

JANUARY 2017

# Hawke's Bay Trends

THE STATE OF OUR ENVIRONMENT

TEMPERATURES

RAINFALL

RIVER FLOW

GROUNDWATER & SOIL

RECREATIONAL WATER QUALITY

MINISTRY OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

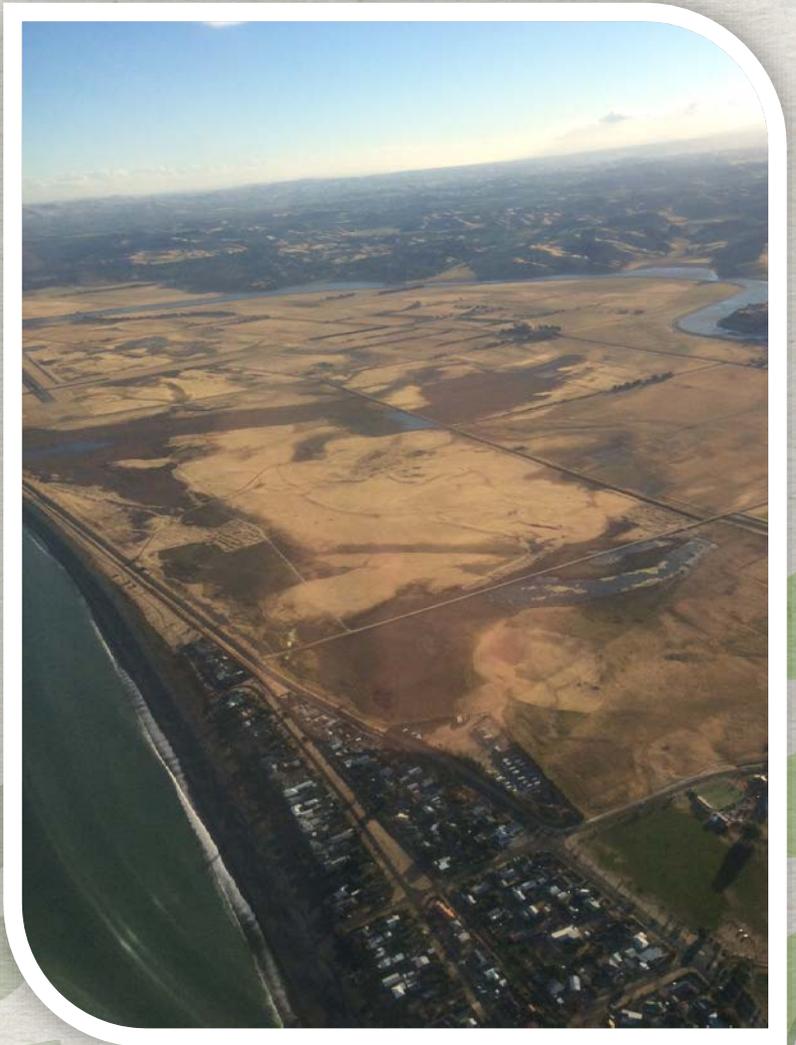
**HAWKE'S BAY** | Environmental Science  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

**HAWKE'S BAY**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

## January 2017

If you haven't noticed the region's browning hills, then I can only guess you've been living under rock. January is the third consecutive month of below normal rainfall and it was *well* below normal. We had roughly a third of the long term average and in some places a mere fifteen percent. Wairoa and the Heretaunga Plains had less than 10 mm for the whole month, which is a piddling amount compared to evaporation rates averaging over 5mm per day. River flows, groundwater levels and soil moisture are all below their respective January average and at some sites these measures have hit record lows for the time of year. This isn't too alarming, as often the length of recording doesn't extend pre 2000. We do have one rebel area in the pack. That's in the Mohaka River catchment, where river flows and soil moisture are holding up well – all I can say is “well done you!”. Daytime temperatures have been mighty and big lumps like ourselves are not the only ones to enjoy the warmth. Bacteria made hay in some swimming spots where flows were feeble but given the trying conditions, the region's water quality fared pretty well.

**Kathleen Kozyniak**  
Principal Scientist Climate and Air



### The short summary

A ramped up version of December, hotter and drier.

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

#### February to April Forecast

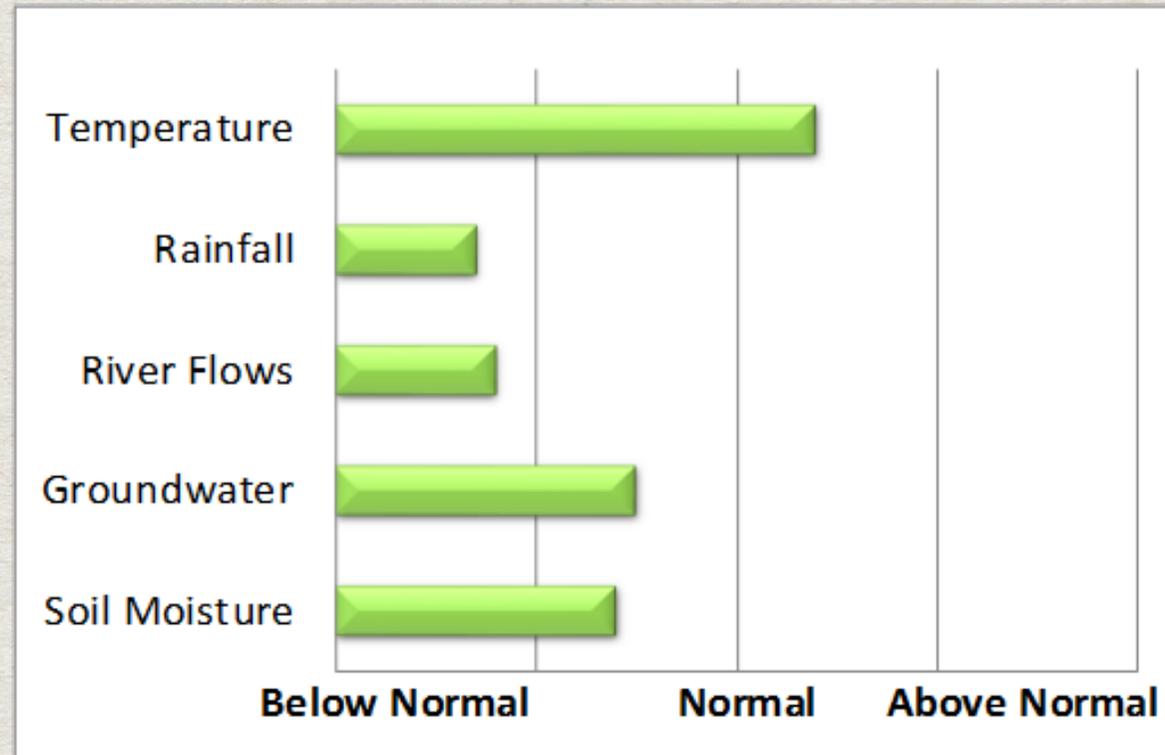
Temperature	Near or above average
Rain	Below normal
River flows	Near or below normal
Soil moisture	Near or below normal

(source : NIWA)

#### For more information

[www.hbrc.govt.nz](http://www.hbrc.govt.nz)

P: 06 835 9200



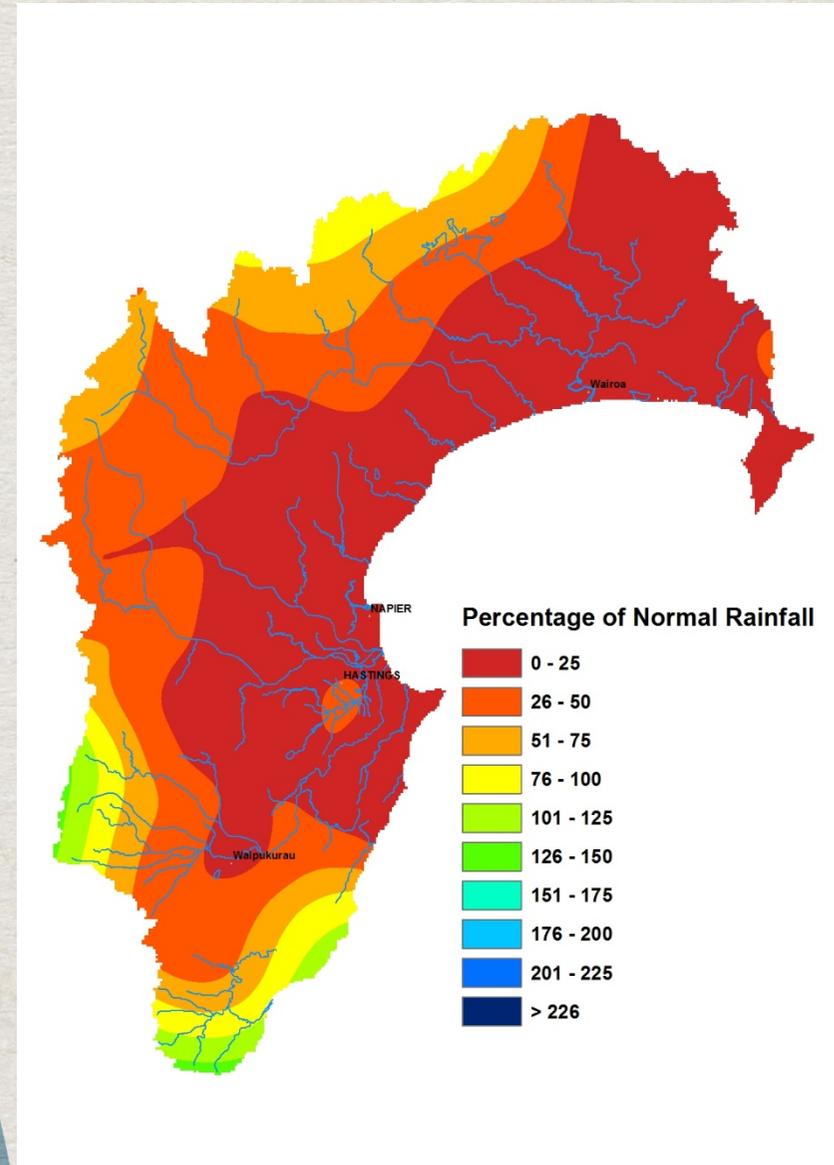
# RAINFALL

Pitiful – well below normal.

Percentage of normal January rainfall  
(30 year average)

**For areas in the region:**

Waikaremoana	36%
Northern HB	13%
Tangoio	17%
Kaweka	34%
Ruahine	87%
Heretaunga Plains	15%
Ruataniwha Plains	29%
<u>Southern HB</u>	<u>51%</u>
<b>Hawke's Bay Region</b>	<b>35%</b>



# TEMPERATURES

Temperature – near and above average  
(from near frosts to scorchers)

## Mean Difference from Normal

Maximum Temperature: 1.1°C

Minimum Temperature: -0.3°C

Mean Daily Maximum: 24°C

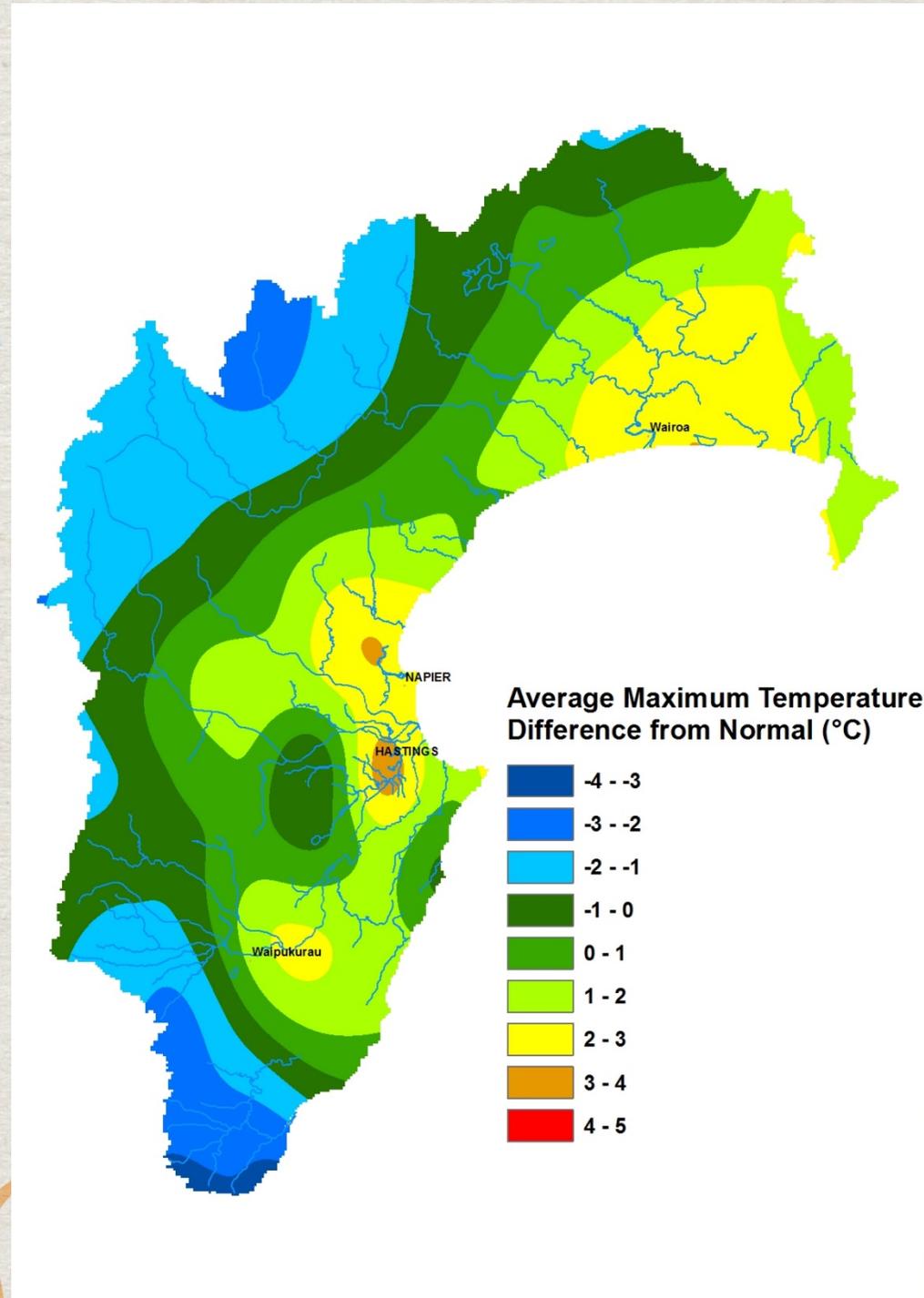
Mean Daily Minimum: 12°C

Highest Daily: 33.6°C

Location: Hastings AWS

Lowest Daily: 1.4°C

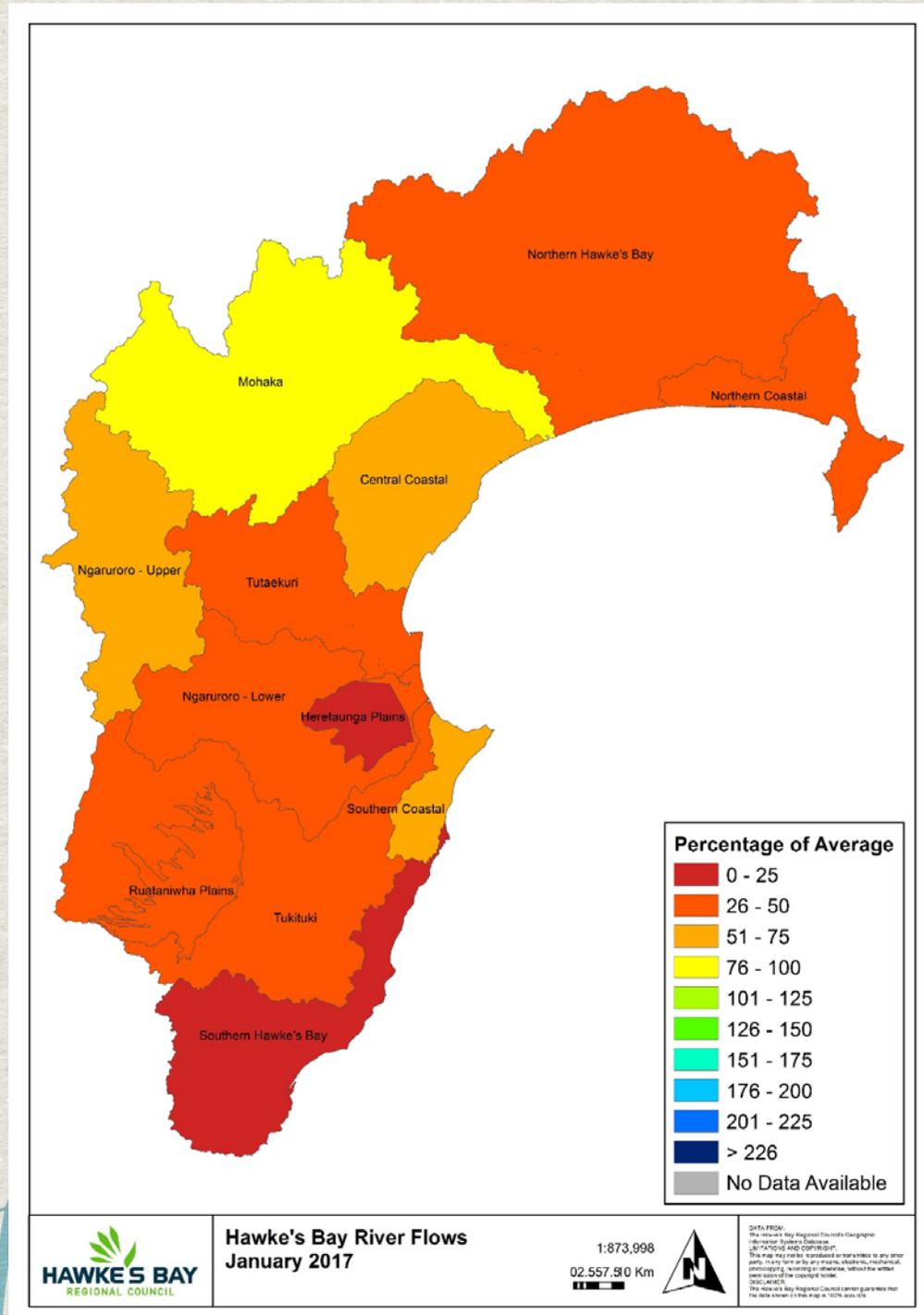
Location: Taharua and Ongaonga



# RIVER FLOW

## Percentage of average January flows for areas in the region:

Northern Coastal	29%
Northern HB – Hangaroa River	29%
Northern HB – Wairoa River	28%
Northern HB – Waiau River	41%
Mohaka	93%
Central Coastal	67%
Tūtaekuri	38%
Heretaunga Plains	12%
Ngaruroro - Upper	60%
Ngaruroro - Lower	35%
Southern Coastal	69%
Ruataniwha Plains	29%
Tukituki	40%
Southern HB	1%
<b>Hawke's Bay Region</b>	<b>40%</b>



# GROUNDWATER & SOIL MOISTURE

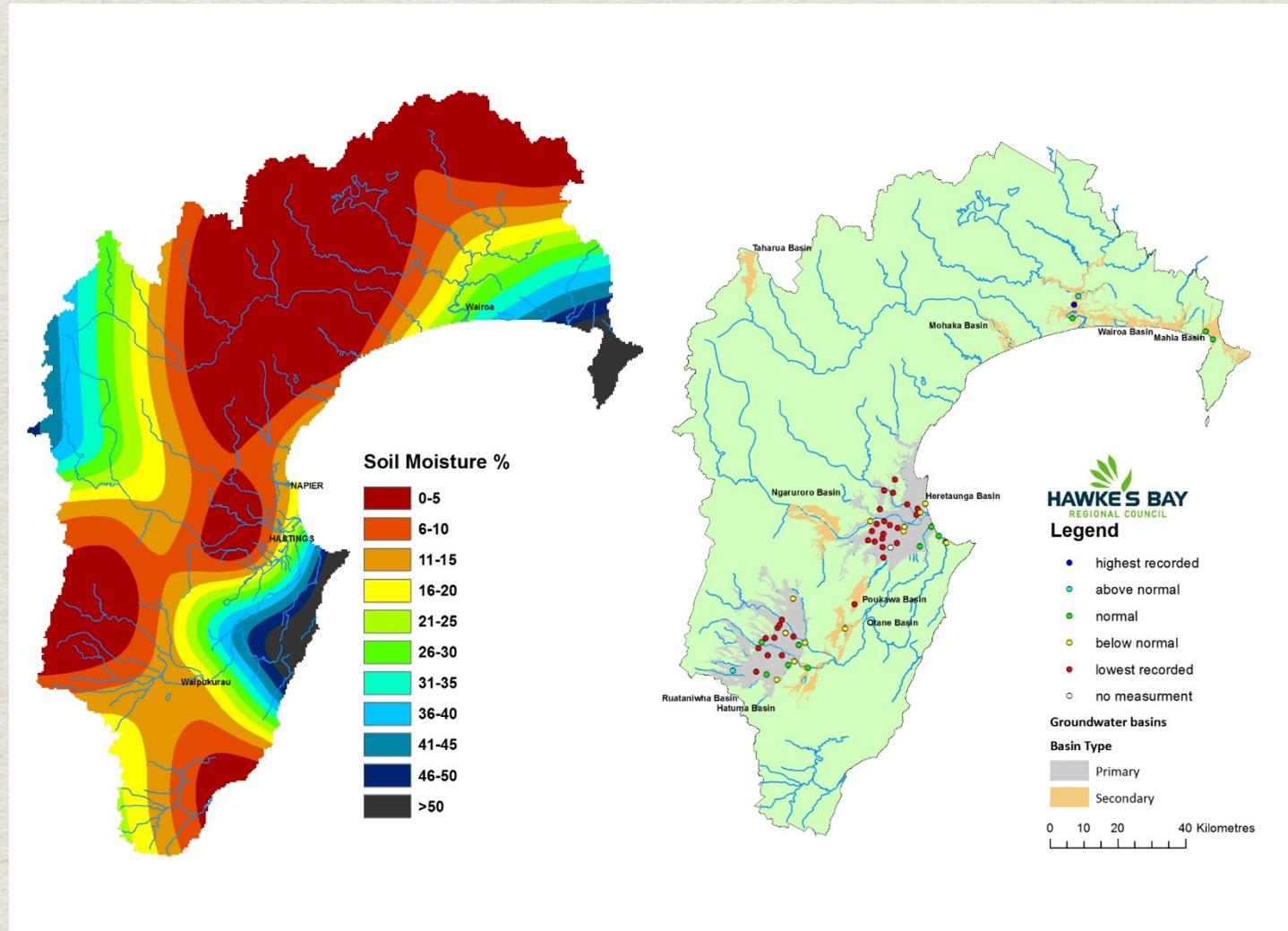
## Groundwater:

**Heretaunga basin** – Mostly record monthly lows and below normal water levels

**Ruataniwha basin** – Mostly record monthly lows and below normal water levels

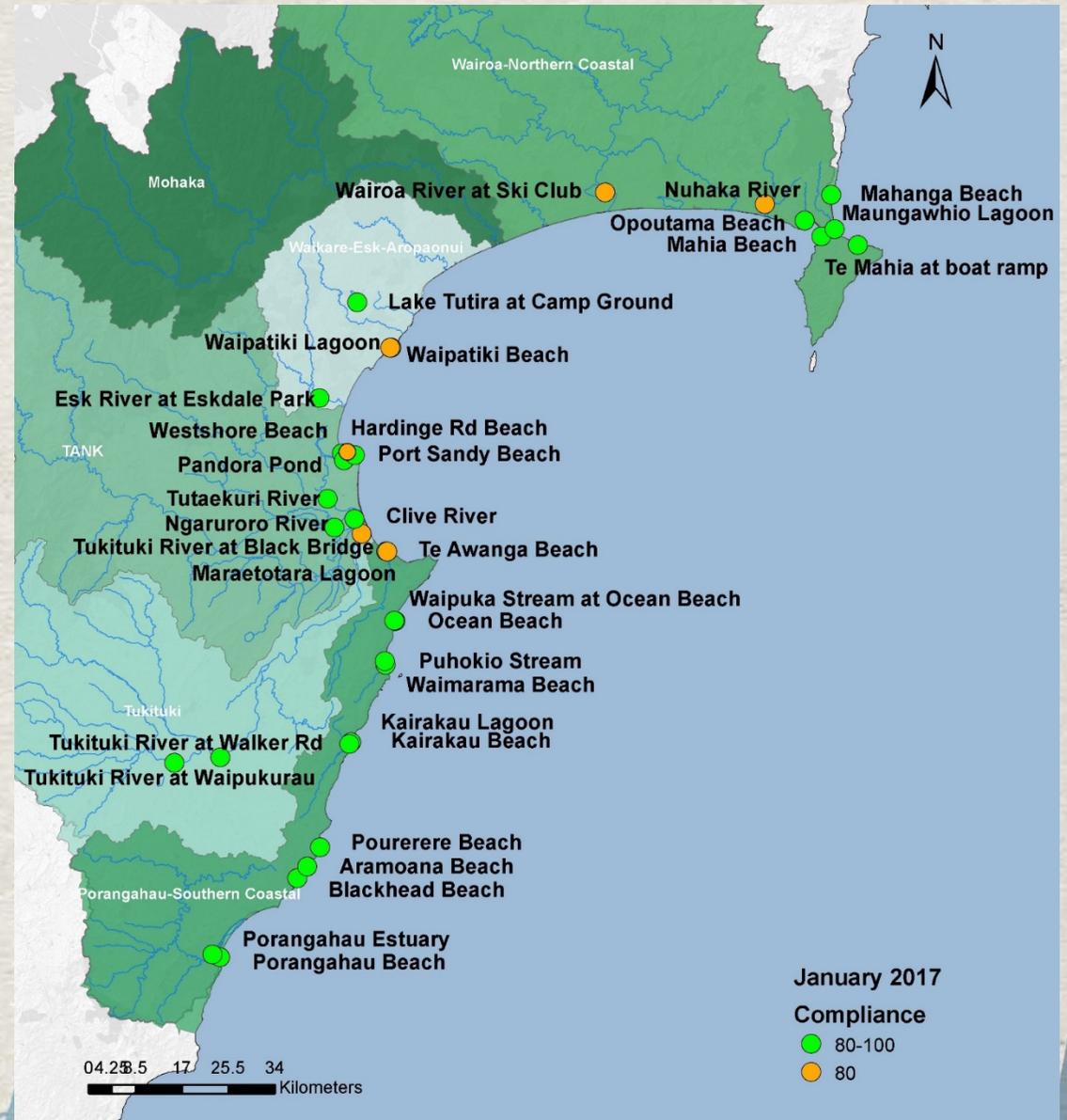
**Secondary basin** – Normal and above in Norther Hawke’s Bay, below normal in Central Hawke’s Bay

**Soil Moisture**  
below normal



# RECREATIONAL WATER QUALITY

Overall, excellent water quality for swimming in the month of January throughout the region. There were single exceedances above guideline level at Maraetotara Lagoon, Nuhaka River, Tukituki at Black Bridge and the Wairoa River at the ski club. The Nuhaka River and Maraetotara Lagoon no longer flow out to sea over the gravel dunes due to low flow. This creates a prime habitat for bacterial reproduction, due to still warm water and no flushing. The main bacterial inputs are from wading birds and grazing stock. As the region receives rain they will naturally re-open.



**January 2017**

Continuing dry and windy weather has made conditions difficult for farmers, especially those in the normally 'summer safe' areas in the lee of the western ranges. Farmers in the eastern hills also report that stock water dams are low. There is little fresh pasture growth and some summer green feed crops failed to establish due to the dry early summer.

Many sheep and beef and dairy farmers have destocked to meet the low feed levels. Some breeding animals have been sent to grazing in wetter western regions. Demand from these areas and the South Island is supporting prices in the saleyards for lambs normally sold prime that have had to be sold store because there isn't the pasture to finish them.

Most dairy farmers are milking just once a day and feeding supplements and fodder crops earlier than usual.

Growers are managing the high irrigation demand. Regular rain on the ranges kept the main river levels above total ban throughout January.

While farming through dry summer months is the norm for Hawke's Bay, farmers are anxious for autumn rain to arrive in early March. On the other hand, orchardists and grape growers prefer the dry conditions to continue through autumn enabling them to harvest high quality fruit.

A close watch is being kept on how well farmers are coping.