Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 – Waikato and Waipā River Catchments

Tracked Changes Version Hearing Block 1 Recommendations Only

Red tracked changes are insertions or deletions to PC1

Black tracked changes are insertions or deletions recommended by the Council Officers

Blue tracked changes are insertions or deletions recommended by Corina Jordan

Important:

1. ***Relevant pages only (other pages will be addressed through future recommendations)***

3.11 Waikato and Waipa River Catchments/Ngā Riu o ngā Awa o Waikato me Waipā

Area covered by Chapter 3.11/Ngā Riu o ngā Awa o Waikato me Waipā

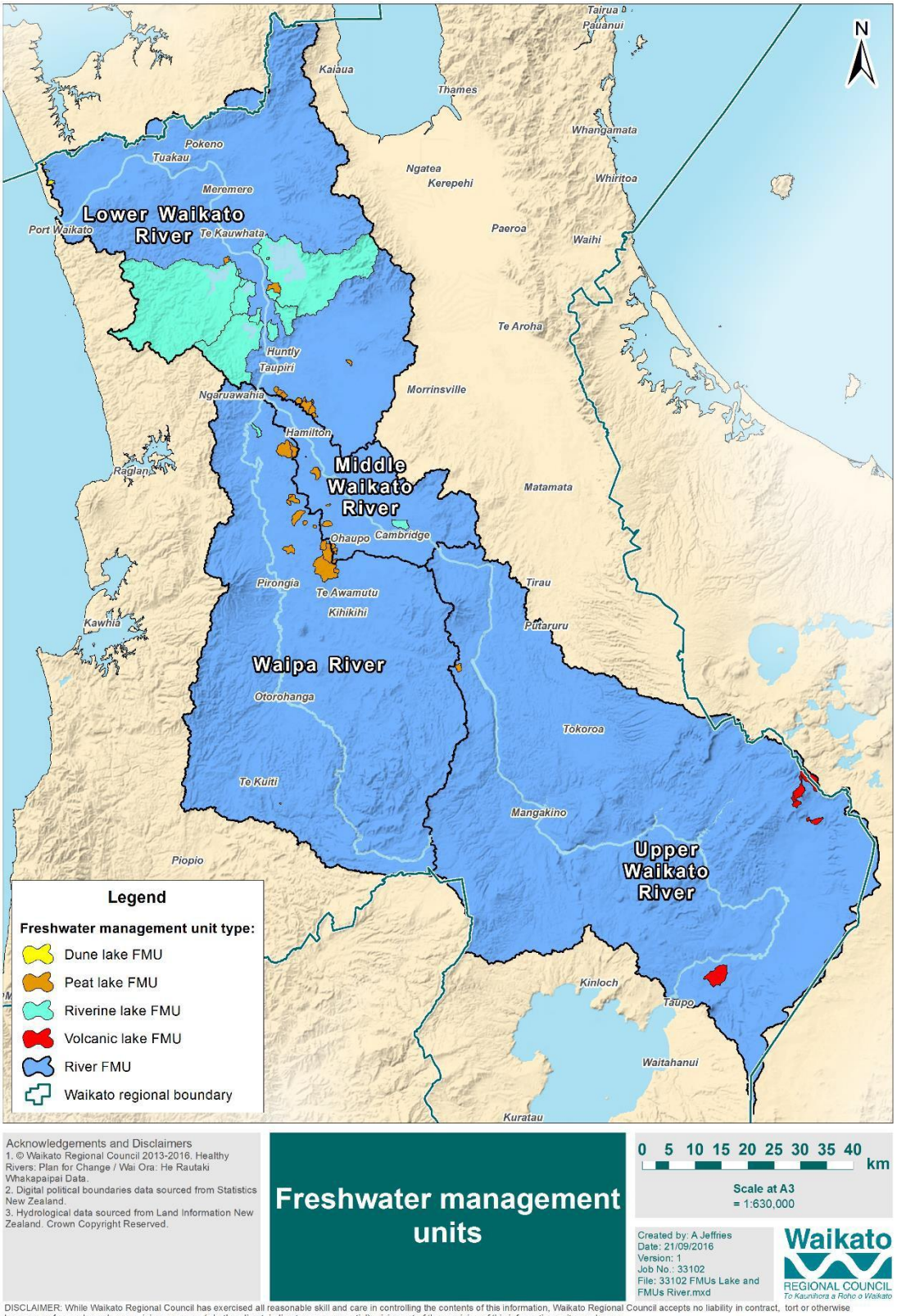
This Chapter 3.11 applies to the Waikato and Waipa River catchments. The map shown in Map 3.11-1 shows the general catchment boundary. This Chapter is additional to all other parts of the Waikato Regional Plan. Where there are any inconsistencies, Chapter 3.11 prevails.

Map 3.11-1 shows the general catchment boundary and includes the boundaries of each Freshwater Management Unit^ (FMU): The FMUs are:

- Upper Waikato River
- Middle Waikato River
- Lower Waikato River
- Waipa River
- Peat Lakes
- Riverine Lakes
- Dune Lakes
- Volcanic Lakes

FMUs are required by central government's National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014. FMUs enable monitoring of progress towards meeting targets^ and limits^.

The Plan maps of the Waikato and Waipa River catchments are available electronically or for viewing at Waikato Regional Council offices on request.



Map 3.11-1: Map of the Waikato and Waipa River catchments, showing Freshwater Management Units

Updated map showing corrected regional boundaries, legend and lake colours to be inserted

Background and explanation

Co-management of the Waikato and Waipa Rivers

There are three River Acts that establish co-governance arrangements for the Waikato and Waipa Rivers and catchment. These are Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010, Ngati Tuwharetoa, Raukawa, and Te Arawa River Iwi Waikato River Act 2010 and Nga Wai o Maniapoto (Waipa River) Act 2012.

The iwi partners in the development of Chapter 3.11 are Maniapoto, Raukawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Te Arawa River Iwi and Waikato-Tainui. The processes for preparing, reviewing, changing or varying the regional plan, in terms of River Iwi involvement in the process, is set out in the legislation. This includes a requirement for Council to establish a Joint Working Party with each of the River Iwi, the purposes of which include making joint recommendations to the Council regarding the plan change.

The three River Acts established the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River/Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato (Vision and Strategy) as the primary direction setting document for the Waikato and Waipa Rivers. The Vision and Strategy prevails over any inconsistencies in a national policy statement or New Zealand coastal policy statement, and is deemed to be part of the Waikato Regional Policy Statement.

The Vision and Strategy states that the Waikato and Waipa Rivers are degraded and require, amongst other things, restoration and protection. One objective[1] has been given particular focus for this chapter: The restoration of water quality within the Waikato River so that it is safe for people to swim in and take food from over its entire length. The Vision and Strategy is being given effect to in Chapter 3.11 by:

- Reducing nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogen losses from land
- Ongoing management of diffuse and point source discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogens
- Giving people and communities time to adapt to the requirements of Chapter 3.11 and supporting actions to achieve short-term objectives while being clear that further reductions in nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogen losses from land will be required in subsequent regional plans
- Ensuring that Waikato Regional Council continues to facilitate ongoing research, monitoring and tracking of changes on the land and in the water to provide for the application of Mātauranga Māori and latest scientific methods, as they become available
- Preparing for future requirements on what can be undertaken on the land, with limits^ ensuring that the management of land use and activities is closely aligned with the biophysical capabilities of the land, the spatial location, and the likely effects of discharges on the lakes, rivers and wetlands in the catchment.

Collaborative approach

The co-governance partners agreed to adopt a collaborative approach to investigate and develop fresh water management approaches that would be implemented in the Waikato and Waipa River Catchments.

A key feature of the collaborative approach was the Collaborative Stakeholder Group (CSG), which represented stakeholders and the wider community in Healthy Rivers: Plan for Change/Wai Ora: He Rauaki Whakapaipai. The CSG was the central channel for stakeholder and broader community collaboration in the project. It intensively reviewed and deliberated on technical material from a group of external technical experts from a range of disciplines. For Proposed Plan Change 1 The CSG also sought input from their sectors and from the community, and ultimately proposed the contents of Chapter 3.11 to decision makers.

Consultation

Schedule 1 of the RMA includes requirements to consult with certain parties, including iwi authorities, during the preparation of the Variation. Consultation has taken place with affected parties including the relevant iwi authorities and the issues

raised during consultation have been taken into account by Waikato Regional Council in the development of Variation 1. Consultation has led to a Variation to Proposed Plan Change 1.

[1] Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato, Objective K

Water quality and National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management

The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014 (NPS FM) requires regional councils to formulate freshwater objectives^ and set limits^ or targets^ (a target is a limit to be achieved within a specified timeframe). Regional councils must ensure over-allocation^ of the water resource is avoided, or addressed where that has already occurred.

Current water quality monitoring results show that while there is variability across the Waikato and Waipa River catchments, there are adverse effects on water bodies associated with discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogens. The CSG concluded that from a water quality point of view, over-allocation^ has occurred. Water bodies in the Waikato and Waipa River catchments are not able to assimilate further discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogens, without adversely affecting community-held values. Achieving the numeric, long-term freshwater objectives^ in Chapter 3.11 will require reductions in diffuse and point source contaminants.

The NPS FM directs the Waikato Regional Council to establish freshwater objectives^ that give effect to the objectives of the NPS FM and describe the state that Waikato regional communities want for fresh water in the future.

The NPS FM process followed in developing Chapter 3.11, included identifying FMUs and the values for each, and then choosing relevant water quality attributes^ and attribute states^ that can be monitored over time. Freshwater objectives^ and limits^ or targets^ set out what is required to achieve the attribute states^. Under the NPS FM, a limit^ is the maximum amount of resource use available, which allows a freshwater objective^ to be met.

The CSG identified resource use that affects the achievement of the freshwater objectives^ and long-term desired water quality, and for achieving the Vision and Strategy. Chapter 3.11 sets out policies and methods that restrict what can be done on the land and discharged to land or water.

Full achievement of the Vision and Strategy will be intergenerational

The CSG has chosen an 80-year timeframe to achieve the water quality objectives of the Vision and Strategy. The timeframe is intergenerational and more aspirational than the national bottom lines set out in the NPS FM because it seeks to meet the higher standards of being safe to swim in and take food from over the entire length of the Waikato and Waipa Rivers and catchment. Based on the information currently available, the CSG has concluded full achievement of the Vision and Strategy by 2096 is likely to be costly and difficult. The 80-year timeframe recognises the 'innovation gap' that means full achievement of water quality requires technologies or practices that are not yet available or economically feasible. In addition, the current understanding is that achieving water quality restoration requires a considerable amount of land to be changed from land uses with moderate and high intensity of discharges to land use with lower discharges ~~(e.g. through reforestation).~~

~~Because of the extent of change required to restore and protect water quality in the 80-year timeframe, the CSG has adopted a staged approach. This approach breaks the required improvements into a number of steps, the first of which is to put in place and implement the range of actions in a 10-year period that will be required to achieve 10 percent of the required change between current water quality and the long-term water quality in 2096. The staged approach recognises that immediate large-scale land use change may be socially disruptive, and there is considerable effort and cost for resource users, industry and Waikato Regional Council to set up the change process in the first stage. New implementation processes, expertise and engagement are needed to support the first stage. The staged approach also allows time for the innovation in technology and practices that will need to be developed to meet the targets^ and limits^ in subsequent regional plans to be developed.~~

~~Because of the extent of change required to meet the 80-year limits^, achieving even the first step towards the long-term freshwater objectives in this Plan is an ambitious target. This means the effects of actions and changes on the land may not be seen as water quality improvements in the water bodies in the short term. This is partly due to the time required for the concentration of contaminants in the water to reduce, following mitigation actions being put in place, and specifically, the time it takes for nitrogen to move through the soil profile to groundwater, and then to surface water. This means that the effect of actions put in place to reduce nitrogen now may not be seen in the water for some time (the length of time lag varies across the catchment). It also means there is a nitrogen 'load to come' from historic land use that is yet to be seen in the water.~~

Plan change 1 therefore adopts a targeted and risked based approach to managing land and water resources which is focussed on sub catchments and which ensures that:

i. water quality is managed to ensure that:

   a. water quality is maintained in those rivers and lakes where the existing water quality is at a level sufficient to support the Values in Section 3.11.1 Objective 1A;

   b. water quality is enhanced in those rivers and lakes where the existing water quality is not at a level sufficient to support the Values in Section 3.11.1 Objective 1A, so that the values are supported by 2097;

   c. accelerated eutrophication and sedimentation of lakes in the catchment is prevented.

The approach to reducing contaminant losses from pastoral farm land implemented by Chapter 3.11 requires:

- stock exclusion from water bodies as a priority mitigation action
- Farm Environment Plans (including those for commercial vegetable producers) that ensure industry-specific good management practice, and identify additional mitigation actions to reduce diffuse discharges by specified dates, which can then be monitored
- ~~a property scale nitrogen reference point to be established by modelling current nutrient losses from each property, with no property being allowed to exceed its reference point in the future and higher dischargers being required to reduce their nutrient losses~~
- an accreditation system to be set up for people who will assist farmers to prepare their Farm Environment Plan, and to certify agricultural industry schemes
- Waikato Regional Council to incentivise, enable, and support, sub- catchment approaches to sustainable land and water management, and adoption of edge of field mitigation where required. Regulatory, non-regulatory, and financial instruments are provided to enable and support communities working together in their watershed (sub-catchments) to address ~~develop approaches outside the rule framework that~~ both point source and diffuse losses of contaminants to water, ~~allow contaminant loss risk factors to be assessed at a sub-catchment level~~, and implement mitigations that look beyond individual farm boundaries to identify the most cost-effective and influential solutions.

There are a number of existing provisions, including rules, in the Waikato Regional Plan that will continue to apply for point source discharges.

Municipal and industrial point source dischargers will also be required to revise their discharges in light of the Vision and Strategy and the water quality objectives, and sub-catchment limits^ and targets^ that have been set. This will happen as the current consent terms expire.

There are a range of existing provisions in this Plan that deal with activities that relate to forestry. Forestry activities will continue to be managed by these existing provisions, with the addition of requirements around preparing harvest plans and notifying Waikato Regional Council of harvest activities.

In the short term, land use change from tree cover to animal grazing, or any livestock grazing other the dairy or arable cropping to dairy, or any land use to commercial vegetable production, will be constrained. Provision has been made for some flexibility of land use for Māori land that has not been able to develop due to historic and legal impediments. As these impediments have had an impact on the relationship between tangata whenua and their ancestral lands, with associated cultural and economic effects, Chapter 3.11 seeks to recognise and provide for these relationships. These constraints on land use change are interim, until a future plan change introduces a second stage, where further reductions in discharges of sediment, nutrients and microbial pathogens from point sources and activity on the land will be required. This second stage will focus on land suitability and how land use impacts on water quality, based on the type of land and the sensitivity of the receiving water. Methods in Chapter 3.11 include the research and information to be developed to support this.

Reviewing progress toward achieving the Vision and Strategy

The overall intent of Chapter 3.11 is to require resource users to make a start on reducing discharges of contaminants as the first stage of achieving the Vision and Strategy, with on-farm actions carried out and point source discharges reviewed as existing resource consents come up for renewal. The staged approach gives people and communities time to adapt, while being clear that further reductions will be required by subsequent regional plans.

The Vision and Strategy contained in each of the three River Acts is required to be reviewed periodically by the Waikato River Authority, which may make changes to insert limits and methods.

The Resource Management Act requires that regional councils commence reviews of their regional plans 10 years after those plans are operative. When this is done in the future, further changes to reduce diffuse and point source discharges will need to follow the initial preparatory stage embodied in Chapter 3.11 of this Plan.

During the life of this Plan, Waikato Regional Council will track the progress of actions undertaken on the land towards achieving the Vision and Strategy. In addition, research and information collation will be used when this Plan is reviewed, to inform any future property-level allocation of contaminant discharges.

3.11.1 Values and uses for the Waikato and Waipa Rivers/Ngā Uara me ngā Whakamahinga o ngā Awa o Waikato me Waipā

~~The National Policy Statement – Freshwater Management Policy CA2 requires certain steps to be taken in the process of setting limits^. These include establishing the values^ that are relevant in a FMU^, identifying the attributes^ that correspond to those values^, and setting objectives based on desired attribute states^. This section describes values and uses for the Waikato and Waipa Rivers, to provide background to the objectives and limits^ in later sections.~~

This section describes the values and uses for the Waikato and Waipā Rivers. The values and uses reflect the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River. The values and uses set out below apply to all FMU's unless explicitly stated, and provide background to the freshwater objectives, and the attributes and attribute states outlined in Table 3.11-1.

Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River/Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato[1]

"Our vision is for a future where a healthy Waikato River sustains abundant life and prosperous communities who, in turn, are all responsible for restoring and protecting the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, and all it embraces, for generations to come."[2]

The values below have been prepared and are supported by the Collaborative Stakeholder Group.

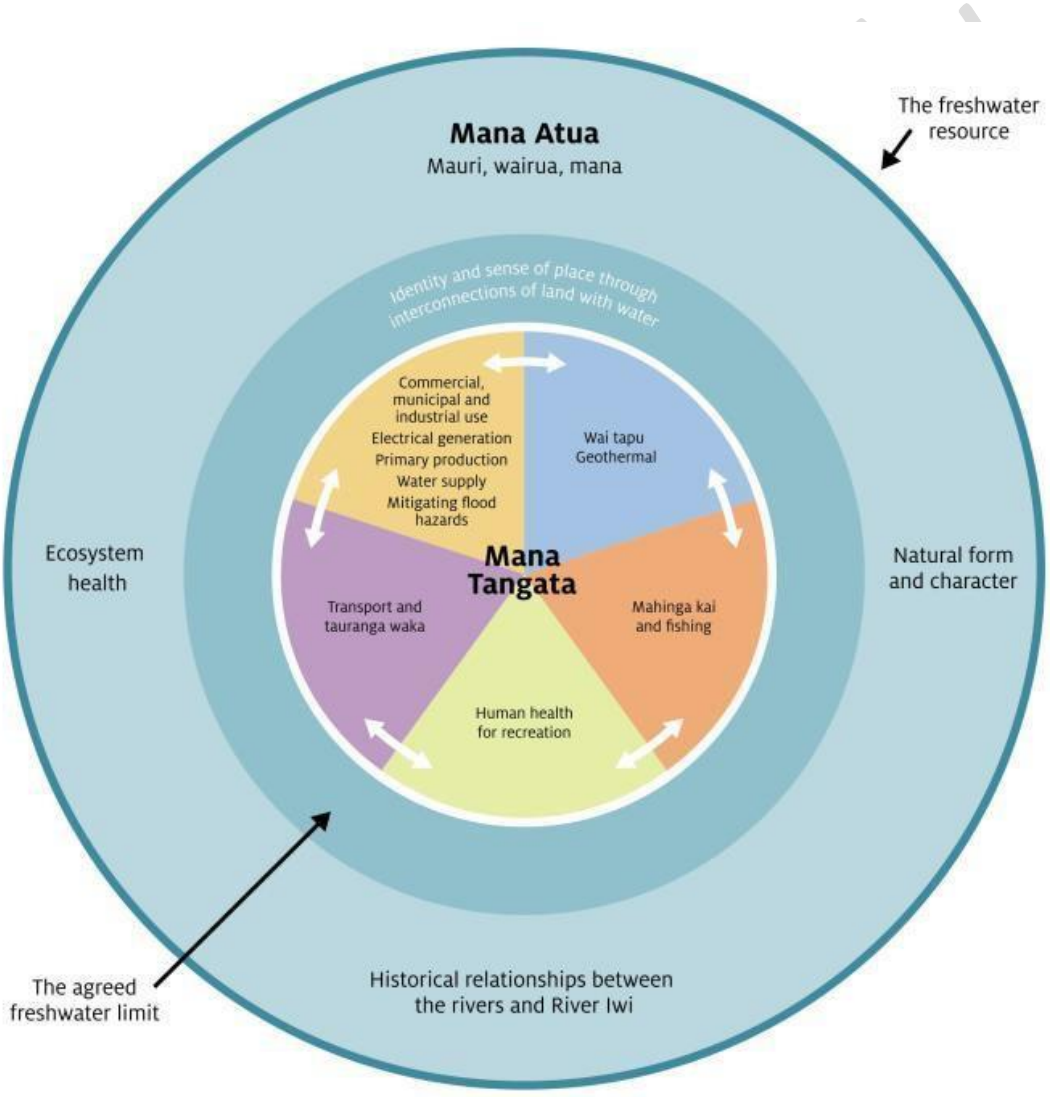
[1] *The Nga Wai o Maniapoto (Waipa River) Act 2012 extended Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato to also cover the Waipa River and its catchment*

[2] *The Vision and Strategy is intended by Parliament to be the primary direction setting document for the Waikato River and activities within its catchment affecting the Waikato River. Values and uses are intrinsic to, and embedded in the Vision and Strategy.*

Te Mana o te Wai: Mana Atua, Mana Tangata

Values can be thought of in terms of Mana Atua and Mana Tangata, which represent Te Mana o te Wai[3]. Mana Atua represents the intrinsic values of water including the mauri (the principle of life force), wairua (the principle of spiritual dimension) and inherent mana (the principle of prestige, authority) of the water and its ecosystems in their natural state. Mana Tangata refers to values of water arising from its use by people for economic, social, spiritual and cultural purposes. Mana Atua and Mana Tangata values encompass past, present and future.

A strong sense of identity and connection with land and water (hononga ki te wai, hononga ki te whenua) is apparent through the Vision and Strategy and the many values associated with the rivers. This is represented in the figure below as a unifying value that provides an interface between the Mana Atua and Mana Tangata values.



Note: New diagram from Variation 1 to be inserted.

[3] *The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014 states that the aggregation of a range of community and tangata whenua values, and the ability of fresh water to provide for them over time, recognises the national significance of fresh water and Te Mana o te Wai.*

Hononga ki te wai, hononga ki te whenua - Identity and sense of place through the interconnections of land with water

- The rivers contribute to a sense of community and sustaining community wellbeing.
- The rivers are an important part of whānau/family life, holding nostalgic feelings and memories and having deep cultural and historical significance.
- For River Iwi and other iwi, respect for the rivers, wetlands and springs lies at the heart of the spiritual and physical wellbeing of iwi and their tribal identity and culture. The river, wetlands and springs are ~~is~~ not separate from the people but part of the people, "Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au" (I am the river and the river is me).
- Whanaungatanga is at the heart of iwi relationships with rivers, wetlands and springs. Te taura tāngata is the cord of kinship that binds iwi to rivers, wetlands and springs. It is a braid that is tightly woven, tying in all its strands. It is unbroken and infinite, forming the base for kaitiakitanga and the intergenerational role that iwi have as kaitiaki.
- The rivers are a shared responsibility, needing collective stewardship: kaitiakitanga – working together to restore the rivers. There is also an important intergenerational equity concept within kaitiakitanga.
- Mahitahi (collaborative work) encourages us all to work together to achieve common goals.

3.11.1.1 Mana Atua – Intrinsic values

~~**Intrinsic values - Ancestry and History**~~

~~Ko te whakapapa o ngā iwi ki ōna awa tūpuna~~ Ko ngā hononga tūpuna me ngā hononga o mua i waenga i ngā iwi o te awa me ētehi atu iwi me ngā awa, ngā repo me ngā puna / Ancestral and Historical ~~relationships~~ connections between the rivers, wetlands, springs and River Iwi and other iwi

Ko ngā kōrero tūpuna me ngā Kōrero o Mua~~o nehera~~ / Ancestry and History

~~Each~~ River Iwi and other iwi have ~~has~~ their own unique and intergenerational relationship with the rivers, wetlands and springs.	▪ ~~The~~ Rrivers, wetlands and springs have always been seen as taonga (treasures) to all River Iwi and other iwi. ▪ ~~The~~ Rrivers, wetlands and springs have always given River Iwi and other iwi a strong sense of identity and connection with the land and water. ▪ Rivers, wetlands and springs were used holistically; River Iwi and other iwi understood the functional relationships with and between all parts of the rivers, wetlands and springs, spiritually and physically as kaitiaki. ▪ Tribal taniwha and tupua dwell in the rivers which are also the location of continued spiritual and cultural traditions and practices maintained over the many centuries. ▪ Iwi tupuna inhabited a rohe that teemed with life in the rivers, wetlands and springs. These resources were subject to access and use rights as an essential part of kaitiakitanga. ▪ Iwi strive to maintain and restore these relationships despite the modification and destruction that has occurred through different types of development ~~along~~ affecting the rivers, wetlands and springs.

~~**Intrinsic values - Ecosystem health**~~

Ko te hauora me te mauri o te wai / The health and mauri of water

Ecosystem health

The Waikato and Waipa catchments support resilient freshwater ecosystems and healthy freshwater populations of indigenous plants and animals.	▪ Clean fresh water restores and protects aquatic native vegetation to provide habitat and food for native aquatic species and for human activities or needs, including swimming and drinking. ▪ Clean fresh water restores and protects macroinvertebrate communities for their intrinsic value and as a food source for native fish, native birds and introduced game species. ▪ Clean fresh water supports native freshwater fish species.

	▪ Wetlands and floodplains provide water purification, refuge, feeding and breeding habitat for aquatic species, habitat for water fowl and other ecosystem services such as flood attenuation. ▪ Fresh water contributes to unique habitats including peat lakes, shallow riverine lakes and karst formations which all support unique biodiversity. ▪ Rivers and adjacent riparian margins have value as ecological corridors.

~~**Intrinsic values - Natural form and character**~~

Ko te hauora me te mauri o te taiao / The health and mauri of the environment

Natural form and character

Retain the integrity of ~~the~~ lakes, rivers and wetlands within the landscape and its aesthetic features and natural qualities for people to enjoy.	▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands have amenity and naturalness values, including native vegetation, undeveloped stretches, and significant sites. ▪ People are able to enjoy the natural environment; it contributes to their health and wellbeing. ▪ The rivers are an ecological and cultural corridor. ▪ The lakes, rivers and wetlands as a whole living entity.

3.11.1.2 Mana Tangata – Use values

~~**Use values - Wai tapu**~~

Ko ngā wai tapu me ngā wai kino / Sacred and harmful waters

Wai tapu and wai kino

Area of water body set aside for spiritual activities that support spiritual, cultural and physical wellbeing or have properties that require additional caution or care.	▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands are a place for sacred rituals, wairua, healing, spiritual nurturing and cleansing. ▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands provide for cultural and heritage practices and cultural wellbeing, particularly at significant sites. ▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands have different states of wai tapu and wai kino that are adhered to and respected.

~~**Use values - Geothermal**~~

Ko ngā Ngāwhā / Geothermal

Geothermal

A valued resource that is naturally gifted to sustain certain activities (meeting spiritual and physical needs).	▪ Geothermal areas and their various resources were prized by tūpuna (ancestors) for their many uses and are still valued and used today. ▪ Geothermal areas of the river have natural form and character, and unique flora found only in the geothermal environment. ▪ Geothermal areas are a special microclimate.

~~**Use values - Mahinga kai**~~

Ko ngā wāhi mahinga kai / Food gathering, places of food

Mahinga kai

The ability to access the Waikato and Waipa Rivers, lakes, and wetlands and their tributaries to gather sufficient	▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands provide for freshwater native species, native vegetation, and habitat for native animals. ▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands provide for freshwater game and introduced kai species.

quantities of kai (food) that is safe to eat and meets the social and spiritual needs of their stakeholders.	▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands provide for cultural wellbeing, knowledge transfer, intergenerational harvest, obligations of manaakitanga (to give hospitality to, respect, generosity and care for others) and cultural opportunities, particularly at significant sites. ▪ The rivers should be safe to take food from, both fisheries and kai. ▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands support aquatic life, healthy biodiversity, ecosystem services, flora and fauna and biodiversity benefits for all. ▪ The rivers are a corridor. ▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands provide resources available for use which could be managed in a sustainable way. ~~▪ The rivers provide for recreation needs and for social wellbeing.~~

~~**Use values - Human health for recreation**~~

Ko te hauora me te mauri o ngā tāngata / The health and mauri of the people

Human health for recreation

~~The~~ Lakes and rivers are a place to swim and undertake recreation activities in an environment that poses minimal risk to health.	▪ ~~The~~ Lakes and rivers provide for recreational use, social needs and social wellbeing, are widely used by the community, and are a place to relax, play, exercise and have an active lifestyle. ▪ An important value for the lakes and rivers is cleanliness; the lakes and rivers should be safe for people to swim in. ▪ The lakes and rivers provide resources available for use which could be managed in a sustainable way.

~~**Use values - Transport and tauranga waka**~~

He urungi / Navigation

Transport and tauranga waka

All communities can use ~~the~~ lakes and rivers to pilot their vehicles and waka and navigate to their destinations.	▪ ~~The~~ Lakes and rivers provide for recreational use (navigation), and sporting opportunities. ▪ ~~The~~ Lakes and rivers are a corridor, mode of transport and mode of communication. ▪ ~~The~~ Lakes and rivers provide for culture and heritage, cultural wellbeing, and social wellbeing, particularly at significant sites.

~~**Use values - Primary production**~~

Ko ngā mahi māra me ngā mahi ahu matua / Cultivation and primary production

Primary production

The rivers support regionally and nationally significant primary production in the catchment (agricultural, horticultural, forestry). These industries contribute to the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of people and communities, and are the major component of wealth creation within the region. These industries and associated primary production also support other industries and	▪ The rivers support a wide variety of primary production in the catchment, including dairy, meat, wool, horticulture and forestry. ▪ Due to the economies of scale of these industries, other service sectors, such as agritech, aviation and manufacturing, are able to operate. ▪ These industries combined contribute significantly to regional and national GDP, exports, food production and employment. ▪ The rivers and the surrounding land offer unique opportunities for many communities and industries to operate, contributing to the lifestyle and sense of community, pride and culture in rural and urban Waikato.

communities within rural and urban settings.	

~~**Water supply**~~

Ko ngā hapori wai Māori / Municipal and domestic water supply

Water supply

The rivers provide for community water supply, municipal supply and~~,~~ drinkable water supply ~~and health~~.	▪ The catchments' surface and subsurface water is of a quality that can be effectively treated to meet appropriate health standards for both potable and non-potable uses.

~~**Use values - Commerical, municipal and industrial use**~~

Ko ngā āu putea / Economic or commercial development

Commercial, municipal and industrial use

The rivers, lakes, and wetlands provide economic opportunities to people, businesses and industries.	Fresh water is used for industrial and municipal processes, which rely on the assimilative capacity for discharges to surface water bodies. In addition: ▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands provide for economic wellbeing, financial and economic contribution, individual businesses and the community and the vibrancy of small towns. They are working lakes, rivers and wetlands; they create wealth. ▪ Those industries are important to the monetary economy of Waikato region, enabling a positive brand to promote to overseas markets. ▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands provide for domestic and international tourism. Promotion of a clean, green image attracts international and domestic visitors. ▪ ~~The~~ Lakes, rivers and wetlands provide assimilative capacity for wastewater disposal, flood and stormwater, and ecosystem services through community schemes or on site disposal.

~~**Use values - Electricty generation**~~

Electricity generation

The river provides for reliable, renewable hydro and geothermal energy sources and thermal generation, securing national self-reliance and resilience. New Zealand's social and economic wellbeing are dependent on a secure, cost-effective electricity supply system. Renewable energy contributes to our international competitive advantage. Electricity also contributes to the health and safety of people and communities.	▪ Waikato hydro scheme extends over 186km, comprising Lake Taupō storage, dams, lakes, and power stations. Tongariro Power scheme adds 20 per cent to natural inflows to Lake Taupō. ▪ Huntly Power Station's role in the New Zealand electricity system is pivotal, particularly when weather dependent renewable generation is not available. Fresh water is used for cooling and process water. ▪ Geothermal power stations located on multiple geothermal systems use fresh water for cooling, process water and drilling.

~~**Use values - Mitigating flood hazards**~~

Mitigating flood hazards

Flood management systems protect land used and inhabited by people and livestock.	▪ River engineering, including stopbanks and diversions, protect land and infrastructure from damage by flooding.

3.11.2 Objectives and Freshwater Objectives/Ngā Whāinga

~~**Objective 1: Long-term restoration and protection of water quality for each sub-catchment and Freshwater Management Unit/Te Whāinga 1: Te whakaoranga tauroa me te tiakanga tauroa o te kounga wai ki ia riu kōawaawa me te Wae Whakahaere i te Wai Māori**~~

~~By 2096 at the latest, a reduction in the discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogens to land and water results in achievement of the restoration and protection of the Waikato and Waipā Rivers, such that of the 80-year water quality attribute targets states in Table 3.11-1 are met.~~

Objective 1 Water Management Values

Surface water bodies are managed in a manner that recognises and provides for the Mana Atua and Mana Tangata Values set out in Section 3.11.1.

Objective 1B Water Quality

Water quality is managed to ensure that:

a) water quality is protected in those surface waterbodies where the existing water quality is at a level sufficient to support the Values in Section 3.11.1 and Objective 1A; and

b) water quality is restored in those surface waterbodies where the existing water quality is not at a level sufficient to support the Values in Section 3.11.1, so that the Values are supported by 2097.

Objective 2~~:~~ Social, economic and cultural wellbeing is maintained ~~in the long term,~~/Te Whāinga 2: Ka whakaūngia te oranga ā-pāpori, ā-ōhanga, ā-ahurea hoki i ngā tauroa.

Waikato and Waipā communities and their economic and social wellbeing, vibrancy and resilience, are provided for while protecting and where degraded restoring the health of the Waikato and Waipa River Catchments.

~~Waikato and Waipa communities and their economy benefit from the restoration and protection of water quality in the Waikato and Waipā River catchments, which enables the people and communities to continue to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing.~~

~~**Objective 3: Short-term improvements in water quality in the first stage of restoration and protection of water quality for each sub-catchment and Freshwater Management Unit/Te Whāinga 3: Ngā whakapainga taupoto o te kounga wai i te wāhanga tuatahi o te whakaoranga me te tiakanga o te kounga wai i ia riu kōawāwa me te Wae Whakahaere Wai Māori**~~

~~Actions put in place and implemented by 2026 to reduce diffuse and point source discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogens, are sufficient to achieve the short-term water quality attribute states in Table 3.11-1. ten percent of the required change between current water quality and the 80-year water quality attribute targets in Table 3.11-1. A ten percent change towards the long-term water quality improvements is indicated by the short-term water quality attribute targets in Table 3.11-1.~~

~~**Objective 4: People and community resilience/Te Whāinga 4: Te manawa piharau o te tangata me te hapori**~~

~~A staged approach to change enables people and communities to undertake adaptive management to continue to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing in the short term while:~~

~~a. considering the values and uses when taking action to achieve the attribute^ targets^ for the Waikato and Waipa Rivers in Table 3.11-1; and~~

~~b. recognising that further contaminant reductions will be required by subsequent regional plans and signalling anticipated future management approaches that will be needed to meet Objective 1.~~

~~OR~~

Objective 4: People and community resilience/Te Whāinga 4: Te manawa piharau o te tangata me te hapori, and the achievement of the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River.

Communities are enabled to work together to sustainably manage land and water resources within sub catchments, in an adaptive manner which:

a) recognises and provides for the Values for freshwater identified in Section 3.11.1;
b) protects, and where degraded restores, water quality; and
c) protects and where degraded restores biodiversity

~~A staged approach to reducing contaminant losses change enables people and communities to undertake adaptive management to continue to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing in the short term while:~~

~~a. considering the values and uses when taking action to achieve the attribute^ targets^ states for the Waikato and Waipa Rivers in Table 3.11-1; and~~

~~b. recognising that further contaminant reductions will be required by subsequent regional plans and signalling anticipated future management approaches that will be needed in order to meet Objective 1.~~

Objective 5~~: Mana Tangata – protecting and restoring tangata whenua values/Te Whāinga 5: Te Mana Tangata – te tiaki me te whakaora i ngā uara o te tangata whenua~~

Tangata whenua values are integrated into the co-management of the rivers and other water bodies within the catchment such that:

a. tangata whenua have the ability to:
   i. manage their own lands and resources, by exercising mana whakahaere, for the benefit of their people; and
   ii. actively sustain a relationship with ancestral land and with the rivers and other water bodies in the catchment; and
b. new impediments to the flexibility of the use of tangata whenua ancestral lands are minimised; and
c. improvement in the rivers' water quality and the exercise of kaitiakitanga increase the spiritual and physical wellbeing of iwi and their tribal and cultural identity.

~~Objective 6: Whangamarino Wetland/Te Whāinga 6: Ngā Repo o Whangamarino~~

~~a. Nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogen loads in the catchment of Whangamarino Wetland are reduced in the short term, to make progress towards the long-term restoration of Whangamarino Wetland; and~~

~~b. The management of contaminant loads entering Whangamarino Wetland is consistent with the achievement of the water quality attribute^targets^ in Table 3.11-1.~~

OR

Objective 6~~: Whangamarino Wetland/Te Whāinga 6: Ngā Repo o Whangamarino~~

a. Nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogen loads in the catchment of Whangamarino Wetland are reduced in the short term, to make progress towards the long-term restoration of Whangamarino Wetland; and
b. The management of contaminant loads entering Whangamarino Wetland is consistent with the achievement of the water quality Freshwater Objectives ~~attribute^targets^~~ in Table 3.11-1.

~~Principal Reasons for Adopting Objectives 1-6/Ngā Take Matua me Whai ngā Whāinga 1 ki te 6~~

~~Reasons for adopting Objective 1~~

~~**Objective 1** sets long term limits^ for water quality consistent with the Vision and Strategy. Objective 1 sets aspirational 80-year water quality targets^, which result in improvements in water quality from the current state monitored in 2010-2014. The water quality attributes^ listed in Table 3.11-1 that will be achieved by 2096 will be used to characterise the water quality of the different FMUs when the effectiveness of the objective is assessed. Objective 1 sets the overall context for what is to be achieved in terms of water quality improvements. There is not any hierarchy of Objectives 1 to 6~~

Reasons for adopting Objective 2

Objective 2 sets the long term outcome for people and communities, recognising that restoration and protection of water quality will continue to support communities and the economy. The full achievement of the Table 11-1 2096 water quality attribute^ targets^ may require a potentially significant departure from how businesses and communities currently function, and it is important to minimise social disruption during this transition.

Reasons for adopting Objective 3

Objective 3 sets short term goals for a 10-year period, to show the first step toward full achievement of water quality consistent with the Vision and Strategy.

The effort required to make the first step may not be fully reflected in water quality improvements that are measureable in the water in 10 years. For this reason, the achievement of the objective will rely on measurement and monitoring of actions taken on the land to reduce pressures on water quality.

Point source discharges are currently managed through existing resource consents, and further action required to improve the quality of these discharges will occur on a case-by-case basis at the time of consent renewal, guided by the targets and limits set in Objective 1.

Reasons for adopting Objective 4

Objective 4 provides for a staged approach to long term achievement of the Vision and Strategy. It acknowledges that in order to maintain the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of communities during the 80 year journey, the first stage (the short term 10-year period) must ensure that overall costs to people can be sustained.

In the future, a property level allocation of contaminant discharges may be required. Chapter 3.11 sets out the framework for collecting the required information so that the most appropriate approach can be identified. Land use type or intensity at July 2016 will not be the basis for any future allocation of property-level contaminant discharges. Therefore, consideration is needed of how to manage impacts in the transition.

Objective 4 seeks to minimise social disruption in the short term, while encouraging preparation for possible future requirements.

Reasons for adopting Objective 5

Objective 5 seeks to ensure that this Plan recognises and provides for the relationship of tangata whenua with ancestral lands, by ensuring the other provisions of Chapter 3.11 do not provide a further impediment to tangata whenua making optimal use of their land. Historic impediments included customary tenure in the nineteenth century, public works, rating law, Te Ture Whenua Māori Act, and confiscation. Some impediments or their effects continue currently, including issues of governance, fragmentation and compliance with central and local government regulations such as regional and district plans, or the emissions trading scheme. Land relevant to this objective is land returned through Treaty of Waitangi settlement, and land under Māori title that has multiple owners.

Reasons for adopting Objective 6

Objective 6 seeks to recognise the significant value of Whangamarino Wetland, a Ramsar site of international importance, and the complexity of this wetland system. It seeks to recognise that the bog ecosystems (which are particularly sensitive to discharges of contaminants) need protection over time. The effort required to restore Whangamarino Wetland over 80 years is considerable and as a minimum needs to halt and begin to reverse the decline in water quality in the first 10 years. This objective describes how wetland restoration needs to be supported by restoration of the Lower Waikato Freshwater Management Unit sub-catchments that flow into Whangamarino Wetland.

Policy 14: Lakes Freshwater Management Units/Te Kaupapa Here 14: Ngā Wae Whakahaere Wai Māori i ngā Roto

Restore and protect lakes by 2096 through the implementation of a tailored lake-by-lake approach, guided by Lake Catchment Plans prepared over the next 10 years, which will include collecting and using data and information to support improving the management of land use activities in the lakes Freshwater Management Units^.