

Living Waters / Wai Ora Living Waters II Update – March 2026

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the GOPI Management Committee on the objectives, scope and status of the proposed Wai Ora Living Waters II video series and suggest next steps for discussion.

Background and Approach

2. In 2011 the Pāuatahanui Inlet Community Trust (now merged with GOPI) sponsored the production of 12 documentary videos to highlight different aspects of the Pāuatahanui Inlet which was made possible with funding from the Mana Community Grants Foundation.
3. GOPI and Adventure Group Pty LTD (AGPL) have signed an agreement to develop a new video series / Wai Ora Living Waters II on the harbour and inlet and its ecology.
4. Under the agreement GOPI has provided \$2,000 towards initial publication materials with the initiative having an overall budget estimate of up to \$200,000. The initial focus is the development of a promotional video to aid fund raising.
5. GOPI has approached the Porirua Harbour Trust (PHT) to also support the new initiative and together both organisations are progressing development of the concept and sources of funding with AGPL.
6. A review of the first series released in 2012 has been undertaken to inform the development of Wai Ora – Living Waters Series II. In doing so it is recognised that there has been a significant increase in the uptake of social media since the first series release in 2012 and that a revision to the approach for distribution will be required.
7. In preparing this update other developments such as the implementation of the Porirua Harbour Accord have also been considered.

Living Waters 2012

8. Twelve videos were released in 2012 with a total play time of 132 minutes. Appendix 1 provides a brief summary of each video's contents.
9. The films were aimed at informing the community about the importance and dynamics of Porirua Harbour and to encourage them to take positive action to protect the harbour.
10. On their release the videos were made available for viewing on the Porirua Harbour Trust website. The GOPI website also had a page which provided a link to the videos. As at March 2026 there has been a total of nearly 7,000 views, an average of 580 per video. The most viewed video was the January release on recreation (1,324 views) with the least viewed being March on shag (103 views).

11. The videos were played on rotation at Pataka for a number of years and were also released via 3,000 DVDs to form the basis of an environmental education programme for schools in the harbour catchment. Current school usage is difficult to ascertain.

Wai Ora – Living Waters Series II

12. In May 2025 an agreement was signed between GOPI and AGPL which provides direction of what is proposed for the series II videos:

Te Wai Ora - Living Waters will showcase the fauna and flora of Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour and its catchments, will explain and explore the issues and threats affecting the harbour ecosystem, and provide harbour communities with video footage and commentary on harbour ecosystem issues and solutions, including community participation.

13. The Agreement includes GOPI providing funding towards initial publication materials for series II videos. The funding is to enable development of a promotional video on the scope and likely content (including themes and timelines) of the new video series.

14. GOPI and PHT are to retain access to photographs and footage and be recognised as founding partners.

15. Subsequent to the Agreement there has been further definition on the purpose and approach:

The purpose of the new series is to highlight different aspects of the inlet with a focus on the wildlife and its supporting ecosystem both above and under the water. It is intended the videos will explain the issues and threats affecting the harbour ecosystem and solutions.

The proposed approach is to produce two types of videos: short clips for progressive social media use and longer doco type videos most likely twelve additions as per Living Waters 1. The videos are intended to provide a platform for multimedia information and education on the value of the inlet.

The video material will showcase the fauna and flora of Te Awarua-o- Parirua and its catchments starting from an organism in the inlet, looking at its wider environment and the food chain on which it depends, looking at threats and problems and then solutions, especially including what residents can do. The video clips will be designed so they can be used for school education purposes.

16. Significant additional funding will be needed to be produce the series. AGPL intend to produce a promotional video to generate interest, support and fund raising. Under the Agreement GOPI and PHT will work with AGPL on the plan for further development and funding.

17. A meeting was held on 13 March to discuss progress. Present were Cam Feast (AGPL) , Kathy Stirrat (PHT) and Ashleigh Sagar (PHT and Ngāti Toa) with Kathy providing the following update:

- Cam tabled an initial proposal to secure Ngāti Toa funding for the project.
- Ashleigh is leading the Accord workstream on communications and engagement and advised the scale of the Wai Ora project is beyond any funding likely to be available under work programmes.
- Ashleigh noted Ngāti Toa has connections to several potential funders such as the Nikau Foundation and would support funding applications to these organisations.
- Cam advised the GOPI trailer is well advanced, he has established the beginnings of the WaiOra website and has been posting a Friday photo on a WaiOra Facebook page. His priority is to develop a funding proposal for around \$50,000 to kick start the initiative.
- He expects a first draft of the funding proposal by end of March and has a well-advanced PowerPoint to support funding requests.
- PHT will share the proposal with GOPI so we can help refine it.

Other Considerations

Supporting delivery of the Harbour Accord

18. The Te Wai Ora o Parirua – the Porirua Harbour Accord has an objective of restoring the harbour’s waters to be healthy and sustainable for future generations.
19. The Accord partners, who represent key stakeholders in the harbour and inlets future, have committed to an agreed approach to achieve the objective which includes establishing, implementing and monitoring accountable work programmes.
20. Three Accord workshops were held in August and September 2025 to prioritise actions for reducing sedimentation, reducing pollutants and restoring habitats.
21. Accord partners are now refining and aligning workshop actions. More than 120 actions drawn from key documents and existing programmes were assessed for effectiveness and feasibility, with additional suggestions captured where gaps were identified. The next steps involve translating these priorities into a coordinated plan with clear roles, timeframes and performance measures.
22. It is understood that the Plan will focus on:
 - Erosion areas
 - Thriving habitats, harbour connectiveness
 - Water sensitive Porirua
 - Performance and monitoring
 - Shoreline restoration including pest management and roading issues
23. It is expected the workstream around communications and community engagement will support all aspects of the Plan.
24. While the Accord’s funding constraints may limit financial support for the development of Wai ora linking the approach, content and delivery of the videos to the Accord’s work programme,

either as a component of the work programme or as an independent initiative that supports Accord objectives, may enhance both obtaining funding from the Accord and other sources and the achievement of the Accords objective.

Leveraging existing video content to reduce costs

25. The Living Waters I video series has excellent content some of which, if funding support proves challenging, may be able to be repurposed to cost effectively support new video production.

Providing targeted educational content

26. Living Waters I included broad based educational content in most, if not all, of the 12 videos produced. Content ranged from understanding the value of estuaries as the most productive of eco systems, what lives in the estuary, what is causing degradation over time and opportunities for restoration.
27. For Living Waters II there is an opportunity to develop content for specific audiences which could include students at various study ages, residents, business etc.
28. Student learning could be specifically targeted to school curriculum research study projects based on science and environmental studies and be included in teacher lesson plans with accompanying videos.
29. For residents and businesses video content could be around specific actions to prevent further degradation to initiatives to restore inlet health.

Defining objectives, strategy, scope and deliverables

30. The purpose of Living Waters I was to inform the community of the importance and dynamics of Porirua Harbour and encourage them to take positive action to protect the harbour.
31. Living Waters II has a similar objective of showcasing the fauna and flora of Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour and its catchments, explaining and exploring the issues and threats affecting the harbour ecosystem, and provide harbour communities with video footage and commentary on harbour ecosystem issues and solutions, including community participation.
32. The objective of both living waters I and II appear similar and can be summarised as communicating:
 - an understanding of the significance and importance of the Pāuatahanui estuary and Porirua harbour.
 - an understanding of its current condition and reasons for degradation.
 - the actions that can be taken to reduce future degradation and motivating individuals and communities to contribution to restoration.

33. What has not been fully defined are the strategies to achieve the objectives for example the specific audiences to be targeted (communities, age groups etc) and the creative approach (content etc) and channels most effectively used to reach each audience.

The need to prioritise funding

34. In the workshops to develop the Harbour Accord priorities concerns around the sources of funding to implement the finalised work programme were expressed.

35. What is evident is that there will be funding challenges for both the Accord work programme and Wai Ora development. As noted, the current view is that the Accord will not be in a position to fund Wai Ora and as yet there is not an understanding as to the cost of the Accord’s work programme or sources of funding.

36. In the best interests of the harbour and inlet that all available sources of funding should be directed to the highest value priorities that lead to the health and mauri of Te Awarua o Porirua being restored. Those priorities are currently being developed by the Accord partners.

Next Steps

37. The Porirua Accord work programme includes a communications component to explain proposed activities and influence the community to take action in support of its restoration objective.

38. It is difficult to see how Wai Ora can be successfully progressed and deliver on its objectives without reference to, and alignment with, the wider Accord work programme.

39. It is therefore suggested that:

1. GOPI, PHT and AGLP engage with Porirua Accord parties to understand priorities and their work programme.
2. AGLP continue to prepare a written proposal with GOPI and PHT support which further develops the Living Waters II objective, strategy, scope and deliverables in the context of and in support of Accord priorities and work programme.

Appendix 1 – Summary of 2012 Video series

Video	Focus
Recreation	Recreational usage including paddling, sailing and beach usage. Also covered water quality from sewage and stormwater overload.
Fishing	Importance of the harbour as a source of food and mana for Ngati Toa and how fish stock have reduced through reclamation and sedimentation.

Shags	Information about shags and their habits including the reduction in their habitat through tree removal.
Pollution	Stormwater quality and sedimentation impacts from urban development including heavy metals from roading and cars. Outlined the importance of cockles and seagrass and suggestions on actions to reduce future impacts.
Tides	Defines an estuary and features of the Pāuatahanui Inlet. Covers sources of food and the food chain in the inlet and its significance for bird life.
Urban Catchment	Ecology checking in Duck Creek, impact of streams and sediment. Habits of whitebait, status of short and long finned eels and actions to reduce sedimentation from urban development.
Pāuatahanui Reserve	History and development of the reserve, salt marsh importance to the food chain and large number of bird species present.
Sediment	Impact of urban development, importance of estuaries, levels of sedimentation and its impact, actions to reduce future levels.
Creatures Great and Small	Estuaries are the most productive eco system, information on swans, cockle count and status, impact of sedimentation on them and that they are a good measure of inlet health.
Rural catchment	History from deforestation, topography , sediment sources and the importance of planting including GWRC programme of riparian planting.
Industrial catchment	Streams replaced by pipes and concrete altering flows, Keneperu industrial area impacts. Take charge programme of working with businesses.
The future	Importance of estuaries, reasons for decline, actions to address, impact of future developments (transmission gully) and 2011 strategy and action plan.