

Catchment Group Story

Auckland/Tāmaki Makaurau | JULY 2024



Arapārera Community Catchment Group

Arapārera River, Kaipara Harbour Catchment

The Arapārera Catchment is an integral part of the northern Auckland region, and is characterised by its diverse landscape. It includes farmland, native forests, and various streams and rivers. It is part of the larger Kaipara Harbour catchment.

Building Resilience Together

The Arapārera Community Catchment Group was formed in response to the 2023 flooding events. It is focused on building community resilience by harnessing the importance of caring for both people and the environment. The newly formed catchment group has ambitious projects planned to address disaster response and local sedimentation challenges along the Arapārera River.

Collaborative Efforts for a Better Future

The catchment group is building collaborative relationships, with initiatives in the area including Kaipara Moana Remediation and The Forest Bridge Trust.





“You have done a wonderful job weaving both our kaupapa together to produce a holistic program that will provide an authentic place based learning opportunity for the tamariki. This programme will support their learning about how the wider landscape impacts our indigenous taonga and what we can do to look after them.

ANGELA – The Forest Bridge Trust

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Engaging the Next Generation – AHUROA SCHOOL

In Arapārerā, the catchment group is lucky to already have a local school passionate about the health of the environment and their school community. Ahuroa School is on the opposite side of the road to an accessible part of the Arapārerā River. Like many landowners in the catchment, the school was affected by the floods in 2023 and has been inspired to understand and face the impacts of sedimentation on the river and the school.



WHITEBAIT
CONNECTION

‘Wai Connection’ delivered programme

In early term two of 2024, ‘Wai Connection – Tatai Ki Te Wai’ delivered a Whitebait Connection programme to the whole school, including a field trip to the river. The programme for Ahuroa had a unique focus on learning about sedimentation and planting as a tool for mitigation. Through a collaboration with ‘Wai Connection’ and The Forest Bridge Trust, the school has been able to take immediate action by planning and implementing a school planting day on the school grounds, relieving some of the sedimentation issues for the future.



River Field Trip

Before the planting day, the school enjoyed a field trip to the river. Sixty students from years 1–8 observed life in the water and practised some water quality tests. They also engaged in a variety of fun, hands-on activities:

- » Students were amazed by the macroinvertebrates they found and the dissolved oxygen test they undertook.
- » Because the programme had a focus on sedimentation, comparisons were made between the clarity of the water as it was on the day, then added murkiness to recreate the stream after rainfall.
- » A favourite activity for many kids was the habitat assessment, led by Angela from The Forest Bridge Trust, which included spotting kōtare nests in a tree.
- » The students also found kākahi, bullies and a bioluminescent limpet as part of the stream investigation.



Planting Day

The school planting day was held the following week with the collaborative support of The Forest Bridge Trust, ‘Wai Connection’ and the Arapārerā Community Catchment Group.

428 native species were planted over three sites.

Transitioning these sites from grass lawns to diverse indigenous vegetation (their deep roots help prevent erosion) will reduce sediment-laden runoff that turned the driveway into a brown river every time it rained.



Ongoing Support & Empowerment

The programme builds a connection to the local river and wider catchment. Combining this relationship with a Kaipara Moana Remediation school planting grant has enabled the students to take meaningful action, and develop relationships that will continue into the future.

In a follow-up from the planting day, the Arapārerā Community Catchment Group and The Forest Bridge Trust will be able to support the maintenance of the new plants by coming back to support the school with weed releasing.



Next Steps

Arapārerā Community Catchment Group has exciting plans for the future, with priority for a ‘discovery phase’ where the catchment group can gather stories and information from landowners affected by flooding, identify local challenges and prioritise local solutions.



To learn more about Arapārerā Community Catchment Group, or how ‘Wai Connection – Tatai Ki Te Wai’ is supporting them, please contact:

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