on the Hakarimata F project eclipsed all previous project plant loss records with 80% of new plantings dying from prolonged inundation and excessive volumes of flood debris accumulating within the planting zone. With such high plant losses RiverCare and our Hakarimata F project partners the Department of Conservation and Waikato-Tainui are working through management actions to bring this project back on track.

With so much rain during the March-June period ground water levels remained elevated throughout winter and into August when project planting started. Conditions underfoot were so wet our plant suppliers and planting contractors Te Whangai Trust were forced to carry plants by hand onto projects in the Mangawara catchment. Three months after project planting commenced, the last of the 41,168 plants were planted at Lake Ohinewai. The Te Whangai Trust crew did a great job delivering project planting while working in some tough conditions across six different projects.

The wet weather impacted our ability to provide opportunities for communities to participate in planting days with two events cancelled due to extreme weather. Several brave people did join RiverCare staff and the Te Whangai Trust planting crew at Lake Ohinewai to plant 3000 plants. A big thank you to our volunteers from Million Metres (part of the Sustainable Business Network), NZI, and Spark for making an effort to get involved.

During this busy time RiverCare welcomed Kathryn Duggan to the team as our new administrator while wishing Natasha Murrirhy-Paulussen all the best at her new role. Kathryn brings to RiverCare a wealth of knowledge and experience which is greatly appreciated by both the executive committee and I.

Several other key milestones and events have occurred over the last 12 months including:

- Successful partnership with the Million Metres Programme to crowd-fund the Te Onetea extension project. The project target of \$25,000 was reached after three months with buy-in from a wide cross-section of the community and businesses.
- RiverCare's first grant from the Waikato River Authority matured with the completion of the last project milestone. This grant, provided in 2011 by the Authority, has produced excellent

results for both parties and the wider Waikato community including three riparian projects, community training and planting opportunities, and a guide identifying river projects and demonstrating how to complete a successful riparian planting.

Five new projects have confirmed funding this year: Te Onetea Stream extension project through the Million Metres programme, the Gateway project at Meremere with our partners at Watercare and the Waikato Regional Council, Hakarimata G and Mangatea Stream projects from the Waikato River Authority and Waikato Regional Council, and, RiverCare's largest ever project, the 12ha Koheroa Road Black Farm project with significant funding from WCEET and support from the Waikato Regional Council.

RiverCare continues to develop diverse projects to ensure the ongoing success of the organisation and its outcomes. New projects away from the main stem of the Waikato River have been identified in the Waipa River catchment, Matahuru Stream catchment, Lake Waikare and Piako River. There has been strong interest from landowners eager to develop wetland and riparian projects, partly for sediment and erosion control.

In the new financial year RiverCare will be focusing operational efforts on the following:

- Building a base of mana whenua contractors and progressing projects with iwi partners
- Ensuring new project opportunities with landowners and land managers reflect funders priorities
- Providing more opportunities for community engagement and ownership of RiverCare projects
- Increase the organisation's online profile
- Continue to maintain RiverCare's core sponsors and project partners through the delivery of excellent projects
- Actively develop opportunities for new project funder/sponsors, both big and small

This past year has provided new opportunities and partnerships for the organisation to further develop and grow its knowledge. The increasing frequency of extreme weather events and the arrival of new pest plants/pathogens (e.g. Myrtle Rust) sets new challenges and risks for RiverCare in its efforts to deliver enduring projects for our funders and the wider communities we work with.

My thanks to all those individuals, community groups and project funders that supported our staff and executive committee to deliver another outstanding year for RiverCare.

Kevin Hutchinson
Operations Manager

Society's Performance Review

Compliance with the Society's Objectives

Waikato RiverCare Inc. has been compliant with the objects and rules listed in its Constitution:

The Society was established for environmental and charitable objects and purposes within New Zealand only.

- (a) **Core activities** – The enhancement of the natural water and riverside environment of the Waikato River and associated catchments to improve habitats and thereby benefit the users of the river and its environs, local communities, and visitors now and for future generations through
 - (i) Providing improved plant and animal habitat in and around the Waikato River and associated catchments for general ecological benefit, and
 - (ii) Promoting public interest and appreciation of the Waikato River and associated catchments and its environs through education and communication with local communities and other river users for the benefit of achieving awareness and support for the need to maintain and enhance the riverine environment.
- (b) **Funding** – To raise, accept, accumulate, and employ funds for the environmental and charitable purposes authorised by these objects.
- (c) **General** – To do all such things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of the environmental and charitable purposes authorised by these objects.

Performance Measures

Performance is measured through project evaluations which monitor planting health, establishment, pest plant prevalence, fence condition and stock exclusion. The use of several photo points helps illustrate planting success and condition and assist in identifying long-term management considerations.

Project progression from active management to receiving pulse maintenance after 5 years is the underlining measure of project success for Waikato RiverCare.

Performance in relation to the Strategic Business Plan

In the 2014-15 financial year, Waikato RiverCare's committee, by agreement, updated the strategic focus and direction of the organisation to include catchment streams, wetlands and lakes of the lower Waikato River. The committee felt a focus only on the main stem of the Waikato River was potentially limiting for the organisation's long-term sustainability.

Waikato RiverCare continually delivers projects on time and under budget and have formed an effective restoration model in the lower Waikato Catchment. This experience, and the organisation's ability to utilise local expertise, are the key to ongoing success and require some further strategic planning in the 2018-19 financial year to ensure that ongoing external funding is secured and high quality projects are delivered.

This past year has seen funding being secured for five new projects, three of which are off the main stem of the river. These include projects on the Mangatea Stream, in the Whangamarino River Catchment, and the Te Onetea Stream extension project. The coming years will hopefully see projects also being undertaken in the Waipa Catchment and at Lake Waikare. Ideally, Waikato RiverCare would like to look at undertaking projects at a catchment-scale.

Other areas identified as needing further development included Waikato RiverCare's online profile, the distribution of resources and information to the general public on riparian planting, and developing opportunities to make it easy for people and businesses to fund the organisation's growth.



Our Year in Numbers

2017-18

\$ 396,246

Total amount spent

\$ 338,188

Funding received via grants,
sponsorship and interest

41,168

Number of plants planted

11,912 m

Metres of work completed along
waterways

20

Numbers of volunteers helping
out

22

Number of current projects

17.36 ha

Hectares planted

2016-17

\$ 436,979

Total amount spent

\$ 413,789

Funding received via grants,
sponsorship and interest

58,375

Number of plants planted

14,708 m

Metres of work completed along
waterways

80

Numbers of volunteers helping
out

20

Number of current projects

16.98 ha

Hectares planted



Volunteers from Million Metres, NZI and Spark contributing to planting 11,850 native plants at Lake Ohinewai Recreation Reserve, with funding generously provided by WCEET.

Community Involvement



Left: We were pleased enthusiastic volunteers from NZI, Million Metres and Spark were able to join us planting at Lake Ohinewai in October 2017 after long periods of bad weather saw us postpone two planned school planting days.

Photo credit: Brigitte Hicks, Million Metres Streams Project, Sustainable Business Network

Right: Operations Manager Kevin Hutchinson being filmed delivering a warm thank you to everyone who contributed to successfully funding the crowd-funded Million Metres Streams Extension Project at Te Onetea.

This project has also received co-funding from DOC and Len Reynolds Trust.



Left: Operations Manager Kevin Hutchinson showing Million Metres Coordinator Alaina Pomeroy and Communications Assistant Brigitte Hicks around the Te Onetea Extension Project.

2,100 plants will be planted at the site by volunteers in September 2018. We look forward to crowd-funding with Million Metres again in the future.

Future Plans

Waikato RiverCare is ensuring financial sustainability by continuing to forecast and budget on a 5-year cycle and developing new sponsorship/project agreements. The generous support of our major sponsors have made it possible to expand Waikato RiverCare's project portfolio and develop a viable organisation for the foreseeable future.

Kia whakapakari te mauri o to tātou Awa.

Making a positive difference to the wellbeing of our river.

Key focus areas in the coming 12 months for Waikato RiverCare Incorporated include:

- Developing a strategic plan to ensure the ongoing effectiveness and longevity of the organisation
- Establishing a significant, large-scale, 3-5 year project with a partner
- Identification and development of new projects within the Mangawara catchment
- Establish collaborative projects within the catchments identified by the Waikato River Authority as priority work areas
- Continuing to provide technical advice and assistance to landowners, businesses and iwi groups keen to develop partnership projects
- Continue to maintain a diverse project portfolio to ensure the widest possible appeal to both large and small funders
- Continue to provide value to our key supporting partners and maintain the excellent reputation the organisation has established in delivering quality outcomes

Waikato RiverCare is continuing to expand its areas of operation by undertaking projects in and around the lower Waikato River catchments, wetlands and lakes, as well as along the main stem of the lower Waikato River, while still seeking catchment-scale projects. Projects in the Mangawara Stream catchment, which focus on improving tuna habitat and targeting tree stand protection and enhancement in addition to riparian restoration, illustrate this expanded focused well.

The executive committee has participated in two strategic evaluation workshops during the 2017-18 financial year to gather information that will guide the development of a strategy moving forward. Education and collaboration with local communities living by the river remain key to ensuring the best possible long-term environmental outcomes for the lower Waikato River. Waikato RiverCare will continue to promote the use of both the Best Practise Guide and Priority Restoration Site documents with groups interested in developing a planting project. Both documents are a free resource available on Waikato RiverCare's website under the Resources tab.

Site Location Map

Site locations are mapped below. For a more comprehensive look at our site locations, visit www.waikatorivercare.co.nz/planting-sites.

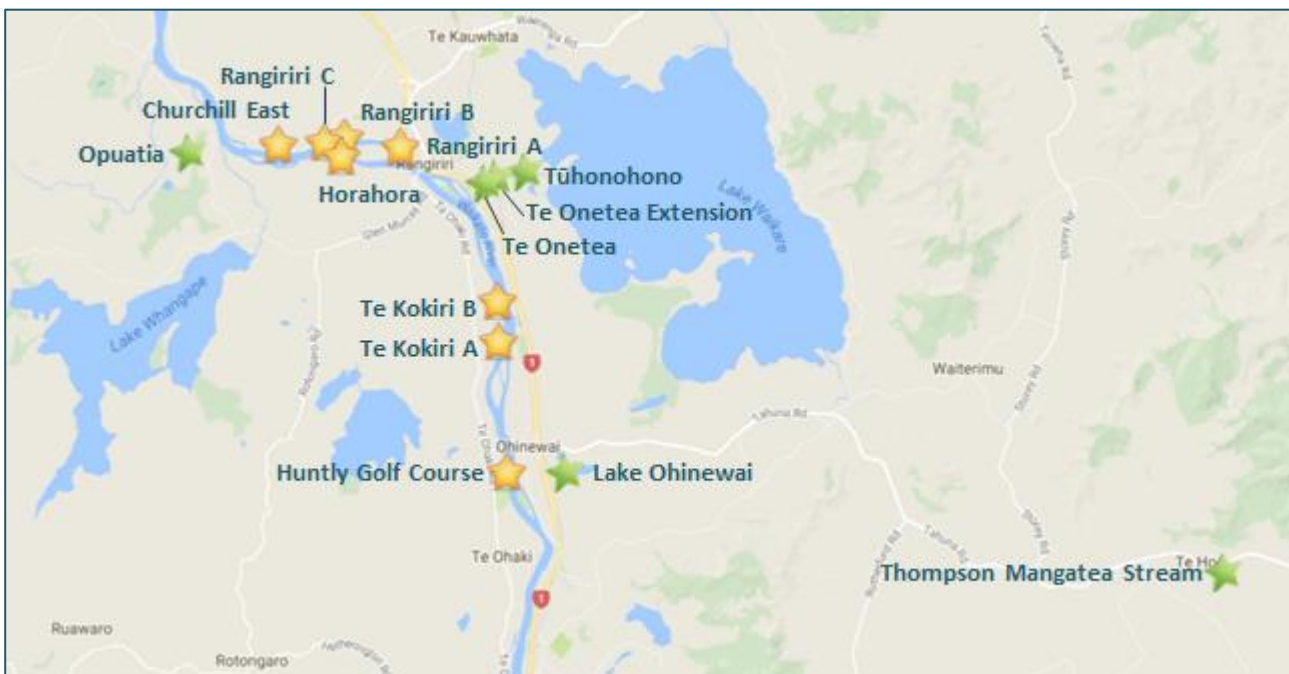
Key:

- ★ Current Projects
- ★ Completed Projects

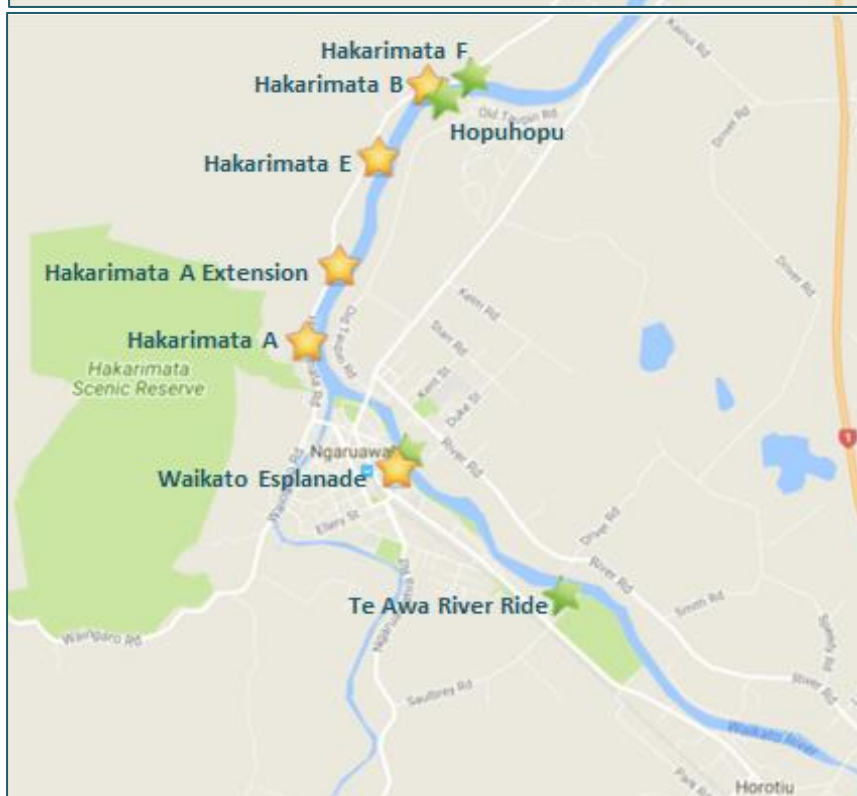
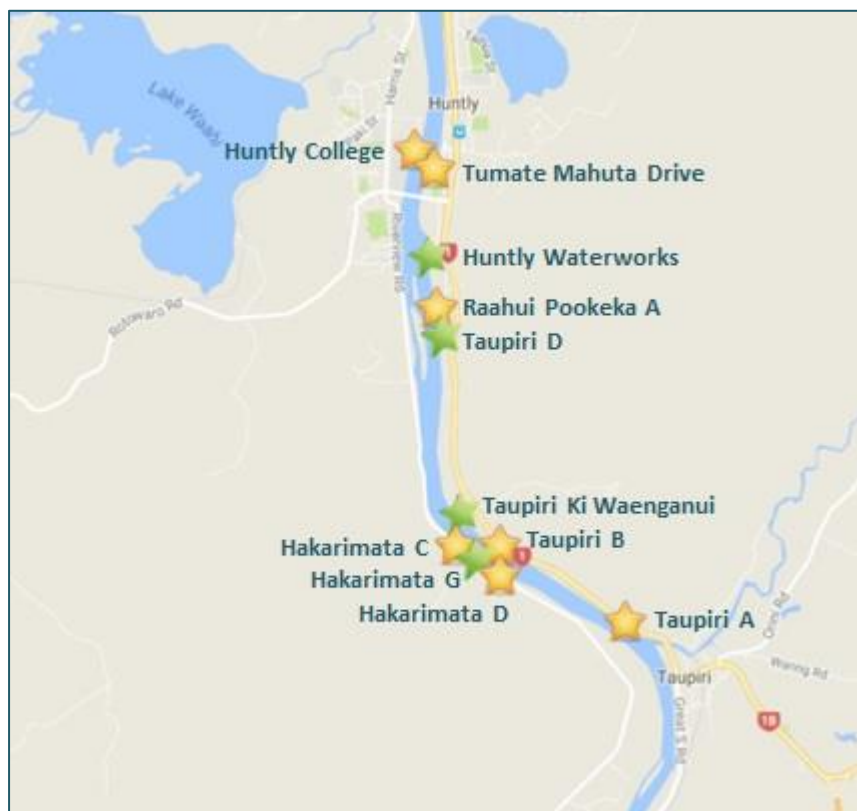
Northern Sites



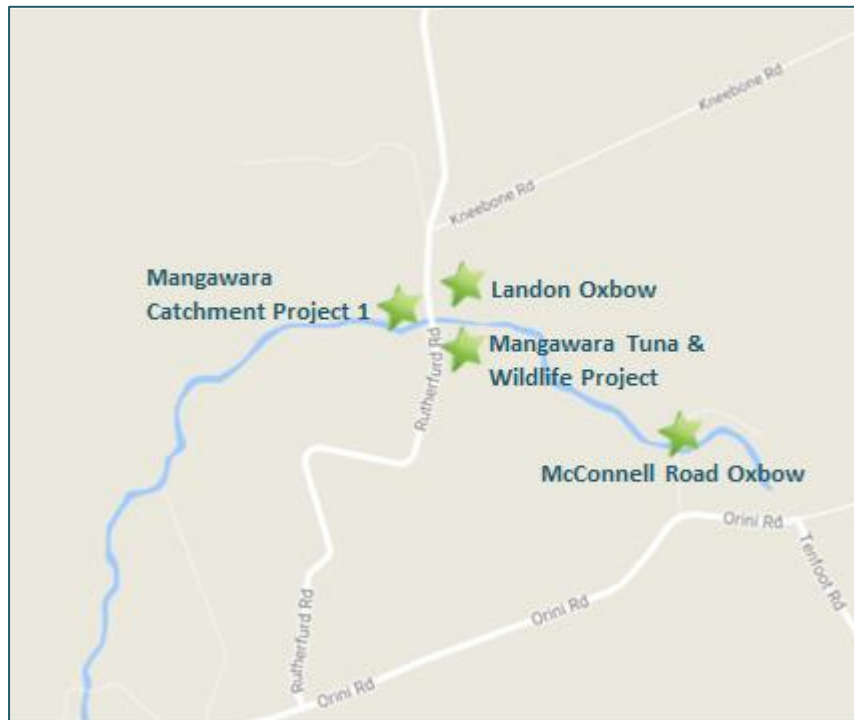
Rangiriri Sites



Taupiri/Huntly Sites



Mangawara Stream Sites



Breakdown of Financial Statements

Our full Financial Statements are available on our website, www.waikatorivercare.co.nz.

Waikato RiverCare is dependent on community funder grants and government funds in order to provide riparian restoration along the lower Waikato River. Sponsorship agreements and in-kind support with a variety of organisations are also central to the funding of Waikato RiverCare's projects.

Revenue	2017-18
Grants/sponsorship	\$316,269
Interest	\$6,356
Other Revenue	\$15,563
Total	\$338,188
Expenses	2017-18
Project costs	\$264,330
Staff costs	\$106,270
Other Expenses	\$25,646
Total	\$396,246
Surplus/ (Deficit)	(-\$58,058)

What Can You Do?

- You can donate to our Give-a-Little page [here](#)
- Let us know if you or your organisation would like to sponsor one of our projects
- Visit our website: www.waikatorivercare.co.nz
- Like our [Facebook page](#)
- Let us know if you have an idea for a new project
- Tell others about the work that we are doing!
- Email us at info@waikatorivercare.co.nz

We'd like to express our sincerest thanks to all of our sponsors, partners, and donors for your continued support.



