

# Kaituna River and Ōngātoro/ Maketū Estuary Strategy Progress Report 2010 to 2011



# A message from Mary-Anne Macleod Chief Executive, Bay of Plenty Regional Council

This is the second progress report the Regional Council has delivered on the progress we are making in implementing the Kaituna River and Ongātoro/Maketū Estuary Strategy.

This is an action plan that the whole community can be involved in, and during this second year of the Strategy, it has been very encouraging to see the community groups and volunteers take ownership of many projects. Their results are impressive, and we look forward to their continuing involvement.

During the year we have seen progress in the many projects that are part of the Strategy. This includes improvements to the existing Kaituna Wildlife Management Reserve, building on the ecological and recreational benefits it provides to the region, as well as improving water quality.

With many big Bay of Plenty projects coming up in this area – including Tauranga Eastern Link and the Rangiuru Business Park – the future of this important Strategy will continue to evolve in the coming years.

Our vision:

*“Celebrate and honour Kaituna River and Ōngātoro/Maketū  
Estuary life as taonga”*

*“Whakanuia, whakamawawatia te mauri o te Kaituna me  
Ōngātoro hei taonga”*



**Mary-Anne Macleod**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE





## Introduction

Welcome to the second annual progress report for the Kaituna River and Ongātoro/ Maketū Estuary Strategy. This Strategy was adopted by Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Rotorua District Council, Tauranga City Council and Western Bay of Plenty District Council in August 2009. This report is an update on progress made by community groups and lead agencies on actions outlined in the Strategy as at 25 August 2011. The report gives an idea of what the area could look like in the future, covering the progress that has been made to each of the four outcomes in the Strategy and what the next steps are for the Strategy.

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# Artistic impression of what the area could look like in the future

The artist's impression on page 10 has been produced by partner agencies involved in the Strategy to show how the key actions of the Strategy fit together. The picture gives an idea of what the area could look like if the outcomes of the Strategy and SmartGrowth are met. This picture is simply a concept and could change as the strategy evolves. We will be consulting with the community on the concept soon.

The letters below indicate the bubbles on the map on page 10. Further explanatory notes for each bubble will be available during consultation in the future.

## Outcomes 1 & 2:

### Improving water quality and restoring healthy ecosystems

- (A) The existing Kaituna Wildlife Management Reserve would continue to be improved, building on the ecological and recreational benefits it provides to the region.
- (B) 100 hectares of additional wetland could provide new habitats for native species to flourish, as well as improve water quality in the estuary.
- (C) These wetlands could be linked together along the banks of the Kaituna River to form an ecological corridor.
- (D) Most of the river flow could be restored back into the estuary through Ford's Cut using low impact construction works. This would allow the estuary's ecosystem to replenish while maintaining public use of the river.
- (E) The Papahikahawai Channel could be opened up, allowing tidal flushing to help improve the estuary while maintaining public access to the popular Te Tumu Cut wharf.

*Maketū Beach*



- (F) Rural drains and creeks could be managed so that water discharging from them is not contaminated. Stormwater wetlands would act as natural water filters to ensure that drainage water is settled and de-silted before entering the river and estuary.

## Outcomes 3 & 4:

### Stewardship and sustainability

- (G) The principle of kaitiakitanga would lead a conservative approach to how resources are managed long-term. Kaimoana gathering and other traditional rights would be protected.
- (H) and (I) Potential Regional or Sub-regional parks would be established at key locations such as at significant dunes (H) or wetland environments (I). Public ownership of these sites would protect the natural beauty of these sites and allow people to enjoy the local environment.

### Planning for the future

- (J) The Tauranga Eastern Link state highway (J) provides a strategic transport connection to improve travel between Tauranga, Whakatāne, and Rotorua.
- (K) The Rangiuru Business Park, a new 150 hectare area of mixed industrial uses, could provide 30 percent of its land for stormwater treatment and new wetlands.
- (L) Pāpāmoa East is identified as a population corridor in the SmartGrowth Strategy. 2021-2051. Te Tumu itself would become a residential township of up to 20,000 inhabitants. The township could contain suitable businesses including cafes and shops, and public amenities grouped around coastal parks and waterfront developments.

*New picnic tables at Te tumu Cut*



# Outcome 1: Improving water quality

## What it means

This outcome aims to achieve and maintain good water quality in the Kaituna River and Ōngātoro/Maketū Estuary.

## Progress made towards achieving the outcome

DairyNZ, Fonterra, dairy farmers, and Bay of Plenty Regional Council Land Management staff have been working together in accordance with the Clean Streams Accord, A Guide to Managing Waterways on Bay of Plenty Farms to achieve beneficial goals for the community and landowners. Properties that must comply with the Clean Streams Accord (Fonterra supply farms) or riparian protection through the Bay of Plenty Regional Water and Land Plan will be offered a Resource Management Plan and trees at cost to assist them in riparian management.

All discharges within the Kaituna Catchment that require resource consent under the Regional Water and Land Plan are monitored by Bay of Plenty Regional Council. This includes monitoring and enforcing all consented dairy discharges where necessary, the AFFCO Rangiuru plant and the Te Puke sewage plant. Bay of Plenty Regional Council staff also follow up complaints about illegal discharges.

Over the past 12 months, Bay of Plenty Regional Council has successfully prosecuted one dairy farmer in the Kaituna catchment for not complying with their resource consent for dairy effluent discharge. A further prosecution of a dairy farmer in the same catchment for the same offence is currently underway.

Bay of Plenty Regional Council staff have recently been involved in removing 13 illegal derelict structures from the Kaituna river between Bell Road and the Kaituna cut. These were old whitebait stands that had fallen into disrepair and were no longer used.

*Te Tumu Cut Jetty – a popular fishing spot*





# Outcome 2: Restoring healthy ecosystems

## What it means

This outcome aims to restore waterways and areas of robust wetland, particularly in the lower reaches:

- so the river and its tributaries provide good habitats for indigenous flora and fauna;
- so fish can migrate freely along rivers and streams and spawn in the tidal reaches of the lower Kaituna River; and
- to provide for a balanced, nourishing natural environment by stabilising coastal sand dunes and the sand spit, and increasing wetland and riparian margins.

## Progress on wetlands

The Regional Council land management team has continued to provide advice and assistance to landowners to maintain good land management practices. The Land Management team is currently developing a Catchment Management Plan that identifies priority areas and properties within the catchment. As part of this Plan, a land use study has already been completed which identified key land management issues, such as biodiversity loss and water quality for the Kaituna and Maketū catchments. The Plan will expand on the land use study to include community vision (by public meeting or survey) and prioritise operational works on a 'farm-by-farm' scale. Prioritising works will not be a public document. The Plan will also identify significant wetlands and prioritise land management work with interested parties. These plans are in development.

Riparian Management Plans (RMPs) are used to promote sustainable riparian management to private landowners undertaking riparian works or Care groups working on public reserve land. The plans provide advice, planning and funding up to 25 percent. RMPs and Environmental Plans, a predecessor to RMPs, have been completed in the catchment, with others under negotiation.

High Ecological Value Sites have been identified and are a priority in the catchment as areas to protect and enhance.

Biodiversity Management Plans (BMPs) are another tool used by Bay of Plenty Regional Council Land Management staff. BMPs promote and provide advice landowners and the community to protect indigenous biodiversity, with a focus on those sites of highest ecological and/or community value. The plans provide advice, planning and funding up to 75 percent. Two BMPs have been completed in the catchment as well as an Environmental Enhancement Fund project, with other plans under negotiation.

Pest plants and pest animals will continue to be managed through the Bay of Plenty Regional Pest Management Strategy. The Strategy review has been completed and was approved by the Council in July 2010. Pest management will be subject to individual agreements with landowners on private land, as well as other agencies for managing pests on public land. We will continue to give technical assistance to several care groups in the Maketū area.

The Department of Conservation (DoC) has undertaken pest plant control in Kaituna Wildlife Management Reserve, with particular emphasis on the Kahikatea stands and around the western ox-bow. The pest plants around the kahikatea will be replaced by a planting programme in October, in association with the Living Legends (Rugby World Cup) project. DoC is also working closely with the Tauranga Eastern Link contractors to maximise conservation outcomes from the road development. Replanting of the retired grazing area has continued with the assistance of local schools. A small collection of flax weaving cultivars has been planted in conjunction with Maketū School.

## **Progress towards 100 ha of new wetlands**

The Department of Conservation and Fish & Game developed a conceptual model of an expanded Kaituna Wetland which has not yet been approved for release. The wetlands feasibility assessment was completed and presented to Council. It decided that its role in creating 100 hectares of wetlands in the lower Kaituna catchment would be to support the creation of wetlands when the opportunity arises. A specific policy will be developed that enables the creation of wetlands through the review of the Policy on Regional Parks scheduled for 2011/2012.

## **Progress on re-diverting the Kaituna River**

In the 2010/2011 year there have been several very interesting developments regarding the re-diversion of the Kaituna River. Significant steps include construction and use of a new hydraulic modelling software package. The creation of an additional 100 hectares of wetlands and re-diversion has the potential to compliment this work. The use of a model that can accurately portray overland flow is essential to the success of both work-streams. The list of potential re-diversion options has been narrowed to five which are currently being assessed for their effects on estuary water quality, flood risk, farmland drainage, recreational interests, costs and other considerations.

Water quality modelling has been completed, and provided valuable information on the ecological effects of a full diversion that can be used to help select a viable re-diversion option.

Work on assessing the impacts of the re-diversion has begun with modelling the effects of a full re-diversion on water quality. This will indicate whether re-diverting the Kaituna River back into the Maketū Estuary will improve the health of the Estuary.



An ideal 'technical' option for the re-diversion is also being developed by staff. The purpose of this option is to find out the most practical and effective way to improve the health of the Estuary, while not increasing the risk of flooding to the Kaituna River Scheme. Once completed, we will be consulting with the community to decide on the preferred option before the resource consent process starts.

#### Timeline of the Kaituna River

- 1902:** The Kaituna River flowed into Maketū Estuary via Papahikahawai channel
- 1907:** River naturally breaks out at Te Tumu.
- 1925-28:** Ford's Cut (Twin Cut) made, most likely to divert the river back into the Estuary.
- 1928-56:** The Kaituna River flowed into the estuary through Fords Cut and the Paphikahawai Channel.
- 1956:** Te Tumu Diversion to sea to reduce flooding to surrounding land. Ford's Cut and Papahikahawai blocked.
- 1979:** Start of Kaituna Catchment Control Scheme. Kaituna River Diversion to bypass River loop.
- 1992-94:** Department of Conservation consent for re-diversion through Ford's Cut after approximately 40 years of closure.
- 1996:** Flow partially diverted through Fords Cut with culverts installed in 1995.
- 2001-09:** Kaituna River and Ōngātoto/Maketū Estuary Strategy developed and adopted.

*Ōngātoto/Maketū Estuary looking towards Tauranga*



# Kaituna River and Ōngātoro/Maketū Estuary:

For a description of the map and each of the bubbles please see pages 4-5



## Planning for the Future

# What the area could look like in the future

## Improving Water Quality & Restoring Healthy Ecosystems (Outcomes 1 & 2)



## Stewardship & Sustainability (Outcomes 3 & 4)



(Outcomes 3 & 4)

# Outcome 3: Ensuring sustainable resource use

## What it means

This outcome aims to ensure resources in the Kaituna River and Ōngātoto/Maketū Estuary are managed and used in a way that protects and enhances the things the community values.

## Progress made towards achieving the outcome

Plan Change 44 (Wairakei Urban Growth Area) is now complete and the planning provisions within the Operative District Plan are now operative. Completion of the planning process and Environment Court hearings now creates the opportunity for developers to begin undertaking comprehensive planning to enable implementation of this new urban growth area.

The timing of when urban areas can be developed is managed by the Regional Policy Statement – Change No. 2. This regime provides for opening up of new growth areas, such as the future Te Tumu Urban Growth Area, through specific policies in the RPS. These policies require structure planning and considering sustainable management and protection of key ecological, landscape, cultural and heritage values.

Through the Proposed Tauranga City Plan, new provisions have been drafted that will ensure key values within the future Te Tumu Urban Growth Area are identified and protected now from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. Structure planning into the future will enable wider consideration of the boundaries of these areas. Identification and protection of open coastal areas, indigenous vegetation and key wetland areas (such as along the Kaituna River) now ensures that these areas will be recognised and protected. Some of these new provisions are under appeal, however we anticipate that these will be able to be resolved.

Western Bay of Plenty's District Plan sets rules on buffering of wetlands when Transferable Protection Lots are subdivided. Wetlands smaller than 2 ha require a minimum of a 10 m indigenous buffer before they are eligible. Those over 2 ha require a buffer area of a suitable width prescribed by a certified ecologist.

# Outcome 4: Kaitiakitanga and local people's stewardship

## What it means

This outcome aims to:

- ensure tangata whenua are easily able to get kaimoana, and other kai for themselves and their manuhiri
- allow the public to enjoy the local environment

## Progress made towards achieving the outcome

The Harbourmaster encourages suitable volunteers to receive free training to become wardens on the Kaituna River and in the Maketū Estuary. While no volunteers were forthcoming over the 2010/2011 summer boating season, educational material on boating on the estuary/river and the rules of the Bay of Plenty Navigation and Safety Bylaw has been produced and is available to the community. Educational material about boating on the estuary/river is provided to the community.

The speed limit on the Kaituna River downstream of the Bell Road boat ramp was changed to 20 knots in the Bay of Plenty Navigation Safety by-law review of 2010. Between 15 August and 30 November the speed limit is 10 knots.

To better facilitate the public enjoyment of fishing from the Te Tumu groyne, a safety barrier, picnic tables and a barbeque have been installed for all to enjoy.

Western Bay of Plenty District Council will be undertaking a Plan Change in the coming year to add additional culturally significant sites to Appendix 3 of the District Plan, and this includes sites identified by iwi of Te Arawa, Waitaha and Tapuika in the Kaituna / Maketū area.

The Maketū Project Team has added organising a community-held hui to its 2011 project list. The hui would allow members of the community and environmental groups to explore options and collaborate on environmental issues.



# Other things happening in the area

## Tauranga Eastern Link (TEL)

The 23 km long TEL project is well underway now, with a completion date set of 2016. The project contract was awarded in November to the Fulton Hogan HEB Construction Alliance, a collaboration of six companies which is delivering the project under a design and construct contract. Main activities being undertaken currently include:

- Main culvert structures for the Kaituna Road extension have been completed. The road has been preloaded and is currently in its settling period.
- The Diagonal Drain pump station upgrade (near the Kaituna Wildlife Reserve) is successfully finished and is operating (increased pumping capacity from 4.5 cubic metres per second to 6.0 cubic metres per second).
- Fulton Hogan HEB Construction Alliance is constructing haul roads from Pah Road to the eastern bank of the Kaituna River and to the western bank from Bell Road. Haul roads will help reduce disruption on the local road network. Haul roads are being fenced off and existing drainage systems maintained.

*An overview of future projects happening in the Kaituna Catchment – SOURCE NZTA*



## Pāpāmoa East urban development

The SmartGrowth Strategy identifies Pāpāmoa East as the eastern corridor for future development. It will accommodate a large proportion of the sub-region's projected population growth to 2051. SmartGrowth envisages development of Wairakei (stage one) from 2011 to 2025 and Te Tumu (stage two) between 2021 and 2051. Planning is already well underway transforming these areas into vibrant new towns.

## Maketū Community Development Plan

Western Bay of Plenty District Council has been granted consent for a Wastewater Treatment Plant for the Kaituna Maketū community, as the Regional On-site Effluent Treatment Plan requires all septic tanks within this area to be updated with a wastewater system by December 2013. Construction of the treatment plant will begin shortly and completion is planned for early to mid 2012.

*Whitewater rafting is very popular on the upper Kaituna River*





# Next steps in progressing the Strategy

The following headings set out the next steps for the Strategy's three significant actions. These are actions that require input from many agencies, stakeholders, iwi and community groups, and may take a few years to fully implement. The agencies will continue to work with community groups to look for better ways to do the everyday tasks as these significant actions progress.

## Re-diverting the river into the estuary

The Bay of Plenty Regional Council will continue to undertake a detailed analysis and comparison of diversion option impacts until a selection of well-researched options can be presented to the community for review. The preferred technical options will then be refined and undergo costing estimations. The chosen option will then be assessed to make sure it aligns with the four Strategy Outcomes.

The Regional Council is carrying out an additional study to examine the physical effects of the re-diversion on the current river mouth at Te Tumu. This study looks at the sensitivity of the river mouth stability, with changing outflows caused by a partial diversion, as well as assessing potential ways of training the river mouth at Te Tumu to maintain boating access and flood relief.

## 100 Hectares of additional wetlands

Bay of Plenty Regional Council will develop a specific policy that enables creation of wetlands as opportunities arise. The policy will be developed through the review of the Policy on Regional Parks scheduled to be undertaken in the 2011/12 year. The policy will provide the Council with a clear direction for establishing wetlands, including in the lower Kaituna catchment. It will provide a decision-making framework for taking advantage of opportunities as they arise.

## Regional parks

Staff from Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Bay of Plenty Regional Council are continuing to work together to look at ways to better integrate our planning for regional/sub-regional open space (including a potential coastal regional reserve). In particular we are working to align the review of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council Regional Parks Policy and the Joint Tauranga City Council/Western Bay of Plenty District Council Sub-regional Parks Policy. Elected member direction on these issues will be undertaken as part of the Councils' Ten Year Plan processes.

## Ten Year Plan budgeting

Each Council allocates resources for the Strategy through their respective Ten Year Plans (also known as long-term plans). Each Council's Ten Year Plan sets out what projects the Council will do, and what funding has been assigned to those projects. The Councils will be working towards completing their next Ten Year Plan by June 2012, which includes formal consultation and public feedback. The Ten Year Plan process will determine the level of public resources assigned to implement the Strategy.

*Children swimming in the Maketū Estuary*





## Case study – “Maketū Taiapure group”

*We are a small taiapure group in Maketū which saw the need to protect and enhance what remained of our marine resources. Taiapure translates literally as ‘a coastal patch’ and is one of the means by which the government has acknowledged that Māori, as tangata whenua, are entitled to have rangatiratanga (chieftainship) over their fisheries.*

*Our Maketū Taiapure group was established in 1996, only the second Taiapure to be set up in New Zealand. The Minister of Fisheries then approved a Committee of Management consisting of two representatives of each of the coastal peoples and two from inland to advise the Minister of Fisheries on regulations to control all types of fishing within the local area.*

*The initial focus of the Maketū Taiapure group was to study the existing coastal resource and harvesting activity in the area. Our aim now is to control the harvesting of the resource to a sustainable level and to enhance the resource so we can achieve our long-term goal of making sure that there will be sustainable harvest for all users of the resource.*

*Some of the activities we have been involved with include:*

- 1 Surveying the shellfish harvesting patterns within the Maketū estuary (joint venture with NIWA).*
- 2 Undertaking shellfish surveys of Maketū and Little Waihi estuaries (joint venture with private consultant Akroyd Walsh).*
- 3 Undertaking whitebait survey in conjunction with DoC.*
- 4 Appointing an Education Officer.*
- 5 Dive surveying of mussel, paua and kina with NIWA.*

*One of the main activities the group is currently undertaking is restoring whitebait habitat on the Kaituna River.*

*“Ōngātoro” is the tangata whenua name for the Maketū Estuary.  
The name comes from “Ngatoroirangi” who was the esteemed  
tohunga/navigator of the Te Arawa waka.*

## **Contact details**

**If you have any questions or you would like more information on how the Strategy is being implemented, please feel free to contact Bay of Plenty Regional Council on:**

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