

# Opihi Pipeline Renewal

Progress report – Issue 1 – 10 July 2023



## BACKGROUND

Water Supply pipe crossing the Opihi River was installed around 1982 as part of the Downlands Scheme at Waitohi. This pipe failed June 2022. As this was the fourth failure in 12 years, it was decided to replace the entire pipeline across the river.

Downstream consumers on the Downlands Scheme are on a precautionary boil water notice until the new pipe crossing is commissioned.

Work was not budgeted for in LTP 2021 – 2031 as the current failure occurred after funding for the period was allocated, therefore other capital projects have been delayed to get this urgent replacement completed.

## OVERVIEW

Old pipeline to the Waitohi Reservoir is being replaced by a new pipeline to be laid under the Opihi River.

Contract 2594 – Opihi River Watermain Renewal – Downlands Water Scheme

Entirely funded as renewal.

All resource consents were granted 30 March 2023. Earthworks and site preparations took place April 2023 on the banks, riverbed works are underway.

## RECENT PROGRESS

- Archeological and Environmental assessments complete, including ruling out native bat (pekapeka) habitat disturbance.
- Vegetation cleared from worksite
- Pipe and anti-flotation blocks have been delivered.
- River diversion works including fish relocations well underway. Of note are endemic species found by ecologists previously thought to be locally endangered or extinct in good numbers, including lamprey and torrentfish.

## PROJECT TEAM

**Project Manager:** Jake Esterhuysen

## PROJECT FINANCIALS

This project is entirely funded from the Drainage and Water Downlands Scheme Renewals Budget. This budget comes from rates collected from scheme users.

**\$0.45M**

*Spent to 30 June 2023*

**100%** Design  
**15%** Construction  
**Completed**

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## PROJECT RISKS

**WEATHER/GROUND CONDITIONS** – It is currently winter with some significant rainfall in the area recently. High groundwater level has made diverting the river course challenging, with four pumps on site struggling to keep up. Access to site has also been difficult to the point of only being able to get in by digger or 4WD with chains.

**ECOLOGICAL** – Native Bats roost in the area and great effort was made to ensure no roosts were disturbed during works. Fish relocation is part of consent conditions while the river course is diverted. During this phase ecologists have found species they were not expecting, including native lamprey and torrentfish. Discovery of notable fauna can delay operations.

**FINANCIAL** – As the project is entirely funded from the Renewals Budget, there can be impacts on renewal of other key infrastructure.

## PROJECT PHOTOS



*Left: Installing Bat detectors. Middle: Juvenile Lamprey found on site. Right: Ensuring Anti-Flotation Blocks are the right fit for the size pipe being used..*



*River diversion works well underway, along with fish management happening to the left of clearing.*