

Work in the pipeline

- The Motueka Iwi RMA Komiti plan to present the draft Cultural Impact Assessment to the WWAC for discussion by the end of December 2005.
- By April 2006 the whio (blue duck) and the scoping of the significance of riparian vegetation will be completed.
- By the end of the first quarter in 2006 water demand will be confirmed.
- Confirmation of residual flow for the Wairoa River at Appleby Bridge and immediately downstream of the two potential storage sites
- Input of residual flow requirements to Stage 2 of groundwater/river modelling to determine residual flow rate at Appleby Bridge, based on actual groundwater pumping rate in a 1:10 dry year
- Preliminary hydrological modelling and identification of flow release options
- Preliminary dam break analysis of two short-listed sites
- Geological mapping of the two sites
- Concept definition of both site options based on required storage from hydrological modelling including indicative costs
- Survey of community to compare preferences for the Upper Lee River and left branch of the Wairoa River sites. The preparation of background information for the ESR will also be carried out.
- Selection of the preferred site option
- Geotechnical investigation of preferred site
- Commence confirmation of demand points for consumptive water supply and delivery areas
- Preliminary allocation assessment



Wairoa River from the Brightwater Bridge, early December 2005.



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Waimea Water Augmentation Committee (WWAC)

Message from the Chair...

Dry conditions throughout the district have reiterated the need for long-term solutions to water management. Rainfall to date has only accumulated to approximately 65 percent of the average for the year. This has resulted in soils being in severe moisture deficit and ground water levels being at record lows.

Irrigation has commenced six weeks early this season leading to the introduction of water rationing well ahead of the usual time. As irrigation is not yet in full swing, the problem is compounded. Fortunately, through the early actions of the Dry Weather Task Force, environmental values of the river and aquifers on the Waimea Plains are still being maintained.

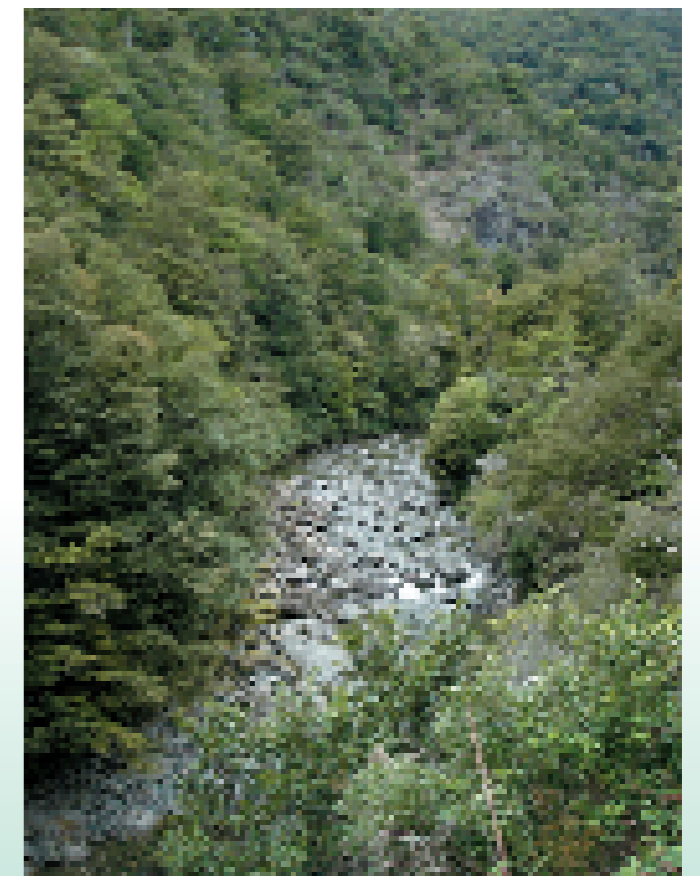
I am pleased to report that we are well on the way to assessing the best options for a long-term solution through water storage and augmentation for the Waimea Plains. Unfortunately this will not assist farmers through the current dry spell.

Many people ask: Why is it taking so long? The answer is that we have a wide range of stakeholders including rural irrigators, urban water users, industry, environmental, recreational, and cultural interests. The solution must address the needs of all and be sustainable over the long term. The project aims to address water issues and ensure security of supply for the Waimea Plains at least for the next 50 years!

All efforts are now being directed toward the two most preferred sites. These are the Upper Lee and Upper

Wairoa left branch areas. Our consultants are now conducting more in depth geological, technical, environmental, and cultural assessments. Storage sizing for different flow and security needs is also currently being carried out.

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Wairoa River in the Wairoa Gorge

The Waimea Water Augmentation Committee

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Please contact your local zone representatives or the Project Manager if you want any further information.



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Chairman's message continued

The full WWAC committee recently conducted a site meeting at both sites. The feedback was very positive and it is great to see that we have some very real options.

Finally thank you to the committee for their ongoing and generous support and to various interested people who have contributed their thoughts and ideas. Please feel free to contact our Project Manager,

Joseph Thomas or any members of the committee if you wish to get further information. Contact phone numbers for all Committee members are listed on the back page of this newsletter.

Murray King
WWAC Chairman

Project progress

Water storage sites narrowed down to two

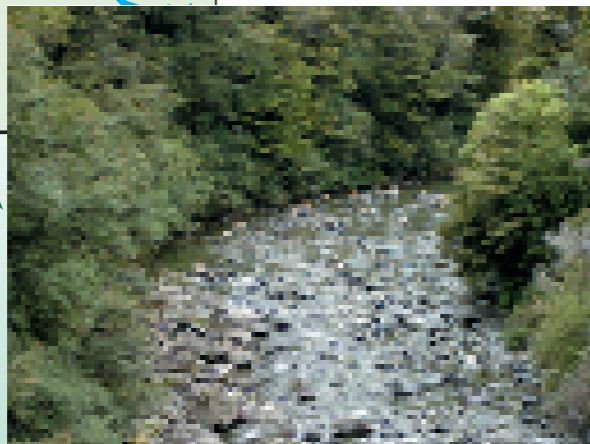


Negative feedback relating to the potential Pigeon Valley water storage site prompted the committee to commission further technical assessment of that option. This resulted in the Waimea Water Augmentation Committee (WWAC) deciding, at its July 2005 meeting, to proceed only with investigations of the Upper Lee River and Left Branch of the Wairoa River sites.

Several more studies still need to be carried out, but it is hoped that the preferred site option will be selected in mid 2006.



Upper Lee River, just below the cement works.



Native bush lines the banks of the upper reaches of the Wairoa River

Environmental Analysis

The Cawthron Institute undertook Instream Habitat Flow Analysis modelling and has completed a report determining provisional minimum flow requirements for the Waimea River at Appleby Bridge and immediately downstream of the potential storage sites (Upper Lee and left branch of the Wairoa River).

Residual flow figures for the Waimea River, upstream of the Appleby Bridge were presented as three scenarios:

1. Environmental Benchmark Flow
2. An intermediate flow
3. A minimum flow



Waimea River at the Appleby Bridge - late November 2005

For the areas immediately below the potential dam sites the mean annual low flow (MALF) has been suggested as the environmental benchmark, while the 1:10 year low flow and the 1:5 year low flow the less conservative options.

The required flow figures have been presented to the modelling experts to input into the river/aquifer model to further assist story size assessment.

Cultural Impact Assessment initiated

Representatives from local iwi were taken on a site visit August 2005. The group visited both the Upper Lee and left branch of the Wairoa sites.

The initial draft of the cultural impact assessment was to be discussed by iwi at a hui in November.

In other moves, initial scoping has begun for determination of significant riparian vegetation and agreement has been reached with the Department of Conservation and Fish and Game for a survey of whio (blue duck) to be undertaken in the upper catchment areas of both potential sites.



Irrigators at work on the Waimea Plains