Papangaio
Te Wharangi
Manawatū Estuary
Management Plan

Manawatū Estuary

The following signatories endorse the intent of the Papangaio Te Wharangi Manawatū Estuary Management Plan with the vision and proposed activities for the Estuary to be sustained, known, respected, and enjoyed as a regional treasure and estuarine ecosystem of international significance.

Hapū and iwi of Ngāti Raukawa te au ki te Tonga – Papangaio, Te Wharangi

TE TŪMATAKAHUKI RAUKAWA TE AU KI TE TONGA	
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Troy O'Carroll Te Tūmatakahuki representative Ngāti Whakatere	**Shane Royal** Shane Royal Chair Te Tūmatakahuki representative Ngāti Kikopiri

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Dave Coles Trustee Wildlife Foxton Trust	**Vai Gordon** Trustee Wildlife Foxton Trust	**Peta Larsen** Trustee Wildlife Foxton Trust
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Introduction

Papangaio and Te Wharangi are of significant importance to many of the hapū and iwi who reside in the rohe. The area was recognised as a food basket and a food resource to sustain the travellers to the region. The aim of today's work is to restore that abundance. The vision is to protect and enhance the ecology, and to make everyone aware of the rich values to be respected and enjoyed as a regional treasure and estuarine ecosystem of international significance.

This document is the overarching management plan for Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary, including the part recognised as a Ramsar site of international significance. This is not a statutory document and a management plan is only 'recommended' by Ramsar. The primary focus of this plan is to ensure there is a strategic approach for everyone to work together and optimise progress towards the vision.

This plan was developed through a collaboration of hapū and iwi, community groups and territorial authorities.

It is aspirational in nature, serving as an umbrella to guide other management and operational plans and activities that overlap the same area.

In July 2005 the Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary was declared a Wetland of International Importance by the Ramsar Convention, following a nomination from the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society with support from the Manawatū Estuary Trust. The Ramsar status of the Manawatū Estuary acknowledges the ecological importance of the area as a site for wading birds, its vegetation, and landforms.

In 2006 the Manawatū Estuary Management Team (MEMT), comprising representatives from hapū and iwi, Department of Conservation (DOC), Horizons Regional Council (HRC), Horowhenua District Council (HDC) and the Manawatū Estuary Trust was established to coordinate efforts to protect and enhance the site. One of the first tasks for this Team was the preparation of a management plan as recommended by the Ramsar Convention. The first management plan covered a five year period from 2007-2012. A review of that plan resulted in the 2015-2025 version.

MEMT has taken a collaborative approach to drafting this revised 2025-2035 management plan. Continuing the work started by the MEMT in 2006, MEMT now includes representatives from a wide range of organisations including:

- Hapū and iwi of the area namely Ngāti Raukawa, Muaūpoko and Rangitāne o Manawatū
- Neighbouring iwi organisations
- Statutory agencies
- Community groups
- Ecological groups
- Interested residents.

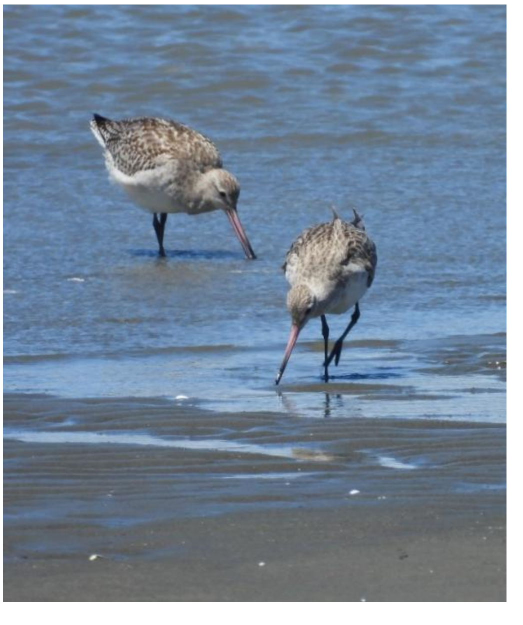
MEMT is not a formal enlistment of these contributing parties but an open group that welcomes all individuals and groups that are passionate about revitalising the Estuary environment.

The collaboration for this plan took place over two years and included a series of workshops in which all participants have brainstormed the current issues, risks and the potential solutions. Early in this process the participants were invited to visit Paranui Marae just north of Foxton. This marae is home to Ngāti Turanga, a hapū of Ngāti Raukawa, and all members of the MEMT, which includes Rangitāne o Manawatū and Muaūpoko, were welcomed into this space to have a hui and engage in mahi to understand what is important, listen to the various perspectives, and forge a common bond to progress this plan together.

That was an important first step in development of this plan which reflects the long-term vision for a healthy and sustainable Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary area, with human endeavour showing requisite respect for this high-quality ecological area.

The focus of this revision has been on strategies to ensure practical activities take place. The activities aim to protect and enhance the Estuary. The monitoring activities will determine the success and need for changes to ensure the vision and goals are supported.

For consistency, throughout the rest of this management plan Papangaio - Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary is referred to as 'the Estuary'.



Kuaka, Bar tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

BEP First banded 5/11/2014. Photo taken when re-sited 15/1/2024 Age:9yr2m10d

Section 1: Scope

A management plan is recommended by the Ramsar convention (Article 3.1) because it sets out the values of the site (S5) and the objectives/actions (S8 and App.5) required to maintain and enhance those values. This 2025-2035 management plan has been prepared by a wide range of parties working together. It is not a legal document. The content includes the following items:

Section 2: Papangaio, Te Wharangi and Ngāti Raukawa te au ki te Tonga

Section 3: Rangitāne o Manawatū

Section 4: Muaūpoko

Section 5: Description of the location including the Ramsar boundary.

Section 6: Additional history of Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary

Section 7: The team behind this management plan. This is an introduction to the many partners, individuals and organisations who have contributed to the formulation and drafting of this plan. This section also includes detail on the legal obligations to or within the Estuary. This is outlined further in Appendix 4

Section 8 Shared social, cultural, spiritual and environmental values from all contributing parties are outlined. These create the drive to protect and enhance the Estuary.

Section 9: The factors that threaten the health of the Estuary are identified

Section 10: The vision for the Estuary is far reaching and aligns with visions of the Ramsar convention; Foxton Beach Coastal Reserves Management Plan (FBCRMP) 2009; National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity; and the Rangitāne o Manawatū Iwi Management Plan. Note: the FBCRMP will be updated by the end of 2025 with a largely similar process including the same MEMT that has formulated this management plan

Section 11: The objectives are identified, with further reference to the activities that will fulfil the objectives presented in Appendix 5

Section 12: Introduction to the Ramsar Convention, with reference to the criteria that the Estuary meets. These are shown in Appendix 2

Section 13: The strategy to ensure practical activities take place and make progress towards the vision is outlined

Section 14: The activity plans presented in Appendix 5 are introduced

The Estuary management plan is a non-statutory document. For the avoidance of doubt, this management plan does not constitute any obligation in the part of any party in relation to the matters contained within it or otherwise, or give any party any right or claim against any other party.

Any change to the use of the Estuary, recommended as a result of monitoring undertaken as part of a management plan, can only be achieved through changes to Acts of Parliament, regional/district plans, district council strategies, or via the resource consent process. All of these processes require some degree of public consultation, thereby providing potentially affected parties an opportunity to become engaged around any proposed change.

Section 2: Papangaio, Te Wharangi and Ngāti Raukawa

Ngāti Raukawa te au ki te Tonga are a collective of hapū and iwi descended from Tūrongo and his brother Whatihua, known as Tainui people. The hapū and iwi migrated from Maungatautari to the lower North Island, including Papangaio and Te Wharangi. Invited by Waitohi, the elder sister of Te Rauparaha, the rangatira of Ngāti Raukawa upheld their obligations and responsibilities for the survival of their people. Under the leadership of Te Whatanui, Ngāti Raukawa led with integrity, looked after the land and waterways and lived, for the most part, peacefully with existing iwi, including Rangitāne and Muaūpoko for decades, based on kawa and tikanga, including mana.

Since the 1820's, the hapū of Ngāti Raukawa have tūpuna responsibilities to exercise rangatiratanga and manaakitanga over their lands, villages, and treasures, including Papangaio and Te Wharangi. This mana was reaffirmed in 1840 when many rangatira of Ngāti Raukawa signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which guaranteed their tino rangatiratanga over their lands, villages and treasures, including Te Wharangi and Papangaio. These areas hold immense cultural, historical and spiritual significance to Ngāti Raukawa. Papangaio and Te Wharangi are crucial for the hapū at place to survive and thrive, as well as for the ecological health of the region and the wellbeing of all residents and visitors.

Te Wharangi is closely associated with the Foxton Beach area and holds historical importance. Te Wharangi serves as a signpost for our tūpuna to remember an area in Whangamata, Taupō of the same name. This area was a vital fishing kāinga, a fortified pā and the location of the first traditional rūnanga for Ngāti Raukawa. Te Wharangi is deeply connected to many hapū and iwi of Ngāti Raukawa. Fourteen Ngāti Raukawa rangatira, including Te Whatanui Tutaki, Nepia Taratoa, Ihakara Tukumaru and Arapata te Whioi, signed a 10-year Te Wharangi lease agreement for a ferry site in 1856. Despite the agreement, the land was never returned to these rangatira and hapū of Ngāti Raukawa after the lease expired, leading to decades of protests led by rangatira, such as Tuturu Paerata, and the growth of the Foxton Beach township.

Papangaio, along with Peketahi and Mukukai, were three significant taniwha that accompanied the Tainui people during the migration from Maungatautari. Papangaio is the guardian of the Manawatū awa and protector of all food sources within the awa. It is said that when someone is lost in the awa and found with an eye missing, they were under the protection of Papangaio. The name Papangaio is also used for the local land block to remember the importance of Papangaio. The original 78 Papangaio landowners were from Ngāti Turanga, Ngāti Te Au and Ngāti Rākau, hapū of Ngāti Raukawa.

By respecting the mana and hapū rangatiratanga of Ngāti Raukawa, we can ensure that the future of Papangaio and Te Wharangi is guided by principles of connection, protection and enjoyment:

1. **Connection:** Strengthen the connection between hapū of Ngāti Raukawa, and Te Wharangi and Papangaio, ensuring cultural and spiritual ties are upheld.
2. **Protection:** Protect the natural beauty, ecological integrity and cultural heritage of Papangaio and Te Wharangi.
3. **Enjoyment:** Ensure Papangaio and Te Wharangi remain places for enjoyment, recreation, learning and spiritual reflection, serving as an inspiration for all.

The hapū of Ngāti Raukawa appreciate and acknowledge the tireless efforts of all volunteers working to restore the health of Papangaio and Te Wharangi. Your dedication ensures that future residents and visitors can enjoy and cherish this beautiful taonga.

Ngāti Raukawa recognise that neighbouring iwi had historical ties to this area before the arrival of the Tainui people. However, without any active hapū or marae nearby, these connections have not continued to the present day. Rangitāne o Manawatū have settled their historical Treaty claims with the Crown, while Ngāti Raukawa te au ki te Tonga and Muaūpoko are still to complete their settlements.

While Treaty settlements acknowledge specific interests in legislation, tikanga Māori remains the first law of this land, with mana being a fundamental principle. Mana, a valuable aspect of one's individual and collective identity, can be gained or lost based on actions. The ongoing mana and responsibilities of Ngāti Raukawa over Papangaio and Te Wharangi are derived from historical actions and leadership, not settlements.

Section 3: Rangitāne o Manawatū and Rohe

Te Mana o te Okatia

Rangitāne has had an unbroken connection to the Manawatū Awa and estuary and Okatia Coastline since Kupe first sailed into these waters over 900 years ago after following the godwits/kuaka on their migration across the pacific.

Haunui a nania, the Kurahaupo ancestor was the first to traverse the coastline naming many features, including the Manawatū Awa. Hau also identified key resources and places that guided the settlement of the Okatia coastline for his Rangitāne descendants. Rangitāne settled the area over 700 years ago, and continue to have an unbroken connection to the area and its environment, which is represented in the numerous archaeological sites uncovered in the coastal area. Complimenting the numerous archaeological sites are Moa remains and sites of Moa hunting/preparation that coincided with the arrival and settlement of the Manawatū Estuary by Rangitāne. The area was first occupied by Whatonga and Tanenuiarangi who expanded the Rangitāne rohe and their descendants settled the Manawatū Catchment.

Papangio was one of the first settlements/mahinga kai established along the coastline due to the large ngaio trees that existed in the southern bank of the Manawatū Awa. The Ngaio tree was a valuable resource that provided shelter and provided a source of medicinal oils and material to ward off sand flies and mosquitos. Papangaio was also a place that provided easy access to the Manawatū Estuary to gather shellfish and fish in the estuary. The location was also an elevated area that provided shelter, a safe crossing point in the Awa for coastal travellers and access to Wharangi.

Wharangi on the northern side of the Manawatū Estuary was established by Rangitāne over the last 700 years and was used as fishing station, waka mooring area and fish/whale/shark processing area. The area was used as a port area seasonally, where waka would leave for fishing expeditions, deep sea expeditions, waka journeys going both north to Whanganui/Whangaehu and south to Te Wae Wae Kapiti ko Tara raua ko Rangitāne and then on to Rangitāne o Wairau in Te Waka a Maui.

Nearby to Papangaio, was Puru Rarauhe which was well known as a cultivation area and place where fern root aruhe or rarauhe was cultivated. Large scale horticultural practises grew in scale and area over 500 years ago due to climate change adaptation that also coincided with the expansion of over 400 settlement sites along the Manawatū Awa. The cultivation sites at Papangaio and Puru Aruhe were still in use when Europeans arrived in the early 1800's. Many Europeans stayed at these sites under the manaakitanga of Rangitāne being welcomed by Rangitāne Rangatira such as, Te Aweawe, Rangiotu, Tiweta and Mahuriwho occupied Papangaio and regularly launched expeditions from Wharangi. Many Europeans made note of the areas pātaka that existed there, and that the crossing of the Manawatū Awa was under the control of Rangitāne as well as making reference to the fish and whales that were harvested and processed by Rangitāne at Okatia and Wharanagi. Rangitāne has had an unbroken relationship with the Manawatū Estuary the Okatia Coast and continue, today, to gather resources in the area.

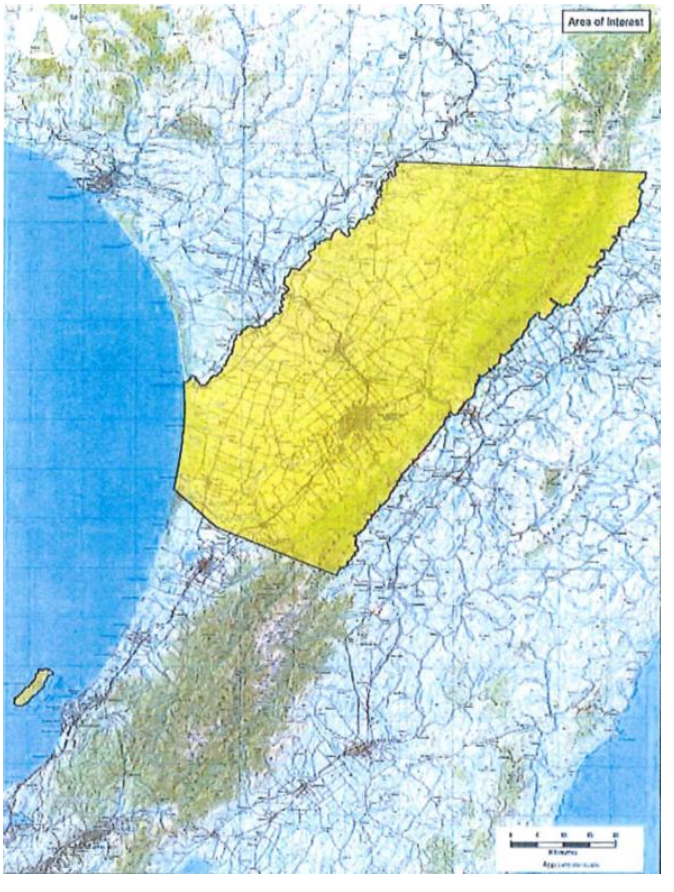
Though Rangitāne o Manawatū has settled their Treaty Claims, which is a Crown process and through their settlement their interests in the Awahou area have been acknowledged their links remain to the area in accordance with Māori Lore and ahi kaa through their ongoing use of the area, which remains unbroken.

The fact that Rangitāne have no Marae in the area is a further reflection of what colonisation and settlement did to the fabric of Rangitāne society and not a reflection that their interests have not continued to the present day.

To conclude, Rangitāne mana over the area sits alongside Muaūpoko and Ngāti Raukawa as Kaitiaki of the area and we look forward to continuing to work in a mana enhancing way with our Iwi and hapu neighbours and all stakeholders who wish to protect and enhance the Estuary for future generations.

Rangitāne o Manawatū Rohe

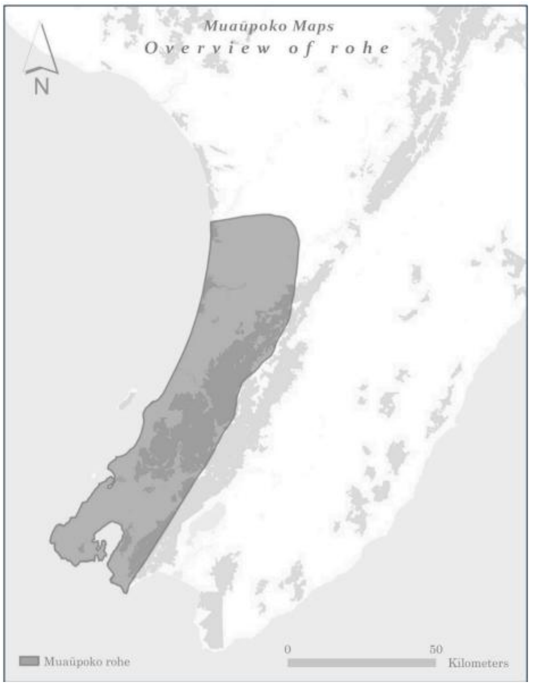
Rangitāne o Manawatū has an identified area of interest within the Manawatū Region. The rohe is defined by the Rangitikei River upstream to Orangipango trig east to Te Hekenga trig following the summit along the Ruahine Ranges southwest to Tararua trig across to the mouth of the Manawatū River.
It also includes Kapiti Island.



Section 4: Muaūpoko

Muaūpoko and Muaūpoko Rohe

The area over which Muaūpoko exercises kaitiakitanga, for the purposes of the RMA, is shown below.



Muaūpoko are descendants of Whātonga, Tara-Ika I Nohu and Tūteremoana, and had an established and recognised area that extended from Te Waka a Maui (the South Island), Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington), Te Waewae Kāpiti o Tara rāua ko Tautoki (Kāpiti Island) to Castlecliff (Whanganui). Muaūpoko can be translated as 'head of the fish' or 'people of the head of the fish,' the fish being Te Ika a Māui, the North Island of New Zealand. The fish's head is the bottom of the North Island, where Muaūpoko are born of the land. The Muaūpoko story of origin began with the arrival of Kupe from Hawaiki on the Matahourua Waka, or more recently, the migration of Whātonga (the great grandson of Kupe) who was a navigator on the Kurahaupō Waka. Muaūpoko can also identify themselves with the Fleet migration where Pōpoto of Ngāti Apa (son of Haunui a Nanaia) captained the Kurahaupō.

The eldest son of Whātonga, Tara-Ika I Nohu (shortened to Tara), is the ancestor of Ngāi Tara. This creates our shared whakapapa, Ngai Tara ki te Mua Ūpoko o Te Ika o Maui. The half-brother of Tara was Tautoki, the father of our whanaunga Rangitāne. The area of Ngai Tara was traditionally recognised as the Niho Mango (sharks tooth) and was marked by three locations named after their ancestor Tūteremoana; a rock outcrop near the modernday Castlecliff, the highest peak on Kāpiti Island and a rock outcrop near the modern-day Barrett's reef near Wellington. Prior to this, he was also a chief in Heretaunga, ruling over vast areas. During the influx of migrant Iwi in the 1820s and early 30s, Ngai Tara lost many of its lands in its vast rohe with the remnants of the Iwi being referred to as 'the people of the head of the fish' or Muaūpoko.

Prior to 1820, Muaūpoko had settlements at Arapaoa Island (Marlborough Sounds), Pukerua Bay, Waikanae, Kāpiti Island, Ōtaki, Ohau, Horowhenua, Poroutawhao/Waitarere, Awahou (Foxton) and along the lower Manawatū River and Rangitikei River. Muaūpoko tīpuna had socio-political relationships and shared whakapapa with their neighbor's in both the North and South Islands. These are Ngāti Apa, Rangitāne, Ngāti Ira, Ngāti Kahungunu, Whanganui iwi, Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Apa Ki Te Ra To and Ngai Tahu, with whom Muaūpoko had engaged in a number of marriages, alliances, and conflicts. Muaūpoko Pa sites situated at the lower Manawatū River included Karikari, Wai-pipi-o-maihi, and Ngarara.

Muaūpoko had interests through shared and separate areas of use and occupation with these iwi. During the 1820s and early 1830s, invasions and migrations were made by Ngāti Toa, Te Āti Awa, Ngāti Raukawa and Taranaki tribes. These iwi settled themselves within the Muaūpoko takiwā.

Some Muaūpoko maintained ahikā roa occupation in parts of the traditional area after the arrival of these Iwi, and some Muaūpoko migrated out of the area and united with other Muaūpoko hapū and related communities. A core group of Muaūpoko remained at Horowhenua while others continued to live in the Manawatū, Te Waipounamu and Kāpiti Coast areas.

Muaūpoko, along with their allies, Ngāti Apa and Rangitāne, entered various arrangements with the incoming iwi to maintain an uneasy peace, including an agreement with the Ngāti Raukawa rangatira Te Whatanui, involving a gift of land from the Muaūpoko rangatira, Taueki.

In 1840, Muaūpoko rangatira signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Muaūpoko engaged with the coming of Christianity as well as the arriving settlers and new economy. Muaūpoko land was generally recognised by neighbouring ahika roa (longstanding) iwi; Rangitāne, Ngāti Apa, and Ngāti Kahungunu. This, however, did not always mean they agreed upon boundaries or the overlapping areas. The invading and migrating Iwi of the 1820s / 1830s identified Muaūpoko as being particularly rich in resources and thus proceeded to assert their interests based on perceived raupatu and tuku[1].

Muaūpoko Treaty Settlement
Muaūpoko identified an area of interest to the Crown that extended across their full area of interest. However, these Muaūpoko claims were not investigated, meaning a lot of land was lost which contributed to deprivation of Muaūpoko as an iwi. This historic process led to internal disputes. In 1873 Muaūpoko was forced by the Crown into an area of 162,460 acres, of which they had near exclusive interests in the 52,000 acres of the Horowhenua Block.

The Horowhenua Block was reduced to 25,827 acres by 1898 through Native Land Legislation, Crown purchasing practices, individualization of land, associated costs and raruraru within Muaūpoko and with other iwi. Between 1886 and 1889, over half of the land was alienated through Crown coercion, legislation, and individualisation of titles completely inconsistent with traditional land tenure practices.

The Muaūpoko 'Area of Interest' for contemporary Treaty Settlement purposes was defined in Section 7 of our Deed of Mandate in 2012. It included areas from Pukerua Bay in the south, to the Manawatū River Catchment in the North, bordered by the Tararua Ranges in the east and the Tasman Sea in the west, including Kāpiti Island. This was our first round of Treaty Settlement negotiations. However, our people did not accept the settlement offered by the Crown and we are yet to resume further negotiations.

Our Treaty Settlement negotiations consider our ownership rights over whenua. This is different to the protection of our values by the RMA. The RMA protects our relationship with our ancestral lands, waters, sites, wāhu tapu and other taonga, including the earliest settlement sites of Whātonga within Te Whanganui-a-Tara (the Wellington harbour, named for our ancestor Tara-Ika I Nohu) and other traditional areas

[1] This history is all based on Waitangi Tribunal reports Wai2200 #A182 by Bruce Stirling (Muaūpoko Customary Interest) and David Armstrong (Muaūpoko Interests Outside the Horowhenua Block). They have stood up through the Waitangi Tribunal and thus represent a short and accurate version of our history.

Section 5: Site Locations

Location

Te Papangaio and Te Wharangi were pā sites located on each side of Manawatū River as shown in the map prepared by Adkin around 1949 (Figure 1-S2).

The Manawatū River enters the Tasman Sea south of Foxton Beach township, on the west coast of the lower North Island. The estuary it forms extends inland from the coast to the Whirokino Cut near Foxton township, a distance of approximately 4km (S3). The Ramsar site is approximately 200 ha in extent (Figure2-S2), and includes areas of beach, sand dune, ephemeral dune wetland, salt marsh, mud flat, and river channel. The total site covers an area of 558 ha, made up of 386 ha of dry land and 172 ha of river channel.

Ownership

No one organisation or individual has sole actual or vested ownership of the Ramsar site. The bulk of the site is unallocated riverbed or foreshore ("seabed" under the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004), with the remainder a mixture of Crown, district council and private land (Figure2-S2). The status of some smaller land parcels adjoining the Estuary is uncertain. Cadastral information can be unreliable in such environments due to the fluctuating position of the shoreline and river and review of the Ramsar site boundary in the future may be required.

Ramsar Site

Improvements planned for the Estuary in this management plan are for all ecosystem types that extend beyond mapped boundaries; therefore extend beyond the recognised Ramsar site (Figure 2-S2).

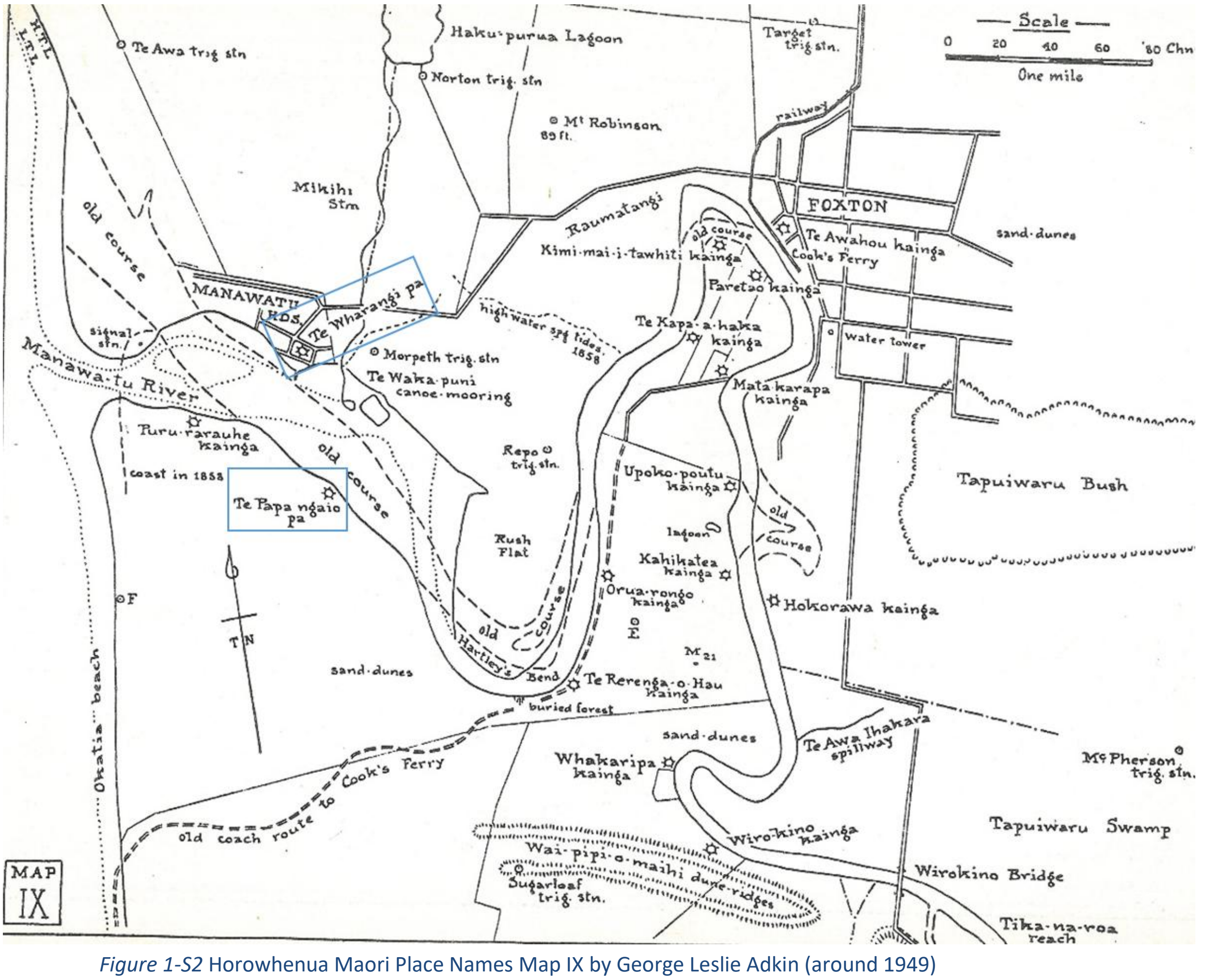


Figure 1-S2 Horowhenua Maori Place Names Map IX by George Leslie Adkin (around 1949)
The location of Te Papangaio pa and Te Wharangi pa are outlined blue (additions to Adkins map)

Figure 2-S2: Manawatū Estuary Location Map: 1789965.41 5515916.01 NZGD_2000 NZ Transverse Mercator

Section 6: History of Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary

History allows us to learn from and make connections with the past. The collaboration of the many groups, and in particular working together with hapū, iwi and local communities, to build a strong resilient natural environment brings hope for the people and for the ecosystems that value this significant location.

The following timeline is a brief summary of historic events. Section 2 offers a detailed history of Papangaio and Te Wharangi from a Ngāti Raukawa perspective, whilst Section 3 reflects Rangitāne o Manawatū perspective and Section 4 Muaūpoko perspective. The history below is drawn from treaty settlement negotiations (more fully described in Appendix 1) and Catherine Knight's book[2].

650 years ago: Tangata Whenua had an abundant food supply available and had little need to change their environment.

450 years ago: Small scale coastal clearance of forest took place that allowed access further inland for food collection from lagoons, swamps and estuaries.

200 years ago: European settlers arrived and fire was used as the most effective way to clear the land. The drive was for economic progress and a controlled environment.

The vegetation cover around 1860 included very large flax and raupō dominated swamp lands; Moutoa (4000 acres of flax[1]) and Makurerua (Makerua) (22,000 acres) extending from Foxton upstream as far as Linton (Figure 4-S3). Tangata Whenua used all parts of flax for medicine, sweet drinks, baskets, mats, nets, traps, footwear and rope. European commercialisation of flax started in early 1800s and continued through to the 1970's with large international sales that dramatically changed these swamp lands.

100 years ago: Soil erosion upstream was problematic and floods were increasing both in magnitude and frequency as a result of deforestation. The environmental consequences from pollutants discharged from the flax mills, plus increased siltation caused significant political and social tensions.

1930 to 1947: Whirokino Cut – see summative detail below and full detail in App. 1.

1923 to 1968: Papangaio land title negotiations– see summative detail below and full detail in App. 1.

Environmental crisis was followed by "*unfaltering confidence in engineering or technical solutions to environmental problems*" (Knight, p.257). Solutions included the groins, stopbanks, planting of fast growing poplars and willows, Whirokino cut, and the Moutoa floodways to reduce flooding of productive farms.

20 years ago: The limitations of engineering solutions were becoming clearly evident with events such as the 2004 floods, "*council officials were conceding that the stopbanks could be raised one more time*" (Knight p.258), plus water quality requiring stricter rules for the treatment.

[2] Knight, Catherine. 2014. Ravaged Beauty An environmental history of the Manawatū. Dunmore Publishing Ltd.

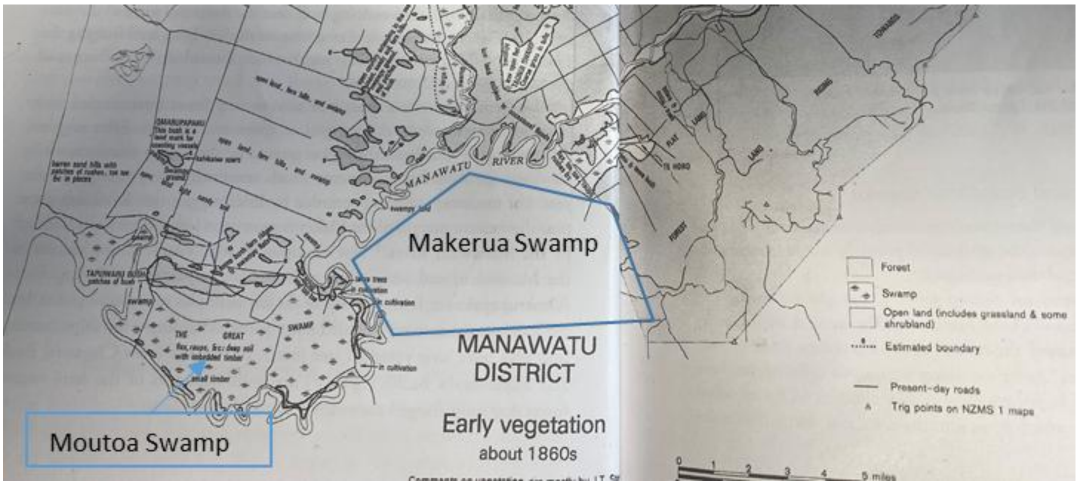


Figure 3-S3: Early vegetation about 1860s Makurerua (Makerua) and Moutoa swamp locations (outlined blue) Source: Esler, A.E. 1978. Botany of the Manawatū District of New Zealand. Auckland: Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.

Whirokino Cut

Early 1930s: The Whirokino cut (Figure 5-S3) was designed to prevent flooding by creating a spillway across the neck of a river loop so that during a flood, the river could run straighter directly out to sea. This would have benefited farmers and landowners in the upper reaches of the Manawatū; but not Ngāti Turanga, Ngāti Te Au and Ngāti Rākau, the owners of Papangaio J who are hapū of Ngāti Raukawa, whose land was mostly submerged due to the cut, nor to Rangitāne o Manawatū and Muaūpoko.

1943: A massive flood washed out the spillway before it was finished creating a direct channel between the upper and lower parts of the loop. It has remained that way ever since.

1947: Compensation for land taken for the Whirokino cut; awarded payments for Whirokino blocks, and parts of Te Rerengaohau (Figure 1-S2).

Figure 4-S3: Part Papangaio J Block 24.8ha (green segment north) Whirokino cut (green segment south)

Note these areas are both underwater and subject to common ownership. Credit unknown

Source: https://horowhenua.kete.net.nz/item/d9614ee9-86d242dd-a1f1-1daccfc89165

Papangaio J

The title for the original Papangaio block was vested in 78 Owners from Ngāti Turanga, Ngāti Rakau, and Ngāti Te Au.

1923: The block was partitioned to Papangaio J block (Figure 4-S3) that was awarded to the original 78 owners of the Papangaio block, and Papangaio A – H were vested in the Ikaroa Māori Trust Board. Note Figure 4-S3 show Papanagaio J block, and the Whirokino cut, are underwater and subject to common ownership (Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004), and has unresolved ambiguity of who are the beneficiaries.

1955: The Manawatū County Council was to be 'allowed to develop and administer the land provided the tenants are given security of tenure'.

Late 1950s to early 1960s: Negotiations and investigations took place to purchase the land off the original land owners.

1962: The final piece of accretion land awarded to the landowners totalled about 72 acres. The eventual price of £20,000 was agreed to for the sale of the land and compensation for encroachments. This was shared among the now 300 people, minus expenses, and would amount to £62 each. There is no evidence that the Māori Trustee ever distributed the money to the beneficial owners.

1968: Section 13 of the Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Act 1968 was enacted which gave the Manawatū County Council the power to sell or otherwise dispose of the land. Prior to this the Māori Owners were told that the land would not be sold but would be leased in perpetuity.

There are at least 9 grievances of the Papangaio J Block forced sale, as listed in Appendix 1.

Section 7: Hapū, Iwi, Partners, Organisations, Individuals and Agencies

There are hapū, Iwi and many partners, organisations, individuals and agencies that are connected to the Manawatū Estuary. Many hapū and iwi of Ngāti Raukawa exercise tūpuna responsibilities at Papangaio and Te Wharangi, based on the actions of their ancestors as doRangitāne o Manawatū and Muaūpoko who identify with the Estuary and contribute significant historical narratives, knowledge and ongoing care. The Department of Conservation, Horowhenua District Council and private landowners currently own parts of the Estuary and the surrounding land. Key community groups specifically dedicated to the Estuary are Manawatū Estuary Trust and Wildlife Foxton Trust. There are many other supportive parties that dedicate time and energy to the Estuary care as listed, and briefly introduced, in S4-Table 4.1. Several agencies are listed that contribute various administration and ensure adherence to legislation for the area. Further introduction to the contributing groups is in Appendix 3.

S4-Table 4.1 Hapū and iwi of Ngāti Raukawa and Organisation Roles

Hapū and iwi of Ngāti Raukawa – Papangaio, Te Wharangi	Role at Manawatū Estuary	Area of Interest
Ngāti Whakatere, Ngāti Takihiku, Ngāti Turanga, Ngāti Huia ki Matau, Ngāti Huia ki Poroutāwhao, Ngāti Pareraukawa, Ngāti Ngārongo, Ngāti Te Au, Ngāti Rākau	Hapū with tūpuna responsibilities and obligations to exercise rangatiratanga and manaakitanga.	Mai i Waitapu ki Rangataua, mai i Mīria-te-kakara ki Kukutauaki, including te awa o Manawatū, Papangaio and Te Wharangi.

Organisation	Role at Manawatū Estuary	Area of Interest
Iwi Partners		
Tānenuiārangi Manawatū Charitable Trust	Unbroken Kaitiaki responsibilities and obligations passed down through whakapapa and occupation	Rangitāne o Manawatū rohe
Muaūpoko Tribal Authority	Kaitiaki	Te Waewae Kapiti Ngai Tara Raua Ko Rangitaane/Kapiti
Landowners		
Private landowners	In consultation with others for access	Land management
Forest owners and leasees	In consultation with others for access	Forest management
Local Community Groups & Supportive Associated Groups		
Manawatū Estuary Trust	Care and education	Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary
Wildlife Foxton Trust	Environmental education	Foxton Beach
Save Our River Trust (SORT)	Manawatū River and Foxton Loop restoration and education	Manawatū River & Foxton Loop
New Zealand Wheel Drive Association (NZFWDA)	Endorse care and respect for the environment, measures to enforce protection	Nationally and Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary, Foxton Beach
Te Awahou Foxton Community Board	Inform HDC	Foxton & Foxton Beach
Foxton Beach affiliated groups	Police Foxton Beach Surf Life Saving Club Manawatū Marine Boating Club	Foxton Beach
Manawatū River Trust	Promote river use	Manawatū River and Manawatū River Loop

Organisation	Role at Manawatū Estuary	Area of Interest
Water Environmental Care Assn. Inc.	Waterways restoration	Horowhenua - Manawatū
Manawatū River Users' Advisory Group	Facilitate better understanding among competing river interest groups and users	Manawatū River and tributaries
The Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society of NZ	Practical protection of nature	Horowhenua and Manawatū Branches and Aotearoa NZ
Ornithological Society of NZ	Bird monitoring	National
Manawatū River Leaders Accord	Improve Manawatū River	Manawatū River
Fish & Game NZ	Protect the habitat of sports fish and game birds	Aotearoa NZ
Government Agencies		
Department of Conservation (DOC)	Administers DOC land at Manawatū Estuary. Some weed control.	Aotearoa NZ
Horowhenua District Council (HDC)	Administers HDC land at the Estuary and Foxton Beach.	Horowhenua District
Horizons Regional Council (HRC)	Weed control and pest control following the regional response plans and river management. Administers small budget to support Estuary biodiversity activities.	Horizons Region
NZ Landcare Trust	Land owner advice to improve ecological function	Aotearoa NZ
Manaaki Whenua Landcare Trust	Conduct science and research focused on environmental issues, opportunities and solutions through partnering with users	Aotearoa NZ
Ministry of Primary Industries	Sustainable fishing catches	Aotearoa NZ
Environmental Protection Agency	With particular reference to biocontrols for such pests as Coastal Wattle.	Aotearoa NZ

Section 8: Values

The Estuary is one of the largest estuary and wading bird feeding grounds in the lower half of the North Island, and retains a high degree of naturalness and biodiversity. The Estuary was designated a Wetland of International Significance on the basis of its various geomorphology, flora, fauna, cultural and social values. The values of the Estuary are described in greater detail within the Ramsar Information Sheet for the Estuary.

Holistic Values:

The spiritual elements connecting the landscape to physical world must be acknowledged to maintain the integrity of Ranginui, Papatuanuku, atua, tipua and tūpuna that connect tangata to whenua.

Rivers, lakes and wetlands are key elements in the identity, whakapapa and mana of hapū and iwi. The river is seen as a physical connection to the spirit world and is considered tapu. The estuarine area provides spiritual and physical sustenance, resources loosely categorised as mahinga kai (mahinga kai is a term used to denote where kai/food is gathered), many natural resources, shelter, transport, fish, tuna and shellfish, waterfowl, ngahere manu, and marine mammals.

In a cultural context, tangata whenua have a rich and varied connection to the ecosystem, including the approximately 4,000 native plants, and innumerable whānau of native animals. This includes harakeke/flax where the plant was used in the physical and spiritual aspects of daily life. The plant itself is symbolic to the family relationship from pēpē to kuia and kaumātua, and personifies sustainability at is most rudimentary level.

In the context of this management plan; the historical connection of tūpuna and the discovery of Aotearoa is relevant. In that, Kupe and Whatonga followed the great flocks of migratory shore birds (kuaka, huahou, tuturiwhatu, etc.) from Hawaiki to Aotearoa.

The Manawatū River and estuary are of considerable significance to many people in the local community as evidenced by the number of groups involved with this plan.

Recreational Values:

Many people live and work within close proximity of the Estuary, and Foxton Beach is a popular destination for holiday-makers and day trippers. The Estuary, Foxton Beach, and the surrounding areas are used extensively for recreational activities such as fishing, walking, bird-watching, boating, duck shooting, motorboat sports, kitesurfing, and four-wheel driving. Many people also enjoy the ever-changing views in response to the tide and weather. Schools, universities and research institutes have all made use of the Estuary and surrounding land for education and research purposes.

Although the Estuary is well known for whitebaiting; the international convention banning the sale, or trading of endangered species bans the sale of whitebait; and Ramsar criteria is to support vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species. Therefore by definition, whitebaiting is not supported. Other activities not supported for the same reason as whitebaiting includes:

- Duck shooting in the Ramsar area that risks the killing of protected or native endangered species; and
- Any vehicles around or through wāhi tapu sites.

Wāhi tapu are special places of cultural significance including urupa (cemetery-burial ground), prehistoric occupation site, artifact find spot, cultural land mark/landform.

MEMT brainstormed values that were important to them. The Team is considered representative of the wider community thus providing a relevant set of values.

People Values:

The Estuary a place for people to enjoy, to communicate with others, to work together, to learn together, and to build respect for the area. Comments from the brainstorm included:

- A place for all the community to enjoy.
- Continued conversations with concerned parties to create positive outcomes together.
- Kotahitanga. Doing it together. By breaking down the perceived cultural division.
- Sharing of the knowledge, awareness, and importance of the Estuary and the reflection of the health of the Manawatū River; that the Estuary is.
- Emotional and spiritual connection to the river and estuary.
- River and estuary are of huge importance to all.
- Feeling of being connected to the area. Valued by all, not just Iwi.
- Engage the local community and empower them to take part with caring for the Estuary.
- Iwi values are not dissimilar to best practice and should be listened to.
- Having such a unique environment accessible to most that needs protection.
- It's about our mokopuna. Leaving it better than it is now.

Dune Garden

Place Values:

The Estuary is a significant place of connections between mountains and sea, fresh and salt water, river and dunes. Now it is a place for restoration and protection of the water, the river, the flora, and the fauna.   Comments from the brainstorm included:

- A place where waters meet. Fresh and salt.
- A place where the mountains meet the sea.
- Everything happening upstream impacts the estuary.
- The life supporting value is critical.
- The ecological enhancement of the estuary and resilience for this space.
- Restoration and protection of the natural environment.
- Water quality is important for our awa, flora and fauna.
- Native flora and fauna are protected.
- Ensuring our environment, especially our awa, is markedly improved.
- Retaining as much as possible the estuary, river and dunes in their natural state.
- The value of the estuary is a priority.

Environmental Values:

The Estuary supports a wide range of plant and animal species. Comprehensive species lists, as introduced below, are frequently updated and available on the Manawatū Estuary Trust website https://www.metrust.org.nz/research In 2024 the website had been viewed in 21 countries outside of

NZ, including main migration routes for shore birds of China, North and South Korea, Canada plus Alaska. Links to each category of organisms is provided at the end of each section. Conversations with Iwi are yet to be had with respect to collection of information and will be carried out as part of this management plan shown in App. 5

Geomorphology

The Estuary is a dynamic part of the coastal environment comprising mudflat, saltmarsh, and dunes. The extent of the mudflats is tide dependent, ranging from non-existent during high tides, to more than 100 ha in size during very low tides. There are is approximately 140 ha of saltmarsh within the estuary, the largest of which is 100 ha in extent (Fernbird Flat). The dynamic dune field on the northern side of the river mouth covers an area of approximately 30 ha. The highly mobile dunes are fed by sand that is moving southwards along the coast. Expansion of the dune field causes the river mouth to move southwards, requiring large floods to realign the mouth.

Flora

The vegetation assemblages of the Estuary reflect the geomorphic units present – mudflat, saltmarsh, and dune. Over 300 species of indigenous and exotic species of plant have been recorded in the estuary. Of these, 14 are nationally threatened or naturally rare plants. The flora of the Estuary is predominantly indigenous species, but a significant number of exotic and exotic weed species are present and pose a significant risk to future functioning of the site (refer Threats S6).
https://www.metrust.org.nz/vegetation

Pīngao Ficinia spiralis

Ferns are not a well-represented in the area. Many are damp forest species but there some unusual species, especially the aquatic Red Azolla. Records also show a few mosses and lichens found in the area. https://www.metrust.org.nz/ferns

Fungi

Not very well researched around the district and there is still plenty of scope to do more work on this interesting group. https://www.metrust.org.nz/fungi

Fauna

The Manawatū Estuary supports a wide range of animal species on a permanent, seasonal, or temporary basis These are categorised on the Estuary species lists as follows:,

Birds

The Estuary has one of the highest bird diversities of any site in New Zealand. One hundred and sixty-eight bird species have been recorded in the Estuary and the surrounding lands. A number of these, mainly seabirds, are recorded as beach wrecks. Of these, 30 species are considered nationally critical or nationally threatened. The Estuary is renowned for the large number of wading birds it attracts at different times of the year for breeding, overwintering, and storm protection. Amongst the wading birds are godwits, wrybills and royal spoonbills. In winter the Estuary can be host up to 1% of the world's wrybill population.

Ngutuparore, Wrybill *Anarhynchus frontalis*

Sites in different countries, including Manawatū Estuary, can be linked as staging points for migrating species such as godwits and knot. Bird numbers swell dramatically when they reach each point in the migration. https://www.metrust.org.nz/birds

Taranui, Caspian Tern, juvenile *Hydroprogne caspia*

Fish

Many of New Zealand's indigenous freshwater fish migrate between freshwater habitats and the sea as part of their lifecycle. Located at the intersection between these two aquatic environments, estuaries provide critical migration routes and spawning/feeding grounds. A total of 50 fish species have been recorded for the Estuary, including indigenous and exotic species, and marine wanderers such as kahawai and mullet. Eight of these species are listed as nationally threatened. https://www.metrust.org.nz/fish

Other Marine Species

There is a diverse assemblage of other marine species such as seaweeds, sea urchins, jellyfish and sponges which do not fall into any of the other groups. https://www.metrust.org.nz/other-marine-species

Invertebrates

Previous surveys have identified large numbers and densities of invertebrates in the Estuary and surrounding lands. The Manawatū Estuary Trust species lists divides these organisms into spiders, beetles, insects, molluscs and crustacea.

A number of spiders are found in the dunes with several rare species. The endangered katipo spider was once common in the dunes at the mouth of the Estuary. https://www.metrust.org.nz/spiders A number of beetle species are found in the area with the dunes holding several that specialise inhabiting sandy areas like Broun's Sand Beetle *Lagrioida brouni*, and are often disturbed if logs are moved. https://www.metrust.org.nz/beetles Invertebrates that are not included in other sections and are recognisable generally as insects, which have been recorded at the Estuary, include ants, stick insects and grasshoppers. https://www.metrust.org.nz/insects-1

Katipō *Latrodectus katipo*

Molluscs and crustacea are found on land and in the sea. Little has been recorded about the shellfish population of the Estuary and immediately adjacent coastline. However, historically shellfish, including toheroa, were abundant as stated by Tangata Whenua and evidenced by the number and size of shell middens in the area. Shellfish are highly valued for cultural harvest and recreational use. https://www.metrust.org.nz/mulluscs https://www.metrust.org.nz/crustaceans

Mammals

Mammals on land are introduced species such as rats and stoats which are a threat to native wildlife. Several marine species are occasionally seen offshore; and there are regular seal visits onshore. The native species recorded often are individual sightings only, such as seals, dolphin, and whale. https://www.metrust.org.nz/mammals

Reptiles and Amphibians

Reptiles and amphibians such as skinks and frogs are not that well represented in the area with most being introduced species. They are difficult to monitor and therefore records are low. Several marine species have been recorded on near-by beaches such as a leatherback turtle.
https://www.metrust.org.nz/reptiles

Section 9: Threats

Although the Estuary retains a high degree of naturalness, the site is far from pristine. The site has been modified through the actions of historical land use changes (within the wider Manawatū catchment and adjacent to the site), and river engineering works (e.g. the Whirokino Cut). The Estuary has responded and adjusted to these impacts, however, there are a host of contemporary impacts and actions that are, or have the potential to, negatively impact on the health of the Estuary:

Climate Change impacts: - sea level rise and temperature rise are providing significant challenges globally at present, and will also have impacts at a regional and local level - including around:

- More extreme weather events will increase water volumes in the Manawatū River
- The dune system of Foxton Beach, and native dune plants, are at risk as a result of coastal inundation and storm effects.

Management – activities such as reopening of the Foxton Loop, additional flood protection and construction of seawalls (in response to sea level change) could impact on the dynamic natural processes occurring in the Estuary, such as migration of the river mouth. Other than returning a residual flow to Foxton Loop, no such proposals are currently being contemplated.

Human disturbance – human activities such as walking (particularly with uncontrolled dogs), dumping rubbish, and use of motorised vehicles and boats has significant impacts on the Estuary ecology. Feeding, resting and nesting birds are disturbed; fragile vegetation is often completely gone where well established vehicle tracks have formed. Vehicles damage mudflat habitats, xeric dune habitats, and ephemeral dune wetland habitats; affecting the forms of life living in and on the sand. Rubbish deposits, directly by humans or indirectly via the river or sea compound the challenges to our native flora and fauna. This threat has only been partially addressed through the erection of educational signage, fencing and bollards, and the efforts of the Police. A new Public Place by-law in development as an activity from this plan provides some authority to control vehicle access.

Lack of knowledge and understanding of the Estuary ecosystems and the needs of the diversity of species contributes to damage and sometimes unintentional damage.

Weeds – invasive plants are the most significant and immediate threat to the Estuary. The most notable plant threats are spartina, marram, sharp rush and tall fescue. All are transformer weeds that modify their environments to the exclusion of indigenous species. Many undesirable exotic plants are present in the wider landscape and could become established in the Estuary, especially with fly-tipping of garden waste still occurring. The presence and extent of weed species in the site remains poorly understood. Spartina has been the focus of a significant control effort in recent decades.

Weeding at the Estuary

Pest animals – the Estuary hosts a large number of pest species, including feral cats, mustelids, hedgehogs, rats, rabbits, and possums. Pest animal impacts include grazing and predation of eggs, nestlings and adults. Pest numbers are unknown, but the impact of each pest is likely to be different and highly variable across the different parts of the Estuary. The most vulnerable areas are the dunes and Fernbird Flat. The landscape surrounding the Estuary has the potential to support large populations of pest animals. A pest trapping programme that has been underway in the Fernbird Flat and surrounding farmland area, and along the coastal foredune north of Foxton Beach, for several years, is currently being expanded as an action from this plan.

Stock (mainly cattle) sometimes graze the Fernbird Flats area where there is potential to alter the indigenous vegetation assemblage, introduce weeds, and trample nests. The number of grazing events per year has declined since the Estuary became a Ramsar site.

Several hundred Canada geese frequent the Estuary several times a year. The increased nitrogen levels from their faeces is likely to adjust the water chemistry affecting the natural ecology.

Water quality – the water quality of the Manawatū River is degraded, in terms of its nutrient, sediment and bacteria loads, as a result of upstream land uses and point source discharges. What specific impacts this has had, or is having, on the flora and fauna of the Estuary is unknown. Poor water quality impacts on shellfish and other aquatic species low on the food chains, affecting all predator species.. Improving the health of the Manawatū River is the aim of the Manawatū River Leaders Forum and their associated Accord Action Plan. The future health of the Estuary will be indicative of the success of the Accord.

Contaminated sites – there is a former rubbish dump located within the coastal dunefield. At present it is capped and covered by trees, but if it remains exposed it could become a pollution risk.

Section 10: Vision

The Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary to be sustained, known, respected, and enjoyed as a regional treasure and estuarine ecosystem of international significance.

Sustained	- the ecology is protected and enhanced
Known	- people are aware and recognise the values
Respected	- everyone including managers, users, and upstream contributors support and sustain the site ecology
Enjoyed	- the site is used frequently

This vision statement supports the vision statements of the supporting documents as follows:

Mission of the Ramsar Convention
Wetlands are conserved, wisely used, restored and their benefits are recognised and valued by all

Foxton Beach Coastal Reserves Management Plan 2009 and its successors
Provide for and ensure the use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection, and preservation … [and] the development, as appropriate, of the reserve for the purposes for which it is classified…(section 41 (3)).

National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity
To maintain indigenous biodiversity across Aotearoa New Zealand so that there is at least no overall loss in indigenous biodiversity after the commencement date; and to achieve this:

- through recognising the mana of Tangata Whenua as kaitiaki of indigenous biodiversity; and
- by recognising people and communities, including landowners, as stewards of indigenous biodiversity; and
- by protecting and restoring indigenous biodiversity as necessary to achieve the overall maintenance of indigenous biodiversity; and
- while providing for the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing of people and communities now and in the future.

Te Mana o te Wai
As referenced from Rangitāne o Manawatū Iwi Management Plan. The most significant quality that flows through wai is mauri. The mauri is generated throughout the catchment and is carried through the connected tributaries, groundwater, wetlands and lagoons. It is the most crucial element that binds the physical, traditional and spiritual elements of all things together, generating, nurturing and ealeaeupholding all life, including that of Rangitāne o Manawatū. The health and well-being of Rangitāne is inseparable from the health and well-being of wai. The Manawatū Awa, its catchment, tributaries and connections, wetlands and lagoons are taonga and valued for the traditional abundance of mahinga kai and natural resources.

From a Ngāti Raukawa perspective, the hapū rely on the Manawatū awa for their wellbeing. Their connection to the Manawatū awa began with Haunui-a-Nanaia who named many awa in the area. Ngāti Raukawa, through Māhinaarangi, the mother of Raukawa, and many other hapū and iwi in Aotearoa descend from Haunui-a-Nanaia. Ngāti Raukawa are committed to enhancing the mana and strengthening the mauri of the Manawatū awa alongside neighbouring hapū and iwi who are located along the upper reaches of the awa.

Section 11: Objectives

The objectives to support the vision for the Estuary are listed in S8-Table 1.

S8-Table 1: Objectives to support the Estuary Vision

Focus Groups	**Objectives**
Overarching Activities affecting Manawatū Estuary	Optimise outputs from all activities by overarching activities affecting more than one project area.
Fauna	Optimise habitat to support abundant populations for at least 4 species that are vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered and located at Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary
Flora	Optimise habitat to support abundant populations of at risk and threatened species at the Estuary for at least 10 plant types; with at least 2 plant types suitable for each of the 3 ecosystems: Estuarine; Xeric and Dune Wetlands
Pest Animals	Support a resilient indigenous species population that dominates the area through implementation of the pest animal management plan.
Pest Plants	1. To reduce or eliminate pest plants to allow native plants to take their place. 2. To ensure that where pest plants are removed suitable native plants are available to replace them before new pest plants take over again. 3. To ensure that once pest plants are eliminated, regular inspections occur to remove any regrowth before it becomes a problem.
Water Quality	To achieve a standard of healthy water quality where native species and people can thrive and prosper.
Community Engagement	Have effective communication channels to all interested parties, including hapū of Ngāti Raukawa to ensure support is garnered and collaboration opportunities available. Include strong engagement with schools, and establish high National visibility of Estuary as a Ramsar site.

Fern Bird Flats

Section 12: The Ramsar Convention

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The Convention requires that countries designate suitable wetlands within their territory for inclusion in a list of Wetlands of International Importance. All contracting parties are asked to have at least 1 site for this status.

The Convention was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975. Since then, almost 90% of UN member states, from all the world's geographic regions, have acceded to become "Contracting Parties". This includes 172 countries that have signed the Ramsar Convention. The Ramsar List is now the largest network of protected areas, consisting of over 2,400 sites across the world; covering over 2.5 million km^2; and representing wetlands that play a 'substantial ecological or hydrological role in the natural functioning of a major river basin, lake or coastal system'.

The Ramsar Convention defines wetlands broadly as:

> *'…areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres.'*

New Zealand and the Ramsar Convention on Wtlands

New Zealand became a contracting party of the Ramsar Convention in 1976 and currently has seven designated Ramsar sites. The seven Ramsar sites cover 8% of the total remaining freshwater and estuarine wetland area in New Zealand. The Estuary was assessed for Ramsar status in 2005, and accepted in 2006 after meeting seven of the nine criteria for inclusion (Appendix 2).

As part of the Ramsar network, the use and management of the Estuary should align with the mission and goals outlined in the 4th Strategic Plan 2016-2024. In the 4th Strategic Plan, the mission of the Ramsar Convention is outlined as the:

> *'Conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world. To achieve this mission it is essential that vital ecosystem functions and the ecosystem services they provide to people and nature are fully recognized, maintained, restored and wisely used.'*

The vision for the Ramsar Convention is to ensure 'Wetlands are conserved, wisely used, restored and their benefits are recognized and valued by all', with the goals to:

> Goal 1: Address the Drivers of Wetland Loss and Degradation
> Goal 2: Effective conservation and management of the Ramsar Site Network
> Goal 3: Wise use of all wetlands
> Goal 4: Enhancing Implementation

In all there are 19 targets that aim to fulfil those goals, see the summary in Appendix 2 or online at: https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/ramsar_convention_strategic_plan_poster_english.pdf

The full strategic plan (49 pages) can be found online at: https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/4th_strategic_plan_2016_2024_e.pdf

Maintaining the Ramsar Status

New Zealand ensures its compliance with Ramsar obligations through several key measures:

1. Regular Reporting: Countries are required to submit national reports to the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands every three years (in October prior to the conference). These reports provide updates on the status and progress of their Ramsar sites, as well as any measures taken for the conservation and wise use of wetlands. .

   New Zealand's report to COP14 (November 2022) is not included here or as an appendix, being 69 pages long. It can be found online at:
   https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/cop14nr_newzealand_e.pdf

2. Updating Ramsar Information Sheets (RIS): There is also a seven-year reporting requirement for Ramsar sites. In addition to the triennial national reports (item 1), countries must also update the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) for each of their Ramsar sites and submit it to the Ramsar Secretariat at least every seven years. This helps monitor and evaluate the ecological condition and values of the sites. In New Zealand, this is the responsibility of The Department of Conservation (DOC).
3. Site Management Plans: The management plan, as recommended, outlines conservation objectives, strategies, and actions. These plans are regularly reviewed and updated to address emerging threats and ensure the ecological health of the wetlands.
4. Community Involvement: Local communities are actively involved in the conservation and management of Ramsar sites. This includes participation in restoration projects, monitoring programs, and educational initiatives.
5. Policy and Legislation: New Zealand has integrated wetland conservation into its national environmental policies and legislation. This includes the development of guidelines and frameworks to support the wise use and protection of wetlands.
6. Research and Monitoring: Ongoing research and monitoring programs are conducted to track the health of wetland ecosystems and the biodiversity they support. This data is crucial for informed decision-making and adaptive management.

Students carrying out the Marine M^2 Citizen Science Survey. Data sent to Otago University Marine Centre

These measures collectively help New Zealand maintain its commitment to the Ramsar Convention and ensure the protection and sustainable use of its wetlands. The Department of Conservation is responsible for the regular reporting and RIS updates; and this plan outlines and informs the community involvement, ensuring policy and legislative obligations are upheld, and research and monitoring is planned and carried out.

The criteria to maintain Ramsar status for the Estuary are outlined in Appendix 2.

Section 13: Strategic Context

The focus of this updated management plan has been on strategies to ensure progress is made to realise and execute the vision. This requires practical on-the-ground actions, and monitoring to make sure those actions are progressing the Estuary towards the goals set out.

In a move to strongly align this management plan with the current MEMT six monthly review meetings, the structure of these meetings into the future will be based around the action plans and activity areas outlined in this plan.

This will ensure: a cohesive and progressive approach to improving this ecological area; enhanced momentum in terms of on-the-ground actions; and likely building of support from everyone connected to the Estuary. With the aim that measurable progress is achieved, the following procedure is being planned for every 6 monthly meeting of the MEMT.

The first two items will be delivered by each activity group with reference to the activities in App. 5: (Fauna, Flora, Pest Animals, Pest Plants, Water Quality, Community Engagement); and the MEMT chair will lead the 'Overarching Activities'. Each agency will also present a report that summarises the activities taken place over the previous 6 months and plans for the following 6 months.

- All actions that were planned and carried out, or not, over the previous 6 months will be identified and reviewed, with the status of the action identified
- All actions planned for the next 6 months will be identified and scoped with: who is responsible to carry out the action, an estimated time frame, and an estimated cost including volunteer hours. Activities which require funding must be forecast for future budget alignment.
- The action list will be updated
- This management plan will be updated as needed and with approval from MEMT. The changes will be noted with a date of change and the adjusted management plan will be identified as a new version and dated

An approach based on bi-annual work planning and regular reviews provides MEMT with the flexibility necessary to ensure the plan remains relevant, and an ability to more readily respond to changing circumstances e.g. environmental, personnel or funding level changes. This approach also ensures that agencies and community and environmental groups will regularly review their obligations and commitments to the site. There will be a stronger emphasis on forward planning, particularly as they relate to funding sources, and important agency planning milestones such as Local and Regional Long Term Plans (LTPs).

It should also be noted that a strategic goal is to raise the profile of this Ramsar site. The importance of this to the MEMT and wider partners and interested parties is reflected in the creation of one of the activity areas being 'Community Engagement'.

Section 14: Activity Plans & Programming

Achieving the objectives of this plan will require work by many people and organisations. MEMT members worked together to identify the activities they considered important to meet those objectives.

Six specialist sub-groups were established to develop the Activity Plans:

- Fauna
- Flora
- Pest Animals
- Pest Plants
- Water Quality
- Community Engagement.

Additional activities have been placed into 'Overarching Activities affecting Manawatū Estuary', Appendix 5: Table A5.1.

The activities to achieve the objectives, set out in Section 9, are summarised in Appendix 5. The detail and any supporting documentation will be kept in separate documents and located on a centralised portal. Where appropriate, such as the species list, information will be presented on the Manawatū Estuary Trust website https://www.metrust.org.nz/research

Appendix 1: Papangaio – The history of accretion lands that formed Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary

In the early 1930s a flood protection scheme was a priority for the Ministry of Works after extensive flooding of the lower Manawatū River. The scheme focussed on the protection of pakeha farmland along the banks of the Manawatū River downstream from Shannon. The Whirokino cut was designed to prevent flooding by creating a spillway across the neck of a river loop so the river could run straighter directly out to sea.

To undertake the cut three pieces of land were to be utilised:

a) Whirokono 1 block which was owned by a European owner in a private trust. Consent was sought from the occupier of the estate, S. Jackson, who was one of the beneficial owners who was farming the land at the time. Jackson gave consent to utilise the land and have it taken under the Public Works Act.
b) Rerengaohau 2B – the registered owners in 1871 were Ihakara Tukumaru, Erua Ihakara and Ruanui Tukumaru. By the 1930s the owners were deceased. The land had been succeeded to by Naina McMillon who was a minor at the time. Consent was given by the trustee of her estate for the Whirokino cut to be undertaken.
c) Whirokino 3 – the registered owner for the block at the time was Koraiti Kiharoa who was deceased. There were no succession orders for his estate in place at the time. The district engineer at the time described the land to be "native land for which there is at present time no owner". At the time S. Jackson was utilising the land and the consent given over the Whirokino 1 block was deemed sufficient consent to take Whirokino 3 under the Public Works Act.

Although a hearing to seek compensation for the land blocks was requested in 1943, the court did not hear the case until March 1947. At the time the court was asked to waive the appearance of the native owners. The judge determined;

The valuation of these sections makes it quite apparent that the land taken [sic] is of little value, and the native owners would gain very little by the employment of a valuer on their own behalf. The land is under water and there can be no possible doubt that its value to the natives is negligible. The circumstances are quite unusual and the Court feels justified in accepting the special Government valuation as the basis for computing compensation. Compensation is assessed as follows: - In respect of Part Whirokino No 3 containing 37 perches, £1.10s. In respect of Part Te Rerengaohau No 2B containing 27a 1r 23p £40. Payment to be made to the Ikaroa District Māori Land Board and held under Sec 550/31.968

In July 1947 Public Works approved the payment of compensation of £41.10s for Part Whirokino 3 (37p) and Part Te Rerengaohau 2B (27a 1r 23p). After the cut was put in place, the remaining land at Whirokino 1 and Whirokino 3 was severed by the river and now considered "useless" by the district engineer. A subsequent deal with the owners of Whirokino 1 took place and the owner was awarded £1000 for the remainder of his block. No deal was offered for the remainder of Te Rerengaohau block, instead the Crown later acquired the block from the Māori Trust Board.

Papangaio

The forced land sale of the Papangaio Block has a number of grievances associated with it. It is a subject of a Waitangi Tribunal claim and been looked at extensively by a number of historians. The following summary is taken from these accounts and the reference documents.

Grievance issues include:

- Environmental issues that impacted the block as a direct result of the Whirokino cut that resulted in people leaving their lands
- Prior encroachments by the Foxton Harbour Board whereby the board leased out land it didn't own to holiday makers in the region
- The Crown awarded some accretion land to the endowment area without consideration or investigation that the land was Māori land
- The Crown opted to settle via legislation rather than through the Māori Land Court – meaning that appropriate investigation of interest did not take place
- The Crown opted to deal with one Solicitor who claimed to represent "some of the owners" There is no evidence that all of the owners were ever involved in the conversation. Whether the Māori Trustee was an appropriate representative for the Trustees and whether they had the appropriate interest of the owners at heart
- The monies from the sale went to the Māori Trustee and there is no evidence that the money was distributed amongst owners or how evenly it was distributed
- The encroachments over time and the land sale meant that hapū members that lived on the block were effectively forced to move away from the area that was a great significance to them.

The Papangaio blocks sit at the river mouth of the Manawatū. The title for the Papangaio block was originally vested in 78 Owners from Ngāti Turanga, Ngāti Rakau, and Ngāti Te Au. The block was then partitioned in 1923. The Papangaio J block was awarded to the original 78 owners of the Papangaio block. In 1923 it was noted that part of the block was in the river. Papangaio A – H were vested in the Ikaroa Māori Trust Board alongside the southern portion of the Papangaio J block.

The benefits that the Whirokino cut offered famers and other land owners in the upper reaches of the Manawatū were not afforded to the owners of Papangaio J. A massive flood that swept through the region in 1943 had the effect of washing out the spill way and creating a direct channel between the upper and lower parts of the loop. The cut arguably also put more of the Papangaio J block under water.

At the time the owners of Papangaio J were aware that the northern portion had a number of encroachments by Pakeha lease holders that had crept onto the block. At the time the Foxton Harbour Board had leased this land to holiday makers thinking it was part of the endowment lands. The landowners wished to resolve this trespass on their own rather than the matter being dealt with by the Ikaroa Māori Trust board.

In 1957 – the Māori Land Court recognised that the Māori Trustee had not done any reclamation work on the block and noted that the Trust was ill equipped to undertake the job. Rather than instruct or support the Trustee to carry out the reclamation work, the judge varied the Trust Deed to allow the Māori Trustee to sell the block. The Māori Land Court also claimed that this would have a detrimental effect on the value of the land. The land was then sold in October 1959 at a discounted rate for £1191.1s.

Earlier that decade there had been much conversation in the local community about whether a wharf was required. In March 1955, the Minister of Lands approved, subject to the Harbour Board being abolished, that the Foxton Beach township endowments be disposed of to the Manawatū County Council provided a 'satisfactory figure' was agreed to. The Council was to be 'allowed to develop and administer the land provided the tenants are given security of tenure'.

In 1956 JDB Joseph wrote to the minister of Māori Affairs explaining that sections of the northern portion of the block had been leased by the Harbour Board to holiday makers and up to 100 houses had been built there. He noted that the Harbour Board had leased sections and collected rent on the block. He also noted that the river was increasingly cutting off Papangaio to the southern side of the river and the accretion lands were growing on the northern side. The Māori landowners objected to these leases for a number of years but this was not attended to for a number of years. It was said that a lack of survey data was responsible for these encroachments occurring.

The Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Act 1956 had the effect of decommissioning the Harbour Board. It also allowed for the Māori Land Court to investigate title for the accretion to the Papangaio J Block. Any land that was found to be Māori land would cease to be considered as endowment land administered by the Manawatū County Council. In 1958 the County Clerk reported that there were 17 tenancies that had encroached on the Māori land block and that annual rental for the blocks ranged from £1.9s 9d to £7 and totalled £68.10s3d per annum. In the latter half of the 1950s through to the early years of the 1960s, negotiations and investigations took place to purchase the land off the original land owners.

The Crown wanted to purchase these lands for a number of reasons:

- It was seen as desirable for the Manawatū Borough Council to have full control of the emerging township rather than it being separated by a block not under their control
- The presence of Māori owned land in the middle of an emerging holiday town was seen as undesirable and might turn people away from purchasing homes in the area
- They also wanted to save the Manawatū Borough Council of some embarrassment having leased out land that they didn't own
- It was noted at the time that a Mr Simpson of Morrison, Sprat, Taylor & Co. represented "a section of Māori owners". There is also evidence that a Mr Bergin of Bergin and Cleary representing "certain other owners" took part in these negotiations - however it is uncertain whether all of the owners were ever represented throughout these negotiations

One of the biggest issues was determining how much of the accretion lands was to be awarded to the Papangaio J land owners. An original court case held in 1962 determined that one half of the old river mouth was accretion to the Papangaio J block, the other half being accretion to the endowment land. The Crown was unhappy with the original ruling and eventually appealed. The Appellate Court found in December 1962 that only the portion of the endowment area lying to the south of a line drawn from the tip of Papangaio Block due west to the sea ... [was] accretion to that block over which title should be granted to the owners of that block. This was on the basis that the legislation passed in 1908 and 1924 had previously vested some of the Papangaio J accretion land in the endowment area.

The judge at the time considered the case to be "a major one on the law of accretion." He considered himself unqualified to consider the case on his own and sought a panel of five judges to hear the case - instead of the three judges that did hear the case. It was not possible to find a further two judges and only one further judge was added.

The final piece of accretion land awarded to the landowners totalled about 72 acres. The value of the land was also contested by the Crown. The Crown was advised by their offices that if the value of the land was determined by the Court, then the Court would take into account the added value of all the illegal improvements that had been placed on the land by the holiday makers. However, if the land was to be acquired via the Public Works Act or by legislation, the price could be negotiated and the improvements would not have to be taken into account. It also meant that they did not require a meeting of the majority of owners. Mr Simpson was agreeable to this process and advised the Crown that he would take this offer back to a series of meetings with the owners. The eventual price of £20,000 was agreed to for the sale of the land and compensation for encroachments.

The Māori owners who brought the case to the court had their personal expenses deducted out of the £20,000 so the total returned to the Māori Trustee was £19,000. By this time the number of owners that succeeded the block numbered more than 300 people. If distributed evenly this would amount to £62 each. There is no evidence that the Māori Trustee ever distributed the money to the beneficial owners.

In 1968, Section 13 of the Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Act 1968 was enacted which gave the Manawatū County Council the power to sell or otherwise dispose of the land. Prior to this the Māori Owners were told that the land would not be sold but would be leased in perpetuity.

Appendix 2: The Ramsar Convention (Manawatū Estuary)

Ramsar Goals & Targets

The Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-24

Vision: "Wetlands are conserved, wisely used, restored and their benefits are recognized and valued by all."

The Fourth Ramsar Strategic plan lays out a new vision under the Convention mission, four overall goals and 19 specific targets which are designed to support the efforts of Parties, partners and other stakeholders in preventing, stopping and reversing the global decline of wetlands.

Convention on Wetlands

Ramsar

The Ramsar Mission: Conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world.

www.ramsar.org

Strategic Goal 1: Addressing the Drivers of Wetland Loss And Degradation

Human impacts on wetlands are growing. Influencing the drivers of wetland degradation and loss and the integration of the role of wetland values (monetary and non-monetary) into planning and decision making requires the development of a methodology that enables wetland resources and ecosystem benefits to be assessed so that the multiple environmental functions and benefits are understood widely within societies. Contracting Parties, the Secretariat, Regional Initiatives and IOPs will enhance their engagement with relevant stakeholders in order to diminish threats, influence trends, restore wetlands and communicate good practices.

1. Wetland benefits are featured in national/local policy strategies and plans relating to key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture, fisheries at the national and local level.
2. Water use respects wetland ecosystem needs for them to fulfil their functions and provide services at the appropriate scale inter alia at the basin level or along a coastal zone.
3. The public and private sectors have increased their efforts to apply guidelines and good practices for the wise use of water and wetlands.
4. Invasive alien species and pathways of introduction and expansion are identified and prioritized, priority invasive alien species are controlled or eradicated, and management responses are prepared and implemented to prevent their introduction and establishment.

Strategic Goal 2: Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network

Ramsar Sites constitute the largest network of officially recognized internationally important wetland areas in the world. This network constitutes the backbone of a larger network of wetlands. Parties must commit themselves to efforts to protect and effectively manage the existing Ramsar Sites and enable the full and effective participation of stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as to expanding the reach of the Convention by continuously working to add more sites and areas of wetlands recognized under the Convention.

5. The ecological character of Ramsar sites is maintained or restored, through effective planning and integrated management.
6. There is a significant increase in area, numbers and ecological connectivity in the Ramsar Site network, in particular under-represented types of wetlands including in under-represented ecoregions and Transboundary Sites.
7. Sites that are at risk of change of ecological character have threats addressed.

Strategic Goal 3: Wisely Using All Wetlands

The wise use of all wetlands requires that Parties ensure they are addressing wetlands beyond those currently included in the Ramsar Site network. This work may occur at the national, subnational, regional, and transboundary levels, including at basin level. Mainstreaming recognition of ecosystem functions, services and benefits into a wide range of sectors and with a broad array of actors will help ensure the success of this effort.

8. National wetland inventories have been initiated, completed orupdated and disseminated and used for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands.
9. The wise use of wetlands is strengthened through integrated resource management at the appropriate scale, inter alia, within a river basin or along a coastal zone.
10. The traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands and their customary use of wetland resources are documented, respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention, with a full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities at all relevant levels.
11. Wetland functions, services and benefits are widely demonstrated, documented and disseminated.
12. Restoration is in progress in degraded wetlands, with priority to wetlands that are relevant for biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods and/or climate change mitigation and adaptation.
13. Enhanced sustainability of key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries, when they affect wetlands, contributing to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods.

Operational Goal 4: Enhancing Implementation

It will be vital for the survival of wetlands and the success of the Convention for Parties to enhance implementation of the Strategic Plan. Various approaches will help strengthen the implementation of the three Strategic Goals, and ultimately of the Convention itself. They involve critical actions to be undertaken by Contracting Parties themselves, and in partnership with other Parties and other entities, in particular with regard to scientific and technical advice and guidance, resource mobilization, public awareness, visibility and capacity building. The Ramsar Secretariat will also play a vital role in raising awareness and visibility of the Convention, as well as mobilizing resources to support enhanced implementation.

14. Scientific guidance and technical methodologies at global and regional levels are developed on relevant topics and are available to policy makers and practitioners in an appropriate format and language.
15. Ramsar Regional Initiatives with the active involvement and support of the Parties in each region are reinforced and developed into effective tools to assist in the full implementation of the Convention.
16. Wetlands conservation and wise use are mainstreamed through communication, capacity development, education, participation and awareness.
17. Financial and other resources for effectively implementing the fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 from all sources are made available.
18. International cooperation is strengthened at all levels.
19. Capacity building for implementation of the Convention and the fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 is enhanced.

Criteria for Ramsar Sites

The Ramsar Convention sets out nine criteria which a wetland needs to meet before it can be included as a Ramsar site. The nine criteria are subdivided into two groups A) sites containing representative, rare or unique wetland types (criterion 1), and B) sites of international importance for conserving biological diversity (criteria 2-9). The Estuary was formally assessed for Ramsar status in 2005, and was officially listed under the Ramsar Convention in 2006 based on meeting six of the eight criteria at the time.

Table A2.1 is taken from the 2023 published Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS). It includes the criteria that the Estuary met and the justifications, as written. The Estuary met seven of the nine updated Ramsar criteria: 1,2,3,4,6,7 and 8.

Some justifications are considered under stated by members of the MEMT. For example 10 threatened plant species have been identified at the Estuary; not 2 (Criterion 2). This is likely to be rectified at the next report due in 2030.

If criteria 5 and 9 were also met at the Estuary at least 20,000 water birds would need to be regularly supported (C5) and 1% of one wetland-dependent, non-avian animal species or subspecies would have to be supported (C9).

Table A2.1. Ramsar Criteria met by the Manawatū Estuary and the justification (RIS, 2023) [2]

Criteria	Justification
A) Sites containing representative, rare or unique wetland types	
1. A wetland should be considered internationally important if it contains a representative, rare or unique example of a natural or near-natural wetland type found within the appropriate biogeographical region.	The Manawatū River Estuary is a moderate-sized estuary retaining a high degree of naturalness and diversity. It is nationally important as a feeding ground for both national and international migratory birds because it is the largest estuary in the southern half of the North Island of New Zealand. The coastal wetland complex is of high value for the diversity of wetland types and habitats it contains and the diverse range of bird species the site supports. Wetland types that occur at the site include coastal saltmarsh, intertidal mud and sand flats, tidal river channel, and sand shores/dunes. It is considered a representative site of near-natural wetland ecosystem in New Zealand. The coastal marsh herbfields and ribbonwood *Plagianthus divaricatus* ecological community is the most extensive in the region, which supports the largest population of fernbirds in the ecological district. The Estuary is noted as being one of the largest remaining natural areas and most natural and diverse estuarine wetland within the region.

Criteria	Justification
B) Sites of international importance for conserving biological diversity.	
Criteria based on species and ecological communities	
2. A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species, or threatened ecological communities.	The Estuary supports several nationally threatened and rare species of birds, fish and plants under the New Zealand Threat Classification System (Townsend et al. 2007[3]) The Ramsar site supports eight (8) freshwater fish, two (2) plant species *(NB additional to RIS 2023: 16 plant species identified, see* https://www.metrust.org.nz/vegetation) and at least ten (10) bird species that are either 'threatened' or 'at-risk' of extinction. Estuarine wetlands are mapped as naturally uncommon (rare) ecological communities within New Zealand (Williams et al. 2007[4]). Tidal flat herbfields, estuarine salt marsh, ephemeral dune and coastal marsh are present at the site.
3. A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports populations of plant and/or animal species important for maintaining the biological diversity of a particular biogeographic region	The Estuary supports the largest saltmarsh in the Manawatū region. The estuary and associated habitats supports a range of indigenous wetland plants and animals, and maintain the biological diversity of the lower North Island of New Zealand. Elsewhere, much of the native vegetation in the region has been lost or seriously impacted by conversion to agriculture. The upper reaches of the Estuary are comprised of the river channel and large areas of saltmarsh with some open ponds and channels. As human access to this area is difficult, it has little disturbance and supports large numbers of Fernbirds *Poodytes punctatus*, Australasian Bittern *Botaurus poiciloptilus* and Marsh Crake *Zapornia pusilla*. The Fernbird population is the southernmost large population of the North Island subspecies *P.p.vealeae*. The Estuary is the most important site for migratory shorebirds in the lower North Island of New Zealand, south of the Waikato and Bay of Plenty harbours. Within the region, the Estuary is the only site that provides a significant area of non-breeding and stopover habitat to wading birds and as such contributes significantly to biodiversity values. At least 95 species recorded of migratory shorebirds have been recorded at the site.

[3] Townsend, A. J., de Lange, P. J., Duffy, C. A. J., Miskelly, C. M., Molloy, J., Norton, D. A. 2007. New Zealand Threat Classification System manual. Department of Conservation, Wellington. 35 p.

[4] Williams, P. A., Wiser, S., Clarkson, B., Stanley, B. C. 2007. New Zealand's historically rare terrestrial ecosystems set in a physical and physiognomic framework. New Zealand Journal of Ecology 31(2): 119-128

Criteria	Justification
	Wintering migratory birds at the Estuary include Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* (200), Red Knot *Calidris canutus* (120), Banded Dotterel (c. 100), Wrybill *Anarhynchus frontalis* (25–30 in winter and additional birds occur on passage), Royal Spoonbill *Platelea regia* (>50). Substantial waterfowl populations also use the estuary. Gulls and terns also use the estuary during late summer and winter, with substantial numbers of White-fronted Terns *Sterna striata* (500–1000), Red-billed Gulls *Larus novaehollandiae* (>900) (NB additional to RIS 2023 *L. novaehollandiae* is now *Chroicocephalus novaeholadiae*) and Caspian Terns *Hydroprogne caspia* (up to 60)[5]
4. A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports plants and/or animals at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions.	The Site provides an important stopover for wrybills on migration between South Island breeding sites and upper North Island wintering sites. Over 100 wrybill may occur at the estuary during migration, which also functions as a drop-in site during adverse conditions. Small numbers of wrybills (25-30) also overwinter at the estuary. The site is used by waterfowl (e.g. Shoveler *Anas rhynchotis variegata*) to escape hunting pressure[6], and is a fuelling site for Arctic migrants (e.g. Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*, Red Knot *Calidris canutus*) preparing for flights of 4,000–10,000 km.
Specific criteria based on waterbirds	
6. A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird	The Estuary supports >1% of the total world population of wrybill during their migratory period (the 1% criterion equates to 45-50 birds). Over 100 birds have been recorded at the estuary on northward migration. The wrybill population is currently estimated at 5,000-5,500 (NZ Birds online 2018) and 4,500-5,000 (WPE database).

[5] A current list of bird species is kept up to date and found here: https://www.metrust.org.nz/birds

[6] Flocks of 200-300 Shoveler and New Zealand Grey Teal (*Anas gracilis*) have been seen in the estuary, particularly in the duck-shooting season (May-June). The estuary is also a shelter for wading birds in times of storms when the prevailing westerly winds hammer the coast – on one occasion 800 Wrybill used the Estuary for this purpose (>20% of the world population).

Criteria	Justification
Specific criteria based on fish	
7. A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports a significant proportion of indigenous fish subspecies, species or families, life-history stages, species interactions and/ or populations that are representative of wetland benefits and/or values and thereby contributes to global biological diversity	The Manawatū River catchment has a high diversity of indigenous freshwater fish, with a total of 17 recorded species (NZ Freshwater Fish Database (NZFFD). A large proportion (13 species) migrate to and from the ocean to the river catchment, through the estuary, and the estuary provides an important migratory pathway for them. A further 10 estuarine fish species have been recorded from the lower river and estuary (NZFFD[7]; Hicks & Bell 2003[8]; Todd et al. 2016[9]), and a variety of other estuarine crustaceans and shellfish, and coastal fishes are likely to be present in the lower estuary.
8. A wetland should be considered internationally important if it is an important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path on which fish stocks, either within the wetland or elsewhere, depend	The Estuary supports an important spawning habitat for 'whitebait' (migratory *Galaxias* species) spawning. Within New Zealand local communities go 'whitebaiting' to catch upstream migrating juveniles of the five indigenous *Galaxias* species. The Manawatū Estuary, particularly two small streams that enter the estuary (Whitebait Creek and an unnamed creek), are popular sites for this recreational fishery. Inanga *Galaxias maculatus*, one of the species that makes up the whitebait catch, spawn near the estuary, in the lower reaches of the river and tributaries. The estuary is also likely to provide spawning habitat for several other species.

[7] New Zealand Freshwater Database. https://niwa.co.nz/freshwater/nz-freshwater-fish-database

[8] Hicks, B. J., Bell, D. 2003. Electrofishing survey of the Manawatu, Whanganui, and Mokau rivers and Lake Rotorangi, Patea River. Report prepared for the Department of Conservation, Wanganui Conservancy by the Centre for Biodiversity and Ecology Research, University of Waikato, Hamilton.

[9] Todd, M., Kettles, H., Graeme, C., Sawyer, J., McEwan, A., Adams, L. 2016. Estuarine systems in the lower North Island/Te Ika-a-Māui: ranking of significance, current status and future management options. Department of Conservation, Wellington, New Zealand. 400 p.

Appendix 3: Connections to Papangaio – Te Wharangi - Manawatū Estuary

Introductions

There are many partners, organisations, individuals and agencies that are connected to the Manawatū Estuary. This is a brief introduction to the reason for their connection and the responsibilities they have towards the care of Manawatū Estuary. Hapū and Iwi associated to the Estuary, currently includes ahi kā hapū and marae of Ngāti Raukawa, and existing iwi who have associations to the Estuary: Muaūpoko and Rangitāne. Muaūpoko korero is section 4 and Rangitāne is in section 3.

Hapū of Ngāti Raukawa te au ki te Tonga – Papangaio, Te Wharangi

Section 2 offers a detailed history of Papangaio and Te Wharangi from a Ngāti Raukawa perspective. As stated in Section 3, the ongoing mana and responsibilities of Ngāti Raukawa over Papangaio and Te Wharangi are derived from historical actions and leadership, not settlements.

Tanenuiarangi Manawatū Charitable Trust.

Statutory Acknowledgements is located here:
https://www.horizons.govt.nz/HRC/media/Media/Iwi%20and%20Hapu/Rangitane-o-Manawatū-Statutory-Acknowledgements.pdf

Roles include:
- Statutory Acknowledgements and Deeds of settlement RoM Settlement Act 2016 pursuant to section 30 of the Act
- Admin Rangitāne North Island Iwi Fish Plan.
- Te Taihauauru Iwi Fish Plan
- RoM Iwi Management Plan
- Statutory Manager with DoC Ramsar signoff.
- MPI partner
- MfE Partner
- Part of Manawatū River Advisory Board RoM .
- Horizons
- MDC/HDC partner.

Muaūpoko Tribal Authority

Landowners

Landowners include private landowners that are part of the Estuary, plus surrounding landowners that include farm blocks, forestry and residents in the Foxton Beach township. Agencies also own some land at the Estuary as shown in Figure 2-S2.

Private landowners

A small part of the north eastern end of the estuary is in private ownership. This is part of the "fernbird area" identified by Ravine (1992). This land is designated as "rural" under the Horowhenua District Plan and can be used for grazing. Currently they allow limited access to conservation managers, duck shooters and interested groups. While both the District Plan and Regional Coastal Plan limit what activities landowners may undertake in this area, it is legal to graze it with stock.

Forest owners and leasees

The entire south boundary of the Estuary Ramsar Site is Crown Land under a long term lease to a private forestry company. The leasees control access to a large part of the estuary and they have fire control responsibilities which may affect small areas of shrubland on the edge of the management area. Some adverse effects of this forestry operation have been identified in terms of management of the estuary. In particular, the weed seed from both pine and coastal wattle; and potential animal pests moving across the river. Pine forests are known to extract water from catchments by lowering water tables (Cromarty and Scott, 1996).

Groups with an Interest in the Estuary

Many groups and individuals have been intimately involved with the care of the Estuary. Some groups listed are less closely affiliated with day to day activities but support and participate in activities as needed or at specified times.

Manawatū Estuary Trust

The Manawatū Estuary Trust was formed by members of The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand, Inc. and The Ornithological Society of New Zealand. It now has members from several different organisations with an interest in the Manawatū Estuary. The Trust supported the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society's application to list the Estuary under the Ramsar Convention. It has accepted responsibility for carrying out various tasks, such as public education, advocacy, participation in preparation of this management plan, coordination between public authorities, interest groups and the community, fundraising and construction of information signs.

Wildlife Foxton Trust

Wildlife Foxton Trust delivers ecological and environmental education that impacts on the Estuary, Ramsar site and Coastal Dune Reserves. They strive to fulfil four primary functions:

- to provide environmental education to interested groups, including schools throughout the region either on site at their base or in the Ramsar or dune sites
- to maintain an environmental centre in Foxton Beach highlighting NZ flora and fauna
- to assist in the implementation of this management plan
- to support native plant restoration (and weed/pest plant removal) in both the Ramsar and Coastal Dune Reserves.

Save Our River Trust (SORT)

SORT is committed to restoring and conserving Piriharakeke (the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton) and the waterways beyond.

Its journey began with a recognition of the environmental degradation caused by mismanaged earthworks in 1943, altering the natural course of the Manawatū River and impacting the well-being of the River Loop and Te Awahou (Foxton).

New Zealand Four Wheel Drive Association (NZFWDA)

The New Zealand Four Wheel Drive Association, or NZFWDA, is an incorporated society representing most of the organised recreational off-road four-wheel drive community throughout New Zealand.

Over 63 4wd clubs are affiliated to the NZFWDA, comprising some 2,300 individual members, across the Northern, Central and Southern Zones.

Amongst its main aims and principles, the NZFWDA encourages community contributions by its clubs and members. This is where they put something back into the communities that allow access for their club members. Activities include track maintenance, rubbish clean-ups, planting work parties, fundraising, transporting interest groups to remote sites, Land SAR and Civil Defence support, activities for local body summer programmes, the list goes on…

In particular the NZFWDA recognises the Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary and Foxton Beach as ecologically delicate and in need of support from all interest groups. Significant damage has been caused by illicit vehicle access that the NZFWDA is adamant must be prevented.

As such, NZFWDA takes a strong role as a member of MEMT and goes to some effort to contribute in a positive way to all its objectives, not just vehicle access.

Te Awahou Foxton Community Board

Te Awahou Foxton Community Board provides a communication path between residents of Foxton and Foxton Beach Townships and the Horowhenua District Council. This may, from time to time, relate to issues relevant to management of the estuary. For example; a representative from MEMT will ensure input about the Estuary to the Foxton and Foxton Beach Community Plan.

Foxton Beach Affiliated Groups

Local Police, recreational groups, and vehicle organisations have an influence on certain issues within the Estuary (particularly vehicle use in the dune area), without necessarily being directly involved in management. It is anticipated that these groups will be consulted from time to time.

Manawatū River Trust

The purpose of this Trust is to promote the utilisation and commercialisation of the Manawatū River and the Manawatū river Loop at Foxton.

Water Environmental Care Assn. Inc.

Its members contribute to local & nationwide campaigns such as raising awareness of local government and the general public to the pollution in our waterways by:

- Writing submissions to local government
- Writing letters to The Editor
- Promoting WECA by way of flyers and road shows
- Assisting WECA to lobby local and central government on national environmental issues.

Manawatū River Users' Advisory Group

This Advisory Group consists of a Regional Councillor, and a number of appointed members representing the various parties interested in the Manawatū River. Current members include representation from Manawatū Freshwater Anglers, Manawatū Power Boat Club, Manawatū Marine Boating Club, Jet Boating NZ, MET, and the Area Engineer.

Its purpose is to facilitate a better understanding among competing river interest groups and users of the Manawatū River and its tributaries, and provide a forum for public consultation on policy and planning issues on the Manawatū River and its tributaries being considered by the Council.

Manawatū Marine Boating Club

The Manawatū Marine Boating Club own large clubrooms on the wharf, where the boat ramp is located. They have a large membership which is active within the estuary waters: boating, sailing, fishing, and socialising at the clubrooms.

The Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society of NZ

The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand, Inc. has an interest in conservation in New Zealand. They have been an effective lobby group for many years. As well as this, members actively participate in conservation projects of many types having particular skills in bird and plant identification and conservation. They have been, and continue to be, active in advocating for protection of the Manawatū Estuary.

Ornithological Society of NZ

The Ornithological Society of New Zealand has a long history of counting, monitoring and studying birds within the estuary. Their records are the only long-term database of bird species and population trends for the estuary.

Manawatū River Leaders Accord

Kei te ora te wai, kei te ora te whenua, kei to ora te tangata
If the water is healthy, the land and the people are nourished.
Iwi/hapū, local and central government, farming, and industry leaders, Massey University and environmental and recreational advocacy groups from around the Manawatū Catchment formed the Manawatū River Leaders' Forum. They signed an Accord in 2010. The main goal of the Accord is to improve the Manawatū River, such that it sustains fish species, and is suitable for contact recreation, in balance with the social, cultural and economic activities of the catchment community.

Fish and Game NZ

Fish & Game NZ is responsible under the Wildlife Act 1953 for management of waterfowl shooting and, under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983, for the fishing of some species. The only fish species under their control which has been recorded from the estuary is brown trout. This species is not generally targeted by local fishermen. The Estuary does support many species of waterfowl that may be legally shot in season. Fish and Game monitor and regulate hunting of these species.

Statutory Agencies

Each statutory agency has legal obligations to contribute to the Estuary. These responsibilities are defined in the Acts cited for each agency from which Plans are developed.

Department of Conservation

Responsibilities: The Department of Conservation administers a 25 ha block within the Estuary (Foxton Conservation Area, Conservation Unit 70067 in Department of Conservation 1997) and a strip of land reserved from sale under Section 58 of the Land Act 1948 (Manawatū River Marginal Strip, Conservation Unit S24502 in Department of Conservation 1996) under the Conservation Act 1987, as well as the 41 hectare Foxton Harbour Local Purpose Reserve (Conservation Unit 70848 in Department of Conservation 1997).

Legislation: As a government department, the Department of Conservation (DOC) is subject to laws passed by Parliament. The Department was formed in 1987 when the Conservation Act was passed to integrate conservation management functions. This Act sets out the majority of the Department's responsibilities and roles. There is also specific legislation for such things as wildlife, reserves and national parks. The Department of Conservation administers 25 Acts of Parliament and has functions under several others. The Department of Conservation is the administering agency for the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance in New Zealand.

Horowhenua District Council

Responsibilities: The Horowhenua District Council is the territorial authority for the Manawatū Estuary. It specifically administers the sand dune area and esplanade reserves and road along the north side of the estuary. The purpose of the Horowhenua District Plan (1988) (District Plan), is to promote sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

Section 3.1 of the District Plan seeks to protect significant natural features from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. The District Plan lists the estuary as a significant natural feature.

Objective 4 of Section 3.1 charges that the council "avoid, remedy and mitigate adverse effects of activities on landscapes, natural habitats, indigenous vegetation and wetlands of ecological significance to the district". Sec 5.2 of the District Plan prescribes protection of the natural character of the coastal environment, which also includes part of the estuary. Policy 6.4 prescribes protection of native wildlife habitats, which includes the Manawatū Estuary. Section 11; Issue 27 -charges the council to take into account the effects that "activities on the surface ..... can have on intrinsic ecological or natural habitat .... values of lakes, rivers and margins". The mechanism of these requirements is both through council activities on land it directly administers and through the resource consent process for activities in other areas.

Legislation: The Horowhenua District Council operates under the Horowhenua District Plan (1998), prepared in accordance with Part V of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Horizons Regional Council

Responsibilities: The role and responsibilities of Horizons Regional Council are prescribed by the Resource Management Act 1991. The principal document detailing Horizons' approach to protecting estuary values, which include the Manawatū Estuary, is the One Plan.

Under the One Plan, the regional council is responsible for granting and monitoring of resource consents for regulating activities such as takes and discharges, and activities that impact on sand or soil stability. The One Plan also lists among the non-regulatory methods for biodiversity protection, a method for protecting and enhancing 100 of the highest priority wetlands in the region, of which the Estuary is one.

Horizons also has a regulatory role in the management of pests and weeds under the Biosecurity Act 1993 and associated National Policy Direction for pest management. In this role, Horizons could strategically plan for integrated pest management in and around the estuary, using a regulatory approach, if that was deemed appropriate by all contributing parties involved. At present, Horizons engages with partners to undertake pest control on the estuary in line with the One Plan, and not regulated under the Biosecurity Act. Horizons also maintains stopbanks and other flood protection works, and soil conservation works in the Manawatū River headwaters.

Like DOC, Horizons is a signatory to the Manawatū Leader's Accord which is a non-statutory document detailing how the leaders of community, industry, science, conservation, and resource management will work together to improve the water quality of the Manawatū.

Legislation: Resource Management Act 1991. The Manawatū River and Tributaries Navigation and Safety Bylaw 2010; read in conjunction with Marine Rule Part 91 – Navigation Safety Rule Biosecurity Act 1993

The Ministry for Primary Industries

Responsibilities: The Ministry for Primary Industries is responsible for setting sustainable catches for recreational, commercial and customary fishing. Many fish species are managed under the Quota Management System in New Zealand. They have also identified specific pest animals and pest plants that they target for control.

Legislation: The Ministry for Primary Industries is responsible for administering the Fisheries Act 1996; and the Biosecurity Act 1993.

Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research

Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research conducts science and research focused on environmental issues, opportunities and solutions through partnering with users. Projects relevant to the Manawatū Estuary have included the campaign with HRC to get coastal wattle biocontrol accepted by EPA; and taxonomy of Autetaranga *Pimelea villosa*; and making *Goodenia heenanii* a separate species to *Goodenia radicans*. *G.radicans* can now be identified as one of the few coastal native species.

Appendix 4: Legislation, Strategies and Plans

This management plan takes into consideration existing legislation, strategies and plans. National and regional strategies provide the overarching frameworks. The strategies enable operational plans to be well directed and appropriate. The legislation, strategies and plans that influence the Manawatū Estuary Management Plan are listed in Figure 5-A4.

Legislation

- Treaty of Waitangi
- Resource Management Act 1991
- Local Government Act 2002
- Conservation Act 1987
- Reserves Act 1977
- Reserves Act guide 1999
- Historic Places Act 1993
- Reserves & Other Lands Disposal Act 1968
- Harbour Boards Dry Land Endowment Re-vesting Act 1991
- Biosecurity Act 1993
- Whitebait Fishing Regulations 2021

National & Regional Strategies

- NPS: Freshwater Management 2020
- NPS: Indigenous Biodiversity 2024
- NZ Coastal Policy Statement 2010
- Parks & Reserves General Policy 2000
- Regional Plant & Animal Pest Management Strategy 2009
- Land & Riparian Management Strategy 1999
- Foxton Ecological District: survey report for protected natural areas programme 1992

Plans

- Horowhenua District Plan 2015
- Long Term Council Community Plan
- Annual Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- Ramsar Management Plan 2015 -2025 (DOC)
- Te Wharangi Holben Parade Concept Development Plan
- Foxton Beach Coastal Reserves Management Plan
- Foxton Beach/Te Wharangi Community Plan
- One Plan (HRC)

HDC Bylaws

HRC Bylaw & Rules

Community Operations day to day

Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary Management Plan

Figure 1-A1: Legislation, Strategies and Plans informing the Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary Management Plan

Four influential documents are introduced below with respect to the legislation which makes reference to the rights of Tangata Whenua (local Iwi) with regard to the management of the Estuary. 2014: The Treaty of Waitangi; The Resource Management Act 1991; National Policy Statement: Freshwater Management 2011; and National Policy Statement: Indigenous Biodiversity 2024.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is an agreement between tangata whenua (the first peoples of Aotearoa), and tangata Tiriti (all others who have come here). The Treaty of Waitangi affirmed the tino rangatiratanga (absolute sovereignty) of Māori and allowed for the establishment of kāwanatanga (governorship) by the British. The intention of the Treaty was to establish an ongoing relationship of mutual benefit, built on trust and good faith between tangata whenua and all who were to come.

- Article 1 gives the government the right to govern Aotearoa New Zealand. It allowed for kāwanatanga — a British governor in Aotearoa New Zealand and made British settlement here possible.

- Article 2 promises that hapū and rangatira will have the right to make decisions over resources and taonga which they wish to retain. It affirms the tino rangatiratanga (sovereignty) of hapū over their lands, resources and taonga (treasured possessions both tangible and intangible).

- Article 3 promises that the Crown’s obligation to New Zealand citizens is owed equally to Māori. It also says the Queen will protect Māori and ensure that they have the same access to laws and customs as the people of England.

The process of colonisation pursued by the British Crown and settler governments after the signing of te Tiriti led to it often being breached. These multiple breaches had devastating impacts on Māori communities. Colonisation saw the Crown gaining control for Pākehā by taking land and enabled the assimilation of Māori.

Treaty settlements

Treaty settlements are negotiated between Māori and the Crown. They usually include both money and cultural redress, such as the recognition of culturally important sites, reinstating Māori place names, and protecting traditional food resources.

As part of the settlement, the Crown apologises to claimants for its breaches of te Tiriti. But it has never offered complete compensation for them. Māori have made compromises, settling for a fraction of the value of what was taken. For example, it has been estimated that the monetary value of the Tainui settlement in 1995 was about 1.4 per cent of the value of the land that was taken. In spite of this, the settlements symbolise peace-making so that Māori and the Crown become partners, and move forward for the well-being of Māori, and indeed for the whole nation.

The Resource Management Act 1991

Overview

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) is noted by Senior Law specialist (Jacinta Ruru (2013) as Aotearoa New Zealand‘s pre-eminent natural resources statute. It puts forward an all-encompassing regime for the sustainable management of land, air and water. Central government retains some responsibility to influence this regime, primarily through setting national environmental standards, national policy standards and New Zealand coastal policy statements.
The RMA directs local authorities to recognise the Māori relationship with water, in formulating district and regional plan rules, and issuing resource consents. Section 6(e) mandates that all persons exercising functions and powers in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources must recognise and provide for matters of national importance, including the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with water.
Sections of the RMA relates to Māori as follows:

Section 6 - Matters of national importance
In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:

> (e) The relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga.
> (f) the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.
> (g) the protection of recognised customary activities.

Part 2 (Purpose and Principles), Sections 7 and 8
Section 7(a) of the RMA provides direction for all persons exercising functions and powers in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources. It states that they shall have particular regard to kaitiakitanga (the exercise of guardianship by Māori).
Section 8 is labelled Treaty of Waitangi, and states:
In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi).

Conclusion
Sections 6(e), 7(a) and 8 provide a strong base for Māori to voice their concerns relating to the use of freshwater. In addition, several other sections in the RMA create mandatory requirements on local authorities to listen to Māori. For example, in 2003, the RMA was amended to direct that a regional council, when preparing or changing a regional policy statement, must take into account any relevant planning document recognised by an Iwi authority, and lodged with the council, to the extent that its content has a bearing on resource management issues of the region.

Section 62(1)(b) directs that a regional policy statement must state the resource management issues of significance to Iwi authorities in the region. Moreover, since 2005, all local authorities must keep and maintain, for each Iwi and hapū within its region or district, a record of:
(a) the contact details of each Iwi authority within the region or district and any groups within the region or district that represent hapū for the purposes of this Act; and
(b) the planning documents that are recognised by each Iwi authority and lodged with the local authority; and
(c) any area of the region or district over which 1 or more Iwi or hapu exercise kaitiakitanga.
The RMA also provides for some substantial possibilities for Māori to be more actively involved in the governance of natural resources, including water. For example, the RMA empowers a local authority to transfer any one or more of its functions, powers, or duties to any Iwi authority.
The RMA also enables a local authority to make a joint management agreement with an Iwi authority and group that represents hapu for the purposes of the RMA.

NZ National Policy Statement for Freshwater 2020

Part 1: Preliminary provisions
1.3 Fundamental concept – Te Mana o te Wai
<u>Concept</u>
(1) Te Mana o te Wai is a concept that refers to the fundamental importance of water and recognises that protecting the health of freshwater protects the health and well-being of the wider environment. It protects the mauri of the wai. Te Mana o te Wai is about restoring and preserving the balance between the water, the wider environment, and the community.

(2) Te Mana o te Wai is relevant to all freshwater management and not just to the specific aspects of freshwater management referred to in this National Policy Statement.

Framework
(3) Te Mana o te Wai encompasses 6 principles relating to the roles of tangata whenua and other New Zealanders in the management of freshwater, and these principles inform this National Policy Statement and its implementation.

(4) The 6 principles are:
(a) Mana whakahaere: the power, authority, and obligations of tangata whenua to make decisions that maintain, protect, and sustain the health and well-being of, and their relationship with, freshwater

(b) Kaitiakitanga: the obligations of tangata whenua to preserve, restore, enhance, and sustainably use freshwater for the benefit of present and future generations

(c) Manaakitanga: the process by which tangata whenua show respect, generosity, and care for freshwater and for others

(d) Governance: the responsibility of those with authority for making decisions about freshwater to do so in a way that prioritises the health and well-being of freshwater now and into the future

(e) Stewardship: the obligations of all New Zealanders to manage freshwater in a way that ensures it sustains present and future generations

(f) Care and respect: the responsibility of all New Zealanders to care for freshwater in providing for the health of the nation.

(5) There is a hierarchy of obligations in Te Mana o te Wai that prioritises:
(a) first, the health and well-being of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems
(b) second, the health needs of people (such as drinking water)
(c) third, the ability of people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being, now and in the future.

Part 2: Objective and policies
Policy 1: Freshwater is managed in a way that gives effect to Te Mana o te Wai.
Policy 2: Tangata whenua are actively involved in freshwater management (including decision-making processes), and Māori freshwater values are identified and provided for.

Part 3: Implementation
Subpart 1 Approaches to implementing the National Policy Statement
3.2 Te Mana o te Wai
(1) Every regional council must engage with communities and tangata whenua to determine how Te Mana o te Wai applies to water bodies and freshwater ecosystems in the region.

(2) Every regional council must give effect to Te Mana o te Wai, and in doing so must:
(a) actively involve tangata whenua in freshwater management (including decision-making processes), as required by clause 3.4; ~~and~~

3.4 Tangata whenua involvement
(1) Every local authority must actively involve tangata whenua (to the extent they wish to be involved) in freshwater management (including decision-making processes), including in all the following:
(a) identifying the local approach to giving effect to Te Mana o te Wai
(b) making or changing regional policy statements and regional and district plans so far as they relate to freshwater management
(c) implementing the NOF (see subclause (2))
(d) developing and implementing mātauranga Māori and other monitoring.

(2) In particular, and without limiting subclause (1), for the purpose of implementing the NOF, every regional council must work collaboratively with, and enable, tangata whenua to:
(a) identify any Māori freshwater values (in addition to mahinga kai) that apply to any FMU or part of an FMU in the region; and
(b) be actively involved (to the extent they wish to be involved) in decision-making processes relating to Māori freshwater values at each subsequent step of the NOF process.

(3) Every regional council must work with tangata whenua to investigate the use of mechanisms available under the Act, to involve tangata whenua in freshwater management, such as:
(a) transfers or delegations of power under section 33 of the Act
(b) joint management agreements under section 36B of the Act
(c) mana whakahono a rohe (iwi participation arrangements) under subpart 2 of Part 5 of the Act.

(4) To avoid doubt, nothing in this National Policy Statement permits or requires a local authority to act in a manner that is, or make decisions that are, inconsistent with any relevant iwi participation legislation or any directions or visions under that legislation.

<u>**National Policy Statement – Indigenous Biodiversity 2024**</u>

Objective

- to maintain indigenous biodiversity across Aotearoa New Zealand so that there is at least no overall loss in indigenous biodiversity after the commencement date; and

to achieve this:

- through recognising the mana of Tangata Whenua as kaitiaki of indigenous biodiversity;
- by recognising people and communities, including landowners, as stewards of indigenous biodiversity;
- by protecting and restoring indigenous biodiversity as necessary to achieve the overall maintenance of indigenous biodiversity;
- while providing for the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing of people and communities now and in the future.

Policy 1: Indigenous biodiversity is managed in a way that gives effect to the decision making principles and takes into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Policy 2: Tangata Whenua exercise kaitiakitanga for indigenous biodiversity in their rohe, including through:

- managing indigenous biodiversity on their land;
- identifying and protecting indigenous species, populations and ecosystems that are taonga;
- actively participating in other decision-making about indigenous biodiversity.

Policy 3: A precautionary approach is adopted when considering adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity.

Policy 4: Indigenous biodiversity is managed to promote resilience to the effects of climate change.

Policy 5: Indigenous biodiversity is managed in an integrated way, within and across administrative boundaries.

Policy 6: Significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna are identified as SNAs using a consistent approach. 14 National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity

Policy 7: SNAs are protected by avoiding or managing adverse effects from new subdivision, use and development.

Policy 8: The importance of maintaining indigenous biodiversity outside SNAs is recognised and provided for.

Policy 9: Certain established activities are provided for within and outside SNAs.

Policy 10: Activities that contribute to New Zealand's social, economic, cultural, and environmental wellbeing are recognised and provided for as set out in this National Policy Statement.

Policy 11: Geothermal SNAs are protected at a level that reflects their vulnerability, or in accordance with any pre-existing underlying geothermal system classification.

Policy 12: Indigenous biodiversity is managed within plantation forestry while providing for plantation forestry activities.

Policy 13: Restoration of indigenous biodiversity is promoted and provided for.

Policy 14: Increased indigenous vegetation cover is promoted in both urban and nonurban environments.

Policy 15: Areas outside SNAs that support specified highly mobile fauna are identified and managed to maintain their populations across their natural range, and information and awareness of highly mobile fauna is improved.

Policy 16: Regional biodiversity strategies are developed and implemented to maintain and restore indigenous biodiversity at a landscape scale.

Policy 17: There is improved information and regular monitoring of indigenous biodiversity.

Appendix 5: Activities

This Appendix summarises the seven detailed Activity Plans resulting from development of this management plan. As the management plan is intended to be a living document, with regular reviews, changes, and general updates, these summaries as presented here are a snapshot in time.

Initially, it is natural that there are some blank details in the Activity Plans. Some are due to their timing being well in the future, some just haven't been developed fully yet.

Achieving the objectives of the management plan is fully dependent on the individuals and organisations represented on MEMT doing their bit. As long as that continues, the Activity Plans will progressively become more fully populated.

The regime set out in Section 11 provides a management oversight process to make this happen.

Table A5.0 summarises activities from the plans that will be carried out over the first three years. Responsibilities are:

- The Team Leads of each activity group are responsible for driving the activity towards the objectives.
- The Team Leads will report the outcomes and future planning at each 6 monthly meeting.
- If the Activity Group cannot achieve a task it must be escalated promptly to the MEMT chair to ensure the task is progressed. It may be either justified why it should not proceed; or an alternative approach found. An alternative approach may include sourcing funding for a person to carry out a task if a volunteer is unavailable, or for resources, or expertise needed.

Table A5.0 Summary of Commitments for 2025 to 2027

Activity and report to meeting	Responsibility	Meeting Report
Identify any discovery of cultural significance and carry out accepted protocol	All	Every meeting
Exercise rangatiratanga and manaakitanga over Papangaio and Te Wharangi	Hapū o Ngāti Raukawa	Every meeting
Identify and implement how to protect waahi tapu sites	Iwi	Every meeting
Determine with Iwi how to manage a rahui	Iwi	Every meeting
Foxton Beach Coastal Reserves Management Plan	HDC	Every meeting
Report on agency activities affecting Manawatū Estuary Include regional response pest plant actions	HRC, DOC, HDC	Every meeting
Meetings with and questions asked of; Iwi & statutory managers & experts; Recommendations made	Water Quality Group	Every meeting
Report current state, trend and planned actions	Water Quality Group	Every meeting
Establishment of any process, and its implementation that helps ensure relevant consents are complied with	Water Quality Group	Every meeting
Report back from meetings with Manawatū River Users Advisory Group; Water Protection Society; Wetland Trust	Water Quality Group	Every meeting
Website additions, Newsletters, School engagements, Community events	Community Engagement Group	Every meeting

Activity and report to meeting	Responsibility	Meeting Report
Funding applications	Community Engagement Group	Every meeting
Volunteer weekly plan	Community Engagement Group	Every meeting
Education carried out – see all Group requirements	Community Engagement Group	Every meeting
Mustelids & Rat -new traps added and data collection	Pest Animal Group	Mar each year
Integrate pest animal databases	Pest Animal Group	Mar 2025
Baseline assessment – tracking tunnel results	Pest Animal Group	Mar 2025
Zone E, estuarine edge manual weed control	Pest Plant Group	Mar each year
LIDAR Survey	Pest Plant Group	Mar 2025
Public Places Bylaw amendment	HDC	Mar 2025
Develop a programme for 2 animal species	Fauna Group	Mar 2025
Baseline monitor for 4 species	Fauna Group	Mar 2025
Develop a programme for 2 flora species	Flora Group	Mar 2025
Drone survey & Marram ID AI model	HRC	Mar 2025
Ramsar annual activity report	DOC	Sept each year
Species list changes made over year	Fauna & Flora Groups	Sept each year
Pest list review	Pest Animal Group	Sept each year
Zone S, spit & Pinewood Road Contractor weed control	HRC	Sept each year
Zone D Dunes Marram removal and follow up planting	HDC & Dune Garden Team	Sept each year
Spinifex and pingao planted post weed removal	Flora Group	Sept each year
Ramsar high level COP reporting	DOC	Sept 2025
Develop a programme for 2 additional animal species	Fauna Group	Sept 2025
Develop a programme for 2 additional flora species	Flora Group	Sept 2025
Signage plan	Community Engagement Group	Sept 2025
Pest animal webpage set up	Pest Animal Group	Mar 2026
Improvements & monitoring for 4 species	Fauna Group	March 2026 March 2027
Create new Beach Access Bylaw	HDC	Sept 2026 Sept 2027
Propagation, planting & monitoring for Dune reintroduction species	Flora Group	Sept 2026 Sept 2027
New signs planned	Community Engagement Group	Sept 2026 Sept 2027

A5.1 Overarching Activities including Agency Responsibilities

Objective: Optimise outputs from all activities by overarching activities affecting more than one project area.

Table A5.1: Overarching Activities including Agency Reporting

Activity	Responsibility	Time	Cost	Status
Identify the process to recognise Manawatū River as a person	tbd			
Exercise rangatiratanga and manaakitanga over Papangaio and Te Wharangi	Hapū o Ngāti Raukawa	Ongoing		
Identify any discovery of cultural significance and carry out accepted protocol	All	Ongoing		Findings (date)
Identify and implement how to protect waahi tapu sites	Iwi All			
Determine with Iwi how to manage a rahui	Iwi All			
Horizons Annual Budget	Horizons	July annually		
Ramsar information sheet	DOC	7 yearly due 2030		
Ramsar high level COP reporting	DOC	3 yearly 2025, 2028, 2031*		
Ramsar annual activity report	DOC	Annually		
Foxton Beach Coastal Reserves Management Plan	HDC	2025		
6 monthly meeting report on agency activities affecting Manawatū Estuary	HRC, DOC, HDC	March & September annually		
DUNE PROTECTION				
Identify and implement; protection, rehabilitation, maintenance, and development for the dunes	All	ongoing		In progress
Coordinate planning and implementation of supportive activities: • Flora - new planting, pest plants • Fauna - habitat, pest animals Community education and participation	Fauna Group Flora Group Pest Animals Group Pest Plant Group Community Engagement Group			

Plan and implement protection from: • Vehicle impacts • Walker impacts • Erosion Community education and participation	HDC Other MEMT members Community Engagement Group			Bylaw enacted Vehicle Access Management Plan agreed

* Dates received from the Ramsar Senior International Advisor and is scheduled 3 years after the last COP in November 2022.

A5.2 Fauna

Objective: Optimise habitat to support abundant populations for at least 4 species that are vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered and located at Papangaio – Te Wharangi – Manawatū Estuary

Table A5.2: Fauna

Activity	Responsibility	Time & Measures	Cost	Status
Actively collaborate with hapū and discuss activities with Iwi				
Maintain a full species list. Includes species, family and group classification. Held on www.metrust.org.nz	MET	Ongoing Annual review		2024 version completed
Promote logging on to iNaturalist and metrust website*	Community Team			See CE
Develop a programme for **at least 4 species vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species located at the Estuary.** Locations, numbers, history, research, how to improve populations.	tbd	Q4 2025 At least 4 plans prepared		Toheroa and bittern selected for research
Carry out improvements & monitoring for the selected species of interest	tbd	Q1 2026 Regular monitoring started. Habitat improvements made		

Activities for “Community engagement” from the Fauna Team

*(booklet from Manawatū Estuary Trust Like the one “Birds you might see at the Manawatū Estuary” by Terry Oliver-Ward

NOTES:

Key species of interest at the time of writing, and likely to have a programme prepared for them, are:

Toheroa, Tuna, Fern birds, Dotterel, Bittern.

It is expected that the improvement of conditions to support the selected species will support a wide range of other species at the Estuary.

A5.3 Flora

Objective: Optimise habitat to support abundant populations of at risk and threatened species at the Estuary for at least 10 plant types; with at least 2 plant types suitable for each of the 3 ecosystems: Estuarine; Xeric and Dune Wetlands

Table A5.3: Flora

Activity	Responsibility	Time & Measures	Cost	Status
Actively collaborate with hapū and discuss activities with Iwi				
Maintain a full species list	MET	Ongoing Annual review		2024 version completed
Promote logging on to iNaturalist*	Community Team			See CE
Develop a programme **for at least 4 vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species**; and at least a total of 10 plant species. Include locations, numbers, history, research, how to improve populations, reintroduction approach	tbd	Q4 2025 Plan for 10 species prepared		
Implementation				
For all Plants selected Programmes: Carry out propagation, planting & monitoring for Dune reintroduction species	tbd	Q4 2025 Monitoring and habitat improvement started		
Spinifex and pingao planted post weed removal every year	tbd	Annual Planting day		

Notes:
It is expected that the improvement of conditions to support the selected species will support a wide range of other species at the Estuary.

The species may change but at least 10 species will have a dedicated programme for their protection and enhancement. Key species of interest at the time of writing, and likely to have a programme prepared for them, are:
Estuarine Ecosystem: Sea Sedge *Carex littorosa; Oxybasis ambigua;* NZ Musk *Thyridia repens*
Xeric Dunes and Dune Wetlands: Taataraheke *Coprosma acerosa*; Half-star *Goodenia heenanii*; Sand Gunnera *Gunnera arenaria*; Autetaranga *Pimelea villosa,* Pingao *Ficinia spiralis*
Dune Wetland reintroductions: Matagouri *Discaria toumatou;* Spike sedge *Eleocharis neozealandica;* Pygmy clubrush *Isolepsis basilaris; Juncus caespiticius; Mazus novaezealandiae impolitus; Pimelea actea;* Sand tussock *Poa billardierei*

It is understood that expertise and experience in plant propagation and protection exists among local hapū, local nurseries, individuals and national individuals and will be part of the programme or invited to enable optimum outcomes.

A5.4 Pest Animals

Objective: Support a resilient indigenous species population that dominates the area through implementation of the pest animal management plan.

See: Animal Pest Control Operational Plan Manawatū Estuary 2024

Table A5.4: Pest Animals

Activity	Responsibility	Time	Cost	Status
ADMINISTRATION				
Iwi overview	Community Team/Justin	2024		
Pest animal webpage on www.metrust.org.nz and linked to WFT for traps	MET			Under construction
Create open dialogue with affected parties	Community Team			See CE
Baseline assessment – metrics	Horizons	August	Horizons time	underway
Integrate existing registers/databases Trap NZ, Predator Free, Horizons etc.	WFT - Vai	December	Volunteer hours	underway
Review pest list	MEMT	Annually Q4	Volunteer hours	2023 version completed
Amend Public Places Bylaw	HDC – Sean Community Team	2024		See CE
Create new Beach Access Bylaw	HDC	2026 – 2027		See CE
FISH				
Fish protection – plan education, develop resources	tbd	2025 Q1		Not started
Fish protection – launch education	Community Team	tbd		See CE
Fish protection – devise compliance	tbd	tbd		Not started
Fish protection – enable compliance	tbd	tbd		Not started
MUSTELIDS, RATS, POSSUMS				
Mustelids trapping Plan	Horizons	August 2024	Horizons hours	started
Mustelids trapping Implement, data collection	WFT – Dave	Start 2025 Q1	tbd	tbd

Activity	Responsibility	Time	Cost	Status
Mustelids education Plan, develop, launch	WFT – Vai	2024 Q4	Volunteer hours	started
Rats trapping & poison Implement, data collection	WFT – Dave	2024 Q4	tbd	tbd
Rats education Plan, develop, launch	WFT - Vai	tbd		Not started
Possums education Plan, develop, launch	WFT - Nola			
Possums trapping Implement, data collection	WFT - Dave			
OTHER PEST ANIMALS				
Rainbow skink education Plan, develop, launch	WFT - Vai	2024 Q4	Volunteer hours	started
South African Praying Mantis Develop programme	WFT - Peta	2024		started
Spiders Develop programme	MET - Arnim			
Wasps - paper	WFT - Dave	2025 Q3		started – see metrust.org.nz
Canada geese (monitor/guide Fish & Game)	Fish & Game			
Cats – Feral & Domestic	DOC, SPCA			
Hedgehogs	WFT - Nola			

A5.5 Pest Plants

Objective 1: To reduce or eliminate pest plants to allow native plants to take their place.
Objective 2: To ensure that where pest plants are removed suitable native plants are available to replace them before new pest plants take over again.
Objective 3: To ensure that once weeds are eliminated, regular inspections occur to remove any regrowth before it becomes a problem.

See: MEMT PEST WEEDS – Ramsar Dr. Bob Hoskins , Foxton Beach; Arnim Littek, Foxton Beach

Table A5.5: Pest Plants

Activity	Responsibility	Time	Cost	Status
LIDAR Survey	Horizons	February 2025		
Drone survey	Horizons	November 2023	\$2.5K	completed
Marram ID AI model	Horizons	December 2024	\$7.5K	started
Identify pest plant priorities	Arnim, Bob	June 2024	Volunteer hours	Completed
Identify access to fern bird flats and Waitarere Forest	Horizons	October 2024	nil	started
Identify zones, map them, identify weeds within each zone	Arnim, Bob	November 2024	Volunteer hours	started
Zone E, estuarine edge Manual weed control	Bob	Weekly	Volunteer hours	ongoing
Zone S, spit Contractor weed control	Horizons	Annually	\$25K +?	Date for 2024-25 tbd
Zone D Dunes Remove priority 1 Marram	HDC & Team	September & May annually	tbd	started
Plant areas where Marram is removed	HDC & Team Dune Garden Team	September & May annually	tbd	started
Pinewood Road control	Horizons			
Zone M marshes control	tbd			
Regional Response Control sea spurge, bone seed, old mans beard, woolly nightshade and moth plant Oversea spartina control	Horizons	all		continuous
Regional Response Control sea spurge and spartina	DOC	all		continuous
Community education -cleaning watercraft -weed seed risks	Community Team			See CE

Activity	Responsibility	Time	Cost	Status
-weed dumping management -what to plant -adjacent estuary resident responsibilities				
Community weeding, day or routine, such as for Zone E	Community Team			See CE

Activities for “Community engagement” from the Pest Plant Team

A5.6 Water Quality

Objective: To achieve a standard of healthy water quality where native species and people can thrive and prosper.

Table A5.6: Water Quality

Activity	Responsibility	Time & Measures	Cost	Status
Actively collaborate with hapū, engage with iwi & statutory managers		Start Q3 2024 Ongoing quarterly		Started
Water Quality Metrics				
Escalate any new or urgent concerns to statutory managers		As required		
Make recommendations to the statutory managers through MEMT.		As required		
Ask questions of statutory managers, and scientists to assist understanding		As required		
Report current state, trend and planned actions to MEMT Prepare report.		MEMT 6 monthly report		
Distribute report	Community	6 monthly newsletter input		
Resource Consents				
Work with statutory managers to devise process that helps ensure relevant consents are complied with		As required		
Carry out process, including reporting or escalating any infringements		As required		
Report current state, trend and planned actions to MEMT Prepare report.		MEMT 6 monthly report		
Distribute report	Community	6 monthly newsletter input		
Engage with other relevant groups				
Manawatū River Users Advisory Group		ongoing		
Water Protection Society		ongoing		
Wetland Trust		ongoing		
Report current state, trend and planned actions to MEMT Prepare report.		MEMT 6 monthly report		
Distribute report	Community	6 monthly newsletter input		

A5.7 Community Engagement

Objective: Have effective communication channels to all interested parties to ensure support is garnered and collaboration opportunities available. Include strong engagement with schools, and establish high National visibility of the Estuary as a Ramsar site.

Table A5.7: Community Engagement

Activity	Responsibility	Time	Cost	Status
COMMUNICATION				
Weave a Ngāti Raukawa perspective into our communication and incorporate the voice of the hapū of Ngāti Raukawa	Community engagement group lead with support and guidance from Ngāti Raukawa	Quarterly		
Compile and maintain lists of communication avenues: newspapers; community newsletters/groups; hapū links; agencies; radio; social media			Volunteer hours	List compiled.
Prepare document with key message points to start with: what we are doing, why we are doing it, who is involved, when it is happening and how people can be involved in the future	S. Ferguson	9/4/2024	-	completed
We will provide input and content for inclusion on the MET website on a regular basis, at least twice a year with the newsletter.		2 times per year minimum		
Active liaison, implementation and operation of the Foxton and Foxton Beach Community Plan		ongoing		
NEWSLETTER				
We will prepare and distribute a community newsletter at least twice a year. We will provide an opportunity for all groups to submit ideas and content for consideration and inclusion.	Sam and Nola	November 2024	Printing - $600/pa	In Progress

We will maintain a nominated newsletter co-ordinator	Sam and Nola	Ongoing		Ongoing
We will make the community newsletter available on the MET website, distribute via social media channels, provide printed copies in targeted locations, distribute through agency communication channels, and distribute to local groups.				First newsletter November 2024
We will identify a way to register email addresses for our newsletter and store them securely.				
AGENCY COMMS INVOLVEMENT				
We will maintain relationships with agencies (HDC, DOC, HRC) and their comms staff that are able to participate in communication to ensure effective messaging	All MEMT			ongoing
We will undertake a communication exercise following adoption of this plan, to ensure agencies within the catchment of the Manawatū River are aware of the work we are doing and our vision.				
SCHOOLS				
We will invite local Foxton and Foxton Beach schools to all of our community events.				
We will maintain annual contact with schools in Foxton and Foxton Beach.				
We will work to engage all schools within the Horowhenua to ensure they are aware of the work we are doing and the opportunities for engagement.				

SIGNAGE				
We will work at identifying suitable signage locations and content throughout the estuary area; both for information purposes and education purposes.				
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT				
Identify and maintain a contact list of people and groups that we are connected with and who are connected with us.				
EVENTS				
We will run at least three community events per year, possibilities include welcome/farewell the birds, planting events, weeding events, weed plant swap, and expert speakers				
FUNDING				
We will maintain relationships with HRC and HDC through annual plan and long term plan processes to ensure funding is sought.				
We will work to build relationships with DOC to access funding opportunities.				
We will seek external funding opportunities with at least one external funding application per year.				
RANGER				
We will work towards establishing a ranger role in 2027/2028 financial year that is based at Foxton Beach, this will include a job description, funding sources, and key outcomes / benefits.				

End of Document