

FEBRUARY 2018

Hawke's Bay Trends

TEMPERATURES
RAINFALL
RIVER FLOW
GROUNDWATER & SOIL
RECREATIONAL WATER QUALITY
LONGER FORECAST
MPI COMMENT

THE STATE OF OUR ENVIRONMENT

February 2018

I've repeated myself for three months now, so to get myself excited I'm saying it with jazz hands. February was hot and rainfall was near normal overall. Not unlike the month before that and the month before that. River flows grade from higher than normal in the north to lower than normal in the south and ditto soil moisture. Groundwater levels lie near or below normal in our main aquifers. It is exciting/concerning that summer was so consistently hot and perfect for flopping into local waterholes, but they themselves flipped flopped between good and vaguely evil.

Kathleen Kozyniak

Principal Scientist Climate and Air



The short summary

Hot, again, and average rain, again.

This is a summary of the regions rainfall, river flows, ground water, air quality and soil moisture levels. Data and images provided by HBRC.

March to May Forecast

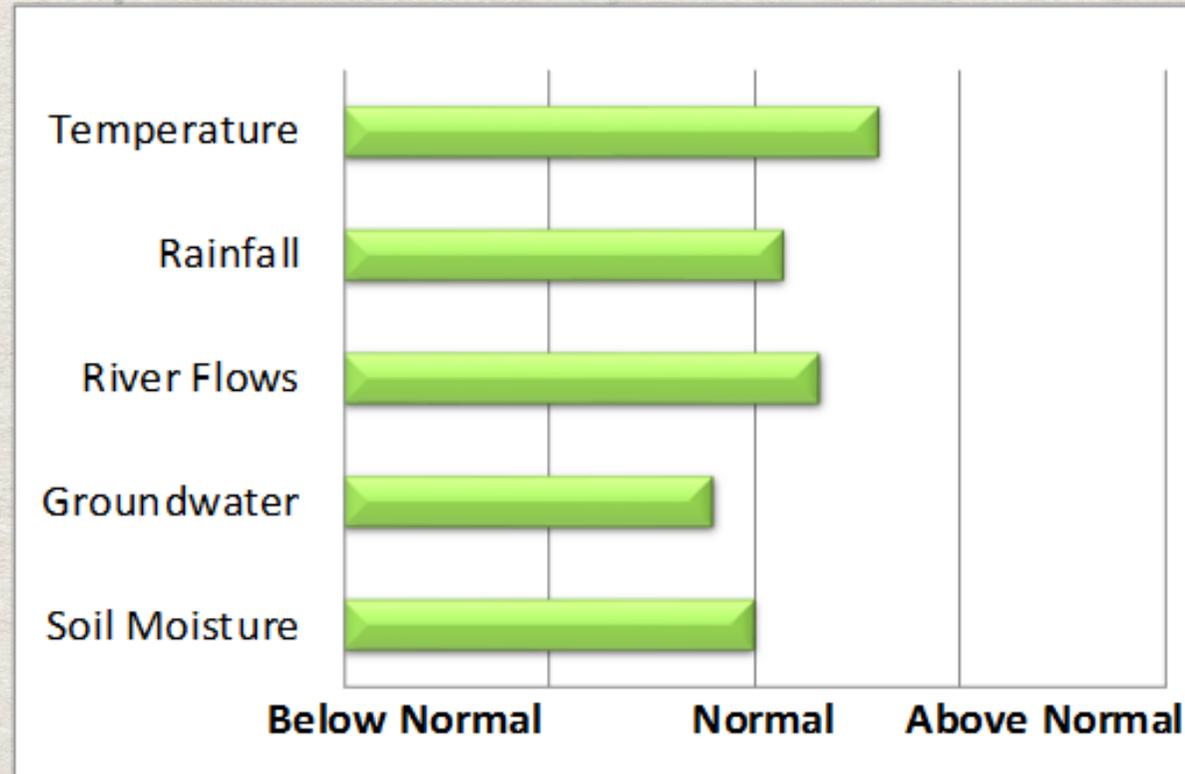
Temperature	Above average
Rain	Above normal
River flows	Near or above normal
Soil moisture	Near or above normal

(source : NIWA)

For more information

www.hbrc.govt.nz

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RAINFALL

Above normal in the north grading to below normal in the south

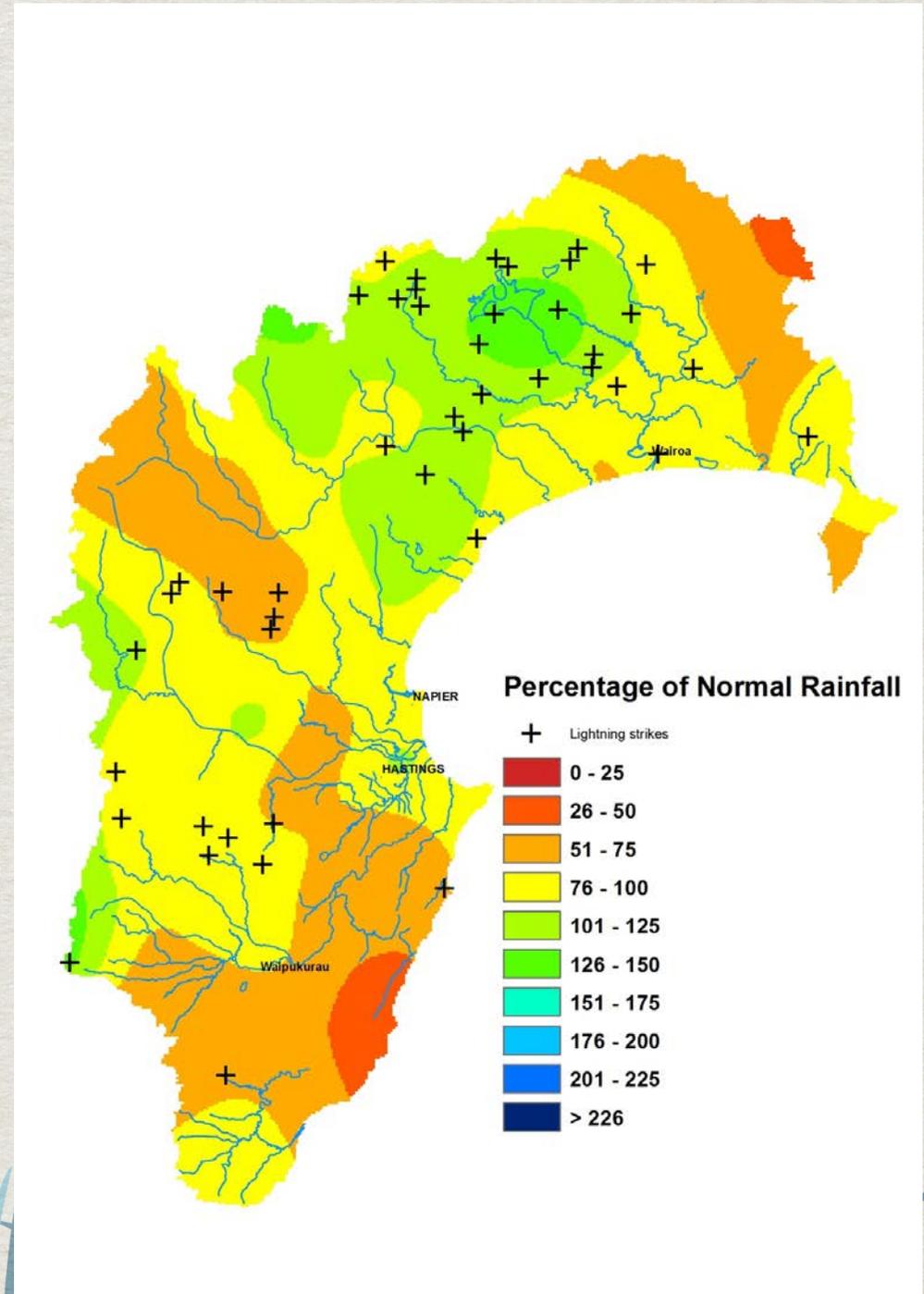
Lightning strikes (cloud to ground) - 45

Lightning counts come from the Blitzortung.org lightning network to which HBRC contributes.

Percentage of normal February rainfall
(30 year average)

For areas in the region:

Waikaremoana	182%
Northern HB	127%
Tangoio	117%
Kaweka	118%
Ruahine	97%
Heretaunga Plains	83%
Ruataniwha Plains	74%
Southern HB	61%
Hawke's Bay Region	107%



TEMPERATURES

Above average – third month in a row!

Mean Difference from Normal

Maximum Temperature: 1.4°C

Minimum Temperature: 2.1°C

Mean Daily Maximum: 24°C

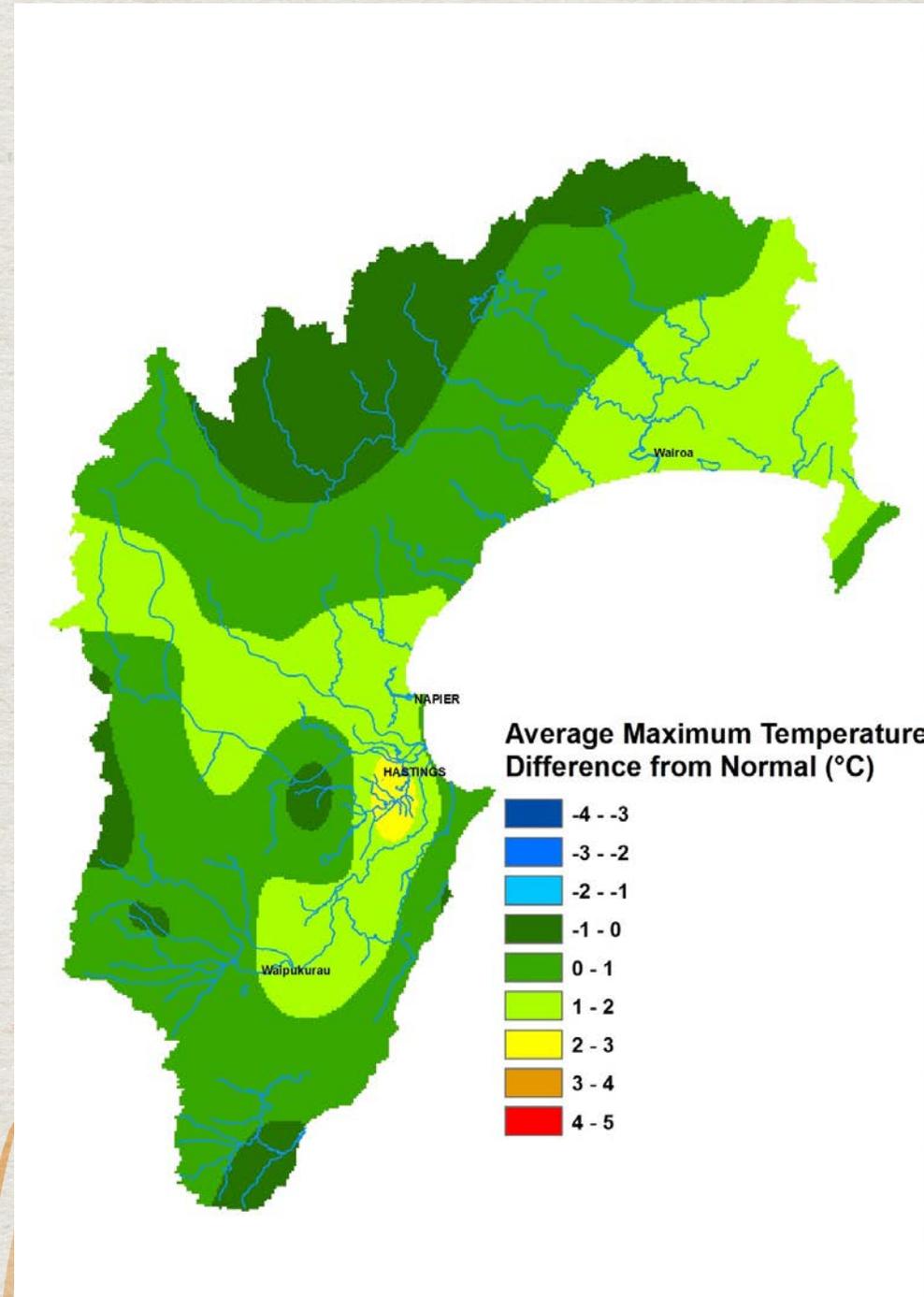
Mean Daily Minimum: 14°C

Highest Daily: 33.9°C

Location: Hastings AWS

Lowest Daily: 2.9°C

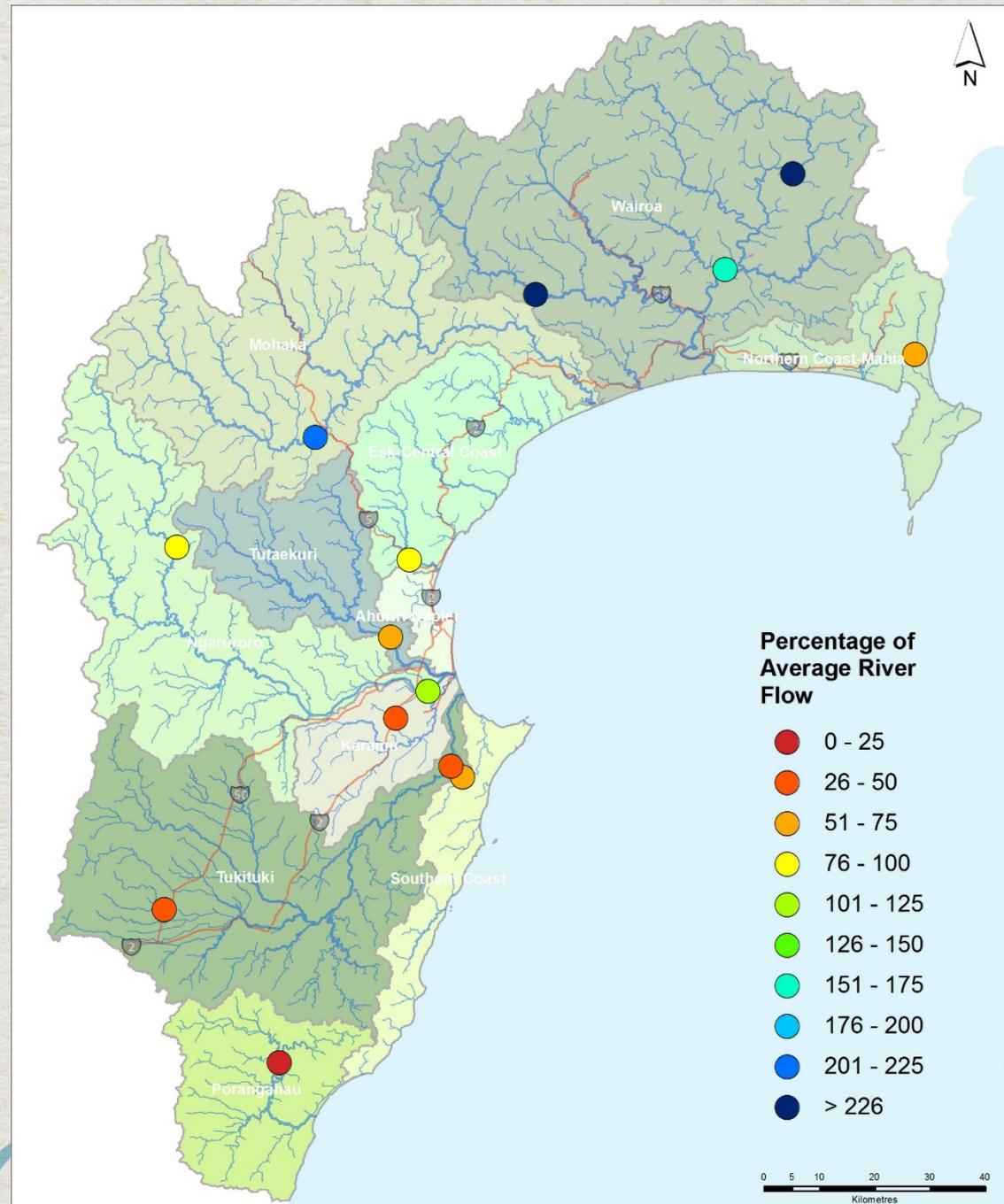
Location: Taharua



RIVER FLOW

Percentage of average February flows for areas in the region:

Northern Coastal	73%
Northern HB – Hangaroa River	258%
Northern HB – Wairoa River	154%
Northern HB – Waiau River	278%
Mohaka	209%
Central Coastal	100%
Tūtaekuri	68%
Heretaunga Plains	35%
Ngaruroro - Upper	193%
Ngaruroro - Lower	124%
Southern Coastal	65%
Ruataniwha Plains	39%
Tukituki	35%
Southern HB	.02%
Hawke's Bay Region	117%



GROUNDWATER & SOIL MOISTURE

Groundwater:

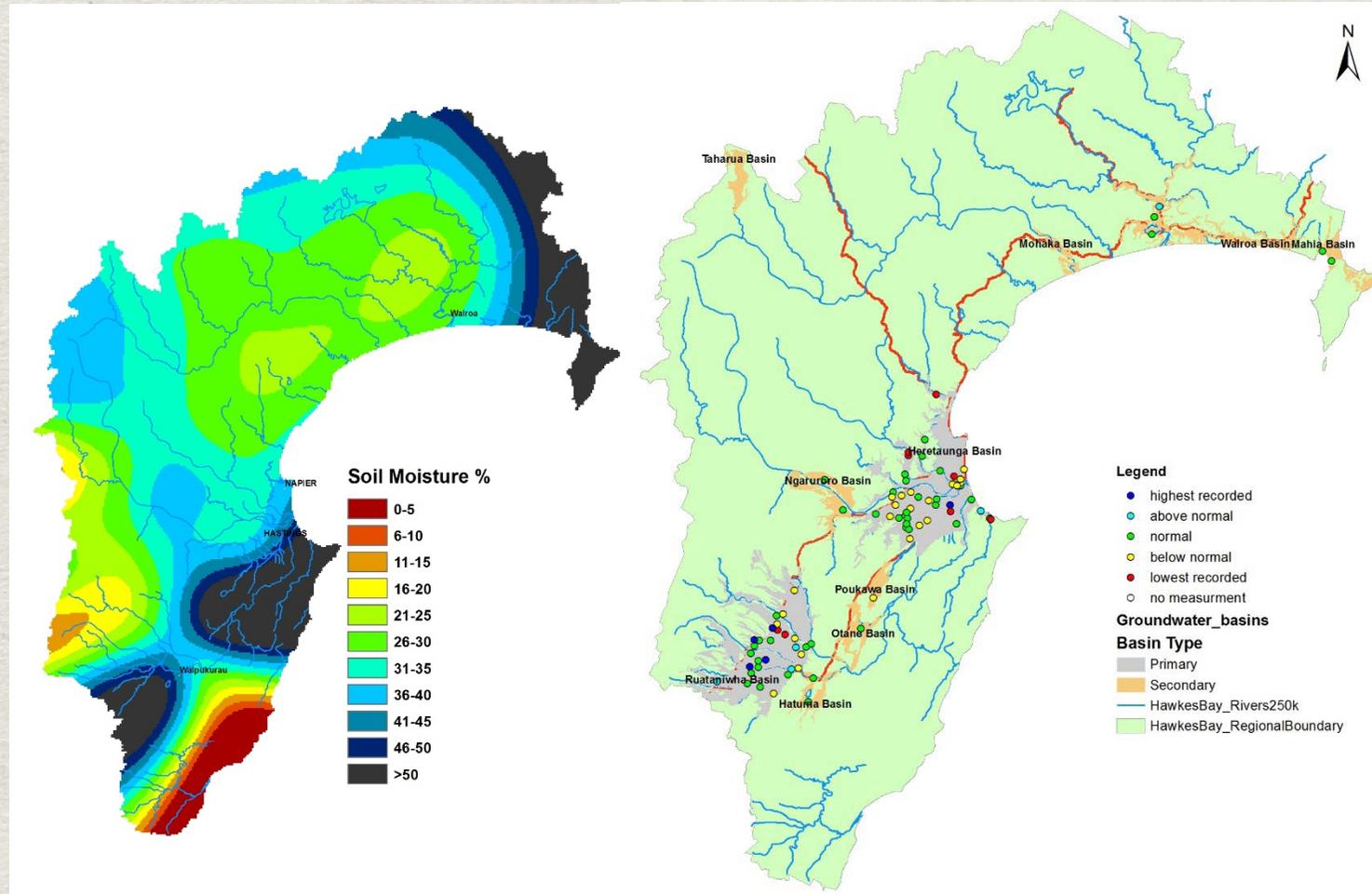
Heretaunga basin – Mainly normal and below normal water levels

Ruataniwha basin – Mainly normal and below normal water levels

Secondary basin – A mix of normal, record high and record low water level conditions

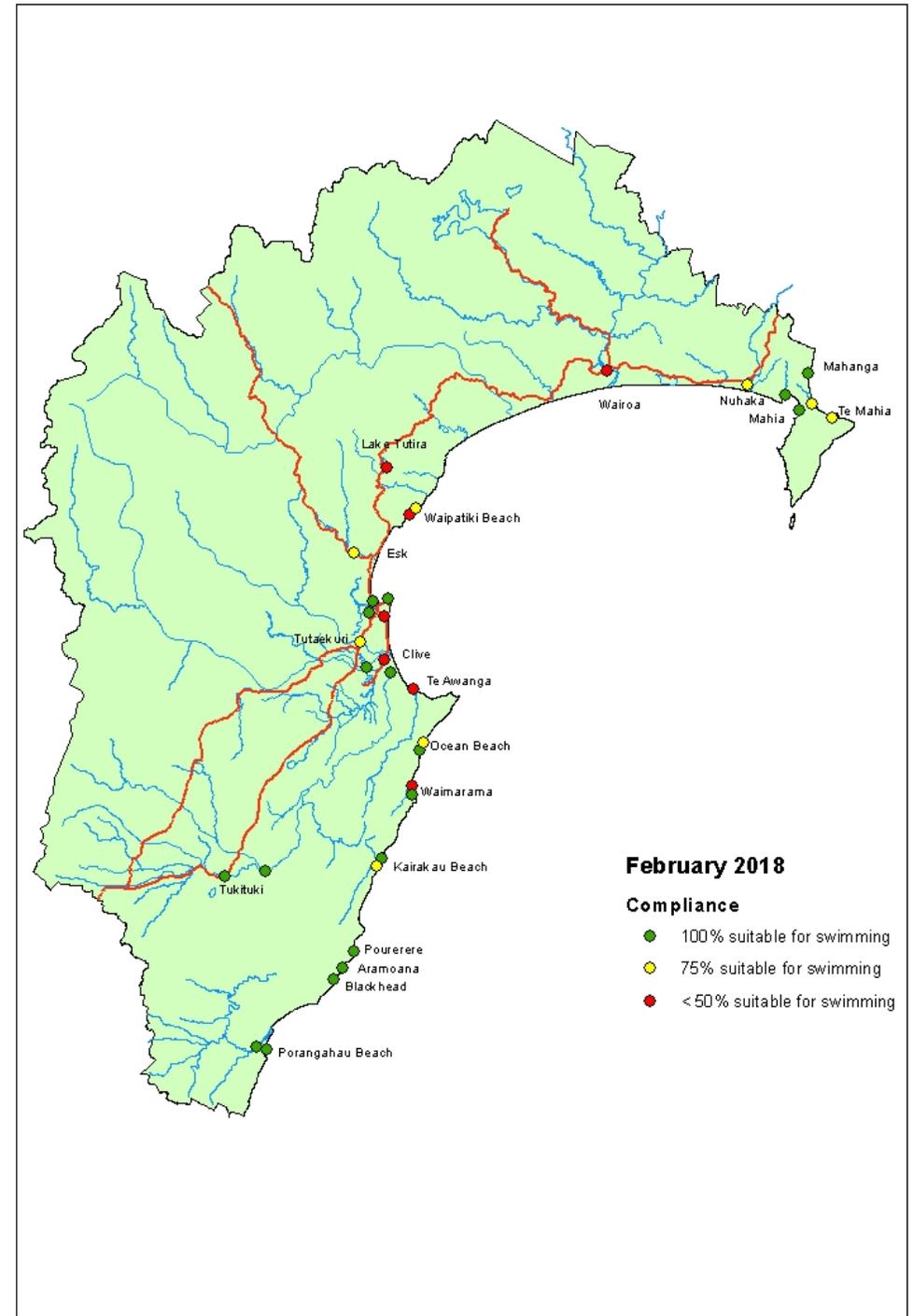
Soil Moisture

Near normal for most of the region but above normal in northern areas



RECREATIONAL WATER QUALITY

Pandora Pond was the big player this month in the recreational water quality programme, with repeated exceedances of the microbiological guidelines which were not attributed to rainfall. This saw the closure of the Pond for swimming by the HBDHB and an ongoing investigation launched into the cause of the contamination. Wairoa River is also the subject of a compliance investigation after repeated exceedances this summer. A number of exceedances occurred in the second week of February which were attributed to rainfall in the catchments. The final week of the month was well under the guidelines at all sites. The most suitable swimming spots this month were the northern and southern beaches, as well as our central rivers.



LONGER FORECAST

Persistence forecasting has been the winner over summer and, yawn, little changes. The La Niña is on the way out but we persist with higher pressures around southern NZ and lower pressures to the north and in the northern Tasman Sea, bringing an easterly flow over Hawke's Bay. Sea surface temperatures remain warm around the country. Prospects for autumn are that temperatures remain warm, particularly the overnight temperatures. Rainfall is likely to be in the normal to above normal range and the north of the region may continue getting more than other areas.

Pastoral farmers welcomed the steady rainfall that generated good pasture growth in early February. However, by the end of the month most farmers (and particularly those in the southern half of the region and coastal areas) would appreciate some follow-up rain by mid-March. This would help get autumn pasture growth rates really pumping and build up covers for winter.

The average to good feed levels have helped with lifting weights of trading stock and of ewes over mating, and with maintaining milk production and the condition of dairy cows. Winter feed crops on dairy farms have been growing well. Prices for meat and milk continue to be positive for maintaining income levels.

Higher soil moisture levels in some areas, combined with warm temperatures have increased the risks of animal health issues such as facial eczema, intestinal parasites and flystrike. Sheep farmers are reporting a much higher incidence of flystrike this summer compared to normal, requiring greater vigilance and treatment.

The apple harvest is underway and running about a week ahead of last year. The drop in night-time temperatures from the latter part of February will help with fruit colour development for mid- to late-season varieties. Both apple and grape growers will be hoping for dry settled weather throughout March, with any rain events short-lived.