



## Report from the Waikato Biodiversity Forum, A,B,C's of Riparian Planting. Held at The Link, Hamilton East on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2022

### Purpose of the day

- To give the community an a set of best practices to apply to any riparian planting project
- To give the community access to experts in the field of carbon accreditation
- To provide the community with a range of options and scenarios in riparian planting and show how these can be managed to get the best result
- To provide the attendees an opportunity to meet with Organisations and individuals working on improving biodiversity outcomes i the region

This event was the result of another collaboration with Forum member - Land Care Trust. The event was titled the A,B,C's of riparian corridors. The location was the stunning Ecoquest education centre, in Whakatiwai, Miranda. Our first speaker Dot Dalziel from Herenga ā Nuku, Walking Access Commission Aotearoa is the government agency protecting and enhancing public access to the outdoors for everyone in New Zealand — walkers, mountain bikers, anglers, horse riders, landholders, trail runners and more. They work with communities to create new connections to and across the whenua, resolve disputes and care for the land and the people who live, work and play on it. Herenga ā Nuku provides leadership on outdoor access issues and administers a national strategy on outdoor access, including tracks and trails. It maps outdoor access, provides information to the public, oversees a code of responsible conduct, helps to resolve disputes and negotiates new access. Dot spoke about all the ranges of land designations that are given for public and private land. Then she detailed what options can be used to open up public access. Public access can be beneficial to a riparian zone for a range of reasons. From making areas more accessible to maintenance, to opening up recreational and tourist potential. The Hauraki rail trail is one such example of this. The biggest take away was that the Walking Access commission are resourced to help the public with any inquiries about opening up public access to land and navigating the tricky processes of land designations and negotiation process for both public and private land.



Next was Sean Weaver from EKOS. EKOS work to create self-sustaining forest carbon projects and programmes. Many of the projects start with developing a financial model that drives regenerative capability and self-sustainability. They are all locally owned, developed collaboratively, and as much as possible, locally delivered. They receive support from public, private and philanthropic organisations to develop these new approaches, with the understanding that once sufficiently developed and piloted they will be replicated and scaled up through impact investment. Sean went through the background and logistics of creating carbon accreditation opportunities, which are highly complex. He then went over the potential of gaining carbon accreditation for riparian margins. Firstly they would need to be at least 30 metres wide average to qualify and even then, with current models it would be a lot for work to gain accreditation for something at this scale unless there was a large collection of landowners operating together to create the viable scale. Sean said they are constantly working on ways to make the process more simple, more encouraging of biodiversity (opposed to monoculture) and more accessible to smaller scale landowners. Last to speak Ric Balfour from Landcare Trust who spoke about the biodiversity and ecological considerations for riparian planting. Ric firstly spoke about planning in consideration of appropriate widths to create potential habitat, to insure access for

maintenance as well as any other future use is considered before site work starts. Plant species selection was also an important consideration - the appropriate plant for the appropriate place in both ecological and spacial senses. For example not planting flaxes close to moving water, as they can pull down stream banks when flooding occurs. Or not planting certain species to close to fence lines, as they may quickly comprise the fences integrity. Diversification of species was also encouraged by Ric, in order to best suit different ecological zones of the area and to ensure greater resilience and ecological values of riparian zone.

After lunch the group split off into 2 groups to view two riparian sites. One on a farm on private land and another on private and public land with full public access. The groups both looked at the unique ecological and access considerations at both sites.



*Figure 1: Field Trip to Kaiaua riparian area, which was created with a partnership between Bay View Hotel , NZMCA and Local Council*