

Public Waterways & Ecosystem Restoration

Annual Report

Financial Year 23/24

01/04/2024

- 30/06/2024

Organisation: Waikato Regional Council

Project name: The Piako River Green Corridor

Deed number: 23704

Project ID: PWER016

**Date report
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Official information and privacy

Official Information Act 1982

Important: Information presented to the Minister for the Environment or the Ministry for the Environment is subject to disclosure under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). Certain information may be withheld in accordance with the grounds for withholding information under the OIA. Further information on the OIA is available at www.ombudsmen.parliament.nz.

Information held by the Minister or Ministry may have to be released under the OIA in response to a request from a member of the public (or any other body) for that information. If you wish to provide sensitive information to the Minister or Ministry which you do not want released, it is recommended you consult with the Ministry as to whether the information is necessary for the application, and whether there may be grounds in the OIA for withholding the information. For instance, if release of the information would disclose a trade secret, or be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information, then there may be grounds to withhold the information. If an OIA request relating to your application is received, the Ministry will endeavour to contact you to discuss it, and what the implications of releasing your information are.

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Privacy Act 2020

The Ministry may collect, use, hold or disclose personal information for the purpose of evaluating project funding. Individuals have the right in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020 to request access to and correction of their personal information.

Introduction

This report provides the Ministry for the Environment with information about how the delivery phase of your project is going.

Your report should be submitted within four weeks of the end of the last quarter of the financial year (ie, within four weeks of 30 June), unless otherwise agreed with your fund analyst.

The document is suitable for sharing with governance groups for approval purposes, and auditors for auditing purposes.

Please note, this information in this report has been exported from information provided in the Enquire reporting portal. However, it does not include any other uploaded documents such as deliverables/evidence of activity competition or the Summary of Expenses (for those who require one). This should be provided separately to aid in the assessment of the full report. It also currently doesn't include the Work Plan section which provides a breakdown of the projects progress, budget, and expenditure per activity. This can be downloaded in Enquire separately in an excel format.

Once the Ministry for the Environment is satisfied that your report meets the deed funding requirements, your assigned analyst will arrange payment (if applicable) with the Ministry's finance department.

Key Project Indicators

	Red	Amber	Green
Timeline	Project is behind schedule and likely to be delivered late. Project will require re-baselining.	Project is behind schedule but has realistic plans to recover.	No slippage against timelines.
Budget	>10% increase in costs against budget or >10% underspends.	<10% increase in costs against budget or <10% underspends.	Project costs are on budget.
Objectives	If issue(s) are not resolved more than one project objective will not be fully achieved by project end.	Experiencing some issues that could result in not all objectives being achieved – but plans are in place to mitigate.	>100% project objectives will be delivered.
Results – Outcomes	If issue(s) are not resolved most of the stated results/outcomes will not be delivered.	If issue(s) are not resolved some of the stated results/outcomes will not be delivered.	All results/outcomes are on track to be delivered during or post project.
Capability and Capacity	There are significant skill shortages, or lack of resources that are impacting project significantly on project's ability to deliver.	There are significant skill shortages, or lack of resources that are impacting project significantly on project's ability to deliver.	The project is full resourced, and there are no major skill gaps on any of the workstreams.
Risks and Mitigations	Major risks have been identified that are likely to cause severe impacts to project delivery if not adequately addressed. Mitigations are not achievable or currently implemented.	Identified risks and most mitigations have been actions. Risks have the potential to overwhelm the project if not adequately addressed.	Identified risks and mitigations have been actions. Risks are considered low severity to project delivery and low likelihood of occurrence.

	RAG Status	Context	Rectification
Timeline	Green	A work programme will be submitted to MfE that outlines the proposed timeframes and budget for the remaining project duration. There is a realistic plan in place to deliver the project to the overall deadline.	The remaining project deliverables are expected to be completed within the remaining project duration.
Budget	Green	A work programme will be submitted to MfE that outlines the proposed budget for the remaining project duration.	The remaining budget has been re-benchmarked to align the proposed work programme for the remaining project duration. At this stage we are expecting a MfE budget underspend of approximately 1%. The Year 5 Annual Works Programme will provide a detailed budget and breakdown of remaining activities for the project.
Objectives	Green	A work programme will be submitted to MfE that outlines the proposed objectives for the remaining project duration.	We are expecting to exceed the plants planted deliverables. We are expecting to be slightly under the fencing deliverable. We are expecting to meet/slightly exceed the planting area and weed maintenance area deliverables.
Results - Outcomes	Green	A work programme will be submitted to MfE that outlines the proposed objectives for the remaining project duration.	We are expecting that the project outcomes will, in part, be met.
Capability and Capacity	Green	Procurement for the remaining activities for the project will be underway once the Year 5 work programme is approved. We will commence this early in the season and it is not expected to be any issues with capability or capacity at this stage.	No issues to address at present.
Risks and Mitigations	Green	Mitigations are actioned and risks identified and managed.	Continue to monitor and mitigate risks.
Overall Project Rating	Green	Currently the project is progressing well.	The project is being closely monitored.

Progress Details

Progress to date	
Date Reported	Progress Statement
30/06/2024	<p>Our overall delivery of Year 4 was successful. Our relationships with our contractors, DOC and Ngati Hako have remained positive and productive.</p> <p>We have had several recent workshops and discussions with Ngati Hako and DOC regarding the project - with particular focus on the Dagger Rd site, MfE transition activities and the ongoing management and maintenance of the site.</p> <p>This has resulted in some positive outcomes, including several value-add activities being included in the Year 5 annual works programme for delivery, and DOC committing to at least one-year of maintenance for the Dagger Rd plants once the project ends on 30 June 2025.</p> <p>A prominent issue for Year 4 was the identification of plant survivability issues for those that were planted during the 2023 and 2024 planting season at the foreshore site. Approximately 11,549 plants have been estimated to have died of the 21,528 planted. Meaning a net survival of approximately 9,979 plants. An investigation as to what has caused this issue was undertaken, and due to the numerous potential impacts in this environment it was difficult to determine the exact cause. It is assumed that the likely causes include pukekos pulling plants out, the planting methodology - using an auger which may have created a "sealed" hole in the clay substrate not letting the roots establish, high salinity of the water table/soils.</p> <p>We decided to plant an additional ~4,000 plants within the areas that had the best survivability rates at the foreshore site in Y4, Q4. We altered the planting methodology to see whether this would assist. These plants will be closely monitored to determine the overall success and whether additional plants should be planted in 2025.</p> <p>Q4, Y4 was a busy quarter with the completion of site preparation, pest plant control and plant maintenance activities.</p> <p>Planting activities was largely completed at the Dagger Road and commenced at the Mainstem 2 sites.</p> <p>To date, we have approximately 269,853 surviving plants planted across the foreshore, mainstem areas and Dagger Rd site, with an additional ~13,000 plants remaining to plant during Q1, Y5.</p> <p>A note regarding the WRC financial contribution during Q4, Y4 being \$-2,720.01.</p> <p>The actual WRC costs for Q4, Y4 include: WRC staff time, vehicle running and printing = - \$24,984.09 contracted project manager and technical support = \$22,264.08</p> <p>Total -\$2,720.01 contribution for Q4.</p> <p>The reason for the negative value on WRC staff time was an adjustment that was made at the end of the financial year by our accountants associated with the labour management costs for this project.</p> <p>The overall WRC staff and project management contribution for Y4 of the project with this adjustment is \$247,569.10</p>

Planned Activities	
Period Planned	Commentary
30/09/2024	Planting will continue and be completed at the Mainstem 2 and Foreshore sites during Q1, Y5.

	<p>Planning for the final project year and project transition will also be a focus for Q1, Y5.</p> <p>This includes an additional 50,000 plants to be planted at the Dagger Road site. We are on track to exceed the overall project deliverable for plant numbers planted.</p> <p>The Year 5 Annual Works Programme will be submitted and will provide a detailed plan for the remaining project activities.</p>
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Lessons Learned	
Financial Year	Key lessons learned in last financial year
No details	

Results - Indicators

Metric	Total project target	Total project results (excluding this quarter)	This quarter's forecasted result per Annual Work Plan	This quarter's result	Comments
FW - Number of people-hours worked	23,040.00	20,478.65	5,000.00	7260.75	Contracted hours = 6,277.75. WRC staff hours = 983
FW - Number of employment starts	0.00	130.00		67	67 new starts for the season associated with site prep, weed control, plant maintenance, planting labour. All others existing staff and project management contractor.
FW - Number of people currently employed	0.00	156.50		41	9(2)(b)(ii) PM) 1, WRC staff 2, 9(2)(b)(ii) 9(2)(b)(ii) 3, 9(2)(b)(ii) up to 15 people
FW - Funding paid on wages	1,991,960.00	1,495,744.58	678,147.86	209218.16	Total cost of contracted wages where the ability to separate wages out from suppliers invoices. Note WRC labour/salaries has not been reported here.
FW - New fencing constructed or existing fencing maintained	27.00	26.30	0.00	0	Fencing complete for Y4.
FW - Area of riparian or lake or wetlands planting completed	35.00	35.80	11.10	16.1	Approximately 16.1ha planted at Dagger Rd. GPS data will be taken once all planting activities have been completed to confirm.

FW - Area of animal pest control completed	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	This has been removed from the project scope.
FW - Area treated for weeds	35.00	44.50	0.00	16.1	The area maintained and treated for weeds have already been counted as part of the site prep count. An additional 16.1ha was prepped for planting at Dagger Rd site.
FW - Number of plants planted in riparian or lake or wetland areas	252,800.00	275,490.00	117,967.00	128793	128,793 plants planted at Dagger Rd in Q4.

Methodology for Nature based employment

We would prefer you to use actual counts for nature based employment. If you are unable to provide actual figures, please explain below your methodology for calculating nature based employment

Actuals provided out of financial reporting system and contractor invoices/information.

Annual Co-Funding Details

Co-Funder name	Period	Forecast in-kind contribution	Forecast cash contribution	Actual in-kind contribution	Actual cash contribution	Total amount paid towards activities this period
Waikato Regional Council	FY 2023-2024		100,000.00		247,569.10	247569.10

Quarterly Payment Request

Financial Year	Your actual cash contribution	Other co-funder actual contribution	MfE actual contribution	Total actual cost this quarter
FY 2023-2024 Q1	56,056.17	0.00	142,999.21	199055.38
FY 2023-2024 Q2	136,564.59	0.00	84,148.00	220712.59
FY 2023-2024 Q3	57,668.35	0.00	100,627.45	158295.80
FY 2023-2024 Q4	-2,720.01	0.00	394,952.24	392232.23
Totals	247,569.10	0.00	722,726.90	970,296.00

Risk Register

Risk	Category	Impact	Impact Details	Likelihood / Severity	Mitigation	Residual Risk	Status	Justification
There is a risk of loss of plantings due to damage from animal/other pests and other causes.	Quality, Benefit	High	Reduce planting density as a result of planting failures.	High / High	<p>Area will be monitored for browser species. Given area is denuded of vegetation possums are unlikely to be a issue. Browsing by hare or removal of plant by pukeko is likely. It has not been an issue at other scheme plantings. If needed culling will occur.</p> <p>There have been a number of impacts on plant survivability noted for the foreshore area. This is continuing to be investigated and a recommendation for the future foreshore plantings/maintenance will be reported to MfE.</p>	Ongoing risk	Escalated	There have been a number of impacts on plant survivability noted for the foreshore area. This is continuing to be investigated and a recommendation for the future foreshore plantings/maintenance will be reported to MfE.
9(2)(b)(ii) and learning about processes and council requirements.	Progress, Quality	High	<p>Delay plant supply or reduced plant availability, therefore insufficient plants to complete the planting requirements for the project.</p> <p>Limited ability to be agile with changes to plant requirements.</p>	High / Medium	<p>Consider alternative providers that could have plants in stock that could be used in year 4 and initiate new contracts process if necessary.</p> <p>Year 5 as a contingency for planting.</p>	Additional costs if plants are required to be sourced from elsewhere. Additional resource costs associated with managing the contractor.	Action	We are working closely with 9(2)(b)(ii) to ensure the required plants are provided within the overall project timeframes in accordance with contract requirements, and to plan for requirements for the Year 4 implementation.
There is a risk that native plant establishment fails because of weather (e.g. drought or floods) or plant/planting quality which could result in lower stocking rates than the required minimums and/or damage to plants.	Progress, Quality, Benefit	High	Incomplete programme, plantings damaged/destroyed.	Medium / Medium	Plan annual planting programmes utilising long term forecasts. Plant suitable species that can accommodate drier periods. Keep year 4 as a backup contingency planting season.	Ability to meet project deliverables.	Action	Ongoing monitoring of planted sites to ensure survivability. Existing plant supply contracts have infill planting to mitigate.
There is a risk that the site is inundated due to flooding resulting in reduced planting/earth works times and/or damage to plants.	Progress, Financial, Quality	High	Incomplete programme, plantings damaged/destroyed.	Medium / Medium	Plan annual planting programmes utilising long-term forecasts. Plant suitable species that can withstand inundation and flooding. Keep year 5 as a backup contingency planting season.	Ability to meet project deliverables within timeframes and budget	Monitoring	The recent wet weather and cyclone events have proven the impacts to the project delivery. There are no current issues with wet weather, and this will continue to be monitored.

There is a risk that there are prolonged periods of drought resulting in loss of plants.	Progress, Financial, Quality	High	Incomplete programme, plantings damaged/destroyed/growth slowed.	Medium / Medium	Plan annual planting programmes utilising long term forecasts. Plant suitable species that can accommodate drier periods. Keep year 5 as a backup contingency planting season.	Ability to meet project deliverables within the project timeframe and budget.	Monitoring	Planted sites are having ongoing monitoring to ensure plant survivability. Currently drought isn't the cause of the plant loss to date. Heading into winter this is unlikely to be an issue until summer 2024/2025.
There is a risk of accidental discovery of artefacts which could result in delays to the project timeframes, or a change of site scope.	Progress, Scope	Low	Delay in works	Low / Low	Cease work in the area concerned and follow 'accidental discovery of artefacts protocol,' advise landowners, relevant iwi and heritage authority	Impacts to project timeframe and potentially the project scope.	Monitoring	Risk assessed low as currently no further significant earthworks are planned.
There is a risk that core project team members leave roles during the project resulting in delays to project delivery.	Other	Low	Time delay in replacing staff/contractors and bringing new staff in.	Medium / Low	To facilitate the delivery of shovel ready projects WRC has established the following to support project managers: • a programme lead overseeing the delivery of shovel ready projects within the relevant geographical area. • a project co-ordinator to assist with project delivery and reporting • a regional shovel ready programme manager to provide high level oversight and communications on the full package of shovel ready projects. This structure ensures that there will be additional staff to the project manager who have a high level of familiarity with the project and key stakeholders, who can support and cover temporary vacancies and the induction of new project team members.	Availability of resources.	Monitoring	There has been some staff turnover within the project team. Resourcing requirements for the remainder of the project are being monitored.
There is a risk that skilled labour is not available to deliver works which would result in delays in the delivery of works programme	Progress, Quality	Medium	Potential to cause time delays or incomplete programme of work.	Low / Low	Plant supply contracts have been awarded for the life of the project, and including planting and maintenance. Earthworks undertaken in the project are able to be done by contractors already on as required contracts. Fencing contractors are engaged as required. Sufficient providers are available for planting preparation work to meet the project needs.	Depending on overall demand for services, any remaining procurement may be impacted.	Monitoring	Most services have sufficient providers at this point.
There is a risk that contractors from iwi will not be able to recruit enough capacity in time to undertake works resulting in iwi expectations not being met in relation to contract award and/or delivery.	Progress, Scope	Medium	This would not affect project delivery or FTE objectives but would mean that outcomes to support 9(2)(b)(ii) aspirations could not be achieved	Medium / Medium	Early communication with iwi/hapū partners on extent of work required so that they can advise if it can be met. Develop an understanding about using alternative contractors if Council approved iwi contractors are	Impacts to the capacity of contractors to deliver the works.	Monitoring	9(2)(b)(ii) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

			in full. Relationships with 9(2)(b) could be undermined. (ii)		unavailable. Having a pool of approved contractors who can take on works as required.			9(2)(b)(ii)
There is a risk that eco-sourced plants are not available in quantities needed which could result in the project deliverables and outputs not being met.	Progress, Scope, Quality, Benefit	Medium	Potential to cause time delays or an incomplete programme of work.	Medium / Medium	Eco-sourcing in the context of the project was determined and agreed early in the project. Multi-year plant supply contracts secure supply and provide sufficient lead in time for sourcing of seed from the local areas.	Ability to meet deliverables.	Monitoring	Ecosourcing area has been defined for the project and is included in specifications in the plant supply contracts, which are multi-year contracts to the end of the project. Eco-sourced plants have been sourced for the 2024 season. If further plants are procured eco-sourcing will be stipulated for any further contracts.

Contract Variations and Change Requests

Effective Date	Variation/Change Title	Requested change	Reason for change
30/06/2021	Sub-group of the Governance Group enabled to approve reports and AWP's before submission to MfE.		
23/10/2020	Transferring leftover funds from the DoC to the DoF	Transferring leftover funds from the DoC to the DoF	
05/08/2021	Reducing FTE from 28 to 16		Changes to project scope
20/03/2023	Changing due date of Annual Work Plans	Projecting annual work plan (AWP) budgets and targets several months before the previous financial year has ended is complicated and time consuming to calculate accurately. This can result in needing to readjust the plan with more realistic figures after the recipient's annual report is received in July. To prevent this double handling, we recommend adjusting the due date of the AWP.	Changes to terms and conditions, Annual workplan
24/07/2023	Change objectives (remove animal pest control)	Animal pest control not a good use of funds. Allocated funds instead will support increased planting and fund fencing.	Change to project objectives
07/06/2024	Change Title: Waiving Annual Project Audit reporting requirements	The Ministry has been assured from previous successful reporting that the annual audit report requirements stated in the deed are no longer required. We recommend waiving the clause in its current state so that resources can be focused on the important work the Project set out to achieve.	Changes to terms and conditions

		<p>A Declaration of Compliance with the terms and schedules of the funding deed/agreement is to be completed and returned with each Annual Report due 31 July. The Declaration of Compliance asks you to state that you have complied with the requirements of the Funding Deed, similar to what the audit was previously checking.</p> <p>The Ministry retains the ability to audit the project at any time at its sole discretion (Schedule 3).</p>	
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Health and Safety activities completed

Reporting Period	Details of health and safety activities completed
19/01/23	Contractor engaged to control pest animals (hares?) causing damage to one of the plantings. This involves night shooting. H & S activities so far have included ensuring they have all the correct certifications and checking on all the notifications requirements around this. This contractor will work in January or February and will follow through with requirements at that point.
19/01/23	9(2)(b)(ii) provided site specific safety sheets ahead of the planting on the foreshore - these were checked over and considered sufficient for the purpose.
27/04/2023	All contractors are required to be SHE registered and to provide appropriate H&S documentation and insurance details. No H&S incidents have been reported for Q3.
30/06/2021 0:00	Site inductions for contractors. Preparation of Health and Safety Plan for site blessing, this included traffic management.
30/09/2021 0:00	Contractors supporting this project (WRC approved/as required contractors) have updated H and S documentation to include COVID parameters for working at different alert levels.

31/12/2021 0:00	Contractors supporting this project (WRC approved/as required contractors) have updated H and S documentation to include COVID parameters for working at different alert levels. - Instruction of works. - H&S plan induction. - Contractor site induction. - Contractors COVID policies provided. - Record of vaccination status of contractors and staff kept.
31/12/2023	No H&S incidents reported during Q2. H&S briefings pre-maintenance works were undertaken.
31/3/204	No H&S issues reported during Q3.
31/7/2023	Pre- works site inspections and H&S briefings were undertaken for all contractors associated with fencing, planting and spraying activities. The fencing contractor for the Foreshore sites also checked in with each private landowner for their H&S induction and site access instructions. There were no H&S incidents reported for Y3, Q4.
31/7/2024	Pre- works site inspections and H&S briefings were undertaken for all contractors associated with planting and spraying activities. There was one incident reporting where a planting crew found a live shell whilst planting but didn't strike it as planting occurred onsite a few weeks after duck hunting season. On finding this shell, the team leader recovered the live shell (they hold a firearm licence) and searched the immediate area for any more live shells. None were found, and planting continued with the wider crew being made aware to keep monitoring the site.

Health and Safety incidents

Date of incident	Description	Location	Action taken and outcome	Reported to regulatory authority?	Follow up action taken
No details					

RMA Notices

Date	Issuer	Reason	Type of Notice
No details			

Capital Assets					
Description	Capital cost	Portion paid for by MfE %	ID Number (if applicable)	Estimated purchase date	Restriction period end date
No details					