

4 Waikato at Tūākau Bridge

Use these insights to develop a farm environment plan that reduces impacts on fresh water and protects what matters in your catchment. For more details or support, call 0800 800 401 or visit waikatoregion.govt.nz/farm-environment-planning.

Prioritise these actions in your farm plan to improve water quality:

- Manage periods of **exposed soil between crops**.
- Manage livestock and machinery on poorly drained soils during critical periods.
- Create vegetated buffers to protect **critical source areas**, drains and waterways.
- Protect and retire wetlands and marginal land.
- Keep stock away from waterbodies.

 **Actions to include in a farm environment plan**

 **Farm menus**

This catchment is diverse with extensive wetlands, the Waikato River, native forest, Pōkeno township, surrounding farms, orchards and market gardens. People connect to the catchment through activities like fishing, boating, hunting and hiking. It is interconnected with the Waikato River, supporting its health and a range of native species. While the catchment is shaped by land use, flood control and pest fish like koi carp, it still provides important ecological, recreational and cultural values, making care for our waterways critical.

The river and surrounds hold deep cultural and spiritual significance for Waikato-Tainui, the primary iwi for this region, who regard the awa as a tupuna (ancestor) with mana (prestige), which represents the mana and mauri (life force) of the tribe. Respect for te mana o te awa (the spiritual authority, protective power and prestige of the Waikato River) must be actively protected and restored. Hapū and marae act as local kaitiaki (guardians) to safeguard and preserve the catchment and its taonga (treasured) species ensuring they are sustained for future generations.

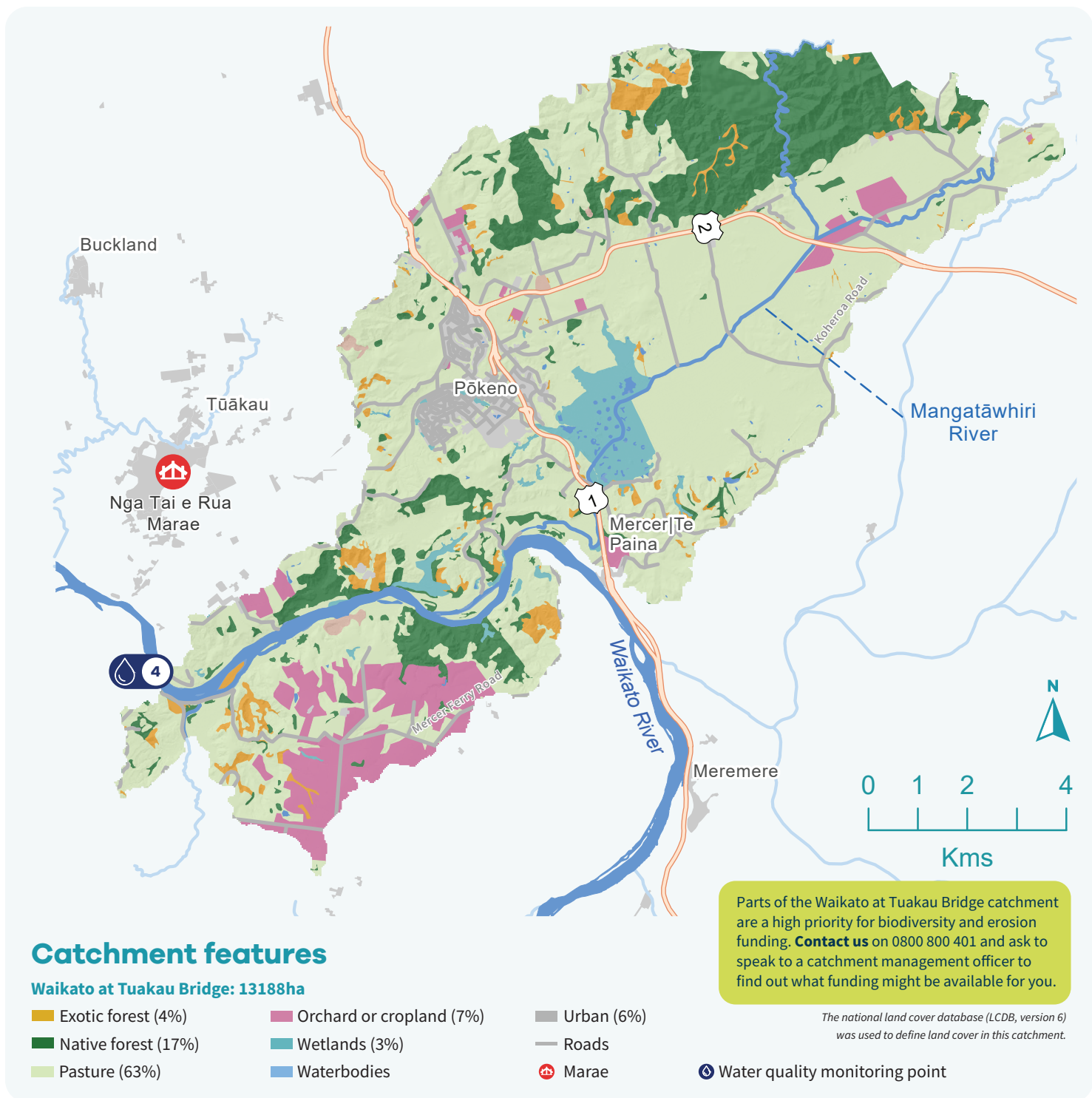
Taonga (treasured) species found in the Waikato at Tūākau catchment



Consider your farm's location in the catchment

The table shows how landform and soil characteristics shape primary risks and contaminant losses specific to the Waikato at Tūākau catchment.

Landform	Main soils + properties	Primary risks	Primary contaminant loss
Flat to undulating land (0-7 degrees) 48% of catchment	Organic: Very poorly drained loamy peat, naturally high water table	Drainage contributes to ongoing peat subsidence including land level lowering. Pugging when wet and unstable substrate.	<i>E. coli</i> Nitrogen
	Gley: Poorly drained and clayey	Pugging if wet and soil compaction. Continuing wetness limitation after drainage.	Sediment Phosphorus <i>E. coli</i>
Rolling land (8-20 degrees) 30% of catchment	Allophanic: Well drained silt loam	Slight to moderate erosion risk when cultivated.	Nitrogen Sediment Phosphorus
	Granular: Imperfectly to well drained clay loam. Varies across the catchment		Sediment Phosphorus <i>E. coli</i>
	Brown: Imperfectly to well drained clay loam	Slight wetness limitation, risk to pugging when wet.	
	Ultic: Imperfectly to well drained and clayey	Slight to moderate erosion risk when cultivated.	
Steep land (>20 degrees) 22% of catchment	Recent: Moderately to well drained, clay over loam	Moderate to severe potential for slip erosion.	Sediment Phosphorus
	Brown: imperfectly to well drained clay loam		



Water quality improvement for the four contaminants

This diagram shows the level of collective effort needed to positively impact water quality in the Waikato at Tūākau Bridge catchment and further downstream. Upstream land activities strongly influence water quality in this catchment, which is part of the Waikato River's main stem. Focus on best practices within your farm and catchment, while keeping your neighbours in mind.

