

Kaihū River Working Group

Tuesday 31 March 2026 at 10:00 am - 11:30 am

AGENDA

Kaihū River Working Group Agenda

Meeting to be held in the SEED
Fosters Arcade
42 Victoria Street, Dargaville
on Tuesday 31 March 2026, commencing at 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Please note: working parties and working groups carry NO formal decision-making delegations from council. The purpose of the working party/group is to carry out preparatory work and discussions prior to taking matters to the full council for formal consideration and decision-making. Working party/group meetings are open to the public to attend (unless there are specific grounds under LGOIMA for the public to be excluded).

MEMBERSHIP OF THE KAIHŪ RIVER WORKING GROUP

Chairperson - NRC Councillor, John Blackwell

KDC Councillor, Snow Tane	Area 1 Representative, John Murray	Area 2 Representative, Bryce Wyatt
Area 3 Representative, John Greensmith	Te Houhanga Marae Representative, Pera Paniora	Te Roroa Representative Sharon Murray

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TITLE: **Record of Actions – 24 September 2025**


From: Haylee Labelle, Personal Assistant Community Resilience

Authorised by Louisa Gritt, Group Manager - Community Resilience, on 19 February 2026
Group Manager/s:

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to present the Record of Actions of the last meeting (attached) held on 24 September 2025 for review by the meeting.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Minutes - 24 September 2025 [↓](#) 

Kaihū River Working Group
24 September 2025

Kaihū River Working Group Record of Actions

Meeting held in the SEED
Fosters Arcade
42 Victoria Street
on Wednesday 24 September 2025, commencing at 10:30 am

Tuhinga/Present:

Chairperson, NRC Councillor John Blackwell
Area 1 Representative, John Murray
Area 3 Representative, John Greensmith
Te Roroa Alternate Representative, Sharon Murray

I Tae Mai/In Attendance:

Full Meeting
NRC Rivers Manager, Joe Camuso
NRC GM Community Resilience, Lousia Gritt
NRC Natural Hazards Specialist Sarah Gauden-Ing
NRC Rivers and Natural Hazards Officer, Nicole Basher (online)
NRC Secretariat, Haylee Labelle
Alayne Fitness
Colin Macdonald
Cook Costello, Philip Cook
KDC Land Drainage Coordinator, Wayne Crump
NRC Councillor, Joe Carr (arrived at 10.42am)
Jane Wright (arrived at 10.42am)
Robert Wade (arrived at 10.42am)

The meeting commenced at 10.30am.

Ngā Mahi Whakapai/Housekeeping (Item 1.0)

Ngā Whakapahā/Apologies (Item 2.0)

Te Roroa Representative - Snow Tane, KDC Councillor - Ash Nayyar, Kieran Gilmore, Nancy Chaves,
Cr Craw, Cr Robinson, Cr Shortland

Record of Actions – 8 May 2025 (Item 3.1)

Presented by: Cr John Blackwell

Agreed action points:

- NIL

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Receipt of Action Sheet (Item 3.2)

Presented by: Cr John Blackwell

Secretarial notes: John Greensmith has purchased a 25T long reach digger (16m) and has two experienced drivers. This digger will arrive in approximately 10days.

Agreed action points:

- NIL

Presentation Slides (Item 3.3)

Presented by: Joe Camuso and Nicole Basher

Secretarial notes: Reviewed the current budget, surplus carryover, and allocation options for the coming year, sought committee direction on spending priorities for machine cleaning, spraying, and contingency items.

- Provided clarity on the \$10,000 in the budget for tree removal – this is a contingency that has been retained as there are often trees to remove.
- Confirmed that unspent funds from the previous year are carried forward (this was from spraying work not executed), resulting in a healthy balance available for the current year's works.
- Members expressed concerns about timber from removed trees being potential future risk in weather event situations. NRC have lifted and stacked trees for farmers to burn, NRC hasn't managed burning in the past. The Working Group agreed that this is the landowners responsibility and this is what was agreed previously. Landowners need to be reminded to burn in the appropriate season.
- It was agreed that if contract funds run out during machine cleaning, NRC is authorised to approve additional spending (within reason) to complete agreed works, with notification to the committee.

Reviewed the current and planned river maintenance activities for 2025/26 season, including machine cleaning, and spraying. The challenges of executing these works within budget and environmental constraints were discussed.

- Outlined the planned machine cleaning for the year, specifying targeted sections and noting that the scope is limited by a fixed budget, which often prevents completion of all desired works.
- The 2025 drone flight will go up to the bottle neck again using NRC drones
- Committee members expressed frustration with contractor reliability and communication, citing instances where work was incomplete or poorly coordinated in their view and called for improved notification and accountability from the council.
- In response to concerns, NRC agreed to explore assigning a dedicated supervisor to oversee machine cleaning, acknowledging that this would increase costs but could improve quality and accountability.

Discussed the ongoing challenges with the targeted rate system, the need for increased funding if the work programme was to be expanded, and the process for adjusting rate..

Kaihū River Working Group
24 September 2025

- Committee members expressed concerns that the current funding is insufficient for the required river maintenance, with increasing costs and a backlog of work leading to river deterioration and silting.
- Concerns were raised about the fairness of the targeted rate, with some contributors to the catchment not paying rates (an example was given of forestry). Staff pointed out that targeted rates were on the basis of those who benefit pay” as for other river schemes.
- The committee debated the merits of engaging external experts for oversight, with Joseph noting that while this could bring additional expertise, it would also increase costs compared to in-house management.
- NRC Rivers Team has committed to improving advance notification to landowners about scheduled works and to ensuring that feedback from the committee is incorporated into operational planning.
- Proposed that the working group identify desired outcomes for increased funding, after which NRC would cost out the work and present options for the next meeting, allowing informed decisions on future rate adjustments.

Discussed the spraying programme for bull rush and Manchurian wild rice, including methods, environmental restrictions, and the need for trialling different application techniques.

- Nicole described the phased approach to spraying, with Nancy planning to break the work into sections to minimise water testing costs and environmental impact, and to coordinate timing with machine cleaning. Explained the colour scheme on the map – Spring (November) treatment outlined in pink, if funds remain will continue downstream into green until funds are exhausted. Autumn treatment is the blue section, again if fund remain work will continue into the section green until funds are exhausted.
- Committee members recommended trialling various spraying methods—helicopter, boat, and handgun—to determine the most cost-effective and practical approach, with Nancy to incorporate feedback and hotspot mapping from the group.
- Noted that we haven’t been charged for Nancys time

Agreed action points:

1. **Establish a process whereby, if machine cleaning funds run out mid-contract, NRC is authorised to allocate additional budget (e.g., up to 20% more) and notify the committee accordingly.**
2. **NRC to send communication to landowners reminding them to burn/remove stacked tree debris in the appropriate season to prevent downstream blockages during future storms.**
3. **NRC Rivers manager to contact Douglas Logging regarding the removal of felled trees and the viability of chipping.**
4. **NRC to arrange for Nancy / engineer to visit the river before deciding on the spraying approach for problem areas.**
5. **NRC Rivers and Natural Hazards Officer to meet with NRC Biosecurity Specialist - Pest Plants (Nancy) to confirm a plan for the MWR and bullrush work and communicate this to the working group**
6. **Committee members were asked to mark hotspot areas for bull rush and Manchurian rice grass spraying on the provided maps and NRC will send these to Nancy for inclusion in the spraying programme.**

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24 September 2025

7. **NRC to assign a dedicated supervisor for the catchment to oversee machine cleaning operations and ensure accountability, with costs charged to the catchment budget.**
8. **NRC to improve communication with landowners regarding the timing and scope of machine cleaning and other works, ensuring they are informed before contractors arrive.**
9. **NRC to review additional work that could be undertaken if a higher targeted rate was charged.**

Wairoa and Kaihu Flood Hazard Maps (Item 3.4)

Presented by: Sarah Gauden-Ing

Secretarial notes: Sarah outlined the expansion of flood models to cover previously unmodelled areas, including the Kaihu catchment, and explained that these models inform council planning and hazard mapping. Joe described how Cyclone Gabriel produced record flows in several tributaries, highlighting the need for robust modelling and improved forecasting to manage future flood risks. Presented cross-sectional data comparing historical and recent river profiles, noting that while some silting and weed growth are evident, the machine cleaning programme has generally maintained channel capacity. Cautioned that older survey data may be less reliable due to sparse measurements and committed to refining calculations and standardising cross-section analysis for future reporting.

Sarah provided a map at the meeting and asked committee members to advise if this is their experience in the catchment. Before the hazard maps are published we want to ensure they match the lived experience particularly the upper Kaihu which wasn't modelled previously,

Agreed action points:

1. **Committee members were asked to review and provide feedback on the new flood hazard maps, especially for the upper Kaihu area, before publication. Members to contact Sarah.**

Whakamutunga (Conclusion)

The meeting concluded at 12.14pm.

TITLE: **Receipt of Action Sheet**

From: Haylee Labelle, Personal Assistant Community Resilience

Authorised by Louisa Gritt, Group Manager - Community Resilience, on 20 March 2026
Group Manager/s:

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to enable the meeting to receive the current action sheet.

Nga mahi tutohutia / Recommendation

That the action sheet be received.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Action Sheet [↓](#) 

Kaihū River Working Group - Action Tracker

#	Date of meeting	Agenda item number	KRWG action	Responsible staff	Status	Notes
5	8/05/2025	3.3 Kaihu River Working Group - Presentation	Email the findings of the Kaihu cross sectional survey to the working group (once received by the consultant and analysed in-house).	NRC Rivers & Natural Hazards Officer	Completed	20/05/25 - Data received by surveyors 01/09/25 - Will present at the meeting as opposed to sending via email. 24/09/2025 - Was presented at meeting
6	8/05/2025	3.3 Kaihu River Working Group - Presentation	Ensure that the NRC Rivers team carry out drone flight before November	NRC Rivers & Natural Hazards Officer	Completed	24/07/25 - NZ lowest high-tides according to NIWA are 30th Sep - 2nd Oct and 30 - 31st Oct. Need to assess against Northland west coast to book in potential (weather permitting) dates 01/09/25 - Will carry out flight in October, we want the river as low as can get it, ideally this would be even later in the year i.e December. Once MetService releases Dargaville Low Tide times for October, will book in a date and a backup date. 21/10/25 - Drone flight was undertaken
1	24/09/2025	3.3 Presentation Slides	Establish a process whereby, if machine cleaning funds run out mid-contract, NRC is authorised to allocate additional budget (e.g., up to 20% more) and notify the committee accordingly.	NRC Rivers Manager	Completed	A contingency has been added to the RFQ that is 20% of the proposed budget for machine cleaning annually.
2	24/09/2025	3.3 Presentation Slides	Send communication to landowners reminding them to burn/remove stacked tree debris in the appropriate season to prevent downstream blockages during future storms.	NRC Rivers and Natural Hazards Officer	Completed	15/01/26 - Have emailed the only landowner I am aware of with debris piles (stacked in late 2023) on their property asking if they have plans to burn them
3	24/09/2025	3.3 Presentation Slides	Contact Douglas Logging regarding the removal of felled trees	NRC Rivers Manager	Completed	1/10/25 Joe Camuso spoke with Brad Douglas, they have no interest in the poplar trees but are willing to provide quotes to remove fallen trees
4	24/09/2025	3.3 Presentation Slides	Arrange for Nancy / engineer to visit the river before deciding on the spraying approach for problem areas	NRC Rivers and Natural Hazards Officer	Closed	This action has been closed as was more in relation to drain cleaning
5	24/09/2025	3.3 Presentation Slides	Meet with NRC Biosecurity Specialist - Pest Plants (Nancy) to confirm a plan for the MWR and bullrush work and communicate this to the working group	NRC Rivers and Natural Hazards Officer	Completed	Contract has been issued, control work is schedule for this month (March)
6	24/09/2025	3.3 Presentation Slides	Trial different spraying methods (helicopter, boat, handgun) in designated areas and assess cost-effectiveness before committing to a single approach for future spraying.	NRC Rivers Team	Completed	This was more information gathering, Colin essentially wanted a cost benefit analysis vs control out put. Nancy has asked around and is pretty happy that gun and hose and/or boat work is the most cost-effective method that delivers the best control. She has been in touch with the committee members about this.
7	24/09/2025	3.3 Presentation Slides	Committee members were asked to mark hotspot areas for bull rush and Manchurian rice grass spraying on the provided maps and NRC will send these to Nancy for inclusion in the spraying programme.	NRC Rivers and Natural Hazards Officer	Completed	06/10/2025 - Provided the maps to Nancy this morning
8	24/09/2025	3.3 Presentation Slides	Assign a dedicated supervisor for the catchment to oversee machine cleaning operations and ensure accountability, with costs charged to the catchment budget.	NRC Rivers Manager	Completed	Charles Chaves is best placed to provide this support with the help of Wayne
9	24/09/2025	3.3 Presentation Slides	Improve communication with landowners regarding the timing and scope of machine cleaning and other works, ensuring they are informed before contractors arrive.	NRC Rivers and Natural Hazards Officer	Completed	Comments from Nicole - Once the resource consent has been issued, I'll send communications to the group regarding the machine cleaning works (contractor, timing, etc.). I think this could be closed, as it's an ongoing action.
10	24/09/2025	3.3 Presentation Slides	Review work that could be undertaken if a higher targeted rate was charged	NRC Rivers Manager		
11	24/09/2025	3.4 Wairoa and Kaihu Flood Hazard Maps	Committee members were asked to review and provide feedback on the new flood hazard maps, especially for the upper Kaihu area, before publication. Members to contact Sarah Gauden-Ing	Working Group	Closed	

TITLE: **Terms of Reference Confirmation**

From: Haylee Labelle, Personal Assistant Community Resilience

**Authorised by
Group Manager/s:** Louisa Gritt, Group Manager - Community Resilience, on 19 February 2026


Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

Reviewing Terms of Reference (ToR) for a new triennium (three years in local government) is a standard governance practice to ensure they align with current legislation, council priorities, and operational needs, occurring at the start of the new term to define roles, responsibilities, delegations, and reporting for committees and advisory groups, ensuring they remain fit for purpose and effective for the next cycle.

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommended actions

1. To review and confirm the terms of reference for the Kaihu River Working Group at the meeting on 31 March 2026
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Ngā tapirihanga / Attachments

Attachment 1: Kaihu - Terms of Reference [↓](#) 

KAIHŪ RIVER LIAISON WORKING GROUP

Terms of Reference 2025-2028

Reporting to:

Northland Regional Council

Composition:

The Liaison Working Group is appointed by the Northland Regional Council and shall comprise:

One member appointed by the Northland Regional Council who will chair the Committee	John Blackwell
One Kaipara District Councillor (who also represents the residents of Dargaville)	Snow Tane
One member nominated by Te Roroa, or in his/her absence, a nominee who shall have voting rights	Evan Nathan (interim until 31 March 2026)
One member nominated to represent Te Houhanga Marae	Cedric Beazley
<i>Three representatives of the ratepayers of the river catchment, one from each area:</i>	
Area 1. Class A rated land on the floodplain	<i>John Murray</i>
Area 2. Class B rated land on the floodplain	<i>Bryce Wyatt</i>
Area 3. Class F rated land being the catchment area beyond the floodplain	<i>John Greensmith</i>
<u>And</u> that the Northland Regional Council may from time to time appoint to the Working Group because of their particular skills or knowledge.	

Length of Term:

Appointments will be made for a term of three years, in sequence with the local government elections, or until earlier disqualification, death or resignation. Should any of the latter three events arise, replacement appointees may be made by the Northland Regional Council.

Meeting Frequency:

As required, but no less than twice each year and timed to inform the operational programme for the upcoming works season and to report back on progress following the end of the season. Meetings shall be open to the public.

Objective:

To advise and make recommendations to the Northland Regional Council, on all matters pertaining to the development and implementation of the Kaihū River Management Plan.

Functions:

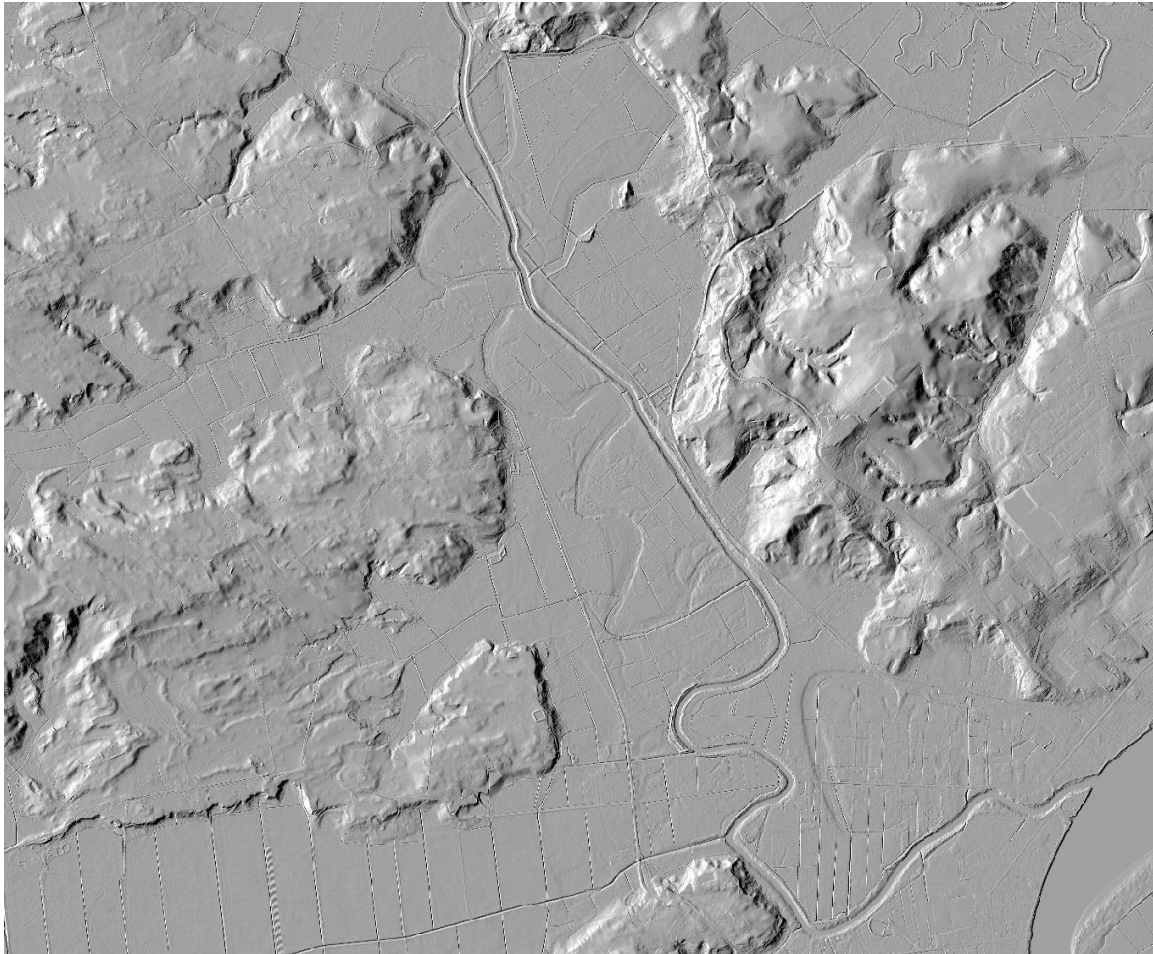
The Kaihū River Liaison Working Group is an advisory group of the Northland Regional Council and has no delegated authority or specific powers. Its functions are to:

1. Provide a stakeholder forum for the development of policies and plans for the reduction of flood risk within the Kaihū River catchment.
2. Enable stakeholders to participate in the ongoing management of flood risk reduction with the Kaihū River catchment.
3. Facilitate communications between the Northland Regional Council, which is ultimately responsible for the management of the scheme, and the residents and landholders within the catchment.
4. Advise the Northland Regional Council on all matters relating to the management of the Kaihū River Flood Control Scheme.

Specific tasks will include:

1. Assisting the Northland Regional Council to develop and adopt a Management Plan for the management of flooding and erosion within the catchment of the Kaihū River.
2. Annually reviewing the priority and order of works within the management plan, ensuring that works are being undertaken in the order set out in the Plan and to the standards specified in the Plan or, when necessary, recommending changes to the Plan.
3. Each year, reporting on performance against the past year's work plan and recommending to the Northland Regional Council an annual works plan and budget for the forthcoming financial year.
4. Reviewing the implementation and effectiveness of other measures identified in the Management Plans to reduce flood risk, including policies and rules in Regional and District Plans, controls under the Building Act, or any other methods
5. Each meeting reviewing monitoring reports on the environmental impacts of the scheme.
6. Assisting the Regional Council to identify potential opportunities for improvement to the scheme and to assist the Council to consult with affected parties.

Date	Section Amended	Approved by
13/09/2023	Updated membership	
30/7/2025	Updated membership – replaced Boyd Parker with John Greensmith, added Snow Tane and Cedric Beazley	
	Meeting frequency and membership updated, functions and tasks aligned with other RLWGs.	
23/12/25	Updated membership	



Kaihu River Working Group Meeting

31st March 2026

Kainu River Financial Report

5003

Description	2024-2025			2025-2026		
	Full year Budget	Actual	Variance	YTD February26 Budget	YTD February26 Actual	YTDVariance
Operating Expenses						
Consultants	0	110	(110)	0	113	(113)
Valuation Consultants	5,378	5,300	78	3,696	3,628	69
Contractors	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stopbank & River Schemes works	0	0	0	0	0	0
River Clearance Works	63,131	30,740	32,391	49,114	2,489	46,625
Advertising - Statutory Notices	366	0	366	189	0	189
Sundry Supplies	0	33	(33)	0	68	(68)
Rate Collection Cost - TA's	1,450	1,103	347	997	999	(3)
Labour Charged	0	2,776	(2,776)	0	444	(444)
Vehicle Running Costs Charged	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sub Total	70,325	40,061	30,263	53,995	7,742	46,254
Operating Income						
Rates Revenue	69,452	65,081	4,371	46,301	44,450	1,851
Contract Revenue	0	0	0	0	0	0
TLA Share of Costs	0	4,361	(4,361)	0	0	0
Interest - Internal	0	2,263	(2,263)	0	924	(924)
Sub Total	69,452	71,705	(2,253)	46,301	45,375	926
Net operating Surplus / (Deficit)	(873)	31,644	(32,516)	(7,694)	37,633	(45,327)
Capital expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0
Less depreciation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net operating and capital surplus / (Deficit)	(873)	31,644	(32,516)	(7,694)	37,633	(45,327)
Surplus / (Deficit) carried forward	89,061	42,056	47,005	51,299	73,699	(22,400)
Surplus / (Deficit) at balance date	88,188	73,699	14,489	43,605	111,333	(63,086)



Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Te Taitokerau



PROPOSED WORKS SEASON BUDGET		
No.	Item	Estimated Cost
1	Confluence to Parore Road Bridge	
1a	Machine cleaning of right bank from Duck Creek to Parore Road Bridge OR left bank from 73 Beach Road to Parore Road Bridge*	\$ 20,000
1b	Spraying of weeds (such as Manchurian Wild Rice and Bullrush) on the left and right banks from the Confluence to Parore Road Bridge	\$ 30,000
2	Parore Road Bridge to the Bottleneck	
2a	Machine cleaning sections from Parore Road Bridge to Bottleneck on an as needed basis	\$ 8,000
3	North of the Bottleneck	
3a	Tree Removal Upper Kaihu as needed	\$ 10,000
	Total	\$ 68,000
	* Each bank will be cleaned on a biennial basis (every second year).	

2025-2026 Works Programme

- Machine Cleaning
- MWR and California Bullrush Control
- 2026 Drone Flight





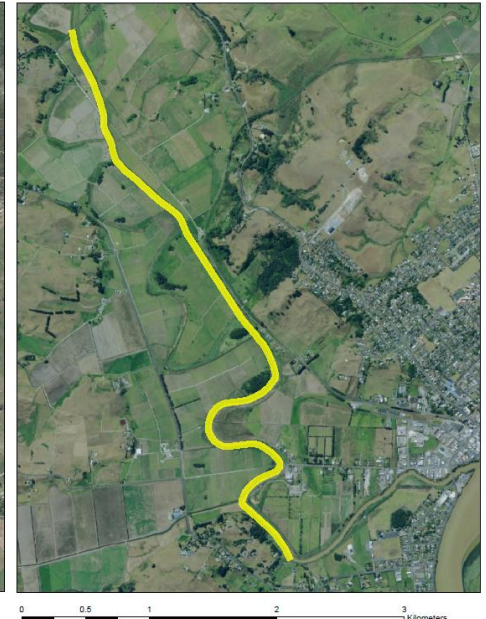
2025-2026 Works Update: Machine Cleaning

Budgeted:

- Machine cleaning along the true right-hand bank of the Kaihu River from Duck Creek to Parore Road Bridge (yellow line). Budget \$20,000.
- Cleaning sections of the Kaihu River between Parore Road Bridge to the Rotu Bottleneck on as needed basis (orange line). Budgeted aprox. \$8,000.
- Contract awarded to Huband Contractors

Consent:

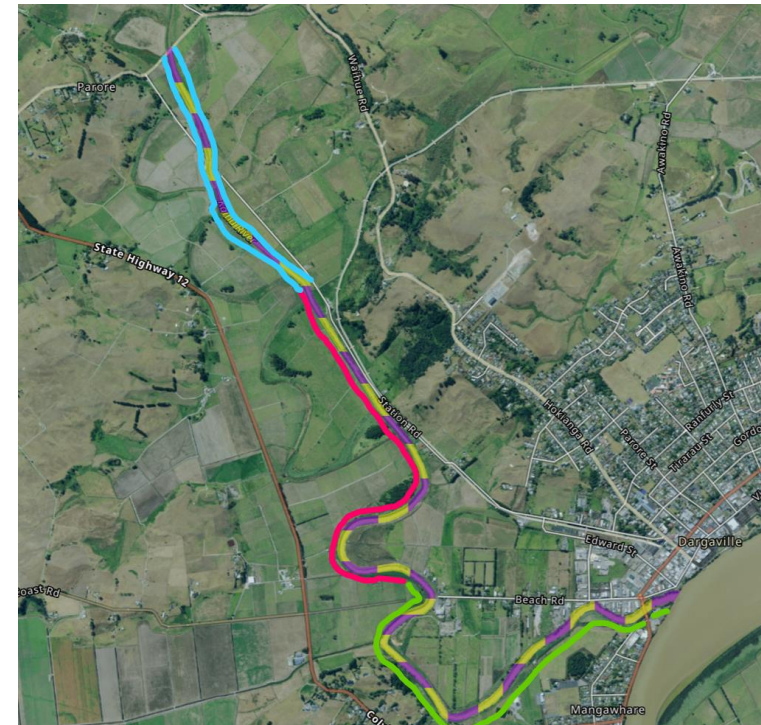
- Draft conditions recieved and under review as of 20th March
- Sseeked consent for the Kaihu River from the Northern Waiora confluence to the Rotu Bottleneck





2025-2026 Works Update MWR & Bullrush Control

- Budgeted \$30,000
- Nancy to provide update on both programs



2025 Drone Flight

- Confluence of the Northern Wairoa to Rotu Bottleneck
- Link to video emailed out to the group in November 2025



2025 Flight: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXAI6PW7kkk>

Other Business: LTP Dargaville Flood Risk Mitigation Project

- Information to be added

