



### Aka Aka Inanga Spawning Habitat Restoration



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To reconnect the marae and community with parts of the river that we have utilised for generations, taking responsibility and playing an active role in the restoration of its health and wellbeing.

This first year project will look to undertake whitebait habitat restoration at Mr Ross Jolly's property, Mawhitiwhiti, Aka Aka. The restoration area is on the river side of a stop bank and is approx 7.5 hectares (18.5 acres). All exotic vegetation will be eradicated and the main water course is over grown with willows and other weeds will be cleared to improve tidal flows prior to planting. The areas to be planted include the main water course, tidal inlets and pond with up to 13,000 native plants. Areas not planted will be kept weed free to allow natural regeneration to occur. During the planting periods the community will be invited to support 2 x voluntary planting days, giving the opportunity for locals to reconnect with the river, create river restoration awareness and support the project.

Successful restoration of whitebait populations in the catchment requires a holistic, full lifecycle approach that considers the habitat requirements for all fish life stages (i.e. spawning, juvenile and adult). It is the Trust's desire to create a synergy with the adjacent inanga spawning habitat enhancement work under-taken by both Stu Muir and NIWA/WRRT under the auspices of the Waikato River Clean up Trust last year, as well as other future restoration projects that may occur in the area.

Mātauranga Māori and science are both key to understanding the significance and wellbeing of the river. The trust will also cater for a one day wananga held monthly, for 12 months to offer learning for 12-20 people about both these perspectives of river wellbeing. It is envisaged that learning will occur along each kaumatua, kuia and environmental organizations.

This project is funded by the Waikato River Authority (WRA 13-044)



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