

Natural Resources Working Party

Wednesday 27 May 2026 at 9:00 am

AGENDA

Natural Resources Working Party Agenda

Meeting to be held in the Council Chamber
36 Water Street, Whangārei
on Wednesday 27 May 2026, commencing at 9:00 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 NATURAL RESOURCES WORKING PARTY

Chairperson, Councillor Geoff Crawford
Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi-O-Ngāpuhi Janelle Beazley
Councillor John Blackwell
Ngāti Tara Mahue Greaves
Councillor, Amy Macdonald
Councillor Arama Morunga
Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua Ihapera Paniora
Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa Abe Witana
NRC Chair, Pita Tipene (Ex-Officio)

KARAKIA

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4.6 Dune Lake Monitoring: Lake Waiparera Presentation	
<i>This report entitled ‘Dune Lake Monitoring: Lake Waiparera Presentation’ by Suha Sanwar, Resource Scientist - Lakes/Freshwater Ecology 27 May is tabled. The associated presentation is unavailable at the time of agenda publication. Staff will be available at the meeting to provide a verbal update.</i>	

4.7 Flowing Artesian Bores Presentation

This report entitled 'Flowing Artesian Bores' by Susie Osbaldiston, Resource Scientist - Water Resources and Hadyn Butler, Environmental Monitoring Officer - Freshwater Ecology 27 May 2026 is tabled. The associated presentation is unavailable at the time of agenda publication. Staff will be available at the meeting to provide a verbal update.

4.8 Resources Management Reform Update Presentation

This report entitled 'Resource Management Reform Update Presentation' by Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager 27 May 2026 is tabled. The associated presentation is unavailable at the time of agenda publication. Staff will be available at the meeting to provide a verbal update.

Opening Karakia

Whakataka te hau ki te uru,
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga.
Kia mākinakina ki uta,
Kia mātaratara ki tai.
E hī ake ana te atākura he tio,
he huka, he hauhunga.
Tuturu whakamaua kia Tina (Tina)
Haumi e! Hui e! Tāiki e!

Closing Karakia

Unuhia, unuhia
Unuhia ki te uru tapu nui
Kia wātea, kia māmā, te ngākau, te tinana, te wairua i
te ara tangata
Koia rā e Rongo, whakairia ake ki runga
Kia tina! TINA! Hui e! TĀIKI E!



TITLE: **Record of Actions – 25 February 2026**
From: Sandra Harris, Personal Assistant - Pou Tiakai Taiao
Authorised by Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao, on 21 May 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 25 February 2026 for review by the meeting.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Record of Actions - 25 February 2026 [↓](#) 

Natural Resources Working Party
25 February 2026

Natural Resources Working Party Record of Actions

Meeting held in the Council Chamber
36 Water Street, Whangārei
on Wednesday 25 February 2026, commencing at 9:00 am

Tuhinga/Present:

Chairperson, Councillor Geoff Crawford
Councillor, Amy Macdonald *(Via audio-visual link)*
Councillor John Blackwell
Councillor Arama Morunga
Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi-O-Ngāpuhi Janelle Beazley *(Via audio-visual link)*
Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua Ihapera Paniora *(Via audio-visual link)*
Ngāti Tara Mahue Greaves *(Via audio-visual link)*
NRC Chair, Pita Tipene (Ex-Officio) *arrived at 10.28am*

I Tae Mai/In Attendance:

Pou Tiaki Taiao | GM Environmental Services
Pou Whakaritenga | GM Regulatory Services *(Via audio-visual link)*
Monitoring Manager | Natural Resources
Natural Resources | Science Manager
Principal Advisor | Environmental Services
Land Programme Manager | Land Management
Kaiāwhina Tari | Te Tiriti Partnerships and Engagement
Policy and Planning Manager
Natural Resources Data Manager
Hydrology Manager

The meeting commenced at 9.00am with karakia by Cr Morunga and mihi to all present.

Ngā Mahi Whakapai/Housekeeping (Item 1.0)

Ngā Whakapahā/Apologies (Item 2.0)

NRC Chair Pita Tipene (note – Pita Tipene arrived 10.28am)

Record of Actions – 6 August 2025 (Item 4.1)

Presented by: Chairperson, Councillor Geoff Crawford

Agreed action points:

- Taken as read - Chair, Geoff Crawford confirmed. Note: Councillor Crawford is the only Working Parties member eligible to confirm this item from the previous triennium.

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Receipt of Action Sheet (Item 4.2)

Presented by: Chairperson, Councillor Geoff Crawford

Agreed action points:

- Taken as read - Chair, Geoff Crawford confirmed. Note: Councillor Crawford is the only Working Parties member eligible to confirm this item from the previous triennium.

Taumāreere Business Case - next steps (Item 4.3)

Presented by: Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao and Justin Murfitt, Strategic Policy Specialist

Discussion and agreed action points:

- The Working Party received a briefing and acknowledged the business case as a significant partnership between Council and Ngāti Hine, with clarity provided that Ngāti Hine Rūnanga is the key partner.
- The Chair sought transparency on total NRC costs to date and questioned whether the rationale is sufficiently strong. Staff confirmed the purpose—reducing sedimentation in the Bay of Islands—and noted key learnings from KMR, with Ngāti Hine expected to lead locally.
- Members highlighted the need for broader engagement with other landowners and farmers in the surrounding area, despite Ngāti Hine's land ownership.
- Secured funding would provide major benefits for Northland, support future LTP opportunities, and requires deeper engagement with FNDC and other councils who recognise the Bay of Islands' economic importance.
- The group emphasised the need for economic impact data, agreed the business case could serve as a broader case study, and the Chair suggested a field visit for Councillor Morunga to understand the tool in practice.
- **Action:** Circulate the Case Study report to the Working Party, noting the presence of new members.

Direction to continue as per report and agreed actions:

1. Updates on progress and any proposals/recommendations are reported back to this Working Party for consideration and endorsement.
2. That the Working Party endorse the next steps (with any amendments) for implementing the business case set out in the report are progressed.
3. That the report Taumāreere Business Case - next steps by Justin Murfitt, Principal Advisor, Environmental Services be received

Strategic review of Northland Regional Council's Natural Resources Unit (Item 4.4)

Presented by: Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao and Jason Donaghy, Monitoring Manager Natural Resources

Discussion and agreed action points:

- A summary and briefing of the item was delivered to the members for clarity.
- Members are supportive of direction of Natural Resources Unit.

Natural Resources Working Party
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- **Action:** A progress update on the Strategic review will be provided to the Working Party at a future meeting.

Direction to continue as per report and agreed actions:

1. That the Natural Resources Working Party provide feedback
2. That the report Strategic review of Northland Regional Council's Natural Resources Unit by Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao and Jason Donaghy, Natural Resources Monitoring Manager be received.

Land Management Work Programme (Item 4.5)

Presented by: Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager and Ellen Williamson, Land Programme Manager

Discussion and agreed action points:

- Action: Presentation to be sent Working Party members.

Direction to continue as per report and agreed actions:

1. That the Natural Environment Bill largely maintains existing regional council functions that drive existing land-management activities. But includes expanded indigenous biodiversity responsibilities and new expectations around action-plans to achieve environmental limits which may additionally require support from land management staff.
2. That the current Land Management Work Programme, including the team's strengthened structure to support farmers in understanding rules, and preparation for implementing Freshwater Farm Plans.

January Weather Event (Item 4.6)

Presented by: Jason Donaghy, Monitoring Manager Natural Resources

Discussion and agreed action points:

- Acknowledgements were given to Chantez Connor Kingi, Kai Whiri Iwituna for her contribution and support during the event.
- Karla was acknowledged for her role in the helicopter operations, with appreciation expressed to the wider team for drawing on specialist expertise and the knowledge held by kaimahi familiar with the area.
- It was noted that delays in capturing intelligence during an event can negatively impact funding and overall response effectiveness.
- The group identified a gap between science and resilience functions when responding to an event.
- Blind spots in the mahi and recovery process were noted, including that risk to life was not explicitly covered within NRC's BAU framework. Despite this, staff stepped beyond their usual responsibilities to ensure communities were heard.

Whakamutunga (Conclusion)

The meeting concluded at 11.12AM with closing karakia by Cr Morunga.

TITLE: **Receipt of Action Sheet**

From: Sandra Harris, Personal Assistant - Pou Tiakai Taiao

Authorised by Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao, on 21 May 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 [↓](#) 

Natural Resources Working Party
Schedule of Actions 27 May 2026

Meeting date	Item	NRWP action	Responsible staff	Status	Notes
12 March 2025	Coastal State of the Environment Report (Item 4.5)	To report back to the Working Party at future date and how engagement with communities is shared around data	Jason Donaghy	In progress	The campaign plan is currently in progress, with partners contributing to the collation of materials intended to support forthcoming engagement activities.
21 May 2025	Northland's Dusty Roads (Item 4.4)	Report on current compliance monitoring outcomes based on existing budget and activities. This initial reporting will establish a baseline of what is currently being delivered.	Colin Dall		An audit of the District Council website was undertaken to check that they contained the information required by Rule C.7.2.7. Follow-up action was taken where missing information was identified. Each summer the Council undertakes particulate matter monitoring of several dusty roads primarily at sites where complaints about dust have been received, although no sites were monitored this past summer mostly due to the regular rainfall received in most areas of Northland. This programme can be continued within existing budgets.
6 August 2025	Natural Resources Mahi Highlights (Item 4.3)	Develop and present a written survey to councillors capturing feedback from all Primary Sector Liaison Group and Tangata Whenua representatives involved in the Freshwater Plan development process.	Tami Woods	In progress	The survey has been sent out. Results to be reported to the next NRWP meeting.

Natural Resources Working Party
Schedule of Actions 27 May 2026

6 August 2025	Freshwater Farm Plans Update (Item 4.4)	Deliver an update once there is greater clarity regarding the proposed framework changes to the Freshwater Farm Plan Regulations.	Tami Woods	In progress	We are still awaiting the revised regulations to be released.
25 February 2026	Strategic review of Northland Regional Council's Natural Resources Unit (Item 4.4)	A progress update on the Strategic review will be provided to the Working Party at a future meeting.	Jason Donaghy		

TITLE: **Review of Natural Resources Working Party Terms of Reference**

From: Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao

Authorised by Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao, on 21 May 2026
Group Manager/s:

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

Terms of Reference were approved by Council on 25 November 2026, with the resolution stating, *'That the TOR be reviewed by the respective governance bodies at their first meeting and any agreed amendments be brought back to respective councils for ratification.'* This is an opportunity for the working party to review the Terms of Reference.

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the report 'Review of Natural Resources Working Party Terms of Reference' by Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao and dated 16 March 2026, be received.

Background/Tuhinga

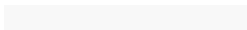
Not Relevant

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Natural Resources Working Party Terms of Reference [↓](#) 

Document Management

Date	Detail	Authorised by
4 Dec 2023	Updated membership	Council resolution 28 Nov 2023
11 Jul 2024	Updated membership	Council resolution 25 Jun 2024
14 Jan 2026	Updated membership	Council resolution 17 Dec 2025



Terms of Reference

Natural Resources Working Party

Membership

The Natural Resource Working Party shall be comprised of five (5) councillors and four (4) Te Ruarangi members as follows:

Chair:	Cr G Crawford
Members:	Cr J Blackwell, Cr A Macdonald, Cr A Morunga
Hapu and Iwi representation:	Janelle Beazley, Abe Witana, Ihapera Paniora and Mahue Greaves
Ex officio:	Chair P Tipene

Standing orders do not apply.

Quorum

The quorum for meetings of the working party shall be four (4). Ex-officio and Te Ruarangi members count towards a quorum.

This working party will contribute directly to the following areas of focus:

- Healthy waters for the environment and our people
- Resilient, adaptable communities in a changing climate
- Protected and flourishing native life
- Meaningful partnerships with tangata whenua

Objectives

The objectives of the working party are to:

1. Provide oversight and assistance to the Chief Executive on council's natural resources' strategic activities ensuring accountabilities and responsibilities are fulfilled; and
2. Make recommendations to council on natural resources matters.

Responsibilities

The working party is directly responsible and accountable to the council for the exercise of its responsibilities.

In carrying out its responsibilities, the working party must at all times recognise that primary responsibility for management of the council rests with the CEO.

For reasons of efficiency and/or expediency, should the working party not be able to perform its functions, the council will assume its role and responsibilities.

ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

The council authorises the working party, within the scope of its Terms of Reference, role and responsibilities, to:

1. General

- a) Subject to operating within approved budget allocation - obtain information it needs from the CEO and/or external party (subject to their legal obligation to protect information);
- b) Discuss any matters with the external auditor, or other external parties (subject) to confidentiality considerations);
- c) Request the attendance of any employee, subject to the CEO's approval, at meetings of the working party or its working groups;
- d) In discussion with the CEO and subject to operating within approved budget allocation - obtain external legal or other professional advice, as considered necessary to meet its responsibilities, at the council's expense;
- e) Co-opt a person as a (non-voting) member of the working party to assist with special projects;
- f) Recommend to council that additional members be appointed to the working party should it consider wider representation would be of assistance in performing its functions;
- g) Undertake such other functions as may be delegated by council from time to time.

2. Planning

For council's planning activities:

- a) To monitor and review the implementation of the Regional Policy Statement, the Proposed Regional Plan for Northland and Resource Management Act regulations.
- b) To make recommendations to council on any appeals in accordance with council decisions on the proposed plan, plan change or variation.
- c) To recommend to council positions and perspectives on proposed legislation (including amendments) and national policy initiatives for incorporation into council submissions as appropriate.

3. Water and land Management

For council's water and land management activities:

- a) Monitor and review council's implementation of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020.
- b) Advise and make recommendations to council (and relevant working parties or working groups) on operational strategies related to freshwater or land management.
- c) Monitor and review progress towards council's objectives, the achievement of the performance targets and the delivery of work programmes in the relevant Long-

Term Plan, Annual Plan and operational strategies associated with council's natural resource management activities

- d) To monitor and review implementation of Nga Taumata o te Moana – our climate change strategy, as the actions relate to council's natural resource functions.

4. Reporting

The Chairperson, supported by staff, will report on working party activities and associated recommendations to Council on a quarterly basis.

5. Meeting Frequency

The Natural Resources Working Party is to meet quarterly.

6. No Delegated Authority – Power to Act

The working party has no delegated authority or power to act.

ID: [DMHUB-33537858-1068](#)

TITLE: **Wetland Mapping Project – Update, Quality Assurance, Website Publication and Next Steps**

From: James Griffin, Policy Specialist

Authorised by Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao, on 21 May 2026
Group Manager/s:

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

Northland Regional Council (NRC) has been undertaking a programme of work to improve regional wetland mapping to support freshwater management, biodiversity protection and informed decision-making. This briefing provides the Biosecurity and Biodiversity Working Party with an update on the wetland mapping project, including progress of an independent quality assurance (QA) process, and outlines the steps required to make the most recent mapping available on the NRC website.

Wetland mapping is required to meet obligations under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM), which requires councils to identify natural inland wetlands and progressively build a wetland inventory.

While national RM reform creates uncertainty around the timing and detail of future freshwater and wetland policy instruments, many practical and enduring uses of wetland mapping will remain. These include freshwater farm planning, biodiversity prioritisation, restoration planning and early-stage advisory work, regardless of future regulatory settings.

NRC's most recent wetland mapping was produced in 2024 using machine-learning and remote-sensing techniques and provides the most comprehensive regional-scale view of wetlands to date. As these outputs are predictive and unvalidated, independent QA was identified as a critical prerequisite to public release.

NRC engaged an external ecological specialist to undertake a QA assessment of the mapping. This work is nearing completion and provides confidence ratings, use-and-limitations guidance, and recommendations to support responsible internal and public use of the mapping.

Staff are aiming to make the updated indicative wetland mapping available on NRC's website by **30 June 2026**, supported by a staged communications approach. The work also establishes a foundation for progressing toward a wetland inventory over time, consistent with NPS-FM requirements.

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommended actions

That the Natural Resources Working Party:

1. Note the progress made on NRC's wetland mapping project, including independent quality assurance work.
2. Note the proposed approach and milestones to support publication of the updated wetland mapping on the NRC website by 30 June 2026.
3. Endorse the intended next steps toward development of a wetland inventory consistent with NPS-FM requirements.
4. Endorse an action for staff to report back on progress at a future Working Party Meeting

Kōrero / Discussion

1. Purpose and intended use of wetland mapping

The purpose of NRC's wetland mapping programme is to:

- improve regional understanding of the distribution and extent of wetlands;
- support regional planning, land management, biodiversity prioritisation and restoration;
- assist with early-stage screening and advisory work for landowners, communities and consent applicants; and
- provide a foundation for meeting NPS-FM wetland mapping and over time, inventory requirements.

The recent mapping is indicative. It is intended to support understanding of wetland locations rather than confirm wetland boundaries, types or legal status. Field verification by a suitably qualified wetland specialist remains necessary where site-specific or regulatory decisions are required.

2. Quality assurance approach

Following identification of organisational and reputational risk associated with releasing unvalidated predictive mapping, NRC progressed a formal RFP to engage external expertise to undertake independent quality assurance of the recent machine learning wetland mapping layers.

The QA work aims to:

- provide a statistically defensible assessment of mapping confidence across wetland types, size classes and land-use contexts;
- describe strengths, limitations and common error types for each layer;
- produce clear public-facing use and limitations statements;
- recommend improvements and outline an update and maintenance pathway; and
- support responsible public release of the mapping.

An external ecological specialist (Marley Ford) was engaged in March 2026. The QA work is still in progress but is nearing completion and will be finalised and available for the website publication.

3. Early insights from quality assurance work

Early findings help illustrate how the mapping performs across different wetland types and why clear guidance on use and limitations is essential.

Two contrasting wetland types usefully illustrate this range:

- **Gumlands / wet heathlands**
Gumland mapping shows moderate and variable confidence, reflecting the ecological complexity of these systems. Gumlands often occur as fine-scale mosaics of wet and dry habitat and can be difficult to distinguish from regenerating scrub or forest using remote sensing alone. Early QA results indicate a relatively high proportion of *medium-confidence* classifications, particularly for smaller sites, reinforcing the need for field verification where gumland identification has regulatory or planning significance.
- **Mangroves**
In contrast, mangrove mapping shows very high confidence overall, particularly for larger stands. Mangroves have a distinctive canopy structure and coastal setting that is readily identifiable in aerial imagery. Remaining uncertainty is largely limited to boundary definition at the upper intertidal margin or where mangroves are small and sparse.

These early results demonstrate that the QA process is functioning as intended by clearly identifying where mapping can be relied on with confidence and where caution and additional verification are required. Full confidence summaries and use-and-limitations guidance will accompany the final QA report.

4. Preparing for website publication and communications

The updated indicative wetland mapping will be made available on the NRC website by **30 June 2026**, supported by a **soft-launch, staged communications approach**.

Key elements include:

- **Clear web content** explaining what the mapping is (and is not), how it was created, confidence levels, and when field verification is required.
- **Internal briefings** for councillors and NRC staff (including regulatory, compliance and customer services teams) ahead of publication.
- **Staged external communications**, avoiding a high-profile launch and instead focusing on users most likely to access the mapping.
- Prepared messaging and FAQs to manage risks associated with perceived regulatory impact, data sovereignty and ground-truthing expectations.

This approach is designed to ensure transparency, manage expectations and minimise the risk of misinterpretation.

5. Next steps – toward a wetland inventory

Publication of the updated mapping is an enabling step rather than an end point. The next phase of work will focus on progressing toward a **wetland inventory** as required under the NPS-FM by:

- using indicative mapping to prioritise areas for **field verification and values assessment**;
- progressively integrating information from consents, compliance, biodiversity monitoring and restoration projects;
- linking wetland mapping with existing condition monitoring programmes (e.g. Wetland Condition Index); and
- establishing processes to update and refine wetland information over time.

Ngā tapirihanga / Attachments

Nil

TITLE: Land Management: Grant Funding
From: Ellen Williamson, Land Programme Manager
Authorised by Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao, on 21 May 2026
Group Manager/s:

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

This report provides an overview of the key funding programmes delivered by the Land Management Team; The Hill Country Erosion Fund (HCEF), Environment Fund (EFund), and Tāngata Whenua and Community Catchment Fund (TWCCF).

These funding streams are key mechanisms for supporting resilient land use practices and improving freshwater quality outcomes across Te Taitokerau. They combine financial incentives, technical advice, and engagement to support landowners and communities to adopt best practice and achieve environmental outcomes beyond regulatory compliance.

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommended actions

1. The report 'Land Management Team Funding Overview' be received including an overview of the Land management teams funding programmes and a summary of the 2026/2027 financial years funded works.
-

Background/Tuhinga

The purpose of the Land Management Team is to support resilient land use practices across rural communities in Te Taitokerau. To achieve this, the work of the Land Management Team is split into three functions delivered by three teams:

Partnerships Team - funding delivery, stakeholder engagement, and community partnerships

Technical Team - soil conservation programme, project effectiveness monitoring, provision of specialist land management support

Nursery - supply of plant material for erosion control and restoration

A key function of the Partnerships Team is the delivery of funding programmes that incentivise sustainable land management and freshwater improvement. These funding streams also provide an 'entry point' for engagement with landowners, enabling further discussions around compliance and environmental outcomes.

Overview of funding programmes

1. Hill Country Erosion Fund (HCEF)

The Hill Country Erosion Fund is delivered as a partnership between the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and Northland Regional Council (NRC) via a 4-year funding agreement (2023 - 2027).

The programme supports erosion mitigation on highly erosion-prone land through a combination of funding incentives, technical advice, and education.

There is approximately \$153,000 available annually for fencing to retire land, approximately \$160,000 for native afforestation, and approximately \$75,000 for subsidising poplar and willow material. Funding covers two thirds of item costs with landowners contributing the remaining third.

The fund is contestable with project assessed by a panel held in October and works are generally beginning between October to March for fencing and May to July for planting.

HECF Funding is available for:

- Fencing to retire pastural land or grazed bush blocks
- Native afforestation of retired land
- Poplar and willow establishment for erosion control



Photo of planted poplars for erosion mitigation

2. Environment Fund (EFund)

The Environment Fund focussed on enabling stock excluding for waterways and top150 wetlands through. The fund supports landowners who go beyond minimum regulatory requirements, and we have seen this lead to ongoing activities such as wetland restoration and riparian enhancement.

There is approximately \$420,000 available annually for this fund. It is contestable fund with a panel assessing projects based on criteria set in the 2022 Council paper, New Land Management Approach by Ruben Wylie. The panel for this fund is held in October with works then starting between October and March.

EFund funding is available for:

- Stock exclusion fencing (that goes beyond regulatory requirements):
 - Waterways and wetlands with a minimum 3m riparian buffer
- A one-off contribution towards stock water infrastructure (where stock currently access waterways):
 - Troughs (Maximum 5 per application (1 per paddock)
 - Tanks, Up to \$3,000 (25,000L) (Maximum 1 per property)



Photo of troughs used to support stock exclusion from waterway

3. Tāngata Whenua and Community Catchment Fund (TWCCF)

The Tāngata Whenua and Community Catchment Fund supports tāngata whenua and community or catchment groups to deliver projects that improve freshwater quality across Te Taitokerau. The fund enables community-led initiatives, with project scope shaped by group priorities and outcomes.

Funding is available for established tāngata whenua entities (e.g. marae committees, hapū trusts, iwi authorities), or representatives acting on their behalf, and established community or catchment groups (note: Individual landowners are not eligible unless part of a collective entity).

There is approximately \$530,000 available annually for this fund. Single year projects can apply for up to \$40,000, and multi-year project \$60,000 over 3 years with a maximum of \$20,000 per year. Applicant must contribute 30% of the overall project costs.

It is contestable fund with a panel assessing projects based on criteria set in the 2022 Council paper, New Land Management Approach by Ruben Wylie. The panel for this fund is held in July and works beginning mid-August.

TWCCF Funding is available for a wide range of activities including:

- Professional services
- Engagement and awareness
- Kaitiaki engagement
- Training (linked to freshwater outcomes)
- On-the-ground implementation

Summary of 2025/26 financial year

Over the 2025/26 financial year the three funds administered by the Land Management team supported 83 projects. Completed project costs will be available after at the end of the financial year but key achievements to date include:

- EFUND supported 38,652m of stock exclusion fencing, 10 troughs and 1 tank
- HCEF achieved 151ha of retired erosion prone land through 18,763m of fencing, and planted 83,000 native plants on eroding hill country
- TWCCF supported 10,440m of fencing, 20,666 native plants, and a range of other outcomes including Hapu GIS training, water quality monitoring, and wetland restoration.

Funding has supported projects in 12 of the 13 Freshwater management Units (FMU) in Tai Tokerau, the Land Management team does not primarily work in the Northern Wairoa FMU as this is covered by the Kaipara Moana Remediation (KMR) programme.

FMU	EFund	HCEF	TWCCF	Total
Awanui	4	3	1	8
Aupouri	3		1	4
Bay of Islands	4	6	5	15
Bream Bay	2	6	1	9
Doubtless Bay	1	7		8
Herekino/Whangape	1	1	1	3
Hokianga	6	3	7	16
Pouto	1			1
Waipoua		1	2	3
Whananaki Coast	2	5		7
Whangārei	1	1	3	5
Whangaroa	3	1		4
Total	28	34	21	83

Case study from 2025/26 Financial year: *Poplars and willows for erosion resilience*



Poplar poles are planted with sleeves to protect against sheep and possum browsing

When Graham Harris bought his rural Northland property in 2009, he knew he'd taken on a piece of classic Brynderwyn hill country, with steep, dramatic terrain but plenty of potential. Over the years he and his family planted thousands of native trees, steadily improving biodiversity across the property.

Graham turned to the council's Land Management team for advice on tackling erosion through planting.

In 2025, with support from NRC, Graham planted 300 Kawa poplars, with help from a contractor over the course of several days. It's tough work planting 3m poles on steep contour, but correct planting is key to establishing the deep, stabilising roots that make poplars so effective.

For Graham, choosing poplars made sense because they slot straight into a working farm system. Poles can be planted directly into pasture, meaning no lost paddock or disruption to grazing. Over time, the trees will offer other benefits too: shade, shelter, and valuable emergency fodder in dry months.

Having already invested heavily in native planting for biodiversity, Graham saw poplars as the right tool for a different job. "These are functional trees and we're trying to get the land to stabilise, while still giving us access to it."

Ngā tapirihanga / Attachments

Nil