

NELSON CITY BIODIVERSITY FRESHWATER ACTION PLAN 2009

Links

Receives run off, recharge and shade from hill and lowland environments.

Delivers nutrients sediment and contaminants to marine and coastal environments.

Provides ecosystem services in form of water to community as a well as amenity.

Migratory fish link freshwater and marine ecosystems.

Wildlife corridors proposed in the Terrestrial Action Plan have a key linking function for vegetated watercourses.

The targets on research and monitoring assist with the terrestrial Action Plan actions on catchment centred restoration.

VISION for next 50 Years

Nelson's freshwater ecosystems retain a predominantly native natural character, their ecological health is sustained and fully functioning examples of natural freshwater wetlands and small streams are restored. The ecosystem services provided by freshwater ecosystems are sustained, wisely used and valued.

The community protects and enhances freshwater resources to eliminate degradation and modification harmful to freshwater biodiversity. Wetlands and "rivers to sea" corridors are restored and/or reinstated. Community participation and education is encouraged and professional/industry best practice is followed and applauded. The mauri (life force) and wairua (spirit) of freshwater ecosystems and species of significance to tangata whenua, and to the community as a whole, are protected and enhanced. Access to food sources such as tuna (eel) is improved by acting on management and kaitiaki roles defined in the *Te Tau Ihu Mahi* Eel Management Plan and the *Nga Taonga Tuku Iho Ki Whakatu Iwi* Management Plan. Threatened species are sustained in freshwater habitats. Pest fish and weeds are eradicated and/or managed. The freshwater environment is legally protected from activities, uses and developments that threaten freshwater habitats. Ongoing monitoring occurs to assess freshwater health and regular information is provided on this data to the community.

In setting priorities for action the Partners take into account:

1. **Biodiversity value** of assets.
2. **Capacity of actions** to halt decline or restore biodiversity value.
3. **Cost.**
4. **Risk** that the action might fail, or might produce unintended adverse consequences.
5. **Synergies** between the work of partners.
6. **Contribution** to other ecosystems.
7. **Capacity to create community awareness and commitment.**
8. **Bottleneck resolving actions** where one action opens up opportunity for many parties.
9. **Existing community action** where institutional support can build on what is already happening.

These principles also apply to establishing priorities between actions in the three Biodiversity Action Plans.

Priority Joint Action of the Biodiversity Partners on Freshwater Environment & Habitat

The Partners involved in the Nelson Biodiversity Forum have agreed to pursue ecological restoration of the Brook Stream as a flagship freshwater project for Nelson. This waterway, highly modified in its lower reaches, has high restoration potential with its headwaters in the proposed Brook Sanctuary. Over three years the partners will develop an integrated restoration plan that restores fish habitat from the source to the sea and allows the potential for re-introduction of rare and threatened species such as blue duck. Within the three years implementation of the plan will commence providing a show case for innovative techniques that can be applied to other waterways in the City. This action was selected because it: builds on synergies with the Brook Sanctuary restoration and the freshwater programmes of the Nelson City Council, improves a tributary to the Maitai, Nelson's largest freshwater catchment, provides potential habitat for blue duck, is in the public eye showing restoration effects dramatically in the highly modified lower reaches. Restoration is also likely to benefit lowland terrestrial ecosystems and estuarine and marine ecosystems.

Priority Joint Action of the Biodiversity Partners on Freshwater Species

The partners have agreed to give priority to identifying and where necessary recreating critical habitats for longfin eel, giant kokopu and koaro in Nelson and to implement physical and legal protection to safeguard habitats of these species. This action was selected because these three are key species both locally and nationally and habitat restoration for these will benefit other species such as banded kokopu and inanga. They are also taonga species for tangata whenua as part of the traditional food basket. Protection is also likely to benefit lowland terrestrial ecosystems.

Priority Joint Action of the Biodiversity Partners on Freshwater Leadership, Community Knowledge and Activity

Public awareness programmes of the partners will focus around these existing initiatives and build on the flagship Brook restoration to give synergies with the restoration programme and gain the greatest benefit from this investment.

The Partners have agreed to complete a full stocktake of current community actions aiding freshwater biodiversity and identify and resolve barriers to effective progress and to acknowledge actions of private landowners, industrial companies, contractors, tourism operators and individuals that promote and enhance biodiversity. This action has been selected as the Partners want to demonstrably support initiative, identify and take advantage of synergies between programmes, believe that small investments in ongoing community programmes will have the highest cost/benefit, and that focussing on current community programmes will allow bottlenecks impeding effective action to be identified and resolved.

To build capacity for effective community action to location and extent of Nelson's original (pre-1840) waterways will be mapped and made available together with the current state of these waterbodies the public and to decision-makers. This will bring into the community's awareness that natural waterways are now often hidden under urban development.

Priority Joint Action of the Biodiversity Partners on Freshwater Research & Monitoring

The Partners have identified a critical need to improve monitoring and enforcement of RMA consent conditions for freshwaters and have referred that matter back to the Nelson City Council for consideration. They also think that cross correlation between the information held by the parts of the Council dealing with consents and wider environmental monitoring and with data gathered by the Department of Conservation and the Fish and Game Council would enable more effective planning, strategic responses and practical interventions. This action has been selected because land use activity is the prime determinant of freshwater habitat quality. In particular the partners to the Forum want land use intensification to be matched by intensification on indigenous biodiversity restoration.