

Protecting Tapu

Flood protection

Flood protection reduces the likelihood of floods impacting on our communities. It safeguards lives and property, enables use of land, and protects services such as water supply and power. However, some people have no idea that flooding was an issue in the past, or even know they are protected by schemes.



Why was the scheme built?

In response to the severe floods generated by the ‘weather bomb’ of 2002, Waikato Regional Council established the Peninsula Project to address river and catchment issues. Tapu was a community identified as having a very high risk to life and property, and the scheme was constructed in 2009 with funds from Thames-Coromandel District Council.

What’s in this scheme?

The scheme primarily protects the campground. An overflow spillway channel about 160 metres long takes excess flow from the Tapu River around the campground rather than across the campground. The spillway is bordered on its western side by a timber floodwall structure designed to the 1% AEP flood level (the equivalent of a one in 100 year event) and a 0.5 metre freeboard. During major flood events, sandbags may be required across State Highway 25 to ensure overflows are directed into the overflow channel and prevent floodwaters from flowing south down the state highway. The lower terrace of the campground along the stream side has been raised above the flood level with 0.5 metre freeboard. This was done by constructing a stopbank 15-20 metres from the riverbank and infilling behind it.

The scheme was handed to Thames-Coromandel District Council to maintain. The main channel of the Tapu River is monitored and periodically maintained by Waikato Regional Council to remove accumulated sediment and debris. This work maintains the capacity of the Tapu River and reduces the risk to adjacent land.

Scheme review

Waikato Regional Council had proposed a complete flood protection scheme to protect other at-risk portions of the community up-stream (not just the campground), however, the community did not wish to progress with this proposal at the time. If at some point in the future the community decides it requires additional protection, and is able to fund the works, then the scheme can be reviewed and completed if practicable.

Residual risk

This is a river flood risk that exists due to the potential for greater-than-design flood events to occur. Residual flood risk applies to the Tapu community from factors such as the incomplete nature of the works, a greater than design flood event, the impact of debris during a flood event and any obstructions which may impact on the flood scheme and its service level.

River management and flood response

Remedial works from the Queen’s Birthday and July 2020 flood events have continued, predominantly across the east coast. Usual river management and maintenance has also continued, including keeping some stream mouths open and maintaining flood schemes.

Please call us if any river management work is required on your property and to find out how we can help.



Tree layering along the Kaimarama River helps protect the bank from erosion.



A rock revetment put in to protect a section of the Wahitapu Stream bank from eroding.

To find out more about flood protection in the Coromandel area visit waikatoregion.govt.nz/integrated-catchment-management/asset-management.