

FRESHWATER IN TE TAITOKERAU



Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Te Taitokerau

Changes to freshwater management

The government has set a new national direction for how we must all look after freshwater.

It's designed to start making immediate improvements to the health of freshwater so that waterways are restored to a healthy state within a generation. It's a huge task as many of the streams, rivers and lakes in Te Taitokerau are in a poor state. If our wai (water) is unhealthy, then our harbours and estuaries are unhealthy, what happens on the whenua (land) impacts our moana (sea).

As a council, we have to implement the government's plans and as a result we're preparing a new Freshwater Plan. It's basically a set of new targets, policies and rules which will enable us to improve the health of freshwater as directed by government.



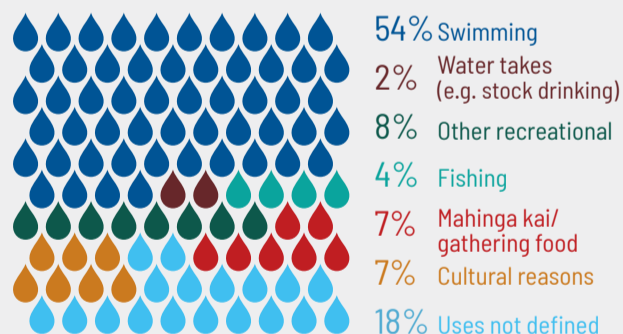
IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS NOT THE SAME KAUPAPA AS THE THREE WATERS REFORMS.

The Freshwater Plan is focused on improving the health of our rivers, lakes, wetlands and groundwater while Three Waters is about funding and managing water related infrastructure like wastewater treatment plants and drinking water supply pipelines.

WHAT YOU'VE TOLD US

We asked Northlanders what freshwater spots are important to them and what they use them for. The locations were spread across the region. Here's what you said.

HOW WE USE FRESHWATER



WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT FRESHWATER

We can't measure the improvements we're making to the state of freshwater without knowing where we are starting from and collecting data that gives us this information is one of the key things we do. Here's some of what we know:

- Most rivers (about 95%) are graded poor or very poor for E. coli (a measure of faecal contamination from humans or animals).
- Sediment is impacting fresh waterbodies, harbours and estuaries.
- About 70% of rivers and streams are in poor condition for freshwater insects (macroinvertebrates).
- Most rivers score either excellent or good against measures of nitrogen and ammonia. They also score well on measures of fish diversity and abundance.
- Some lakes have elevated nutrients. This increases the risk of algal blooms which then affects the health of native plants and animals.

THE MESSAGE IS SIMPLE - IT'S GOING TO TAKE TIME AND LARGE-SCALE CHANGE TO HOW WE CURRENTLY DO MANY THINGS TO ACHIEVE THE IMPROVEMENTS IN FRESHWATER WE NEED TO ACHIEVE.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

It's now our job to work with communities to prepare a plan for how we start to improve freshwater. We're already talking with various advisory groups, iwi authorities and hapū representatives to get different views. We'll be asking for feedback on a draft of the freshwater plan mid 2023.

... ABOUT WHAT VALUES NORTHLANDERS HOLD FOR FRESHWATER AND WHAT PEOPLE THINK IS IMPACTING THOSE VALUES.

You can use our online mapping tool to tell us what you think needs to be done differently to improve fresh water. This is a really great place to find out more up-to-date detail about everything to do with freshwater in Te Taitokerau.

WE'D LIKE FEEDBACK