

Introduction

A lot of work from the Waituna community and Waituna Partners has made a good start towards improving freshwater management in the catchment – and the Whakamana te Waituna work programme hopes to continue that momentum.

At the meeting on 22 November, we were hoping to talk to the community about:

- How they want to be involved in the project
- Ideas for Waituna Creek transformation

In early 2019, the focus will be on listening to the community and working with people on their ideas for community representative structures. We will also give the community time to think amongst themselves.

Contaminant intervention

Fonterra and Environment Southland staff have recently been undertaking a farm plan rollout within the catchment.

There has been a lot of research done in the Waituna Catchment on ways to improve water quality and ways to reduce the impacts of nutrient pathways, while still maintaining productive land. As part of the funding through Living Water and other partners, the Whakamana Te Waituna programme has the opportunity to put various interventions to the test.

We don't yet know what all these interventions might be or where in the catchment they need to go, this will need to be decided in consultation with the community. To help bring useful information together we are working with scientists and agricultural specialists to pull together some options that might be practical for farmers and for drain management. By April 2019 we will have some options for the community to consider.

Waituna Creek Transformation

The Waituna Creek workstream aims to enhance the ecological, cultural and recreational values of the Waituna Creek. Previous work carried out by the Living Water project through reprofiling of banks, the addition of instream habitat structures and extensive planting has been doing well.

Recently the Department of Conservation has been working with the adjacent landowner to determine the boundary of the Waituna Creek. The fencing of this marginal strip is nearly completed, which will allow you to access these public areas.

We want to work with the community around how we might build on the work done to date. If you have an idea, and you would like to discuss it, please email jbowen@doc.govt.nz

During the next few weeks a representative will be contacting neighbouring landowners and organisations to discuss some of these ideas. Once we collate these ideas we intend to take this out to your community once again to get your views before a project plan is put in place.

Biodiversity:

We are currently undertaking some work around ways to enhance biodiversity in the Waituna catchment. We will pull together some preliminary ideas and come and talk to the community around what you would like to see done. Do you have an idea now? If so we would love to hear it. Please email jbowen@doc.govt.nz

Biosecurity

Waituna Possum Control Area (PCA):

- 6,630 hectares in size.
- Initial round of possum control has been completed/implemented by Environment Southland through the use of a possum contractor on the agreed farms.
- 2978 possums recorded as caught.
- 40 landowners approx. agreed to be in the Waituna Possum Control Programme (PCA)
- Post control monitoring recorded a 1.7% Residual trap catch (RTC) (the number of possums caught per trap night), the target was < 5% RTC - a fantastic result.
- A network of possum bait stations have been installed on various properties.