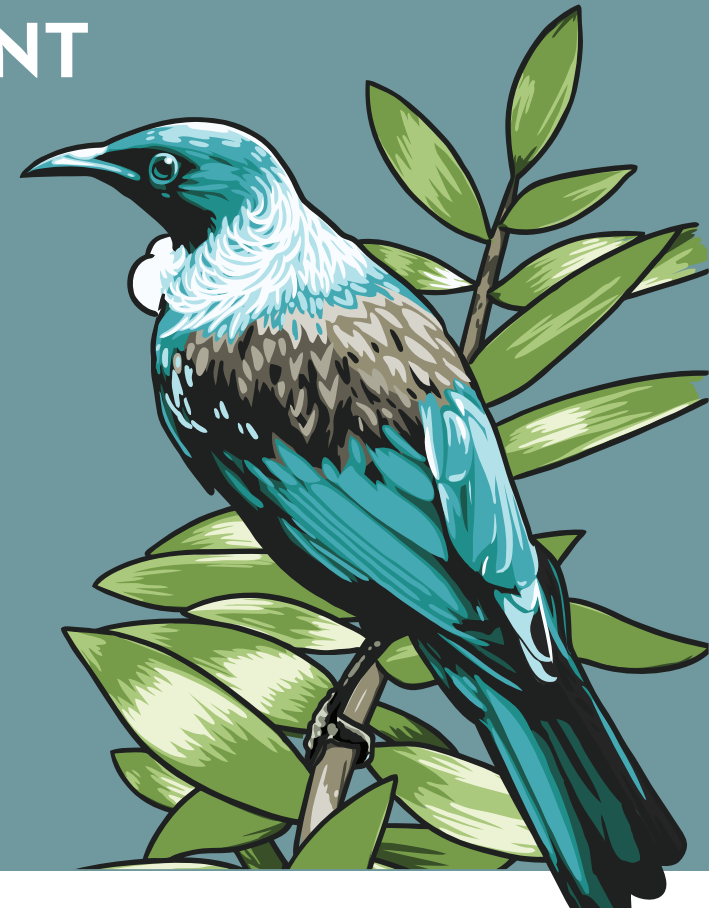


# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

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# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

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## OVERVIEW

The natural environment of the Western Bay is one of our most valuable assets covering 212,000 hectares of coastal, rural and urban areas. The land of the Western Bay of Plenty faces north-east to the sea. To the West are the rugged bush-covered Kaimai ranges. Numerous streams drain the Kaimais, flowing down through the hills and coastal lowlands into the swampy estuaries and mudflats of the Tauranga Harbour.

The Kaituna River drains the lakes of Rotorua and Rotoiti into the Maketu Estuary and out to sea, while smaller streams drain the western district into the Tauranga Harbour.

Matakana Island forms a natural barrier between Tauranga Harbour and the Pacific Ocean.

From our beaches and harbours to our wetlands and forests, all are recognised by our communities, Tangata Whenua and visitors as important resources which should be protected and enhanced.

The quality of the natural environment is directly related to people's quality of life and the success of many commercial activities is reliant on resources such as water and soils. Population growth and economic development put pressure on the sustainability of the natural environment. Pressure for the expansion of urban areas affects the natural ecosystems of both the land and sea. Issues such as environmental pollution, waste generation and management, heritage protection and preservation of indigenous wildlife all require consideration as our District grows and develops.

We acknowledge our responsibilities towards the environment and take a sustainable approach towards environmental protection and enhancement in order that future generations can continue to appreciate what we enjoy today.

Much of our work affects the natural environment. We have statutory obligations under the Local Government Act 2002 and Resource Management Act 1991 to control the effects of land use on the environment including natural hazards and indigenous biodiversity. We do this through planning and resource consents and our role in providing infrastructure; for example water, sewerage and roads, which potentially impact on many elements of the environment. It is essential therefore that we take a sustainable approach in order to recognise and, where necessary, minimise the impacts of projects on the environment.

While our work spans regulatory activities such as District Plan preparation, infrastructure development and recreation and leisure planning, it is important to recognise that our role is broader than regulation.

We understand the value of a wider commitment to the natural environment and continue to see the benefits of environmental education, provision of environmental information and support for environmental projects and groups within our communities. Where human activities affect the environment we are keen to support initiatives which seek to offset these negative impacts, understanding that the timeframe for environmental restoration projects is often long term.

The natural environment within our District continues to be impacted by both natural and manmade events. The rise in sea levels and coastal erosion are significant issues in our District and across the wider sub-region. Landslips around the harbour basin have affected many of our communities and there is a need for us to understand the longer term geotechnical situation within these areas.

In our role as one of a range of organisations we continue seeking to improve and enhance the natural environment, in particular through our close relationship with the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, which also focuses on environmental projects and managing the effects of people's use of freshwater, land, air and coastal water. We will continue to actively cooperate and support these organisations in order to ensure the sustainability of our natural environment into the future.

Activities that are provided within the Natural Environment Strategy include:

- Environmental education programmes and initiatives delivered mostly through service delivery contracts with Wild About New Zealand and Coastcare
- Support for community based environmental projects provided by our Environmental Development Officer who helps communities to realise their capacity to drive and implement environmental projects
- Fencing subsidies to encourage the protection of important ecological areas on private land
- A small fund that can be used to support projects or initiatives that enhance the quality of the environment.

## WHAT WE PROVIDE



### EDUCATION PROGRAMMES & INITIATIVES

Support for  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICE DELIVERY  
PROVIDERS**

**FENCING SUBSIDIES**  
*(protected bush lots)*



**COMMUNITY  
GROUP SUPPORT**

**LIAISON WITH THE  
REGIONAL COUNCIL  
AND PARTNERS**  
*with a focus on environmental issues*

## WHY WE PROVIDE IT

### OUR COMMUNITY OUTCOME

Areas of our natural environment with important environmental, cultural and heritage values are protected.

### OUR GOALS

- Support the provision of environmental education and information across our District.
- Support community based environmental projects.

## HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR COMMUNITY OUTCOME

GOAL	OUR APPROACH	OUR ROLE
Support the provision of environmental education and information across our District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaborate with environmental protection agencies to support the development of environmental education initiatives for community environment care groups.</li><li>• Work with other agencies, in particular the Bay of Plenty Regional Council to provide accessible, user-friendly environmental information.</li></ul>	Partner/Facilitator
Support community based environmental projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support the community to implement environmental projects recognised in Community Plans.</li><li>• Acknowledge and recognise outstanding contributions towards environmental enhancement.</li><li>• Liaise with other organisations to develop and manage environmental projects within our District.</li><li>• Offer limited financial support to projects or initiatives which contribute towards environmental enhancement.</li><li>• Use incentives to encourage legal protection of important ecological areas, for example fencing subsidies.</li></ul>	Facilitator

## WHAT WE ARE PLANNING TO DO

All information from 2017- 2025 includes an adjustment for inflation.

PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT NAME	\$'000									
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
151501	Fencing Subsidies	52	53	54	56	57	59	61	63	65	67
151502	Fencing Subsidies - Ecological fee funded	21	22	22	23	23	24	25	26	26	27
306902	Environmental Monitoring of Protection Lots	25	26	26	27	28	29	29	30	32	33
252302	Ecology Community Services Contract	47	48	49	51	52	54	55	57	59	61
252303	Materials - Volunteer Support	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6
306401	Natural Environment Support	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	7
311801	Ecological Development Impact Fees - Enhancement Planting	17	17	17	18	18	19	19	20	21	22
311802	Ecological Development Impact Fees - Associated Works	10	10	11	11	11	11	12	12	13	13
311804	Ecological Development Impact Fees - Education	8	8	8	8	8	9	9	9	9	10
311805	Ecological Development Impact Fees - Monitoring	27	28	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
311807	Ecological Development Impact Fees - Maketu Biodiversity Development Plan	4	4	4	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
311808	Ecological Development Impact Fees - Pukehina Biodiversity Development Plan	7	7	7	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
311809	Ecological Development Impact Fees Newdicks Biodiversity Development Plan	11	11	11	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
162401	Compensation for Esplanade Strips	10	10	11	11	11	11	12	12	13	13
244602	Coastcare Community Services Contract	15	15	16	16	17	17	18	18	19	20

PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT NAME	\$'000									
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
244606	Coastcare Materials	15	15	16	16	17	17	18	18	19	20
302302	Pukehina Beach Refurbishment	15	15	16	16	17	17	18	18	19	20

## MAJOR PROJECTS PLANNED FOR 2015 - 2025

- Council intends to fulfil our roles in the planned Kaituna river diversion and work closely with Regional Council.
- Council has approved \$50,000 to be paid to the Otanewainuku Kiwi Trust over the next three years for monitoring expenses.
- For the high achieving environmental groups, there is a current trend towards formally established 5 year Management Plans and Council is assessing sustainable funding options to continue supporting these in the future. The plans usually contain some percentage of project management expenses.
- Continued financial support (approx. \$70,000 pa) for Regional Councils remnant land and riparian protection schemes.

## HOW OUR PLANS HAVE CHANGED

The timing and costs of some of our projects have been updated since we adopted our 2012 - 2022 Long Term Plan (LTP).

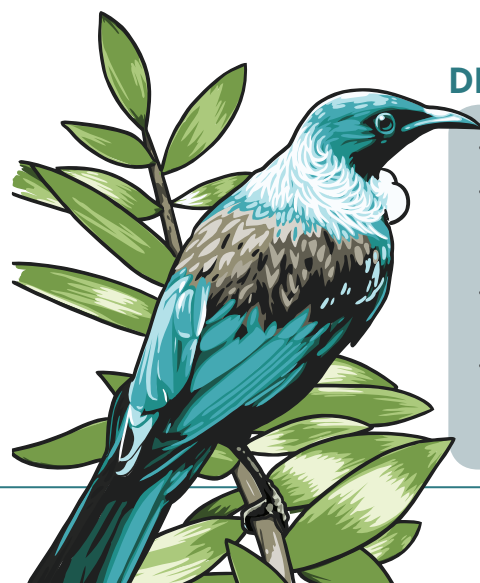
To see how our plans have changed click [here](#) for the complete list of the projects/programmes that have been revised or alternatively visit our website [www.westernbay.govt.nz](http://www.westernbay.govt.nz).

## HOW WE WILL TRACK PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR GOALS

### OUTCOME

Areas of our natural environment with important environmental, cultural and heritage values are protected

GOAL	WE'LL KNOW WE'RE MEETING OUR GOAL IF	ACTUAL	TARGET				
		2014	2016	2017	2018	2019 -21	2022 -25
Support the provision of environmental education and information across our District.	Number of protection lots monitored to ensure compliance with covenants.	NEW	≥40	≥40	≥40	≥40	≥40
Support community-based environmental projects.	<p>Percentage of residents surveyed who perceive the environmental attributes monitored have improved or being maintained.</p> <p><i>Please note: the environmental features monitored include the quality of streams and rivers, harbours and estuaries, air quality, the amount of noxious weeds, protection of historic places, general level of cleanliness and the amount and quality of native plants and animals.</i></p>	40.6%	≥40%	≥40%	≥40%	≥40%	≥40%
	Annual number of training initiatives supported.	NEW	≥5	≥5	≥5	≥5	≥5



### DID YOU KNOW...

- At the start of 2015 there were 39 environmental care groups working within our District.
- One of these groups, the Uretara Estuary Managers, have won a national Green Ribbon Award for their work and are the only group actively and successfully working with landowners to restore ecological values to an entire catchment under their Catchment Guardianship Scheme.
- The more successful groups are turning over a minimum of approximately \$60-\$70,000 each year.
- In the last decade Kiwi and Kokako have been translocated back into the District by the Otanewainuku Kiwi Trust and more are in progress. The Aongatete Forest Restoration Trust have applied to reintroduce Weka as well as having discovered a small population of Rifleman.

## HOW WE WILL TRACK PROGRESS - LEVELS OF SERVICE

WHAT WE PROVIDE	WE'LL KNOW WE'RE MEETING THE SERVICE IF	ACTUAL	TARGET				
		2014	2016	2017	2018	2019 -21	2022 -25
Facilitate and support community involvement in protecting and enhancing the natural environment.	Percentage of environmental groups that Council actively supports.	54%	≥50%	≥50%	≥50%	≥50%	≥50%
	Number of individual landowners actively supported to protect remnant bush and riparian zones.	57	≥50	≥50	≥50	≥45	≥40

## KEY ASSUMPTIONS

ASSUMPTION	DESCRIPTION	RISK
Population growth impact	Population growth and development occurs at a rate and is managed in a way that our natural environment can adapt to change and absorb the impact of human activities.	If we inaccurately forecast the rates of growth and development in our District our natural environment will be unable to cope and will be adversely affected.
Fencing grants	We will continue to contribute funds to ecological protection programmes facilitated by the Bay of Plenty Regional Council; these are Biodiversity Management Plans and Riparian Management Plans.	If fencing grants are no longer offered remaining stream, wetland and bush areas may be compromised. Costs of restoration are likely to be high.
Working in partnership	It is assumed that our partnerships with other agencies in the region to co-operate with and provide programmes will continue as at present.	If partnership arrangements are varied, costs of programme provision may increase or services may no longer be able to be provided.
Rising sea levels/frequent severe weather events	An integrated, multi-agency response to the effects of rising sea levels will be implemented to address land stability and coastal erosion issues across our District.	If an integrated, multi-agency approach is not taken, land instability and coastal erosion issues may remain unresolved and the costs of land remediation may increase.



## SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF PROVIDING THIS ACTIVITY

WELL-BEING	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	HOW WE ARE ADDRESSING THESE EFFECTS
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Provides environmental education which is recognised as one of the most valuable methods of supporting the natural environment.</li> <li>+ The natural environment is a highly valued community asset. Everyone benefits from an enhanced natural environment.</li> <li>+ Residents and visitors use the natural environment as a community resource and for opportunities to socialise.</li> <li>+ Engagement of community members to create environmental community groups provides both social and environmental enhancement outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There may be some community environmental groups who consider our work with the natural environment to be inappropriate (possibly by location or by method of remediation/enhancement).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We focus on education as a means of helping communities understand why we do this work, for example by targeting schools. Research indicates that developing an awareness of environmental sustainability early in life means that practices/understanding are embedded and often practiced in later years.</li> <li>• Using signage as a means of 'putting the message across'.</li> </ul>
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Helps support habitats for native flora and fauna.</li> <li>+ Helps to ensure that our use of the natural environment for farming practices, etc is more sustainable into the future.</li> <li>+ Helps to sustain and enhance biodiversity within our District.</li> <li>+ Contributes to landscape character and visual amenity.</li> <li>+ Can be used to manage or mitigate natural hazards and the predicted impact of climate change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There may be some members of the community who hold differing views on the methods by which we seek to improve our natural environment, for example clearing mangroves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We work with communities, landowners and environmental groups to provide education and support regarding the work we are undertaking.</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ A high quality natural environment is vital for continued commercial success across a range of businesses reliant on natural resources.</li> <li>+ Provision of funding support is a vital tool in ensuring the establishment and ongoing support for these environmental protection and enhancement projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Environmental restoration and protection projects may be perceived as impeding economic progress, for example land development.</li> <li>- Our work may initiate projects which will require financial support long term. Groups which are unable to manage themselves effectively in the future may request further financial support at a later date.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We work with commercial businesses to help educate them in terms of both regulatory provisions and environmental best practice.</li> <li>• We support groups and provide long term advice about managing projects and sourcing long term funding.</li> </ul>
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ The natural environment is a valued and significant cultural asset.</li> <li>+ Protection and enhancement of the natural environment and cultural sites supports local identity.</li> <li>+ Fosters respect for the cultural traditions and heritage of an area/environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Risk of cultural sites being seen as less important.</li> <li>- Risk of the mauri or spiritual significance of a cultural site being diminished.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that staff have access to relevant information and are appropriately equipped with the knowledge and skills to share information relating to the cultural significance of our natural environment.</li> </ul>

## SUMMARY FINANCIAL FORECAST

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

All information from 2015-2027 includes an annual adjustment for inflation

FOR THE YEARS ENDED 30 JUNE	ACTUAL	BUDGET	FORECAST									
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000									
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Analysis of expenditure by activity</b>												
Environment protection grants	108	82	101	104	107	109	112	116	119	123	128	132
Natural environment support	248	159	235	240	242	248	227	231	238	243	249	257
Coastcare	37	55	55	56	58	59	61	63	65	67	69	72
Land drainage	-	-	299	307	316	324	333	344	354	366	380	392
<b>Total operating expenditure</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>853</b>
<b>Analysis of expenditure by class</b>												
Direct costs	356	258	639	654	667	683	677	695	715	737	761	786
Overhead costs	34	37	45	48	51	50	51	55	54	56	61	59
Depreciation	3	1	7	5	4	7	6	5	8	6	5	8
<b>Total operating expenditure</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>853</b>
<b>Revenue</b>												
Targeted rates	15	15	313	320	329	338	347	357	369	381	394	408
Financial contributions	93	108	111	184	194	206	240	250	265	273	283	293
Other income	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>701</b>
<b>Net cost of service - surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>(284)</b>	<b>(173)</b>	<b>(267)</b>	<b>(202)</b>	<b>(200)</b>	<b>(197)</b>	<b>(147)</b>	<b>(147)</b>	<b>(143)</b>	<b>(144)</b>	<b>(149)</b>	<b>(152)</b>
<b>Capital expenditure</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total other funding required</b>	<b>(284)</b>	<b>(173)</b>	<b>(267)</b>	<b>(202)</b>	<b>(200)</b>	<b>(197)</b>	<b>(147)</b>	<b>(147)</b>	<b>(143)</b>	<b>(144)</b>	<b>(149)</b>	<b>(152)</b>
<b>Other funding provided by</b>												
General rate	103	142	130	132	131	134	134	136	140	141	144	148
Environmental protection rate	30	30	45	46	47	48	50	51	53	55	56	59
Reserves and future surpluses	151	1	92	24	21	14	(37)	(40)	(49)	(51)	(51)	(55)
<b>Total other funding</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>152</b>

## WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

#### COMMUNITY OUTCOME

Areas of our natural environment with important environmental, cultural and heritage values are protected.

#### GOALS

- Support the provision of environmental education and information across our District.
- Support community based environmental projects.

#### DISCUSSION / RATIONALE

##### Natural environment support

(Local environmental officer and service delivery contracts).

The community as a whole benefits from activities to protect and enhance the environment. Valuable environmental features are preserved for future generations. Individuals take part in community education and facilitation activities but even those that do not participate benefit from the results.

Public and private land owners adjoining areas where remedial work has occurred may gain increased amenity value to their properties.

Actions that result in increased expenditure on this activity include:

- Land owner neglect, lack of pest control
- Growth and subdivision alters the natural environment and increases the need to protect ecological features that remain.

##### Natural environment incentives

The public benefits from fencing of ecological areas from farming activities in that biodiversity or valuable environmental features are preserved.

Fencing subsidies can assist farming activities by containing stock and helping to pay for fencing.

Council's incentivisation policy is designed to provide encouragement to individuals to protect the environment so it is difficult to allocate to particular ratepayers the private benefit share of costs.

There is a need to recognise the work of volunteers in reducing our costs for this activity.

Intergenerational benefits include:

- Protection and enhancement will provide health and amenity value
- Fencing ecological features will protect them for future generations
- Growth and subdivision will increase the need to protect ecological features that remain.

##### Waihi Land Drainage

Private owned drainage system which services low lying farmland in the Pukehina area.

#### FUNDING APPROACH

Ecological financial contributions fund:

- 80% of the cost of fencing grants
- 100% environmental education service delivery contract
- 100% regional biodiversity forum grants
- Compensation for esplanade reserves.

Environmental protection rate funds:

- 20% of the costs of fencing grants
- 100% of the community environmental programme.

Recreation and leisure financial contributions fund:

- 50% of Council's contribution to the Coast Care programme.

General rates fund:

- 50% of Council's contribution the Coast Care programme
- The Community Participation programme
- Rates remission and other incentives not funded by recreation and leisure financial contributions.

In addition, for specific projects targeted rates are used for:

- Pukehina Beach Coastal side of Pukehina Parade for 80% of the grant to Pukehina Ratepayers Association for the costs of the sand relocation project
- Remaining properties in Pukehina Beach for the remaining 20% of the grant to Pukehina Ratepayers Association for the sand relocation project.

Targeted rate to properties receiving a direct benefit from the drainage system.

## Funding sources - Natural environment 2015/16

