



Kaitiaki Whangaroa Association Inc.
Chairperson Property and Operations Annual Report
November 2022

To: Association Members, and all associated and interested people and organisations

For many people this has been a challenging year with the continuing influence from Covid and other health concerns, the effects of war and turmoil, and lots of rain and other extreme weather events! These few challenges aside, I hope you are well and able to receive this report in the good faith it is intended.

Our Kaupapa is the protection, restoration, and enhancement of the ngahere and taiao – the environment of the Whangaroa area. While it is our part in this Kaupapa to:

- i) Support and encourage local initiatives,
- ii) Collaborate and work together with others,
- iii) Administer and coordinate resources,
- iv) Monitor and raise awareness, and
- v) Plan for the protection, restoration and enhancement of the Whangaroa environment.

It is also our responsibility to consider both the physical/biological aspects, and the people and cultural aspects, as well as the ability to guide and coordinate resources applied to a common vision.

Our Vision

From our Whangaroa Environmental Vision we created together in 2019, and by considering the issues raised around water quality, we decided to work on improving the drinkability, swim-ability and biodiversity of our waterways. In this regard two projects have evolved – one is the Tiakina Waikare Awa Project, and the other is a local Inanga Restoration Project in collaboration with The Whitebait Connection and our water monitoring project.

Through this last year, and due to a range of circumstances – weather and Covid included – we have still managed to hold some events to raise awareness about the health of our streams and waterways and promote the work of stream restorations at Waikare Stream in Kaeo.

Although we still hope to hold a Waiora Symposium when time permits, nevertheless we did hold a Kaitiaki Awareness Day in July, Plastic Free Month. This was held at the Whangaroa War

Memorial Hall in Kaeo in conjunction with a rubbish clean-up around town thanks to Anouk and Eco solutions for organising. Being beside Waikare Stream, the focus of the day was in presenting the water monitoring information we have been gathering and to raise awareness about the drinkability, swim-ability and biodiversity of our streams and waterways. This information was strengthened by the Freshwater Fish Survey conducted with support from Reconnecting Northland during last spring and summer, and also an outstanding presentation from Nic Naysmith of the Whitebait Connections, about the need for inanga restoration.



Kayaking on Kaeo River to identify the saltwater wedge and spawning habitats

Networks and Connections

As a largely volunteer organisation we rely on networking and connections to make things happen, and this mirrors the wholistic view of the environment which we endeavour to protect, restore and enhance. For instance, the connection of the health of inanga to the health of the entire ecosystem.

Through interest in our water testing etc., we have a growing number of people willing to volunteer in Kaitiaki activities such as water and bird monitoring, and the restoration of Waikare Stream. In this time, we have also gained an Association member, John Rakena, who is now a committee nominee.

The idea around stream restoration is to form a catchment group that represents those with viable interests in those streams. This group would coordinate and organise the project.

At this stage, we have full moral support from local hapū, landowners, businesses, council, etc., however with the problems around people meeting to get organised, that catchment group, or more particularly, the project, sits with Kaitiaki Whangaroa Association. Also, with the relationship we have developed with the Regional Councils Rivers Team, we have begun with clearing the privet by the Hall in preparation for a 5-year riparian planting project. Information about the Tiakina Waikare Awa Project will be illustrated on a sign to be paid for and installed by the Council somewhere in public view alongside the stream.



Committee members and supporters viewing Waikare Stream alongside Jenny Gillanders, from NRC

Through the taonga species Inanga, the Tiakina Waikare Awa project connects with a restoration project being conducted by Whitebait Connect to restore inanga spawning habitat where the fresh and saltwater meet.

At this point, I will also mention the rahui due to the plight of the scallops in the harbour and elsewhere which share the same issues of e-coli and sedimentation in waterways.

At the end of the summer holiday period in January, we collaborated with Eco-solutions and Plastic Free Kaeo to coordinate a rubbish clean up from Waiare swimming hole to Tauranga Bay beach. With four cubic meters of rubbish collected and a huge group of participants, this was a very successful and rewarding activity with many thanks to Nyree and Rio of Finline Decorators in providing a BBQ lunch on completion.



Whanau helping in the end of summer Clean Up

Strategies

Raising awareness by monitoring, sharing information, and promoting cultural understanding remain as the major strategies with regard to achieving our Kaupapa. The effect of protecting, restoring and enhancing Waikare Stream flowing through town, and the source of its water supply, is to provide a model highlighting what stream health is about and how to achieve it. The developing 5-year plan is to include riparian planting for 300m above the bridge in town and 200m downstream to the Kaeo River, to improve stream ecology, community connections, public education and to suitably beautify a flood prone area. This strategy which draws together many elements of our environmental Kaupapa, would be to hold community working bee events and planting ceremonies to prepare, plant and maintain the project.

After a year of SHMAK water monitoring testing on the Kaeo River, Waiare and a few other streams, we are now planning adjust that program to include Te Awaroa-Pupuke River, and possibly Touwai Stream. This will involve developing a group of tangata with connections and interests in their awa to do periodic water monitoring. Also, this will help us build a bigger picture of the waterways in our area and the impacts on the marine environment, all of which are part of our Whangaroa Catchment Plan.

Coordination and Administration

In the domain of the Committee a \$20,000 Lotteries Grant in April to build capacity and capability in this area. This has been divided into two parts with paid employment for a communications role, and also to improve and upgrade our communications systems including website and google account, face book strategies, and construction of digital resources. Contracts have been made to engage Robyn and Lorraine to do this work, with consideration to conflicts of interest especially that Lorraine is also our Treasurer. To date some of this work has been achieved although compounded by Lorraine's absence while caring for her mother.

Money from the grant has also been used to purchase a Kaitiaki Whangaroa tear drop banner, t-shirts for sale and distribution, and a collection of flyers about what we do especially in regard to our waterway focus.

I heartily thank our committee for all their work in providing the enginery of our organisation, and especially our Secretary Katharina who has done an amazing job with this and her involvement with water monitoring. Although there have been disruptions and challenges in this period where we haven't reached a quorum, nevertheless we have still managed to keep meeting regularly, progressing our Kaupapa and also corresponding through our regular *Whangaroa Whisper* articles.

A remind to all Association Members that you are welcome to participate and contribute proposals at or through the Committee. One such proposal is that we run a seasonal series of events to promote kaitiaki activities at those particular times – ideas welcome!

Property and Resources

- (i) Technical Property
 - Website, Facebook page, email account
 - Information and data from water monitoring and freshwater fish survey
 - Kaitiaki Information Flyers
- (ii) Physical Property
 - Trap Library - 20 x SA2, 20 x DOC200, 6 x leg hold traps
 - SHMAK water testing kit (kept at the science lab at Whangaroa College)
 - 1 street banner & 1 teardrop banner
 - 25+ tee-shirts
 - 3 painted Mana Whenua, Mana Tangata, Mana Atua signs (kept at the Eco Centre)
- (iii) Financial Resources
 - See Treasurers' report regarding our Kiwibank Account

Recommendations:

1. That Kaitiaki Whangaroa be the community service organisation driving the Tiakina Waikare Awa Project.
2. That Kaitiaki Whangaroa develop the Whangaroa Catchment Plan.
3. That Kaitiaki Whangaroa develop a calendar of seasonal events.
4. That a volunteer database be developed.

Concluding Remarks

Being two years old now and positioned as a community organisation with a broad wholistic environmental purpose, we are ready to expand upon our vision.

Also we have constraints being a volunteer organisation during a time of extreme pressure on communities in general. Therefore, I acknowledge all the support – moral and financial, as well as those that are there when a job needs to be done.

A word of thanks goes to our Association Members and growing list of volunteers, and especially to our Committee and the Executive who hold it together.

Again, I look forward to your continued support.

Thank you all

With kind regards

Thomas Hawtin

Chairperson Kaitiaki Whangaroa Association Inc.

*Some of the native
species found in our
waterways.*

Left: Red fin bully

Right: Kaeo

