

# Kaituna River Re-diversion and Wetland Creation Project



Issue One: May-June 2013

## Introduction

Since 1956 almost all the Kaituna River's freshwater has been diverted out to sea at Te Tumu to protect the low-lying farmland from flooding and improve drainage. Unfortunately, the diversion had significant ecological effects on the Ongatoro/Maketū Estuary.

Bay of Plenty Regional Council intends to re-divert almost a quarter of the Kaituna River's flow back into Ongatoro/Maketū Estuary. The extra water is predicted to improve the estuary's health and will restore some of the mauri of the area by allowing salt marsh and other wetlands to return; create more suitable conditions for a range of shellfish and fish species; and may reduce the rate at which sand fills in the estuary.

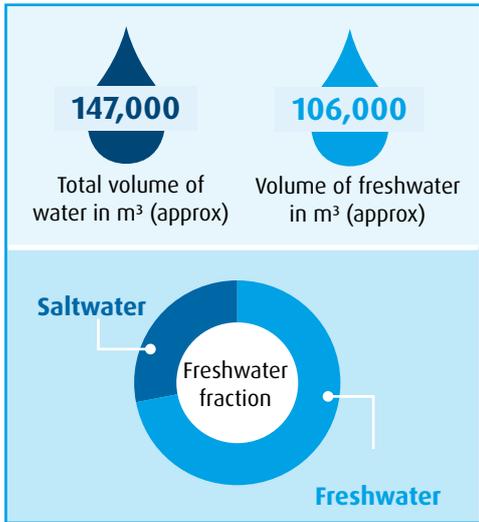
These actions are set out in the Kaituna River and Ongatoro/Maketū Estuary Strategy, developed by the community and relevant local and central government agencies in 2009. This fact sheet sets out what is proposed, what the environmental effects might be, and how you can have your say on what happens next.

Check out our website for important dates and information on how you can have your say.

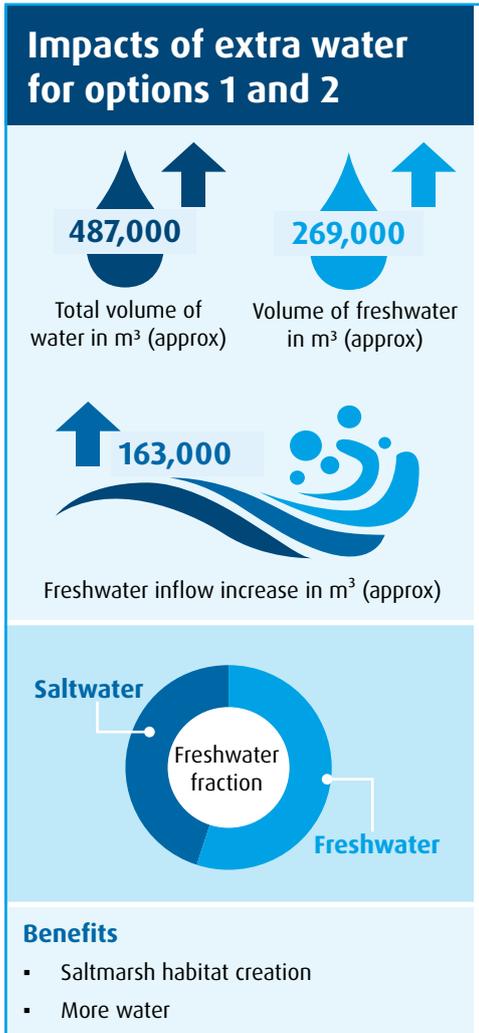


*From left: Project Manager Pim de Monchy, Technical and Engineering Manager Steve Everitt, Regional Councillors Lyall Thurston, Tai Eru and Raewyn Bennett with local Te Tumu Kerr discussing options for the Kaituna River Re-diversion and Wetland Creation Project at Te Tumu.*

# Existing and proposed channels



## Existing situation



## Proposed new option 1 - new channel



## Proposed new option 2 - widen Ford's Cut



The current volume has been measured and the two new options' volumes are estimated using numerical computer models based on an average tidal cycle and river flow. The average volume of water coming down the Kaituna River per tidal cycle is 2,900,000 m<sup>3</sup>.

## Our proposal

Council is committed to maximising the re-diverted flow while leaving Te Tumu Cut open. This is predicted to improve estuarine health, maintain current levels of flood protection and drainage and minimise the cost and risk of the project.

Following preliminary modelling and surveying we have identified two approaches we think will work. Both options involve installing 30 to 40 large flap-gated culverts under Ford Road near the current Ford's Cut culverts. These would carry between 487,000 and 600,000 cubic metres per tidal cycle of the Kaituna River's flow to the estuary through a 60 metre wide channel.

To get as much freshwater as possible into the estuary we expect changes around Ford Island, by re-opening the blocked channel to the Kaituna River on its western side and closing the channel between Ford Road and Ford Island. We

would remove or open the small stopbanks blocking the upper Papahikahawai Channel from the rest of the estuary, and we could install a small culvert to link the western end of the Papahikahawai Channel with the lower Kaituna River.

## Option 1 - New Channel

In Option 1 the channel would curve to the north east and direct the flow into the estuary near Papahikahawai Island. The water would then split into two flows around both the northern and southern sides of Papahikahawai Island to the estuary mouth at Maketū (as it did prior to 1956). The low-lying farmland north of Ford's Cut would need to be acquired for this to be implemented. That land could then be restored to the estuarine saltmarsh it was prior to the 1956 Te Tumu diversion. Fill excavated from the new channel

could be used to fill in Ford's Cut and create wetlands.

## Option 2 - Widen Ford's Cut

An alternative approach (known as Option 2) would be to widen the existing Ford's Cut to 60 metres and direct the extra water into the southern part of Ongatoro/Maketū Estuary. The low-lying land north of Ford's Cut would still be needed to restore the wetlands. Less water would flow around the north side of Papahikahawai Island.

## What do you think?

We want to know what you think of these options, and whether you have any preference.

## What happens next?

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019



### By 20 June 2013:

Send feedback on options and effects to Regional Council.

### Mid-late 2013:

Feedback analysed, more detailed modelling and Assessment of Environmental Effects prepared

### Early 2014:

Feedback on final option.

### May 2014:

Lodging of resource consent and designation applications.

### After May 2014:

Statutory consultation and formal submissions

### Mid-late 2015:

Construction could start.

### Project Stage

-  Project plan, data collection and concept designs
-  Pre-consent consultation: Phase one
-  Draft resource consent and designation applications, feasibility designs
-  Pre-consent consultation: Phase two
-  Final resource consent and designation applications, feasibility designs
-  Resource consent and designation processing
-  Appeals, land acquisition and detailed designs
-  Construction and implementation: Phase one
-  Construction and implementation: Phase two
-  Implementation and monitoring

# Environmental Effects

These are the environmental effects that the Project Team will be investigating in detail. We want to know which of these are important to you, and if there are any others we should be looking into.

## Water quality, salinity and ecology

Water in parts of the estuary will likely become less saline, but have slightly higher levels of bacterial contamination. We are trying to maximise the benefits to estuarine health such as creation of salt marsh and habitat for kaimoana while minimising the risks to cultural uses such as shellfish gathering and swimming.

## Wildlife and ecological sites

We expect significantly enhanced habitat for wildlife and better protection for existing ecological sites.

## Cultural

The mauri of the estuary and river is expected to improve over time.

## Kaimoana

The habitat for edible shellfish and finfish is likely to improve over time, and we are hopeful that the number and populations of species will also improve. This will be studied in detail.

## The low-lying land north of Ford's Cut

This land was estuarine saltmarsh until the 1956 Te Tumu Cut allowed it to be drained. It will be significantly affected by this proposal. However, protecting it with stopbanks would cost more than twice the land's value, which is one reason we want to acquire it and return it to saltmarsh wetland.

## Access to Papahikahawai Island

The proposed works will involve removing the stopbank between Papahikahawai Island and the low-lying land north of Ford's Cut, thereby limiting access to the island to boats as was the case prior to 1971.

## Upstream flood protection and land drainage

Flood protection, drainage levels and conditions for grass growth upstream will not be significantly affected.

## Landscape

Natural landscape features should be enhanced.

## Historic sites

There should be no effects on known archaeological sites.

## Downstream flood protection and land drainage

Water levels in the estuary and adjacent drains and wetlands are expected to change. How much they will change will depend on the type of control structures used, and whether these allow flood flows into the estuary.

## Navigation

Water depths and currents may change through the Ongatoro/ Maketū Estuary entrance and at Te Tumu. Our preliminary assessment suggests little change but we need more detailed study to confirm this.

## Erosion

Works will be undertaken to protect areas of land from erosion if the risk is predicted to increase, such as parts of Papahikahawai Island and Maketū Spit.

## Recreation

Activities such as shore-based fishing, or white-baiting from Ford Road, should not be affected significantly. If anything, slow improvements may result from improved habitat.

## Want more information?

Check out our website for important dates and information on how you can have your say.

Get a more detailed scoping document and feedback form from the Maketū Information Centre, our website [www.boprc.govt.nz/kaitunamaketu](http://www.boprc.govt.nz/kaitunamaketu) or from Project Manager Pim de Monchy at [pim.demonchy@boprc.govt.nz](mailto:pim.demonchy@boprc.govt.nz) or phone 0800 884 881 extn 8518.



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