

Report 04.25
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Committees Landcare and Environment
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Waitohu Stream Study

1. Purpose

To seek the Committees' endorsement of the Waitohu Stream Study, a joint Divisional project, as outlined in this report.

2. Background

In November 2002 the Landcare Committee approved a scope and programme for the Waitohu Flood Hazard Assessment (refer to report 02.708). The aims of this assessment were to describe the flood hazard, and identify and document issues associated with the hazard.

The Environment Division is also targeting the Waitohu Stream as it is one of the region's six most polluted streams.

In order to manage the stream in an integrated way, we propose to formalise a whole stream approach to its management. In effect we will be combining the two Divisions' work programmes. The original Waitohu Flood Hazard Assessment scope now requires some modification as a result of the joint approach.

3. Scope of study

The first phase is to gather information about the stream and to talk to the local community. We are referring to this phase as the 'Waitohu Stream Study'. It involves investigating the flood hazard posed by the stream and reviewing the stream's water quality and ecosystem health. This is a technical exercise using data about flooding and the results of our water quality monitoring. Those people who live by and use the stream will also be asked what they want for their stream, now and in the future. At the end of the process we would like to be in a position for Councillors to decide, together with the tangata whenua, landowners and the community, how the stream should be managed and cared for.

3.1 Flood hazard assessment

The aims of the flood hazard components of the study remain unchanged. The specific outputs will include:

- a series of technical reports which investigate a number of the stream's characteristics
- a computer hydraulic model of the stream
- a computer rainfall-runoff model for catchment hydrology
- flood hazard maps.

3.2 Water quality and ecosystem health assessment

Over the years there have been a number of studies of aspects of the stream such as riparian vegetation, freshwater fish, water quality and bird numbers. This information will be supplemented with further work on the stream's flows, habitat, ecosystem health and catchment characteristics (refer to **Attachment 1** for a list of the technical reports being compiled).

3.3 Consultation

Consultation¹ with iwi, landowners and relevant organisations will begin in February. The consultation process aims to get an indication of community aspirations for the stream and to identify issues and concerns, as well as to present some of the findings from the technical investigations.

It is important that we do not raise expectations as to actions or possible solutions to problems. For the study's flood hazard components in particular, this phase is one of identifying problems and concerns and obtaining baseline data. Consequently, we do not intend to identify options for resolving any problems. That is dependent on the outcome of this study and may form a second phase work programme.

The proposed consultation methodology remains largely unchanged from that Flood Protection outlined to the Landcare Committee in November 2002. That is:

- a press release and newsletters
- individual stakeholder meetings
- a community meeting
- release of the final summary report.

The key change is the extent of the consultation, which will now involve slightly larger consultation groups in the lower beach area and Convent Road area (to incorporate parts of Managapouri Stream), and an additional group above Ringawhati Road, which is upstream of the area managed by Flood Protection.

¹ A detailed scope and consultation methodology has been prepared for the study

4. Reporting

The results of the technical investigations will be reported to both the Landcare and Environment Committees at the end of June 2004.

We will then prepare a further report, incorporating the results of consultation with the community, by December 2004.

We anticipate that this report will include:

- summary of technical investigations
- summary of consultation
- summary of community expectations/aspirations
- identification of issues
- recommendations on where to next.

The recommendations will depend upon the nature of the problems and issues identified in the study. In other words, only when we have done the assessment will the Council (and the community) be able to decide what future measures are needed and what should happen next (phase 2).

5. Programme and budget

5.1 Programme

The key changes from the programme outlined to the Landcare Committee in November 2002 are:

- highlights of technical investigation to be identified by February 2004
- public consultation to start in February 2004
- draft technical reports to be completed by May 2004
- final technical reports to be completed by June 2004
- public meeting May/June 2004
- summary report completed – December 2004.

5.2 Budget

The Waitohu Flood Hazard Assessment has a budget of \$120,000, to be spread over the 2002/03 and 2003/04 financial years. With the wider study, the expected project costs for Flood Protection have increased by up to \$20,000, with some of this cost being incurred in the 2004/05 financial year. The additional costs will be accommodated from existing budgets.

The Environment Division is funding its part of the study from existing budgets in the Environment Co-ordination and Resource Investigations Departments.

6. Communication

In the first instance we propose that a press release and newsletter be prepared to announce the Waitohu Stream Study to the community.

Extensive further communication will occur as part of the consultation process (section 4).

7. Summary

The joint approach to the Waitohu Stream Study will provide improved outcomes for the community and lead ultimately to an improvement in the management and health of the stream.

8. Recommendations

That the Landcare Committee:

1. *receive the report.*
2. *note the contents of the report.*
3. *endorse the Waitohu Stream Study and consultation as outlined in this report.*

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Attachment 1: Technical investigations list