

Foxton Futures

**Brief Summary of the Foxton Freshwater Improvement
application for funding from the Fresh Water Improvement Fund**



Summary by John Girling, Foxton Community Board Representative on
The Foxton Futures Governance Board.

Prepared by:

Project Name

Foxton Freshwater Improvement Project

Project Purpose

To improve the quality of water in the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton and in the Manawatū Estuary.

Since the Whirokino Cut was made in 1943, despite some tidal wash, the loss of a link between the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton and the main stream of the Manawatū River, has caused increased sedimentation to build up in the River Loop channel adjacent to and upstream from the Foxton township.

Consequently, the ecological health and water quality in this area had deteriorated significantly. This is because the River Loop receives debris and flood sediment from inland, upstream sources; however, none of the healthier normal, oxygen-filled river flow is capable of flushing this material out to sea and thereby sustaining a healthy indigenous aquatic ecosystem.

This project is to improve the quality of Foxton freshwater via six interconnected initiatives. The most significant of these initiatives is to return the flow from the main stem of the Manawatū River to the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton.

The six proposed initiatives provide the foundation stone for the implementation of a range of aligned and well thought through local amenity, nature based and cultural/heritage/recreational activities. Together these initiatives will provide a base for much sought after Māori and community social and economic development and employment opportunities.

Funding is sought over a four year period.

The six initiatives

- **Return the flow to the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton.**
- **Create a wetland and establish riparian planting on the Moutoa Floodway.**
- **Construct wetlands inland from Foxton township.**
- **Extend dredging of the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton.**
- **Fence and plant riparian margins around the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton.**
- **Construct wetlands at Holben Reserve, Foxton Beach.**

The total project cost is \$28,551,189 consisting of Freshwater Fund Contribution of \$23,501,139, Co-investment of \$3,850,000 and in-kind contribution of \$1,200,000.

The impact

of many years of flow diversion, wastewater disposal, contaminated stormwater discharges, urban land use development, weed infestation and intensive farming have been extreme and neglectful.

These impacts

have been caused by seven major influences:

Diversion of the natural course of the lower Manawatū River causing excessive ecological degradation and water quality decline in the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton.

Use of the Moutoa Spillway for dairy and cattle grazing, causing excessive sediment and nutrient discharge into the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton.

Inadequate drainage and treatment of nutrient laden stormwater from intensely grazed land

located to the east of Foxton township.

Excessive sediment build up within the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton due to loss of flow from the main stem of the lower Manawatū River.

Farm and animal-sourced nutrient discharges and growth of plant pests on land located on both sides of the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton.

The water quality in the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton has been further affected by the discharge of partially treated waste water from the Foxton wastewater treatment plant.

Poor water quality discharge into the lower Manawatū Estuary from the Foxton Beach township.

The solution or action proposed to address these problems

Project 1.

Return the flow to the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton.

Project 2.

Create a wetland on the Moutoa Floodway.

Project 3.

Construct wetlands to improve the quality of stormwater/drainage, inland from Foxton township.

Project 4.

Extend dredging of the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton.

Project 5.

Fence and plant riparian margins around the Manawatū River Loop at Foxton.

Project 6.

Construct wetlands at Holben Reserve to improve water quality and enhance wetland appreciation.

The detailed comprehensive application has been prepared by Horowhenua District Council and duly lodged.

This project is supported by the hapū of Te Awahou and the Save Our River Trust