

Public Consultation Summary

**Taumārere Catchment Nature-Based
Solutions Feasibility Study**



Prepared For:
Northland Regional Council

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Preface

The **Taumāreere Hydrological Catchment**, encompassing the Upper Kawakawa River area, faces significant environmental challenges, including persistent flooding impacting communities and critical infrastructure, along with degraded water quality, erosion, and biodiversity loss. This comprehensive feasibility study was initiated to understand the opportunities and constraints for implementing **Nature-based Solutions (NbS)** and restoration to address these issues. This project was supported by funding from the **Ministry for the Environment's (MfE) NbS for Flood Mitigation Programme**. The project's overarching ambition is to provide a foundational blueprint to guide future restoration, with its process and outcomes having the potential for replication across Northland and wider Aotearoa New Zealand.

This study employs a multi-faceted and integrated approach, **combining advanced scientific analysis with deep community and cultural engagement**. It has systematically moved through phases involving extensive consultation with iwi, notably **Ngāti Hine**, and utilised **high-resolution GIS mapping** and **hydrological analysis** to identify and prioritise suitable NbS sites, alongside assessing **financial viability** and developing robust **monitoring frameworks**. This collaborative and data-driven methodology aims for solutions that are culturally aligned, **ecologically considered**, and **financially assessed**, ultimately aiming to reduce flood risk, improve water quality, enhance ecological health, and strengthen community resilience and cultural well-being.

This phase one report focuses on the consultation undertaken throughout this NbS feasibility study. Consultation took place to **ground the NbS project in local knowledge**, to understand the aspirations and issues most concerning to the community, receive feedback from restoration practitioners and the Northland Regional Council (NRC). Consultation also included **technical discussions** with multiple NRC departments, from the land management and public engagement team to the rivers team and flood defence managers, through to ecologists and biodiversity experts. **Financial feasibility** is a key driver of this project, as such, this study included consultation with Martin Jenkins, who are currently drafting the business case for the catchment to support long-term funding.

Taumārere Catchment Nature-Based Solutions Feasibility Study Public Consultation Summary

First Edition

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This report has been prepared by Vision Consulting Engineers Limited (VISION) based on the agreed scope of our engagement for the consultation period. It is intended for the use of our Client, Northland Regional Council, and for broader dissemination to inform wider stakeholders and the public on the findings related to the Taumārere Hydrological Catchment and Nature-Based Solutions.

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Executive Summary

Phase 1 of the **Taumārere Catchment Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) Feasibility Project** centred on **engaging iwi, community groups, landowners, and key stakeholders** to inform restoration priorities and spatial planning. The study is led by Northland Regional Council (NRC) and Vision Consulting Engineers (VISION) under the Ministry for the Environment's (MfE) NbS for Flood Mitigation Programme.

Consultation emphasised **listening, relationship-building, and recognising lived knowledge**. Engagements with Ngāti Hine, Nga Tangariki, Te Papa Pa Orooro, and the Ngāti Hine Forestry Trust, along with the local community, informed **culturally aligned site selection, hydrological analysis, and long-term project design**. The consultation process indicates that successful NbS implementation in the Taumārere Catchment is achievable through **co-designed, community-anchored, and adaptable approach**—honouring both cultural knowledge and scientific insight.

Key Themes and Findings



Community and Iwi Partnership

- Support was expressed for restoring taonga species and improving awa health, with emphasis on mātauranga Māori and whānau wellbeing.
- Identification of deep-dive sites for targeted NbS based on field experience.



Ngāti Hine Forestry Trust Alignment

- NHFT's transition to native forestry, cultural-ecological design (Te Kuirā), and diversified land use aligns with NbS outcomes.



On-the-Ground Challenges

- Invasive species management, data access, and long-term maintenance emerged as concerns.
- Calls for improved training pathways and local employment models to support kaitiakitanga.



Data, Monitoring & Integration

- Gaps in data sharing protocols and long-term monitoring resourcing were identified.
- Field insights are now informing GIS-based MCA and risk modelling for Phase 2.



National Best Practice Alignment

- Taumārere's early iwi engagement and high-resolution NbS modelling are in step with emerging national approaches (confirmed through the MfE national workshop).



Strategic Alignment and Opportunity

At a national level, the **Taumārere Catchment Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) Feasibility Project** supports the goals of the **National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM 2020)**, **Te Mana o te Wai**, and the **Emissions Reduction Plan**, by promoting actions that enhance water quality, restore ecological integrity, and build community resilience to climate impacts. By integrating hydrological modelling with community validation through collaborative approaches, the project aligns with emerging guidance and contributes to the national knowledge base for community-led, flood-resilient design.

Locally, the project advances shared aspirations expressed by **Ngāti Hine, Nga Tangariki o Ngāti Hine**, the **Ngāti Hine Forestry Trust (NHFT)**, and restoration partners—especially around kaitiakitanga (guardianship), taonga (sacred) species recovery, and whānau-centred land management. The alignment with the **NHFT's 2040 Strategic Intent** and active community restoration initiatives supports future NbS implementation being rooted in lived experience and cultural values.

The catchment is uniquely positioned to attract **targeted investment and long-term support** by demonstrating **co-designed solutions developed to address climate resilience, biodiversity recovery, and Indigenous leadership**.

1 Introduction

This document summarises the consultations undertaken by VISION as part of the **Taumāreere Catchment NbS Feasibility Study**.

The project recognises that existing catchment-scale problems resonate deeply within the community and the commitment of NRC to full transparency and community engagement.

It is known that the benefits of NbS extend far beyond flood mitigation into water quality improvement, ecological restoration and community resilience. As such, listening to and understanding the concerns and opportunities raised by the community is a critical approach to transition back to a landscape reflecting improved natural characteristics. Collaboration, forward-thinking, and an integrated approach, community ownership, and financial sustainability are aspirations and requirements for project outcomes.

1.1 Objectives

The key objectives are for engagement with the following:

- **Iwi consultation:** Engaging directly with Ngāti Hine to discuss their short to long-term aspirations, concerns and grievances (relating generally to catchment management and water quality), ongoing restoration or land management projects, and aspects of mātauranga Māori (traditional ecological knowledge) important to the catchment.
- **Nga Tangariki O Ngāti Hine / Te Papa Pa Orooro Consultation:** Meeting with the teams undertaking restoration work on the ground provides an opportunity to understand the team's aspirations in the environmental services space, identifying limitations or challenges from an operational perspective, recognising what does / doesn't work and the effort involved, listening to valuable information gained whilst out in the field, what additional training requirements there are (etc), and how these tie in with NbS projects.
- **Ngāti Hine Forestry Trust Consultation:** Consultation was undertaken with the Forestry Trust to help confirm that identifying NbS sites minimises potential conflict with their ongoing management, restoration goals, and their long-term Strategic Intent 2024-2040 vision.
- **Stakeholder Consultation:** Continued conversations with landowners, community groups, and other key stakeholders to gather diverse perspectives, data, and support consensus building around shared goals in the NbS and restoration space.
- **Martin Jenkins Consultation:** A meeting will be held with NRC and representatives of the Martin Jenkins team undertaking the scope of the business case for the Taumāreere catchment.

Public consultation will feed directly into the wider project stages providing the background information and context for catchment scale enhancement projects that target multiple criteria through combined scientific and traditional approaches.

2 Consultation Summaries

The following sections summarise the consultation undertaken to date for the NbS project and continued mahi by stakeholders in the catchment.

2.1 Ngāti Hine Taiao Wānanga

The Ngāti Hine Taiao Wānanga took place at Mohinui Marae, Waioomio on the 28th November 2024. Presentations on the ongoing and proposed mahi in the Taumārere catchment are given in the table below. VISION attended to learn about the groups that are active within the catchment, to listen to concerns and opportunities, and make acquaintance with local groups. Monitoring Requirements for Funding

Name	Presenter	Organisation
Waitīre	Wylie Keretene & Suzie Scott	Nga Tangariki O Ngāti Hine
NH/NRC Taumārere Business Case	Pita Tipene & Rowena Tana	
Te Papa Pa Orooro	Kaitiaki	Nga Tangariki O Ngāti Hine
Indigenous Forests	Peter Prime & Amadonna Jakeman	Ngāti Hine Forestry Trust
Te Awa O Waioomio	Nisha Marsh	Awa Committee
River Management Hill Erosion	Meg Tyler & Ellen Williamson	NRC
Mahi Tahi	Chantez Connor-Kingi	NRC

The common themes emerging from the concerns and opportunities raised during the wānanga are discussed below

- **Monitoring & Data Management**
 - Ongoing water quality monitoring by Nga Tangariki O Ngāti Hine is progressing slowly due to resourcing, access, and navigation challenges.
 - Data management issues – uncertainty around protocols, data storage, and accessibility.
 - Better utilisation of local resources in environmental monitoring.
 - Issues with data sharing and accessibility need to be addressed.
- **Invasive Species & Ecosystem Maintenance**
 - Privet trees causing respiratory issues and restricting access.
 - Crack willow removal challenges – rapid regrowth and concerns about mulching near watercourses.
 - 90% of wetland restoration time/ mahi is spent on maintenance, highlighting ongoing weed and pest management demands.
 - Need for a management plan for invasive species control.
- **Pollution & Environmental Degradation**
 - Rubbish in the catchment, particularly along road edges, entering waterways and polluting the moana.
 - Hill erosion management requires long-term strategies and correct planting techniques.

- **Prioritising Whānau & Local Community Involvement**

All work in the rohe should prioritise whānau needs, including:

- Sustainable employment.
- Skill development.
- Equipment access.
- Strong, healthy relationships.
- Identifying willing landowners and available workforce to take on restoration work.
- Project ownership within the local community and fostering engagement with open spaces.
- Training and upskilling kaitiaki to create a knowledgeable, resilient workforce.

- **Economic & Structural Support for Restoration Work**

- The need to develop an environmental contracting service using trained kaitiaki from Te Papa Pa Orooro / Nga Tangariki o Ngāti Hine.
- Support system for kaitiaki to transition into environmental management and design roles.
- Concerns around long-term viability of projects, but 100-year leases or similar land acquisition mechanisms should be avoided.

- **Strategic Collaboration & Purposeful Partnerships**

- Clear project goals and strategies are needed for effective collaborations.
- External technical support is acceptable but must align with Māori principles.
- Restoration locations should be prioritised strategically.
- Better promotion of existing work to raise awareness and support.

- **Forestry & Land Use Strategy**

- Ngāti Hine Forestry Trust's intergenerational approach to forest management, including transitioning from pine to native species.
- Te Kuira (Recloaking the landscape in native forests) is a key long-term strategy.
- Trials for different planting methods are ongoing—alternative local NbS should be considered.
- Hill erosion management requires long-term commitment, correct planting, and maintenance.

2.1.1 Key Takeaways

The below summarises the key takeaways:

- **Restoration is more than just planting trees**—it requires sustained maintenance, resourcing, and whānau support.
- **Long-term planning was identified as a priority**, but land acquisition models need to align with community values.
- **Kaitiakitanga (guardianship) should be embedded** in all aspects of environmental management, from training to contracting services.
- The need for effective data systems and **defined strategies was identified to support better decision-making** and project outcomes.

- Ngāti Hine's forestry strategy aligns with nature-based solutions, but approaches should be flexible and community-driven.

2.2 E Tū Taumārere Hui

The E Tū Taumārere Hui (20th February 2025, Te Pokepu, Kawakawa) built on previous engagement between Ngāti Manu, Ngāti Hine, and NRC. Discussions centered around collaboration, environmental monitoring, and the shared vision for restoration and future generations.

The following key themes emerged:

- **Whānau & Well-being at the Core**
 - “Heal the people, heal the land” – Recognising that environmental restoration is deeply connected to the health and well-being of people.
 - Intent must be tika/pono (true, just, right), painga/ngākau (beneficial, mindful, well-being focused).
 - Reclaiming Māori scientific sovereignty – Owning and applying mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) in environmental management.
- **Building a Living, Sustainable Resource**
 - How to help confirm environmental monitoring and restoration is a living resource—adaptive, evolving, and community-led.
 - Strengthening training and succession planning—building expertise within iwi and empowering the next generation of kaitiaki.
 - Working with existing initiatives, instead of starting from scratch—honouring past mahi and supporting continuity.
- **Restoration & Monitoring Priorities**
 - Restoring inanga sites and awa—focusing on fish habitat restoration and waterway connectivity.
 - Improving water quality and habitats through science-led and community-driven action.
 - Applying for the Tāngata Whenua Environmental Monitoring Fund to support these efforts.

2.2.1 Ngāti Manu / Ngāti Hine Taiao Hui (30 Jan 2025)

Although not in attendance for this NbS project, a summary document was provided prior to the E Tū Taumārere Hui summarising the Ngāti Manu / Ngāti Hine Taiao Hui (30 Jan 2025). The following key themes and insights emerged:

- **Environmental Monitoring & Waterways Restoration**
 - Nga Tangariki o Ngāti Hine monitors water clarity & taonga species (tangariki, inanga, kakahi).
 - Water monitoring is ongoing across different sites (Tauranga Waka, Pipiwai, Te Awa Tapu o Taumārere).
 - Inanga spawning restoration underway, with collaboration across research and conservation groups.
- **Pest Control & Ecological Restoration**
 - Willow removal projects improving flooding impacts (another 1km to be cleared).
 - Trapping & pest control (possums, stoats, dogs) for kiwi protection.

- Overpopulation of kiwi on Ngāti Manuhiri Island—exploring relocation options.
- **Community Empowerment & Training**
 - Mentoring younger kaitiaki in water monitoring, marine conservation, and pest control.
 - Capacity building within iwi to lead monitoring and environmental governance.
 - Cultural sovereignty in environmental science—reclaiming expertise in taiao.
- **Collaboration & Funding Opportunities**
 - Joint Ngāti Manu & Ngāti Hine application to Tangata Whenua Environmental Monitoring Fund (NRC).
 - Ngāti Hine whānau along waterways committed to monitoring their stretch of the awa.
 - FNHL (Far North Holdings Ltd) supports reactivating the Ōpua Marina Liaison Committee to strengthen environmental coordination.

The Next Steps and Agreed Actions were:

- **Funding Application for Tangata Whenua Environmental Monitoring Fund**
 - Collaboration between Ngāti Manu & Ngāti Hine.
 - Common whakapapa & shared purpose to be formalised.
 - Meeting on 13th Feb to finalise application
- **Long-term Vision for Te Awa Tapu o Taumārere**
 - Focus area: Mai i ngā matāpuna o te awa o Te Karetu, puta noa ki te wahapū o Taumārere (From the headwaters of the Te Karetu River, all the way to the estuary of Taumārere).
 - Establishing a collective kaitiaki monitoring network across the catchment.
- **Potential Future Collaboration - "E Tū Taumārere"**
 - Proposed Te Noho Taiao o Ngāti Hine 2025 (Easter 1st or 2nd Week) (Living with the environment event)
 - Could evolve into a wider collaborative platform for future restoration work.
- **Ōpua Marina Liaison Committee Reactivation**
 - FNHL keen to support.
 - Opportunity to secure funding and strengthen environmental governance.

2.3 Ngāti Hine Forestry Trust

Ngāti Hine Forestry Trust (NHFT) presented at two NRC-attended catchment wānanga during this project (see Sections 3.1 and 3.5), sharing the Trust's long-term vision for transitioning toward more sustainable forestry practices and planting increasing areas in native species. Their contributions at the marae-based wānanga provided valuable insight into the alignment between hydrological restoration and the Trust's land stewardship aspirations.

A follow-up hui was held on 16 April 2025 between **NHFT**, **NRC**, and **Vision Consulting Engineers** to discuss the NbS project in greater depth and explore pathways for collaboration. The discussion focused on how baseline hydrological and erosion analysis could inform the Trust's future land use planning and native revegetation priorities.

The following initiatives were shared publicly at wānanga held at Motatau and Matawaia Marae and are supported by publicly available NHFT materials, including their home website, Scion publications, and regional media coverage, such as *Te Ahua Hu* (2022)¹.

Key initiatives and ambitions outlined by NHFT include:

- **Transition to Indigenous Forestry:**
 - NHFT is leading *He Ringa Ahuwhenua, He Hanga Mahi* (2021–2025), a four-year project to shift from exotic pine plantations toward native forestry systems.
 - The project is supported by Scion and funded by Te Uru Rākau – One Billion Trees programme.
- **Integrated Cultural-Ecological Design:**
 - The project incorporates the *Te Kuirā* mosaic approach — blending mātauranga Māori with ecological science to restore indigenous forest structure and function.
- **Restoration and Trial Sites:**
 - NHFT has established five native trial sites totalling ~27 hectares, designed to inform future planting regimes across the Trust’s wider estate.
- **Diversified Land Use Strategy:**
 - Alongside native planting, NHFT is trialling complementary enterprises including:
 - Kiwifruit orchards
 - Dairy operations
 - Beekeeping (apiculture)
 - These enterprises aim to create jobs and income while enhancing ecological outcomes.
- **National Recognition:**
 - In 2024, NHFT received the Outstanding Environmental Management award at the Northland Forestry Awards, recognising their leadership in integrated, values-based restoration.

2.3.1 Implications for NbS

- NHFT-managed land presents potential for implementing NbS such as:
 - Wetland and riparian zone restoration
 - Sediment and erosion control in post-harvest zones
 - Long-term carbon and biodiversity gains through native reforestation
- Continued engagement and data-sharing will support outcomes, allowing catchment-scale NbS design to align with NHFT’s vision for environmental and cultural regeneration.

2.4 Nga Tangariki O Ngāti Hine / Te Papa Pa Orooro

Meetings with Te Papa Pa Orooro and direct communication has been ongoing throughout the project and their mahi is commended and their commitment to environmental services in the catchment is celebrated. Their presence and contributions at each hui are integral to the NbS project and developing the scope and scale.

¹ Te Ahua Hu article 2022 titled “Ngāti Hine leads development of world-first indigenous forestry strategy” for the *He Ringa Ahuwhenua, He Hanga Mahi* projects. Available at <https://teahuahu.nz/2022/06/22/ngati-hine-leads-development-of-world-first-indigenous-forestry-strategy>

At a hui on the 31st January 2025, attended by Suzie Tematarau and Wiremu Keretene, along with NRC's NbS project team, several sites of interest were identified. The sites are locally known to be undergoing water quality or habitat decline and will be used as deep dive sites for the NbS study. The sites proposed were as follows, along with the concerns mentioned:

1. Otiria Falls – water quality issues and groundwater seepage from redundant pig pen/ effluent pond into main river.
2. Goodhue Farm wetland (opposite Kawakawa wetland) – drainage ditch and willow regrowth.
3. Ruatangata Urupā, Pipiwai Road – long term water quality issues in main watercourses.
4. Kawakawa Wastewater Treatment Plant – water quality and overtopping issues when in flood.
5. Lake Ōwhareiti – water quality in the lake is poor and marginal vegetation is low. Concerns about hydrological linkage from the lake to the south and tuna movement impacted.
6. Matawaia Maromaku Road catchment – flooding at the road intersection and water quality into the wetlands.

2.4.1 Preliminary Mapping Results

Initial map analysis results were discussed with Suzie and Wylie on 20th March 2025 and met with warm response. Generally:

- the strategic analysis method to identify risk and hotspots is seen as the start of **quantifying the scale of the issues in the catchment**
- identifying and **ranking priority catchments is easy to interpret** visually
- opportunities for **collaborating on land management and restoration lands** with neighbouring high-risk catchments seems more attainable as the maps open a means to talk and engage
- the deep dive site visual outputs provide a **mechanism for talking to landowners** about the scale of restoration.

2.5 Te Ruarangi Workshop

VISION and NRC attended this hui at Motatau Marae on 10th April 2025 that was hosted by Ngāti Hine to increase understanding of the Taumāre catchment's health and cultural priorities. Presentations included restoration progress, **rongoā Māori practices**, awa-focused monitoring, pest control, and indigenous forestry goals (NHFT). The workshop provided a forum to discuss existing partnerships and informed the cultural framing of NbS opportunities—particularly through the lens of wellbeing, intergenerational healing, and Waitīre-led visioning.

A key insight from this hui was **the temporal shift in the migration of tuna** in the upper catchment that were observed to have been delayed from March, into May, according to a long-term resident, local landowner and tuna fisherman. This could be in response to the modification in the catchment land use and drainage, and the changing weather patterns.

2.6 Martin Jenkins

Martin Jenkins consultancy are undertaking a business case for the Taumāre catchment. An initial project start-up meeting was held to discuss aspects of our individual projects and any potential synergies.

It was generally noted that there would be some cross over; however, the economic assessment is based on spatial data of relatively coarse resolution and catchment scale benefits. Whereas the NbS map analysis is focused on high-resolution and drilling down into site scales (albeit for the entire

catchment). Additionally, the delivery dates of the projects and associated timelines are on different trajectories, making collaboration difficult with key milestones and data outputs not aligning.

Of particular interest to the Martin Jenkins team are the **quantified and costed NbS interventions** proposed as feasible as these could feed directly into economic calculations.

3 Mid-Project Workshop Summary—MfE NbS for Flood Mitigation Programme

This section summarises the mid-project workshop held in March 2025 for the Ministry for the Environment's (MfE) **NbS for Flood Mitigation Feasibility Programme**. The event brought together 21 councils to share progress, insights, and challenges in developing community-led NbS strategies for flood resilience. VISION and NRC participated in the workshop.

3.1 Summary of Core Themes from the National Workshop

3.1.1 Modelling and Tools—MCA & GIS-Related Insights

- **Widespread use of QGIS, HEC-RAS, HEC-HMS, and LiDAR** to support hydrological modelling and NbS assessments.
- **MCA complexity** noted across councils when comparing multiple NbS types across full catchments—especially with variable resolution and incomplete datasets.
- **Challenges Identified:**
 - Misalignment between model outputs and field observations.
 - Groundwater interactions often missing due to lack of data.
 - The value of early, detailed site visits to validate hydrological assumptions and catchment connectivity was noted.
 - Inconsistent data formats and fragmented ownership of datasets across agencies made integration difficult

Relevance to the Taumārere NbS Project:

This supports the decision to use a high-resolution GIS MCA model for Taumārere and to explicitly factor in hydrological nuance (e.g., wetland detention, degraded land identification, road flooding frequency).

3.1.2 Optioneering and Site Selection

- Key practices:
 - Starting with degraded or low-value land for early wins.
 - Using story maps and visual tools to explain NbS potential.
 - Ground-truthing and validating MCA outputs with iwi and community insight before final site prioritisation.
- One council highlighted that *weightings for the **MCA were assigned by the governance group and technical advisors, not landowners, to ensure long-term environmental benefit over short-term commercial interests.***

Relevance to the Taumārere NbS Project:

This aligns with the governance structure and MCA logic that avoids landowner bias in weighting decisions, while still engaging landowners meaningfully at the implementation stage.

3.1.3 Engagement with Ngāti Hine and Broader Stakeholders

- Strong workshop consensus: **Mana whenua and community engagement is essential throughout—not just consulted but partnered.**
- **Strategies that worked:**
 - Co-development of project goals.
 - Governance groups involving iwi early.
 - Ongoing wānanga and inclusion in funding applications.

Relevance to the Taumārere NbS Project:

Your inclusion of Ngāti Hine from the start (via pilot site co-selection and support for their business case) was validated by this national workshop as best practice.

3.1.4 Implementation Needs and Limitations

- Recognised barriers across projects:
 - Funding uncertainty post-feasibility.
 - Regulatory constraints (e.g., Public Works Act, resource consents).
 - Policy misalignment—NbS not yet prioritised in many regional plans.
- Key recommendation: Create a national roadmap and communities of practice to mainstream NbS.

Relevance to the Taumārere NbS Project:

The Phase 2 economic and funding feasibility study with Martin Jenkins fits this call for clarity on funding pathways and is likely to be seen as a national example.

3.2 Key Recommendations from the Workshop

A condensed list of the 7 key recommendations from the workshop are as follows:

1. **Move forward with implementation** using available data.
2. **Form communities of practice** to exchange lessons between councils.
3. **Develop national guidance** on MCA, modelling, stakeholder strategy, and funding pathways.
4. **Recognise NbS limitations**, especially for extreme events (1% AEP); set realistic expectations.
5. **Emphasise co-benefits**—e.g., biodiversity, resilience, cost savings—not just flood control.
6. **Build strong partnerships** with iwi and rural landowners early.
7. **Standardise data formats and tools** across agencies to reduce project delays.

4 Next Steps & Integration into the NbS Project

The consultation process has provided valuable insight into the aspirations, concerns, and ongoing mahi of iwi, community groups, and stakeholders across the Kawakawa/Taumārere catchment. This engagement has identified restoration priorities, data gaps, and opportunities for partnership that will directly shape the next stages of the NbS feasibility study.

The Taumārere NbS Feasibility Project reflects a wider national shift: from engineered control to ecological partnership—from siloed restoration to integrated healing of land and people - intergenerationally.

Insights gathered will inform:

- High-resolution GIS **spatial analysis and sub-catchment prioritisation**
- Hydrological modelling and **eco-flow validation**
- Site selection for targeted NbS interventions, including deep-dive restoration zones and **community-led monitoring sites**

These inputs will support NbS interventions being grounded in both technical feasibility and community priorities, with ongoing collaboration remaining central to project delivery.

Phase 2 will involve:

- Refining intervention designs through co-development
- Strengthening long-term monitoring frameworks
- Supporting funding readiness and delivery planning through economic assessment

By continuing to **integrate mātauranga Māori with hydrological science**, the project aims to create a practical, place-based pathway for catchment-scale restoration that is:

- **Community-driven**
- **Based on ecological principles**
- **Economically viable**
- **Culturally grounded**