

9 Waikato at Mercer Bridge East

Use these insights to develop a farm environment plan that reduces impacts on fresh water and protects what matters in your catchment. For more details or support, call 0800 800 401 or visit waikatoregion.govt.nz/farm-environment-planning.

Prioritise these actions in your farm plan to improve water quality:

- Manage livestock and run off around **critical source areas**.
- Keep stock away from waterbodies.
- Manage livestock on poorly drained soils during critical periods, consider off pasture options.
- Manage the amount and timing of fertiliser inputs.

 **Actions to include in a farm environment plan**

 **Farm menus**

Waikato at Mercer Bridge – East is one of seven catchments that flow into the internationally important Whangamarino Wetland, which is rich in native plant and bird species. Contaminants from surrounding rivers and streams degrade the wetland and Lake Waikare, which suffers toxic algal blooms and frequent health warnings. Flood control schemes, water reservoirs and pest fish, like koi carp, further disrupt natural process, making care for our waterways critical.

The Waikato River and surrounding environments hold deep cultural and spiritual significance for Waikato-Tainui, the primary iwi for this region. Waikato-Tainui regards the Waikato River as a tupuna (ancestor) that has mana (prestige) and in turn represents the mana and mauri (life force) of the tribe. Respect for te mana o te awa (the spiritual authority, protective power and prestige of the Waikato River) must be actively protected and restored. The lower Waikato wetlands were once places where taonga were stored and protected, including the koiwi (bones) of tūpuna (ancestors) who fell during the battles of Rangiriri and Meremere in 1863. Hapū and marae act as kaitiaki (guardians) at a local level to safeguard and preserve the catchment including its taonga (treasured) species ensuring they are sustained for future generations.

Taonga (treasured) species found in the Waikato at Mercer Bridge catchment

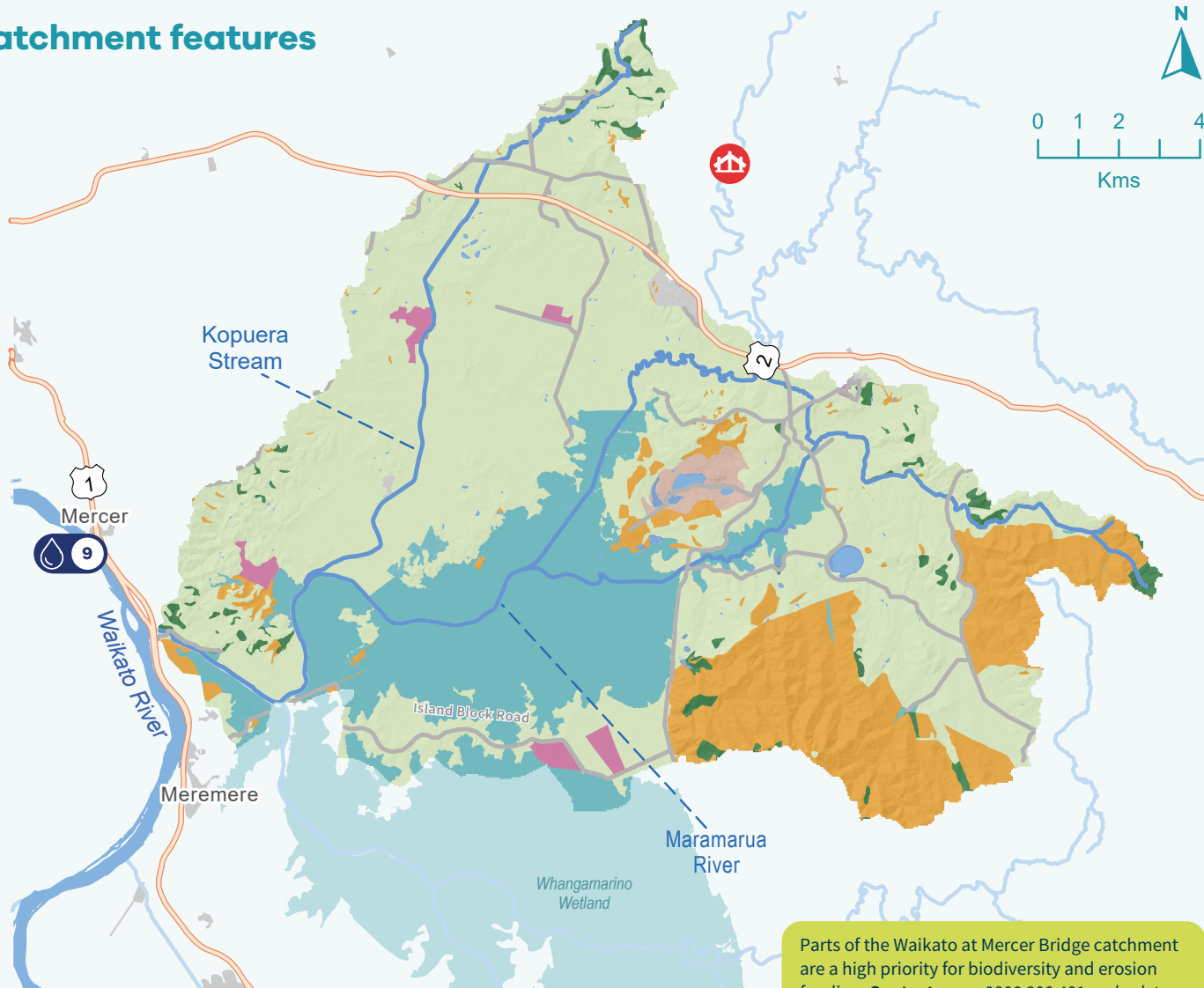


Consider your farm's location in the catchment

The table shows how landform and soil characteristics shape primary risks and contaminant losses specific to the Waikato at Mercer Bridge catchment.

Landform	Main soils + properties	Primary risks	Primary contaminant loss
Flat to undulating land (0-7 degrees) 62% of catchment	Gley: Poorly drained and clayey	Pugging if wet and soil compaction Continuing wetness limitation after drainage	<i>E. coli</i> Nitrogen
	Organic: Very poorly drained, naturally high water table	Drainage contributes to ongoing peat subsidence including land level lowering	
Rolling land (8-20 degrees) 28% of catchment	Ultic: Imperfectly drained and silty	Slight to moderate rill or sheet erosion when cultivated and pugging when wet	Sediment Phosphorus <i>E. coli</i>
	Granular: Moderately well drained and clayey		
Steep land (>20 degrees) 10% of catchment	Ultic: Imperfectly drained and silty	Moderate to high risk for soil slips	Sediment Phosphorus

Catchment features



Waikato at Mercer Bridge East: 13456ha

Exotic forest (15%)	Orchard or cropland (1%)	Roads
Native forest (2%)	Wetlands (19%)	Marae
Pasture (60%)	Waterbodies (3%)	Water quality monitoring point

Parts of the Waikato at Mercer Bridge catchment are a high priority for biodiversity and erosion funding. **Contact us** on 0800 800 401 and ask to speak to a catchment management officer to find out what funding might be available for you.

The national land cover database (LCDB, version 6) was used to define land cover in this catchment.

Water quality improvement for the four contaminants

This diagram shows the level of collective effort needed to positively impact water quality in the Waikato at Mercer Bridge catchment and further downstream. Upstream land activities strongly influence water quality in this catchment, which is part of the Waikato River's main stem. Focus on best practices within your farm and catchment, while keeping your neighbours in mind.

