

Kaipātiki Local Board
90 Bentley Ave, Glenfield
Auckland

Clean Water Consultation

To: Dave Allen – Principal Analyst
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The Kaipātiki Local Board thanks you for the attention on the issue of fresh water and welcomes the opportunity to input into Council's submission on central government's Clean Water Package.

In Kaipātiki it is streams, not rivers, that dominate as a special feature and are treasured by our community. Yet streams are ignored by the proposed standards. This is a pressing issue because we are witnessing ecosystem collapse in many of our urban streams.

Local residents report pollution events, sedimentation, sewage and stormwater overflows impacting on these waterways on a weekly basis. The frequency of incidents points to a systemic failure in effective monitoring, mitigation and enforcement. These are not one-off events.

Of note, residents report problems with sewage and stormwater infrastructure and poor maintenance leading to blockages. There is, at times, a lack of follow up and the response to incidents is often too slow. Local people would also like to see a more proactive approach through targeted monitoring, rather than a solely reactive approach to complaints of non-compliance.

Kaipātiki streams traditionally harbour Banded Kokopu, long and short-finned eels, freshwater crayfish and invertebrates. Some also contain valuable fish spawning habitats. Species abundance and richness are at risk and, because streams are small, stormwater discharges and associated urban development can have major impacts.

We are experiencing not just degraded streams on the North Shore that need to be restored, but streams in good condition being destroyed. Evidence suggests that once Kokopu disappear from a stream, it is very difficult to re-introduce them due to their specific adaptive attributes.

In sum, we would like to see proactive prevention and mitigation before complete ecosystem collapse.

Case Study 1: Kauri Glen Bush stream, Northcote

Throughout 2016 a volunteer group, the Kauri Glen Bush Society Inc., lodged several complaints about practices at a nearby development site, causing the stream to turn muddy. Following these complaints, Auckland Council issued a fine to the developer in July 2016 for washing muddy trucks on site. However, pollution problems continue including failing silt fences during significant rainfall and clay continues to enter the stream.

Case Study 2: Le Roys Bush stream, Birkenhead

Since the beginning of this year there have been several incidents reported impacting on the Le Roys Bush stream, including:

- 4 February 2017: restoration volunteers discovered a widespread film of oily pollution near a sewage trestle. This was in the same area of the stream where over 400 Kokopu disappeared in 2012 following a major pollution event.

- 31 March 2017: restoration volunteers discovered sewage flowing from a private property on Birkenhead Ave into the stream. This poses a threat not only to ecological health, but to human health also, as dogs witnessed entering the stream then carry the pathogens into the home environment.
- 2 April 2017: an independent scientist monitoring the stream discovered more sewage from a private drain flowing into the stream.

The Kaipātiki Local Board seeks:

- The inclusion of smaller rivers and streams (below order 4) in the swimming standards
- New maps and information on water quality, not just focusing on levels of E. Coli, but also levels of macroinvertebrates, nitrates, phosphates, pH, ammonia, oxygenation, turbidity and temperature
- Flexibility in the new standards to focus efforts on addressing those contaminants that are a problem in a particular waterbody; for some water bodies it will be nitrates and phosphates, for others turbidity or E.coli
- The use of MCI as a measure of water quality in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management
- A complete assessment of indigenous fish stocks. This was last done by the former North Shore City Council and it should be repeated
- The development of a monitoring protocol that would allow councils to use citizen scientists to help undertake monitoring work and thus engage with locals and keep costs down
- Significant infrastructure investment is also critical to achieving the long-term objective of improving water quality