

Freshwater Improvement Fund

Annual Report

2022

Organisation:	Marlborough District Council
Project name:	Taylor River Catchment Improvement Project
Deed number:	22373
Date of report:	20/02/23

Official information and privacy

Official Information Act 1982

Important: Information presented to the Minister for the Environment or the Ministry for the Environment is subject to disclosure under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). Certain information may be withheld in accordance with the grounds for withholding information under the OIA. Further information on the OIA is available at www.ombudsmen.parliament.nz.

Information held by the Minister or Ministry may have to be released under the OIA in response to a request from a member of the public (or any other body) for that information. If you wish to provide sensitive information to the Minister or Ministry which you do not want released, it is recommended you consult with the Ministry as to whether the information is necessary for the application, and whether there may be grounds in the OIA for withholding the information. For instance, if release of the information would disclose a trade secret, or be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information, then there may be grounds to withhold the information. If an OIA request relating to your application is received, the Ministry will endeavour to contact you to discuss it, and what the implications of releasing your information are.

The grounds for withholding information must always be balanced against consideration of public interest that may justify release. Although the Ministry does not give any guarantees as to whether information can be withheld under the OIA, it may be helpful to discuss OIA issues with the Ministry in advance if information provided with an application is sensitive.

Privacy Act 1993

Important: The Ministry for the Environment (Environment House, 23 Kate Sheppard Place, Wellington 6011) may collect, use, hold or disclose personal information for the purpose of assessing eligibility and suitability for Freshwater Improvement Fund funding. Individuals have the right in accordance with the Privacy Act 1993 to request access to and correction of their personal information. While the provision of personal information is not mandatory, failure to provide requested information could lead to a delay in considering the application or a decline of the same.

Introduction

This Annual Report provides the Ministry for the Environment with information about how the delivery phase of your Freshwater Improvement Fund project is going.

This report gives you the opportunity to record and communicate to interested parties, including the Ministry for the Environment, funding partners and the wider public, the progress made on your project, along with any significant risks, issues and/or health and safety matters encountered, and stakeholder engagement undertaken.

The Annual Report is a key source of information for updates to the Minister and the Ministry's website on the progress of Freshwater Improvement Fund projects. The different sections in this report serve different purposes:

- **Section A** is an opportunity for you to provide an update as to what has been achieved during the financial year and lessons learned. This is a useful recording tool for the project team and any other involved parties for assessing what has been achieved to date and what is ahead, as well as providing robust information should the project come under scrutiny.
- **Section B** is an opportunity to report against the objectives of the project as outlined in the Work Programme. The overall success of the project will be evaluated based on the achievement of objectives.
- **Section C** asks for operational details of the quarter including, funding received from external organisations, risks and issues, and health and safety. It also provides an opportunity to include any other details which you think are relevant and the Ministry should be aware of (eg, events, publications, awards).
- **Section D** provides assurance to the Ministry that you recognise the accountability for the information provided, which may be requested by interested parties beyond the Ministry.
- You are also required to update the **Budget Tracking Spreadsheet** for this financial year, and provide the agreed deliverables for any activities which have been completed during the final quarter.

Important Information

It is preferable to complete this report electronically and submit it by email.

Please discuss any problems, issues, or major changes to your project with your fund analyst before completing and submitting this report.

When your report is complete

Your report should be submitted within eight weeks of the end of the last quarter of the financial year (ie, within four weeks of 31 August, unless otherwise agreed with your fund analyst).

Email the following documents to them:

- updated budget spreadsheet
- completed summary of expenses spreadsheet
- deliverables for any activities completed in this quarter
- a copy of the independent financial audit (if agreed in the Annual Work Programme).

Alternatively, you can post these to:

Freshwater Improvement Fund
Hono Tahua – Communities & Freshwater Investments Team
Ministry for the Environment
PO Box 10362
Wellington 6143

What happens next?

Your assigned analyst will assess the report to ensure that you have met the requirements for funding as specified in your funding deed. During the review of the report and supporting documentation, further information (including evidence confirming actual expenditure) may be requested. Allow at least two weeks for the assessment to take place. Approval of the final report may also be dependent on the results of an independent audit.

Once the Ministry for the Environment is satisfied that your Annual Report meets the funding requirements, your assigned analyst will arrange the final payment of the financial year with the Ministry's finance department. At least 10 per cent of the total Freshwater Improvement Fund contribution for the year will be withheld until approval of the Annual Report by the Ministry.

SECTION A: PROJECT SNAPSHOT

1 Progress update and key facts

Reflect on the project this financial year and provide a brief description regarding the planning of the project, community engagement, trials and physical works undertaken. Please also provide any key facts and figures or any other information that the Ministry should be aware of. You may want to consider:

- work undertaken during the year, whether the project is running to timeline, costs incurred compared to the agreed budget
- successes you have had this year or particular progress you have made towards your project objectives
- risks that have appeared or challenges faced this year and ways you plan to mitigate them.

Introduction: Reflect on the project over the past year and provide a brief description of the project's overall status (is project on time, on budget, etc?).

The Taylor River Improvement Programme has now completed its final funding year. The programme aimed to deliver 55,000 m² of native riparian planting by its conclusion. To date so far 58,848 native plants have been planted over an area of 83,025m². This project has delivered well in excess of initial projections. The programme has also assisted in the fencing of 4.227km of riparian margin to protect native plantings.

The project has been hugely successful, and has been embraced by landowners who are eager to improve both water quality and biodiversity habitat on their properties. Even with these successful interventions, there are still several high-profile sediment-producing sites that were not able to be included in the programme, and many landowners who expressed an interest in engaging were unfortunately not able to be assisted before the programme reached its end.

Some landowners have contributed toward the project by installing drip irrigation and others by manual watering, as well as carrying on plantings in addition to those funded.

Key interventions completed this financial year: Describe the progress made against your Annual Work Plan, any slippage or gains made (and the reasons why).

So far this year 15,000 native plants have been purchased and planted. The unusually wet weather has been extremely beneficial and will mean the plantings are likely to have increased survival rates through the summer as soil moisture will no longer be in deficit.



Some prior plantings were damaged somewhat by recent flooding, but not significantly, and all recovered.



This planting has also included a large degree of in-fill planting in areas that were planted sparsely at the end of last season. This was planned, but will make planting areas and plant numbers look different to other years, as planting areas already existed, but more plants have been put into them.

The programme is running smoothly as it is ready to conclude, with contractors and landowners working well together to achieve the desired outcomes.



Planting cost have been noticeably higher this year compared with previous years, with contractors increasing prices to reflect higher wage costs, higher fuel and chemical costs, and increased pressures from supply chain, covid etc. This has meant that some extra maintenance work, rabbit control work or extra plantings that might have been done at the end of this season were not undertaken. The planned works have otherwise not been affected.

Lessons learned: What key lessons have you learnt whilst implementing the project over the last year? What might you do differently in the next year of the project?

Covid, weather conditions, and inflation can create issues for projects like these, but are difficult to plan for. One lesson learnt over the last season is that in certain conditions over summer in Marlborough during high temperature and particularly still days plastic plant guards can create a greenhouse effect and severely burn plants inside the guard. In future projects we would use waxed cardboard guards where these were required.

SECTION B: PROJECT PROGRESS

2 Evaluation of project objectives

Complete the table below to show how your project is tracking against the objectives identified in your Work Programme.

Objective <i>Describe the tangible results your project is trying to achieve.</i>	Key performance indicators (KPIs) <i>KPIs are concise statements about key benefits of the project and how they will be achieved.</i>	How will you monitor and evaluate the achievement of this objective? <i>How will you measure your progress and demonstrate that the objective has been achieved?</i>	Baseline information <i>Provide the baseline information for this objective (as outlined in Part 1 of your original application form)</i>	Current situation <i>Describe the current situation</i>	Expected outcome <i>What is the expected benefit from this objective being met? How does this contribute to the purpose of your project?</i>
Planting By 2023, 55,000 m ² of riparian buffer zones will have been created with landowner cooperation by riparian planting and fencing along the Taylor River	Produce baseline maps of the Taylor River catchment and current plantings. Identify and prioritise buffer zones to be created. Identified buffer zone sites are prepared for planting through a combination of fencing, willow removal and earthworks. Approximately 8,000 - 15,000 riparian plants planted per year. Develop voluntary long-term maintenance agreements with private landowners, to ensure plantings are maintained and protected in perpetuity.	Annual reports and end of project report on planting activities. Maps to identify the locations of plantings and buffer zones created. Number of maintenance agreements in place with landowners.	No current riparian buffer zones. No long-term maintenance agreements with private landowners are in place.	58,848 native plants have been planted over 80,000m ² . These plantings are now being maintained by landowners. 4,227m of fencing has been erected as part of this project to protect native plantings in riparian areas along the Taylor River and its tributaries.	The expected benefits include a reduction in stream bank erosion, long term improvements in water quality (as measured by turbidity, phosphorus, and <i>E. coli</i>), long term improvements in fish biodiversity as measured using the 'New Zealand Fish Sampling Protocols'. Landowners will take over maintenance and protection of plantings following the end of the project.

<p>Water Monitoring</p> <p>By 2023, a water monitoring programme will have been implemented to monitor rural and urban water quality in the Taylor River Catchment.</p>	<p>Commission a consultant to design the urban stormwater monitoring network.</p> <p>Complete baseline urban storm-water monitoring.</p> <p>Implement monitoring of major tributaries of Doctors Creek (rural network)</p>	<p>Regular monitoring, at targeted locations within the catchment, of the key water quality parameters.</p> <p>Results of regular monitoring reported at year-end reporting and a 5-year report on recreational water quality.</p> <p>Report annually on improvements made to the urban stormwater network.</p>	<p><i>E. coli</i> Baseline values: days over 550 cfu/100ml:</p> <p>2012-13 – 6 2013-14– 2 2014-15 – 5 2015-16 – 6 2016-17 – 5</p> <p>5 year rolling average: 4.8 days/yr</p> <p>Taylor River 5 year trend (2011-15) Baseline Values Median annual Sen slope:</p> <p>Turbidity - 0.59 NTU (mid-Opaoa)</p> <p><i>E. coli</i> - 26.11 n/100ml</p>	<p>While the current programme of funded monitoring under the programme has concluded, monitoring of the Taylor River is continuing under MDC’s State of Environment monitoring programme and urban stormwater monitoring programme. Hopefully this will show improving water quality indicators over time.</p>	<p>Improvements in all parameters towards Band B in the NPS for Freshwater Management; Human health for recreation guidelines.</p> <p>A reduction in the 5 year trend data for <i>E. coli</i> at the sites as measured by the Median annual Sen slope compared to baseline values.</p>
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3 Environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits

Ecosystem services are the benefits people obtain from ecosystems. Provide an update on the ecosystem service categories that have been enhanced or improved so far through the delivery of your project.

Ecosystem service	Description	Measure	Source of measure	Benefits realised since the commencement of this project
Sediment reduction	Reducing the amount of sediment reaching waterways	Metres of waterways fenced and planted	GIS records	Enhanced buffers around streams providing protection around streams from sediment run off.
<i>Water Quality</i>	Improving water quality	Water quality	Water quality testing	Improved water quality metrics
<i>Improved Biodiversity Outcomes</i>	Better habitat for native birds and invertebrates in riparian areas and streambeds.	Metres of habitat created through planting	GIS records	Improved biodiversity habitat
<i>Carbon sequestration</i>	Improved carbon capture and sequestration in grazing and vineyard areas	Number of native plants planted	GIS records and plant invoices	Increased number of native plants storing carbon

SECTION C: OPERATIONAL DETAILS

4 Other sources of funding

Provide information about other external funding for this project (other than that from the Freshwater Improvement Fund) that you have received this financial year. Include cash contributions from your own organisation and other co-funding listed in your Annual Work Plan. (Do not include in-kind contributions.)

If you have more than three partners or external funding sources, press the Tab key on your keyboard to add more rows to the table below.

Organisation name	Total amount requested	Total amount approved	Amount received to date	Amount paid towards activities completed this year
Marlborough District Council	84,500	\$84,500	\$75,620.21	\$75,620.21

5 Change Request Register

Provide information about the change requests made this year eg, significant changes to project activities. Describe why the change request was made and indicate whether or not they were approved by the Ministry in advance.

If you have had more than three change requests, press the Tab key on your keyboard to add more rows to the table below.

Change request date	Reason for request	Impact on project	Approved (Y/N)

6 Risk and Issues Register

Provide a brief description of the major risks realised and any newly identified risks, or project issues, that have occurred during this financial year. Where possible give an indication of the likelihood and significance of the risk and any mitigation strategies to be included in the project. Indicate whether the risk/issue is resolved or not.

Risk/issue identified during this financial year	Impact on project <i>Describe the impact the risk would have on the project if realised (for example, misunderstandings, duplication of work, incomplete work).</i>	Consequence on project <i>Minor, moderate or severe.</i>	Strategy to mitigate <i>Describe the process you will use to minimise and manage the risk (for example, if the risk is that project delivery is late, one mitigation strategy could be that the project manager monitors functional roles to ensure enough time is allocated to complete each task/activity and the project as a whole).</i>	Resolved (yes/no) <i>If a risk no longer applies, your answer here should be 'yes'; if the risk remains, your answer here should be 'no'.</i>
Damage to plantings from various sources	Increased costs of protecting and replanting	Minor	Damage comes from 4 sources- dry weather, stock damage, rabbit damage and vandalism. Methods for preventing stock and rabbit damage are in place, vandalism is random and minor. Dry weather is unpredictable but watering protocols are in place.	Yes

7 Health and safety

Have there been any health and safety incidents for your project during this financial year?

Yes No

If yes, please describe incident, the action taken and outcome, and any lessons learned. (If more than four incidents occurred, please add appropriate heading and details for these incidents.)

Incident 1:

Incident 2:

Incident 3:

Incident 4:

8 Other information

Is there any other information that you would like to share in relation to the delivery of your project? For example significant stakeholder engagement, events or awards received.

SECTION C: ANNUAL REPORT DECLARATION

Declaration

As a duly authorised representative of the organisation:

- I declare that to the best of my knowledge, the information contained in all sections of this Annual Report, or supplied in support of our annual report, is complete, true and correct.
- I declare that I have the authority to sign this Annual Report and to provide this information.
- I understand that information presented to the Minister for the Environment and Ministry for the Environment is subject to disclosure under the Official Information Act 1982.

Name

James Mills-Kelly

Position

Land Resources Advisor

Signature

By typing your name in the space provided you are electronically signing this Annual Report.



Date 20/02/2023

James Mills-Kelly