



Kānoa
Regional Economic Development
& Investment Unit

Environment Southland – Aparima catchment flood protection upgrade

This RIF project has strengthened critical sections of the Aparima Flood Infrastructure Scheme to reduce erosion, improve river stability and increase the capacity of the river channels to handle higher flows.

Background

Ōtautau township sits on the floodplain of the Aparima River and Ōtautau Stream and is an important service centre for the wider rural area, including providing critical emergency services.

The town and surrounding farmland have a long history of flooding, which is predicted to worsen as climate change brings more frequent and intense storms.

Historically, there were major floods in 1984 and 1987 that severely impacted Ōtautau. The 1984 flood, the worst on record, inundated the town when floodwaters broke into the Ōtautau Stream.

In response to these historical events and further climate change, the Aparima Flood Infrastructure Scheme was developed to reduce future flood risk.

Performance

The upgrade has restored sections of the Aparima Flood Infrastructure Scheme to their intended level of service, as planned.

In doing so, the project has successfully strengthened Ōtautau's flood banks and improved the community's resilience to more frequent and intense rainfalls. The upgrade has also supported climate adaptation by improving river flow and sediment transfer, reducing erosion risk, and maintaining channel capacity as the likelihood of extreme weather events increases.

**Regional
Infrastructure
Fund (RIF)**

Southland

REGION

\$0.300m

CONTRACTED

2025
COMPLETED



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Learnings

Several learnings were made on the project, including better health and safety practices, improved documentation, constructive contractor-council relationships, and upskilling.

Variations

There were no significant variations on the expected cost, time, delivery or benefits of the project.

Benefits*

The benefits include:

Preserved flood infrastructure and reduced future repair costs due to restored flood banks. Rating: HIGH. Duration: 15 yrs.

Supported resilience of homes, businesses and farmland due to restored flood banks. Rating: HIGH. Duration: 15 yrs.

Enhanced health of waterways due to stabilised river margins. Rating: HIGH. Duration: 15 yrs.

Improved habitats for aquatic species due to removal of vegetation and sediment control. Rating: MEDIUM. Duration: 15 yrs.

Greater local capacity and expertise in river engineering due to experience gained. Rating: HIGH. Duration: 15 yrs.

Benefits to outcomes**

The project fits to the following intended outcomes of the RIF:

Increased flood protection due to restored flood banks.

More local jobs, especially for unemployed due to small local contractors being used.

Improved access to finance for local firms and Māori due to using local firms which also employed Māori.

Reduced impacts of natural disaster due to the upgraded flood banks.

More vital assets and services protected due to flood protection of bridges, power, and telecommunications.

Strengthened local and Māori communities due to less disruption from floods.

Increased local productivity due to less flooding.

More highly skilled workers due to transferred skills and intelligence on the project.

KEY INFO

Grant

FUND TYPE

\$0.300m

CONTRACTED

\$0.200m

CO-FUNDED

\$0.500m

TOTAL VALUE

2,223

HOURS WORKED

1.4

ANNUAL FTES

100%

LOCAL

6%

MĀORI

Dec 2024

START

Mar 2025

END

TOTAL MONTHLY EMPLOYEES



* Benefits of each project are rated HIGH, MEDIUM or LOW with an estimated duration. Not all benefits may be included.

** Benefits to outcomes include the RIF outcomes the project fits to either fully or partially. Not all benefits may be included.

Notes on KEY INFO: Employment figures use recipient Monthly Reports of employment and hours worked. One annual FTE is equivalent to 1,560 hours and may be spread across multiple employees. Percentage local and Māori are of the total monthly employed. Start dates are contract start dates and end dates are construction end dates (approximate).