
WHIRINAKI RESILIENCE PROJECT
TECHNICAL FOCUS GROUP
MEETING MINUTES - FINAL¹

DATE 26 May 2023
TIME 3:00pm – 4:30pm
VENUE Pan Pac Forest Products Ahuriri, Microsoft Teams

IN ATTENDANCE

Mark Smith - Resident	Geoff Huggett - Resident
Stan Evans - Resident	Parris Greening - Mana Ahuriri (Teams)
Kyle Russell - Waka Kotahi / NZTA	Daniel Headifen - KiwiRail
Matthew Brady - DoC	Reece O'Leary - Pan Pac Forest Products
Tony Clifford - Pan Pac Forest Products	Stephen Daysh - Mitchell Daysh
Tania Lund - Transpower (Teams)	Anita Anderson - Mitchell Daysh
Justan Clark - Transpower (Teams)	Martina Groves - PDP
Rob Nichol - Contact Energy (Teams)	Ramon Strong - PDP
Charlotte Drury - View Consultants (on behalf of Chris Brownlee / Hort NZ)	

Apologies:

Lee Grace / Liz Munroe - Maungaharuru-
Tangitū Trust

1. Introductions

- Those present introduced themselves and provided a background as to their interest / involvement in the project.

2. Project background and Technical Focus Group ('TFG') process

- Stephen outlined the projects purpose, objectives, governance group, operational team, actions undertaken to date and the TFG process (see attached - pages 3 to 10).
- Tony explained that three industry sponsors (Pan Pac, Contact and Transpower) are funding the facilitation of the initial project to get it promptly underway, however details of the cost sharing with the companies, Councils and government are still to be worked out. The companies don't see themselves as owners of any public Council asset that may be built as a result of the project. Reece noted that this has been discussed with the Councils.
- Tony also explained that one of Pan Pac's motivations for the project related to the morale and welfare of staff both now and in any future events, and the insurability and continued operation of their site.

¹ Confirmed at TFG Meeting 2, 30 June 2023

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- The team have provided budget estimates for this first stage of the project to the Hastings District and Napier City Councils for their locality plans for government funding. Reece noted that the next iteration of the plans will include costs for any works / structures that are selected as part of the project.
 - Mark asked what could be communicated to the other residents / community out of the TFG meetings. Stephen advised that the representatives at the meeting were chosen because of their connections into the community and therefore should openly share the information and discussions within their respective circles. Tony noted that it was important to let the community know that there are no firm solutions being proposed at this stage and that this process was an options review one. There will be opportunity for wider community engagement once these have been developed.

3. Catchment summary

- Martina explained her previous experience with the Engineering and Asset Management teams at the HBRC. Martina's presentation (see attached - pages 12 to 20) summarises her knowledge from her experience during this time and the historical information that she has been able to obtain on the Whirinaki and lower Esk catchments. Ramon will provide the technical input into the project on behalf of PDP. Martina noted that it important that any asset that may result from this project and which the Council was to manage must be designed to their level of service and specification.
- The Whirinaki Scheme was created to protect the mill from future flooding from the Whirinaki Drain, not the Esk River. There are Council modelling reports that detail the level of service. Reece noted that the Council reports have provided some differing numbers in terms of the level of service provided by the Whirinaki drainage scheme. This will be reviewed as part of the project.
- Mark asked about the rates that landowners pay for flood protection and whether this was for the Esk / Whirinaki or the wider regional flood control schemes. It was agreed that if it wasn't specified as Esk / Whirinaki on the rates notice then it would be for the region wide flood protection.
- Martina's view was that stopbanks along the full length of the Esk River would not be feasible for a number of reasons. Reece explained that there may be a number of solutions that come out of this process for the lower Esk / Whirinaki drain which is the focus of the project – some may be quick wins / easy fixes and other longer-term options.
- Tony asked why Cyclone Bola wasn't included in the significant events in the presentation. Martina explained that Cyclone Bola didn't have as significant an effect in Hawke's Bay in comparison to Gisborne and while it was a big flood in some areas of Hawke's Bay (e.g., Twyford), there wasn't as much damage in the Esk catchment as other floods that were reviewed by PDP. Stan noted that Cyclone Bola was significant however not in comparison to Cyclone Gabrielle. Stan commented that changes to the lower Esk from an event prior to Bola in 1986 may have reduced the impact of that event (Bola) 18 months later. Daniel also noted that the railways in Hawke's Bay were not affected in Bola as much as they were by Cyclone Gabrielle. Tony proposed that it may have been the event in 1986 where the water levels at the Pan Pac water intake were higher than in Cyclone Gabrielle.

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- Tony asked if through this project are we going to review the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle. Reece noted that the Council are working with NIWA on this so there was no need to duplicate the work. Reece has asked the Council to provide the relevant records when they are available so that the team can use this data for modelling etc. NIWA presented to the Climate Action Joint Committee meeting on 22 May 2023 (link below - approx. 2 hrs 25 mins).
<https://www.facebook.com/HBRegionalCouncil/videos/149075734727560/>
 - The impact of the river mouth during Cyclone Gabrielle and the Councils river mouth opening and maintenance process was discussed.
 - Stephen said he is meeting the HBRC interim Chief Executive, Bill Bayfield, Chris Dolley, Group Manager Asset Management and Louise McPhail, Recovery Manager on 31 May 2023 where he will discuss the HBRC's input and involvement in the project and a way to access additional information.
 - Daniel noted that there are limitations on the railway in the lower Esk and asked for any records or analysis that are available to support the views on the feasibility of stopbanks. The team explained that this is Martina's professional opinion based on her experience with the catchment. The Council did do some work in the early 1990's however the team does not have these records. Martina also noted that the Whirinaki Drainage scheme is very different from the Esk River where the stopbanks on the Whirinaki Drainage Scheme have previously been effective.
 - Kyle asked if the Council has looked at options to slow the flows / reduce the peak heights in the upper catchment to reduce the impact on the Whirinaki Area. Martina noted that there are theoretical options such as detention dams or over-flow paths that have been considered in other catchments / overseas, however there is no documented information available in relation on the Esk.

4. TFG member comments

- Kyle - aligned with Kiwi Rail, particularly in the upper catchment. Mindful that any improvements that Waka Kotahi undertake could cause issues for others. Interested to see what comes out of this project and what impact their asset management can have (e.g., additional culverts, SH5 intersection and bridge improvements).
- Geoff - having seen the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle on North Shore Road and Stans property his view was that the river mouth was blocked and that when it burst the water flow changed direction.
- Charlotte - Chris Brownlee has footage showing that the river mouth was blocked. The Brownlees have been a part of the Bay View community for a long time and want to see protection on the southern bank having lost over 2 hectares of their property in Cyclone Gabrielle. Bay View is unique horticulturally with a microclimate that provides early fruiting for a premium citrus product. Chris engaged an engineer in 2018 to draw up plans to protect the toe, wanting to discuss options with the Regional Council to actively manage the risk. He has not been successful with his engagement with the Council.
- Mark - if there is a stop bank being considered, there needs to be work on the river mouth.

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- Stan - agreed with Mark and doesn't believe that there has even been any work downstream of the state highway bridge. He has had discussions with Regional Council in regard to the lower Whirinaki drain as it was eroding over time.
 - Matthew - DoC are interested in the project in terms of any environmental values and impacts.
 - Parris - interesting hearing the feedback from the group who have similar aspirations to mana whenua in terms of the people and community and building back better. He supports the thoughts and ideas of the group and is willing to engage through the journey.
 - Justan - happy with the discussion and please to see all the background work that has been undertaken. Good to see a diverse range of stakeholders who will provide a range of opinions.
 - Rob - pleased to see that it will be an integrated community decision.
 - Daniel - may not be a simple solution that suits all. Keen to work to understand the options.
 - Ramon - reiterated that the technical comments that he and Martina had made in relation to the wider Esk Catchment are based on their experience noting that the lower catchment is different to the upper catchment and is a very complex system. He also explained that there may not ever be an accurate return period estimate for the event so there may not be absolute precision around the level of service. Tony agreed and suggested that the solution should aim for protection from a similar event to Cyclone Gabrielle.
 - Stephen thanked all for the meeting, noted that the project team want to keep the TFG fully informed throughout the process. Anita and Reece will be in touch with the TFG members to confirm meeting dates for the next meetings.

Minutes prepared by Anita Anderson

Attachment 1: Presentation



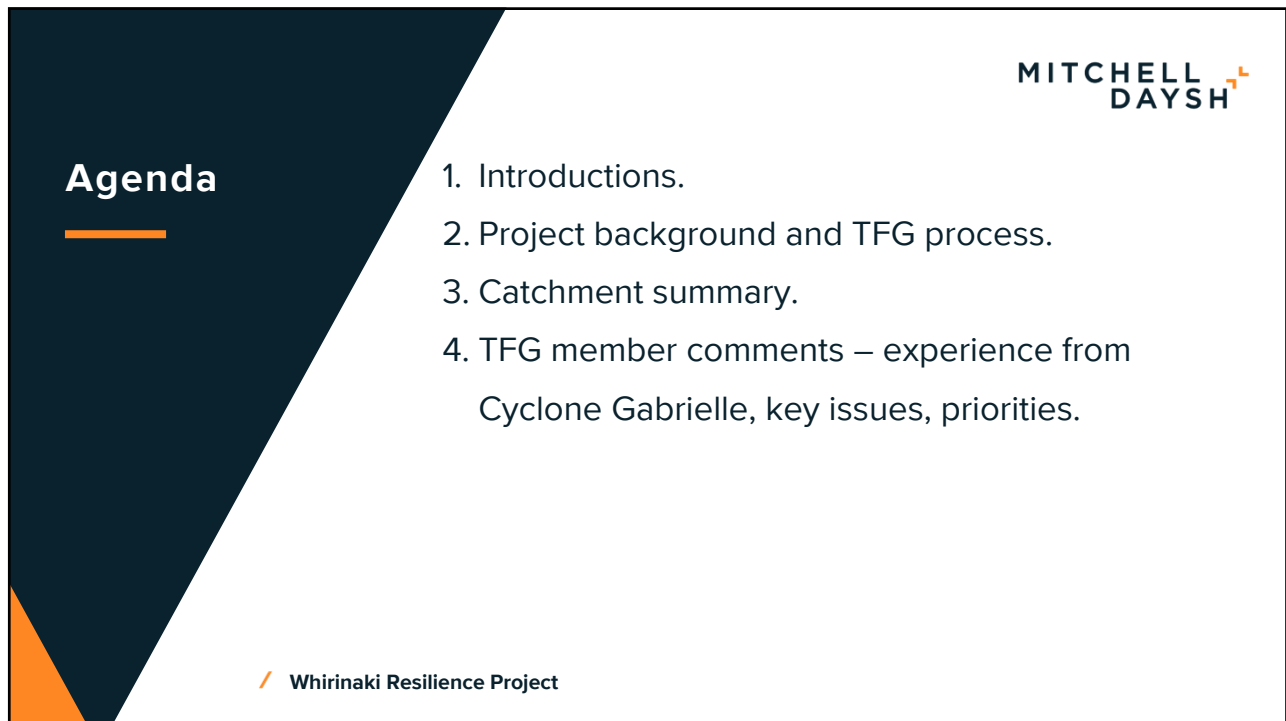
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Whirinaki Resilience Project

Technical Focus Group Meeting 1

26 May 2023

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Agenda

1. Introductions.
2. Project background and TFG process.
3. Catchment summary.
4. TFG member comments – experience from Cyclone Gabrielle, key issues, priorities.

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Project Purpose

The purpose of the project is to improve resilience for the Pan Pac Forest Products Limited, Contact Energy Limited and Transpower sites and the immediate established neighbouring community and ensure personal safety, business continuity, insurability, and community morale.

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Project Objective

To review and consider the event and outcome of Cyclone Gabrielle in order to rapidly assess options and decide the best overall option to provide a long-term level of protection for the Pan Pac Forest Products Limited, Contact Energy Limited and Transpower substation sites and the immediate established neighbouring community and design, consent and install the preferred solution before the end of 2023.

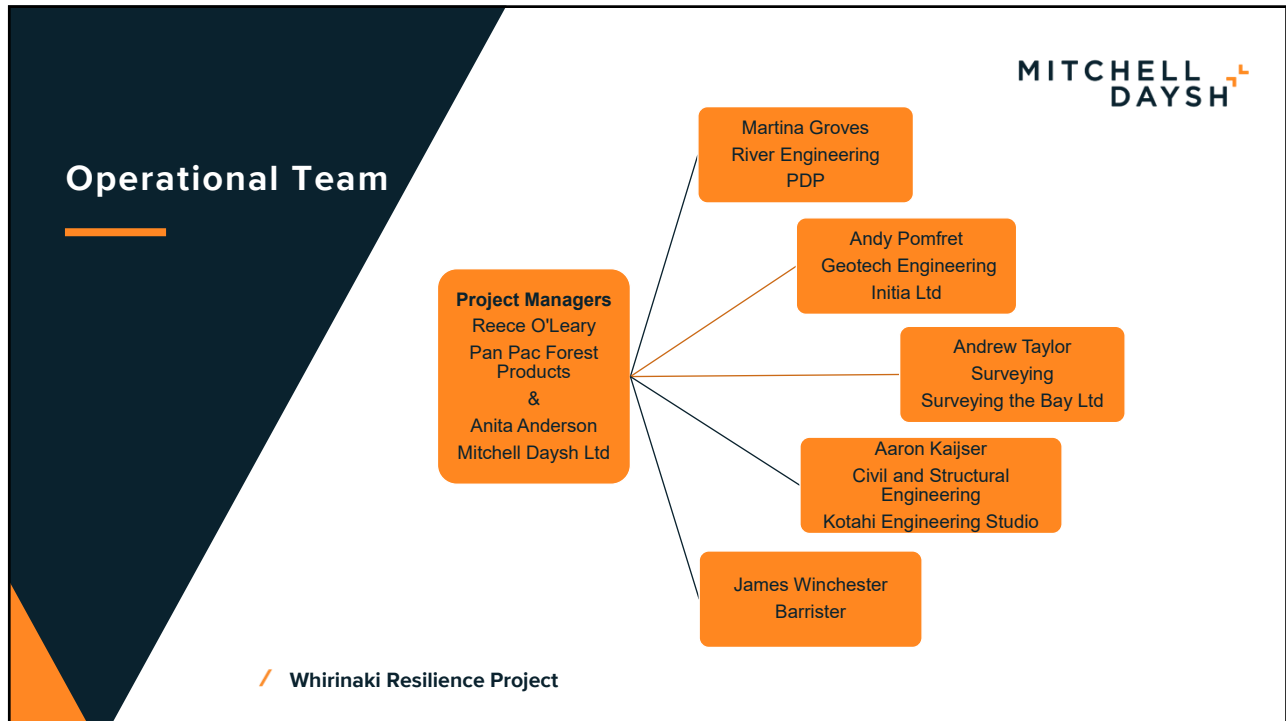
Today's first TFG meeting is focused on listening to and understanding the community issues and aspirations.

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Actions underway / completed




Action	Date
Letter to Mayors / Chairs and Chief Executives of three Councils introducing the projective initiative – support received from all three councils.	16 & 31 March 2023
Engage technical and legal team.	March 2023
Review of Severe Weather Emergency Legislation Act 2023.	April 2023
Input on project provided to HDC and NCC - included in their Locality plans.	28 April 2023
Ascertain Esk / Whirinaki River flood control design history - liaise with HBRC staff.	May 2023
Meetings with Government officials, Council representatives and the Cyclone Gabrielle Recovery Taskforce.	Ongoing
Stakeholder and community engagement.	Ongoing
Understand impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle.	Ongoing

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Technical Focus Group

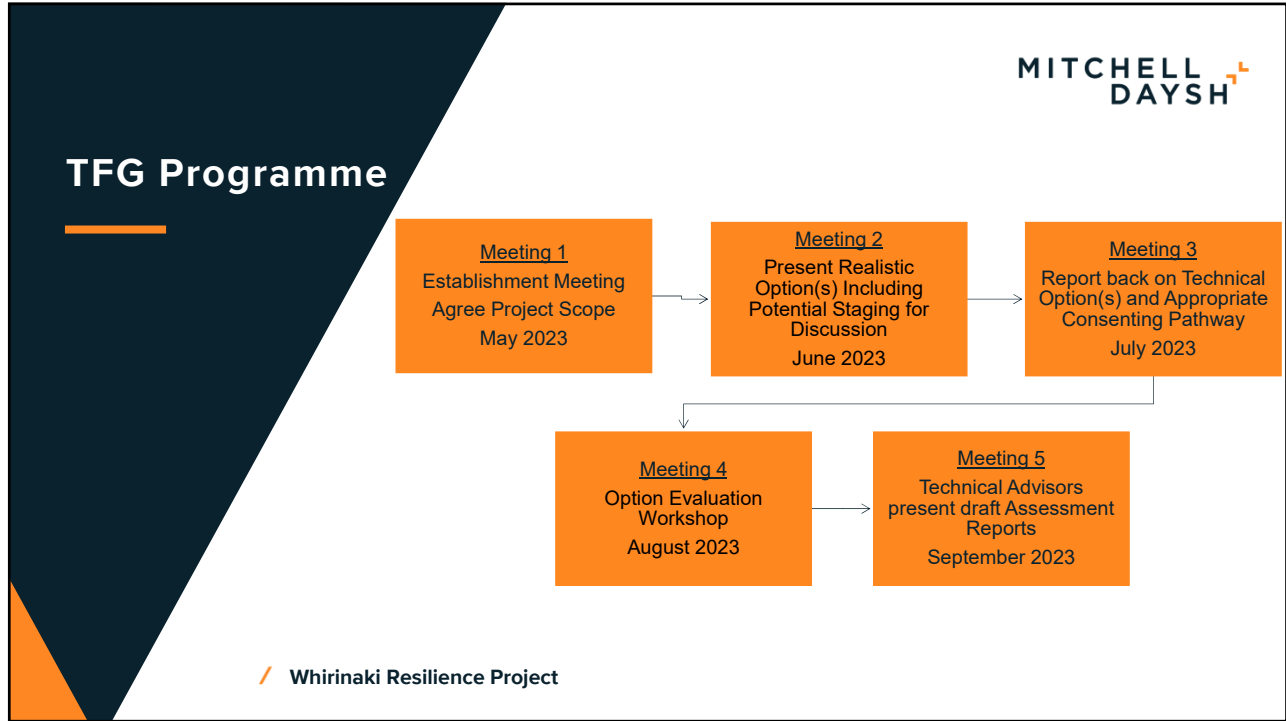


- Made up of representatives from key stakeholder groups to engage with the Project Team during this process.
- Provide focused and coordinated advice and input as part of a two-way information sharing process

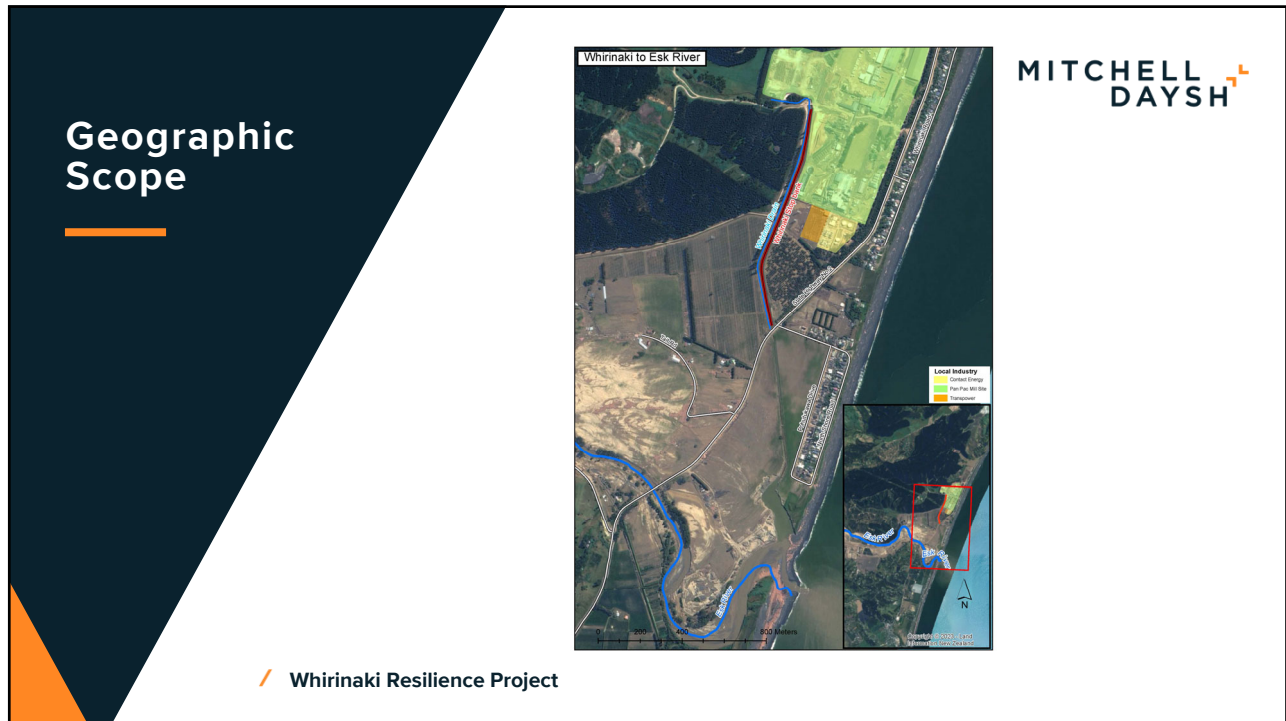
TFG Members	
Councils	Mana Whenua
<i>Engineer - Participant, Consents Planner - Observer</i>	
• Hawke's Bay Regional Council	• Mana Ahuriri - Petāne Marae
• Hastings District Council	• Maungaharuru Tangitū Trust
• Napier City Council	• Ngāti Pāhauwera
Landowners	Other Agencies / Affected Industrial and Lifeline Businesses
• Esk River Left bank Landowner - Stan	• Department of Conservation
• Bay View / Esk River Right bank Landowner - Chris Brownlie	• Waka Kotahi
• Whirinaki Resident - Geoff Huggett	• Kiwi Rail
• North Shore Road resident- Mark Smith	• Contact Energy
• Others - TBC	• Transpower
	• Pan Pac Forest Products

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Catchment summary

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PDP Presentation

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Discussion

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Feedback from TFG members

- Experience from Cyclone Gabrielle
- Key issues
- Priorities

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TFG Meeting 1

Whirinaki Resilience Project Esk / Whirinaki Background Information

*Martina Groves
Group Director- Land
Pattle Delamore Partners Ltd
Napier*



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Past floods (only the most significant)

- 1938 - Esk Valley - Napier isolated, 54 bridges needed to be replaced.
- 1987- Napier was left underwater after heavy rain. The Esk and Mohaka rivers overflowed.
- More recent:
 - 2018: 329mm in 24hr
 - 2023: Initial modelling by NIWA suggests approx. 450mm-490mm from Cyclone Gabrielle



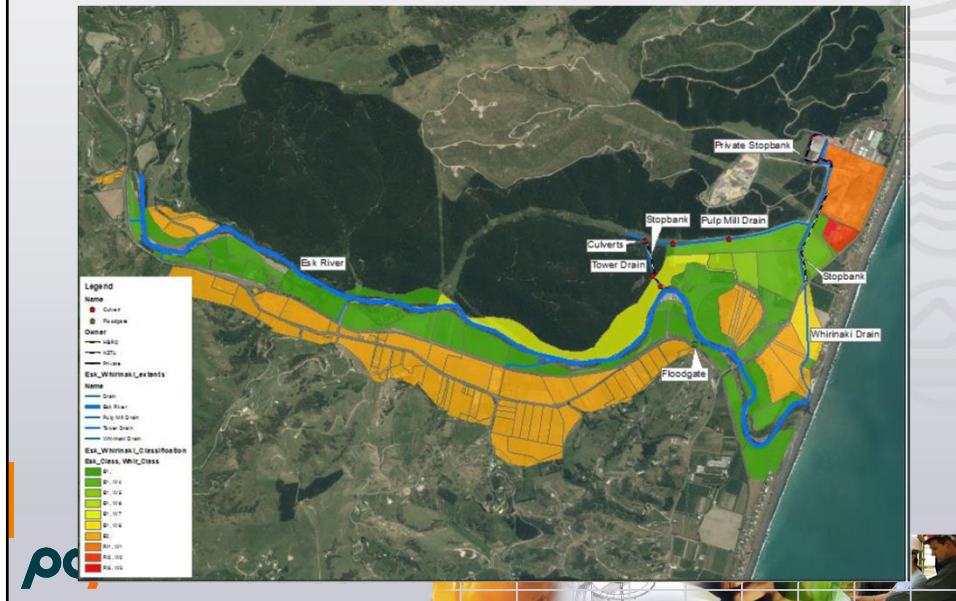
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Esk / Whirinaki Scheme



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The Esk / Whirinaki Scheme

- Established 1996
- Directed and operated by HBRC (AMG)
- Level of Service for Esk:
 - No flood protection structure
 - Channel conveys flood events up to an estimated two-year return period flood ($215\text{m}^3/\text{s}$)
- Level of Service for Whirinaki Drainage:
 - The Whirinaki Drain Stopbank is proposed to contain the 1in 100-year return period



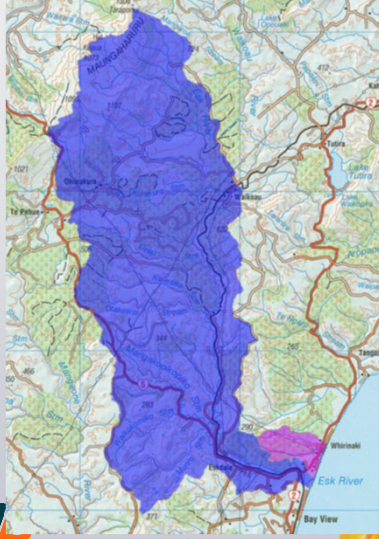
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Esk River / catchment



- 252 km²
- Flows from Taraponui in the Maungaharuru Range and turning to east to reach Hawke Bay.
- Steep hill country to the north and west of Whirinaki as well as the narrow strip of land at the coast where Esk River and Whirinaki Drain enter the ocean



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Maintenance and Improvement Work - Esk Valley

- 1968 - Hawke's Bay Catchment Board undertook a small amount of riverbank protection and channel work.
- 1977 - Additional works proposed but due to a number of objections received, the proposal was rejected.
- 1986 - in depth investigation into flood protection, river channel widening, and willow clearing.



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Maintenance and Improvement Work - Esk Valley

- 1987 and 1988 - extensive river channel works (mainly clearing and widening) undertaken. Funded by the beneficiaries (landowners) of the work and Central Government subsidy.
- 1990 - start of ongoing edge protection and planting programme.
- Present rating scheme was established following extensive consultation with landowners who were assessed to benefit from work.



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Whirinaki Drainage - Establishment

- Late 1960's - the need for a comprehensive drainage scheme for the Whirinaki area was considered.
- 1972 - drainage scheme designed and built to provide flood protection for the industrial area (five-year return period design standard).
- Construction of 4.7km of new drains and 1.7km of new Stopbank - the basis of the scheme today.
- After successive floods in the 1970's and 1980's, the design standard was considered to be too low for the Whirinaki Mill.



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Whirinaki Drainage - Maintenance and Improvement Work

- 1987 - HB Catchment Board reviewed scheme and works were proposed to provide a 100-year flood protection standard.
- 1987 - Improvement work carried out by raising the Stopbank height and extension of the existing Stopbank.
- To confirm current level of service with HBRC.



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