



Waipa Sustainable Milk Plans



DairyNZ Ltd - Adrian Brocksopp
 07 859 4066
 adrian.brocksopp@dairynz.co.nz

The dairy industry is committed to supporting on-farm changes that will contribute to desired water quality outcomes and demonstrate to policy-makers and the general public the benefits of this collective, industry action.

Experience from the Upper Waikato Sustainable Milk project (WRA11-019) has identified the value of working individually with dairy farmers to increase rates of good practice adoption and significant change on-farm. We now seek funding support from WRA to expand the delivery of targeted Sustainable Milk Plans to the Waipa catchment.

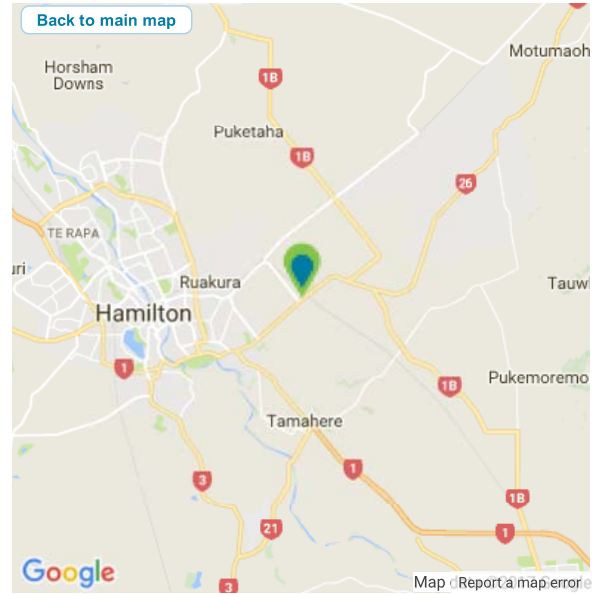
The Waipa River is the largest tributary of the Waikato River. The catchment faces significant water quality challenges from both historic land management decisions (e.g. erosion and resulting sediment issues in the river and its tributaries) and continued intensification of agriculture. For these reasons, the Waipa catchment (Area C) is now a high priority for restorative actions funded through WRA.

Through this project, dairy farmers in the Waipa catchment will significantly improve their environmental performance in terms of reducing nutrient, sediment and faecal matter loads to the Waipa River, improving water use efficiency and restoring and protecting habitats and ecosystems (e.g. wetlands). While based on existing national work programmes, the tools, resources and support associated with this project will be tailored to specific issues and solutions for the catchment and delivered to all catchment dairy farmers (i.e. +/- 855 farmers within 5 years).

We recognise that achieving improvements in water quality, water use efficiency and biodiversity and ultimately the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River will take time and therefore, this is a first step. However, building on the findings and lessons learned from the Upper Waikato Sustainable Milk Project, we believe the project will be of great value to the industry and the WRA in meeting our shared Vision for the Waikato River.

This is a Waikato River Authority funded project (WRA 14-006)

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