

PROJECT MAITAI/MAHITAHĪ – MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO OUR RIVER

Now at the end of its second year, Project Maitai/Mahitahi is starting to have a visible impact on the river catchment and its flora and fauna.

The focus has been on river health issues such as the numbers and types of native fish and macro-invertebrates in the river, gravel and fine sediment management, toxic and non-toxic algae blooms, *E.coli* levels at swimming holes, in-stream and streamside habitat, and urban pollution including petrochemicals, heavy metals and litter.

Some of the key achievements so far include:

- Extension to the inanga spawning habitat and signage at Shakespeare Walk
- Remediation of the ford at the Waahi Taakaro Golf Course to allow fish passage
- Installation of bio-filtration swales and rain gardens at Rutherford Park to treat carpark run-off
- Improved fish habitat in Pipers Reserve Stream and York Stream
- Fish ladders installed and monitored at Maitai Reservoir spillway, South Branch intake weir, throughout York Stream and at the Brook Dam.
- Five central city wastewater leaks located and fixed, with ongoing investigation

- A gate installed at Victory School to allow students access to York Stream for stream care activities
- Signage about toxic algae installed at key locations
- Streamside plantings at eight sites.
- Changes to the ways river verges are mowed to improve fish habitat on the stream edge
- Changes to industry car washing and sump maintenance practices in the Saltwater Creek catchment
- Adoption of a section of the Maitai Riverbank by the Friends of the Maitai
- Wakatu Rotary group's Saltwater Creek clean-ups
- Adoption of a section of Brook Stream by Nelson Central School
- Victory Primary School adoption of York Stream in their school grounds
- Development and publication of Against the Flow: the Maitai/Mahitahi River Game

If you would like to know more detail about any of the projects please check out the Project Maitai/Mahitahi quarterly newsletter at nelson.govt.nz or contact Environmental Programmes Adviser Jo Martin on 03 545 8728



Cawthron staff and students studying toxic algae in the Maitai River



New planting at Maitai Camp



Victory School student presentation to Council group

BROOK STREAM GETS A HELPING HAND



Nelson Central School cleaning up the Brook

Students at Nelson Central School, have been working to improve the Brook Stream banks just outside the school boundary.

The children have been learning about caring for their local stream, through identification of invasive weed species, litter collection, and planting of over 400 native plants that will help shade the stream. Their efforts will improve

the quality of this urban waterway, and enhance it as a habitat for native fish and other wildlife.

The collaborative project, delivered through Project Maitai/Mahitahi, was organised by Lynley Walters from Nelson Central School and school parent Liz Gavin from Canopy Landscape Architects, who gifted a landscape vision for the stream to the project.

Additional help was generously provided by senior students from both Nelson Boys College and Nayland College, who helped with ground preparation and planting.

By taking part in this project, the students have learned how to keep streams healthy, the value of riparian plants, and the wildlife that can survive and thrive as a result.

ALMOND TREE FLAT FORD SURVEY INITIAL RESULTS

Project Maitai recently undertook a survey of people who use Almond Tree Flat ford, to assist with a decision on future options for the ford and access. The ford is the last remaining fish barrier in the river.

Overall 138 people took part in the survey. 52 percent favoured removing the ford and replacing it with an alternative crossing nearby which does not impede fish passage, 23 percent favoured ford removal with no need for

an alternative access. 16 percent wanted the ford to be kept as it is, 5 percent had no opinion and 3 percent thought that Council should adopt the lowest cost option.

Council would like to thank everyone who took the time to fill in the survey. Once the results and comments have been fully analysed, officers will make a recommendation to Council about the future of the ford.

THE YEAR AHEAD

Project Maitai has a full work programme planned for 2016/17, with four of the current projects continuing: Riparian Planting, Maitai Fords, Groom Creek Wetland and the Cyanobacteria Action Plan.

There will also be a 'York Stream Focus' project and a new project focused on reducing the impact of stormwater runoff on urban waterways. This will continue work done this year on Saltwater Creek and will be delivered in partnership with the Nelson Nature Urban Waterways project for a whole of Nelson approach.



Saltwater Creek clean up

Thank you

Project Maitai/Mahitahi would not be possible without the support of Nelson City Council, the project sponsor Clare Barton, the Friends of the Maitai, Iwi representatives, the Cawthron Institute, and the Project Maitai/Mahitahi stakeholder group. We'd also like to acknowledge all the Council officers, contractors and community volunteers who support the programme with their passion and enthusiasm.