



Waimatā – Pakarae Catchment Advisory Group – Hui 7

Date: 5 November 2024

Subject: Scheduled waterbodies

1. Introduction

The Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan (TRMP) includes a range of waterbodies that are ‘scheduled’ for particular values. Scheduled waterbodies have rules that require a more careful approach to activities around these waterbodies, where activities might impact on their values.

Currently the TRMP includes the following schedules:

- Regionally outstanding waterbodies
- Regionally significant wetlands
- Aquatic ecosystem waterbodies
- those with significant native freshwater fish values
- Habitats of threatened indigenous species
- Whitebait/inanga spawning sites
- Important habitats of trout
- Watercourses in land drainage schemes with ecological values,
- Significant swimming sites.

2. Outstanding Waterbodies within the Waimatā-Pakarae Catchment

During the development of the 2015 Regional Freshwater Plan, it was decided that the process of identification and evaluation of Regionally Outstanding Waterbodies would be undertaken through the catchment planning process. At the time, the process of identifying outstanding waterbodies was largely focused on the Waipaoa Catchment, which was being developed at the time.

Examples of outstanding waterbodies in the Waipaoa Catchment are Te Arai River (waterworks bush area above the water supply intake) and Lake Repongaere. These waterbodies were identified via a “long list” that were then evaluated against criteria.

Any waterbodies suggested as being “outstanding” in the Waimatā-Pakarae catchment would also be evaluated against the same criteria.

A key question for the group is whether there are any potentially outstanding waterbodies that should be evaluated.

3. Regionally Significant Wetlands

There are 22 regionally significant wetlands identified in schedule G17 of the current Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan.¹ These wetlands reflect the information available to Council during the development of the 2015 Regional Freshwater Plan. The process of identification and evaluation of scheduled wetlands drew on findings from reports assessing freshwater values and ecological significance of sites throughout the region:

- Wildlife and Wildlife Habitats in the East Cape region, which surveyed sites of special wildlife interest²
- The Froude Report, which assessed regional freshwater biodiversity values³
- The Department of Conservation Freshwater Ecosystems of New Zealand (FENZ) geodatabase 2010; a set of spatial data layers and supporting information providing a national representation of the biodiversity values and pressures on New Zealand's rivers, lakes and wetlands.

While the FENZ database provided national information on the extent of national wetlands, we still have a limited understanding of the extent and state of our wetlands in the region, especially wetlands that are on private land. Mapping refinement is planned in 2025, and the resulting inventory of wetlands, as required under the NPS-FM, will provide an opportunity to reassess those that are Regionally Significant for Tairāwhiti.

There are four Regionally Significant Wetlands within the Waimatā-Pakarae catchment area. They are found close to each other near the turn-off to Waihou Bay (Loisels):

Site	Values
Rototahi Wetlands	Raupo and Carex species, Sphagnum Moss, and a canopy of Manuka growing over surround several small ponds, plus a diverse range of wetland species. New Zealand Dabchick, and a wide range of waterfowl. High significance for wildlife and vegetation values.
Waihou Road Wetland (a)	Small elongated pond and wetland surrounded by coastal Tawa - Kohekohe Forest.
Waihou Road Wetland (b)	Dominated by Raupo, Manuka, and Harakeke.
King's Farm Wetland	Raupo is the dominant species with Manuka, Kohuhu, and Cabbage Tree. Note: at Hui #5, Members queried the naming of 'King's Farm Wetland', highlighting that 'Rototahi' is a significant name. Staff cannot locate documentation outlining decisions regarding naming conventions for wetlands. However, the original Department of Conservation survey of significant ecological sites, Wildlife and Wildlife Habitats in the East

¹ Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan [Schedule G17: Regionally Significant Waterbodies](#).

² G. Rasch. 1989. Wildlife and Wildlife Habitats in the East Cape region. Department of Conservation, New Zealand.

³ Froude. V. 2003. Freshwater Biodiversity in the Hawke's Bay East Coast Conservancy Department of Conservation Department of Conservation, New Zealand

	Cape region. used similar identifiers when recording ecological sites e.g. names of roads and farm owners' names. It is likely this practice was followed in the case of King's Farm Wetland. If a name change is appropriate, staff can investigate this possibility during the review process.
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4. Aquatic Ecosystem Waterbodies

The aquatic ecosystem waterbodies (schedule G15 of the TRMP) is made up of five parts:

Schedule part	Waterbodies identified
G15A - nationally and regionally significant habitats and migratory habits of native fish	The Waimatā River - Redfin Bully, Longfin Eel, Inanga, Common Bully
G15B - additional key habitats for Long Finned Eel	Waiomoko River, Pouawa River
G15C - freshwater habitats of threatened indigenous flora and fauna	No scheduled waterbodies within the Waimatā-Pakarae catchment area
G15D - known whitebait spawning sites	Waiomoko River
G15E - important habitats of trout.	No scheduled waterbodies within the Waimatā-Pakarae catchment area

Appendix 1 records recent eDNA results of 'At risk' species found at sites in the Waimatā-Pakarae catchment.

5. Whitebait Spawning Areas

One whitebait spawning area is scheduled in the TRMP – on the Waiomoko River. It is important that these areas are protected from riparian disturbance during the spawning season and there are rules in the TRMP focussed on this.

If members of the group are aware of other locations for whitebait or other native fish spawning that can be identified and mapped, then these could be brought through into the updated Freshwater Plan.

6. Significant Recreation and Swimming Areas in the Waimatā-Pakarae Catchment Plan Area

As well as important ecological values, the schedules identify significant recreation and swimming areas in the catchment.

There are a range of locations in the catchment plan area identified as important recreation areas:

- Waimatā River – The length of the river between the island and the confluence with the Taruheru River; Scout camp.
- Pouawa River – below bridge
- Turihaua River – river mouth
- Hamanatua Stream – Lagoon
- Wainui Stream – Stream mouth

Ensuring that swimming areas have safe water quality is a key part of developing the catchment plan.

The group is asked to consider:

Are the important swimming sites correctly identified?

Are there particular sites of greater importance for swimming?

Are there other recreation sites that should be identified – e.g. for waka ama or other boating use?

7. Other Features required by the NPSFM

The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) requires Council to include a range of requirements around the identification and protection of wetlands, mahinga kai and wāhi tapu sites in our reviewed freshwater planning provisions.

The first requirement is for all wetlands in the region to be identified and mapped. Council has started this process by undertaking a desktop study using LiDAR data to identify potential and likely wetlands across the region. This map has been provided to the group. The next step will be to undertake more detailed surveys and confirm the size, extent and type of each wetland.

Where possible, it will also be useful to specifically pinpoint mahinga kai and wai tapu sites in the Catchment Plan to better speak to the environmental outcomes sought for these values.

8. Next Steps

The Group is asked to review the scheduled areas outlined in this report and reflect on:

- **Are there any areas not mentioned in the schedules that should be assessed for potential inclusion?**
- **Should there be specific scheduling for other types of areas connected to freshwater values?**

This information will be collated and shared with the wider plan development team who are reviewing the Schedules at the Regional Plan level.

Appendix 1 - eDNA results in the Waimatā-Pakarae catchment

Fish species	Locations	NZ Threat Classification
Shortjaw kōkopu	Whakauranga Br	Nationally Vulnerable
Lamprey	Waimata River	
Longfin eel	Pakarae Trib Waimata River Pouawa River Turihaua Stream Cave Road Wainui Stream Kopuawhakatapa Str Whakauranga Br Waiomoko River Hamanatua Stream	Declining
Torrentfish	Waimata River Waimata River Waimata Turihaua Stream Waiomoko River Cave Road	
Kōaro	Cave Road Whakauranga Br	
Inanga	Pakarae Trib Waimata River Sponge Bay Waikirikiri Pouawa River Turihaua Stream Waiomoko River Kopuawhakatapa Stream Wainui Stream Cave Road Whakauranga Br Hamanatua Stream	
Bluegill bully	Waimata River Cave Road Whakauranga Br	
Giant bully	Waimata River Turihaua Stream Waiomoko River Wainui Stream Kopuawhakatapa Stream	Naturally Uncommon

	Cave Road Hamanatua Stream	
Other species	Locations	NZ Threat Classification
Freshwater mussel	Pakarae Trib Waimatā River Waiomoko River Whakauranga Br	Declining