



Piako
Waihou
Catchment Trust

RIVERS, STREAMS & ON-FARM WATERWAYS

Lifelines of the Piako Waihou Landscape

What makes them special?

The waterways of Piako Waihou form critical corridors connecting diverse ecosystems - from the Kaimai-Mamaku ranges to the Firth of Thames. These blue highways support an incredible diversity of native species.

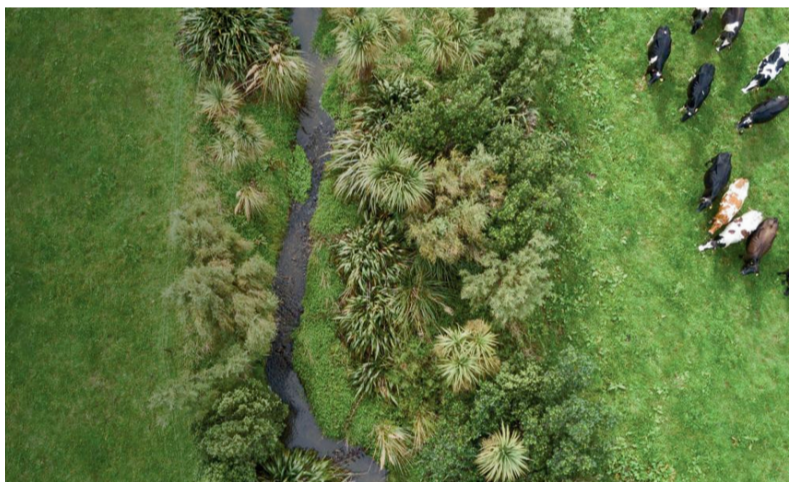


Photo: DairyNZ

Biodiversity Hotspots

Waikato Regional Council ranks waterways as high biodiversity value when they connect to:

- Existing ecosystems - Links to Kaimai-Mamaku forest
- Significant wetlands - Kopuatai and Torehape wetlands
- Coastal areas - Whitebait spawning zones
- Forest remnants - Lowland forest patches

Native Species You Might Find

- Fish: Shortfin eels, longfin eels, kōaro, banded kōkopu, whitebait species
- Birds: Mātuku-hūrepo, kotare (kingfisher), grey teal
- Plants: Raupō, flax, sedges, native grasses
- Invertebrates: Freshwater crayfish, mayflies, caddisflies
- Reptiles: Skinks in riparian areas



Photo: Angus McIntosh

Photo: Jason Burton

Ecosystem Functions

- Wildlife corridors - Allow species movement across landscape
- Nutrient cycling - Transport nutrients from land to sea
- Flood management - Natural water storage and flow control
- Water filtration - Remove sediments and pollutants
- Temperature regulation - Shade keeps water cool for fish



PROTECTION ACTIONS

Riparian Management

1. **Plant native buffer strips** - 2-20m wide depending on stream size
2. **Stock exclusion** - Fence waterways to prevent bank damage
3. **Bridge/culvert placement** - Maintain natural stream flow
4. **Shade creation** - Plant trees to keep water cool
5. **Bank stabilisation** - Use native plants to prevent erosion

Water Quality Improvement

- Reduce sediment runoff
- Minimise chemical inputs
- Manage stock access to prevent pugging and direct pollution
- Maintain flow regimes and preserve natural water patterns
- Create settling ponds for areas with unavoidable runoff

Habitat Enhancement

- **Preserve pool-riffle sequences** - Maintain natural stream structure
- **Remove barriers** - Improve fish passage at crossings
- **Protect headwaters** - Maintain source areas in good condition
- **Connect waterways** - Link isolated stream sections
- **Manage invasive weeds** - Control waterway pest plants

What to Include in Your Farm Plan

- ✓ Map all waterways and rate their current condition
- ✓ Identify priority areas for riparian planting
- ✓ Plan stock exclusion with alternative water sources
- ✓ Set goals for water quality improvement
- ✓ Include fish passage improvements
- ✓ Monitor native species presence
- ✓ Budget for fencing, plants, and maintenance

Monitoring Opportunities

- **eDNA sampling** - Detect presence of native fish species
- **Visual surveys** - Count eels, native birds, and plant health
- **Water quality testing** - Track improvement over time
- **Photo monitoring** - Document changes in habitat condition



RESOURCES + SUPPORT

- Waikato Regional Council riparian support schemes
- NIWA freshwater identification guides
- Local iwi guidance on waterway management
- Sustainable farming incentive programmes



piakowaihourestoration.org/resources

