

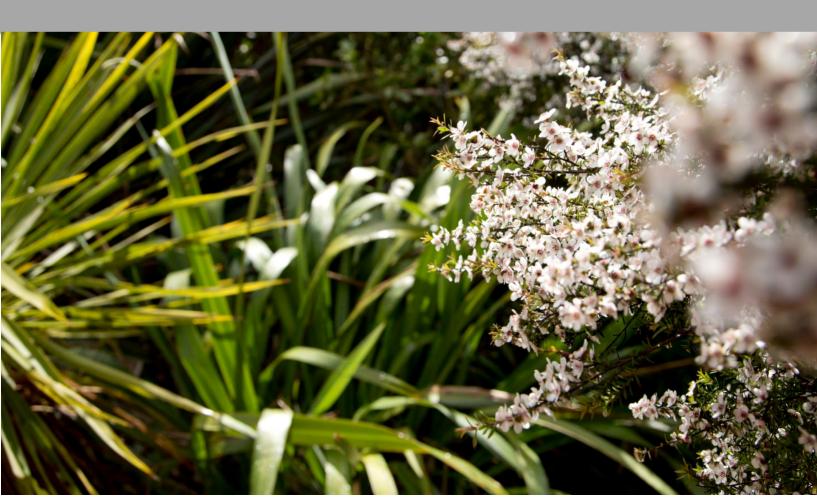
### **Our Vision**

Kia whakahii tatou ki ngaa awa o Waikato
Pride in our Waikato rivers

### **Our Mission**

Ecological restoration that enhances the Waikato River catchment for the wellbeing of our communities.

"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 mission."



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## Introduction

Waikato RiverCare Incorporated is pleased to present our Annual Report for the 2020/21 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.

## **Sponsors**

Waikato RiverCare sincerely thanks its supporters, project partners, land owners and clients, who enable us to keep up the momentum of restoration work within the Waikato catchment.

### **Major Sponsors**













#### **Sponsors**















#### Structure of Waikato RiverCare Inc.

The organisation is governed by an Executive Committee whose membership comprises one representative from each Foundation Member organisation. In addition, up to three general members can also be appointed to the committee. Two Advisory Members offer high level support and political advocacy.

#### **Executive Committee**

Representative Organisation

Michelle Archer - *Chairperson* Independent member of public

David Klee - *Deputy Chairperson* Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Council

Simon Hill – *Treasurer* Mercury
Larnie Chrystall Mercury

Nigel Binks Department of Conservation

Elyse LaFace Genesis

Wally Lee North Waikato Federated Farmers

Sarah Lealand Waikato Regional Council
Nathaniel Wilson Watercare Services Ltd
Ben Wolf Waikato District Council

Dawn Metcalfe Independent member of public

**General Members** 

Kathryn Duggan Independent member of public Peter Buckley Independent member of public

**Advisory Members** 

Don Scarlet Mercury

Staff (at end of March 2021)

Kevin Hutchinson Operations Manager

Sally McCarthy - Secretary Administrator

## Chairperson's Report

This year has been unlike any other as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some maintenance and planting activities were delayed due to the nationwide lockdown and Auckland region flare ups. However, the organisation weathered these due to the excellent planning and communication of its staff and we remain in a strong position at the end of the financial year.

Operations Manager Kevin Hutchinson has been a steady presence for Waikato RiverCare over this time and I continue to be impressed with his dedication to the organisation and passion for his work. Sally McCarthy has adapted well to her role after starting just prior to lockdown. We now have an increased presence online thanks to Sally's frequent Facebook posts that are sharing the achievements and milestones of RiverCare to a wider audience.

On the committee, we farewelled Kathryn Duggan as she left to undertake full-time study and welcomed Simon Hill into the Treasurer role. As with any organisation, efficiencies and improvements are continually identified. This year, we have focussed on our staff and implemented a sub-committee to ensure that their needs are met confidentially and professionally. I wish to thank the core team of Committee members, particularly Kathryn Duggan, David Klee, Simon Hill and Dawn Metcalfe for their support and work undertaken in between the committee meetings.

Our funding applications to the Waikato River Authority for projects at Taupiri Cemetery, Smythe Farm and Opuatia catchment were successful and we have now finalised all the agreements to commence these projects in the new financial year. Unfortunately, our project with Nga Muka Development Trust for a site at Lake Kopuera was unsuccessful.

We managed to plant 12,635 plants over 5 different projects. However, COVID-19 restrictions significantly impacted RiverCare's ability to deliver all the anticipated planting for the year. We have also welcomed additional planting work from Genesis in the Whangape catchment and it is fantastic to be involved in restoration around that lake where other projects are working towards similar goals.

In April we attended the Waikato Ballance Farm Environment Awards as Waikato RiverCare was a finalist for the Catchment Group award. Although we didn't win the award, it was humbling to be alongside the other nominees and have recognition of Waikato RiverCare's achievements.

We have faced challenges, with many hours put into unsuccessful funding applications. Kevin and Sally have continued their great work in this area and take the learnings from each application for the next.

Changes to the National Policy Statement for freshwater have created further work and analysis to ensure our projects can continue without restrictions.

I always think that if things were easy, then everyone would do it. Even though it can be difficult to see the end goal at times, I am pleased to work with an organisation that operates collaboratively and constructively to achieve fantastic restoration projects in the Waikato.

Nga mihi

Michelle Archer

Chairperson, Waikato RiverCare Inc.



## **Operation Manager's Report**

Like most New Zealanders, the last 12 months of field operations for RiverCare has been far from "normal".

The ever-present threat of COVID-19 restrictions or lockdowns has required us to take careful consideration when planning our project delivery and for the first time in many years, RiverCare was unable to hold any school or public planting events. This was disappointing for RiverCare but a course of action that needed to be taken given the very purpose of our events is to encourage people coming together to enjoy the shared activity of tree planting.

RiverCare's project delivery has also been impacted by the post lockdown transport and material delays. Many New Zealand businesses have experienced shortages in timber product, agrichemicals, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), wire products and spare parts for machinery, which have all added additional time to delivering projects. This has required us to adopt a flexible approach to some project milestones and I'm extremely grateful to all our project funders who worked alongside RiverCare during this challenging time to ensure funds were available when required.

After a slow start to the new financial year due to lockdown restrictions, I'm pleased to report RiverCare has achieved some outstanding results over the last 9 months with a busy planting season due to start shortly.

RiverCare was extremely fortunate that the proposed planting season for 2020 could be scaled back and some projects deferred when the impact of COVID-19 emerged as a major issue for the country. A total of 12,635 plants were planted across five projects, which was a significant reduction from the previous year's planting of 47,785 plants across 12 projects.

With the absence of any community planting events, RiverCare was 100% reliant on our contractors to get plants in the ground on our projects. They all did a fantastic job successfully completing project planting in less than two weeks.

For the second consecutive summer, our projects endured another significant drought with rainfall averages well down—especially concerning were the Taupiri and Te Kauwhata areas. On many projects, vegetation control actions were scaled back to leave some ground cover to protect our new plantings from the summer heat and wind. Most projects have done well to get through this summer with minimal plant losses with only one project suffering above average plant losses.

Sally McCarthy recently celebrated her one-year work anniversary as RiverCare's administrator. Starting the role just five weeks before COVID-19 restrictions were implemented, meaning she had

to work independently. She has been doing a great job settling into the administrators position under challenging circumstances. Her Facebook posts and videos have attracted new page followers, promoted our project partners and co-funders while assisting other community groups and events to get key messages into the public arena.

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

- 2020-21 has set a new record for metres of fencing constructed under RiverCare's direction including more than 3km on the Wai O Te Atua Stream.
- Several long-term funding commitments for prescribed projects matured over the last twelve months including the WRA funded Mangawara Tuna and Wildlife, Mangawara McConnell Rd Oxbow, Mangawara Landon Oxbow and Huntly Waterworks.
- WCEET's fantastic financial support for the Butler Farm project has also now concluded.
   However, project work continues with new project partners Trees that Count and the Waipa District Council coming on board. WCEET's early support of this project was instrumental in developing the foundations of this significant planting.
- Genesis Energy committed new project funding towards a largescale planting project on Department of Conservation managed reserve at Lake Whangape. This works supports the multi-party project to arrest water quality decline and protect indigenous values within and around Lake Whangape.
- RiverCare was successful in securing new project funding from the Waikato River Authority in 2020. Funded projects include a site in the Karapiro catchment, a project in Taupiri and a project involving two landowners in the Opuatia catchment.
- RiverCare was a top five finalist in a new category, the Catchment Care Award, for the Waikato Ballance Farm Environment Awards. A big thank to all our project partners and funders involved in the Mangawara catchment.
- Trapping initiative started using the new automated trap designed by NZ Autotraps. RiverCare has purchased 4 units to trial on projects with early trapping results showing promise.

RiverCare's focus over the next 12 months will be in the following key areas:

- Support capacity building and maintain our iwi partners and community groups.
- Maintain the highest standard of project delivery for our project partners and funders.

- Continue to provide opportunities for community engagement and partnership on new RiverCare projects.
- Increase RiverCare's pipeline of new projects and family of project co-funders.
- Deliver key outcomes of RiverCare's endorsed three-year strategic plan.

Nga mihi

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

Waikato RiverCare has continued to actively look for and develop new project opportunities within the Waikato catchment with a focus on upper catchments, constructed wetlands, critical habitat projects and identified priority areas for our project partners. This approach has been instrumental in the organisations success in securing new funding for the following projects:

Project	Funder(s)		
Butler Farm Extension	Waipa District Council Heritage Fund, Peter and Helen Butler		
Lake Areare	Waikato District Council		
Opuatia Catchment	Waikato River Authority and Waikato Regional Council, Brian Lees		
	and Andrew Caldwell		
Smythe Farm	Waikato River Authority and Waikato Regional Council, Isobel and		
	David Smythe		
Taupiri Cemetery	Waikato River Authority, WCEET, Waikato District Council		

Waikato RiverCare was also able to secure funding from Trees That Count for the purchase of plants on two of our current projects (Butler Farm Extension and Gateway projects).

The organisations online profile has seen a steady growth with interaction increasing on the RiverCare Facebook page. Plans are in place to set up an Instagram and Linkedin accounts to increase our reach.

Waikato RiverCare continues to have a close working relationship with the Sustainable Business Network via its Million Metres programme and in January 2021, the RiverCare team were able to show Million Metres staff around their crowd funded project, the Te Onetea Extension project.

This financial year, due to COVID-19, Waikato RiverCare was unable to support or hold any public planting events. In the near future, we hope to be back running our own planting days and supporting events such as the Lower Waikato River Trout Fishing Contest and the Waikato 100.

### **Our Year in Numbers**

2020-21

2019-20

\$375,643

**Total Spending** 

\$336,466

**Total Spending** 

\$493,497

Total Funding (grants, sponsorship and interest)

\$316,658

Total Funding (grants, sponsorship and interest)

12,635

**Plants Planted** 

47,785

**Plants Planted** 

ń

Volunteers Helping Out

63

**Volunteers Helping Out** 

24

**Current Projects** 

20

**Current Projects** 

6.5

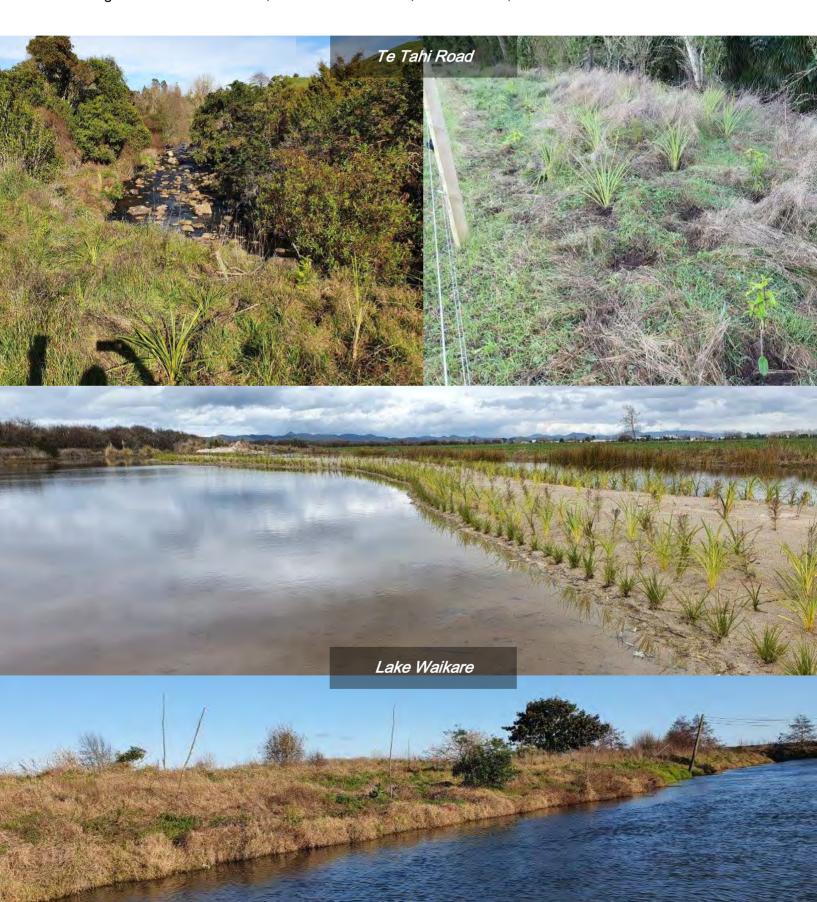
**Hectares Planted** 

32

**Hectares Planted** 

# **Community Involvement**

Due to COVID-19, there were no public planting events on any of our projects sites this financial year. However, our planting contractors manage to get 12,635 plants in the ground, across 5 project: Mangawara Oxbow Wetlands, Te Onetea Extension, Lake Waikare, Te Tahi Road and Tuhonohono.



### **Future Plans**

The long-term effects of COVID-19 on New Zealand's economy and communities is yet to be known. However, during these uncertain times, Waikato RiverCare's Executive Committee remains committed to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the organisation. The committee's priority is to supporting our project partners, contractors and communities that work with us to deliver such great outcomes.

RiverCare's focus over the next 12 months will be in the following key areas:

- Building and maintain our iwi partners and community groups.
- Increase RiverCare's pipeline of new projects and family of project co-funders.
- Engage with the community to build partnerships on new RiverCare projects.
- Deliver key outcomes of RiverCare's endorsed three-year strategic plan.
- Maintain the highest standard of project delivery for our project partners and funders.
- Maintain the excellent reputation the organisation has established in delivering quality outcomes.



# RiverCare Projects

RiverCare's projects usually cover a 3-5 years period and involve active vegetation removal, planting and post planting care.

To view the project site locations, including projects completed prior to 2020, visit www.waikatorivercare.co.nz/planting-sites.

	X65		
	Project Name	Planting Area (hectares)	
	New Projects		
W AND A	Butler Farm Extension	1 ha	
ana se	Lake Areare	1.1 ha	
1111	Lake Ohinewai Recreational Reserve	7.05 ha	
A WAR THE	Opuatia Catchment	7 ha	
	Smyth Farm	6.25 ha	
	Taupiri Cemetery	2.3 ha	
	Projects in Progess		
	Butler Farm	5.2 ha	VA 85
	Gateway Project (SH1 Meremere)	1 ha	J. J. Karley and Co.
5 Cal 1	Hakarimata G (Candy Licence)	0.79 ha	
	Lake Whangape	0.4 ha	
The Later to	Koheroa Road Black Farm	14 ha	
TIN THE	Mangawara Stream Project 1	1.26 ha	and the same
All Control	Te Onetea Lake Waikare	12.26 ha	
	Te Onetea Stream "WRA Site 4"	1.58 ha	No Parties
1 Les No	Te Awamutu WWTP	1.43 ha	
The state of	Te Tahi WTP	0.38 ha	
	Tūhonohono	1.34 ha	
	Wai O Te Atua Project	4 ha	
	Completed Projects		
L. F. V. WIN	Huntly Waterworks	1.75 ha	
<b>建</b>	Mangawara Catchment Tuna & Wildlife	1.4 ha	(1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1)
	Mangawara Landon Oxbow	1.1 ha	
MARINE MEDICAL	Mangawara McConnell Road Oxbow	1.7 ha	
Chair Thinks	Te Onetea Extension	0.42 ha	

## **Breakdown of Financial Statements**

Our full Financial Statements are available on our website, <a href="www.waikatorivercare.co.nz">www.waikatorivercare.co.nz</a>.

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

Revenue	2020/21
Grants/sponsorship	\$472,452
Interest	\$13,527
Other Revenue	\$7,518
Total	\$493,497
Expenses	2020/21
Project costs	\$239,975
Staff costs	\$118,087
Other Expenses	\$17,581
Total	\$375,643
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$117,854

## 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
- We're always interested in new project ideas big or small
- Tell others about the work that we are doing!
- Email us at info@waikatorivercare.co.nz

We'd like to acknowledge and thank our generous sponsors, partners, and donors for your continued support.