OCEANAGOLD
WAIHI OPERATION

OceanaGold UPDATE

February 2022

A Jumpstart for Waihi Students

Recently you may have seen the OceanaGold, Jumpstart car out and about on the roads of Waihi. The Jumpstart programme is a new initiative between OceanaGold, Waihi College, Blue Light, Waihi community members, and the Waihi Police to support local students in getting their driver's license.

In mid-January a group of volunteers from the Waihi Community undertook the Navigator training course run by Blue Light. This included a theory aspect and practical driving test, which enables Navigators to work with local students to gain confidence in driving, and hopefully, the ability to go on to attain their restricted and full licenses.

This will help Waihi students gain employment or access further training options in the future.
The small team of Navigators are excited about the opportunities ahead to support local students. We are looking to begin the Navigator programme alongside the start of the new school year.

> *"Without a license, many of our young people are disadvantaged. They can't drive a vehicle to work or a training provider. Many jobs require a license before they will employ you, so a programme like this can have a real impact locally.*
>
> *Waihi College Careers Co-ordinator; Carolyn Graveson.*

Understanding Water at Waihi

At the OceanaGold Waihi operation we are well known as being a gold and silver producer, but what is less well known is that we are also a significant water producer. Our underground mine acts in a similar way to a bore well; drawing in water and removing it. Other water types around site are also captured and treated before discharge to the Ohinemuri River.

We use water in our refining processes, taking 40m³ of water on average a day from the Ohinemuri River. However, we also discharge 9,500m³ of water to the Ohinemuri on average a day; over 230 times what we draw.

In 2021, we discharged 3,500,000m³ of water, all to specific standards for safe release. These standards form part of our operating consent conditions issued by Waikato Regional Council through the Resource Management Act. On site we maintain Polishing Ponds where treated water sits as its final step on site, awaiting independent lab results to confirm the water meets these specifications before its release.

Like much of New Zealand's geology, the Waihi area is made up of separate groundwater systems that are independent from each other; soils, upper volcanic deposits and lower basement deposits – in the case of Waihi the lower deposits are mostly in the form of andesite rock and begin to form roughly 100 m to 200 m below the surface. Upper volcanic deposits are what most of us picture when we think about water systems; this is the layer that Waihi's rivers occur in, where well and spring water is drawn from, and what water leaves and joins through evaporation and rainfall as part of the water cycle. Mine operation dewatering however, is deep enough below ground that it is confined to the lower basement andesites. The nature of the andesite rock layer is such that it has minimal interaction with the above volcanic deposit layer in relation to water; meaning that conditions like rain or drought do not affect the amount of water present in our underground operations, and conversely, mine dewatering cannot dewater or affect the upper layer.

Baseline studies of the water quality and aquatic biology of the Ohinemuri River and its tributaries originally commenced in 1981, and this work continues today. At present, we maintain nine biomonitoring sites around the Waihi area: both upstream and downstream of the discharge locations of our operation. Sites include the Ratarua, Mataura, and Waitete streams, as well in the Ohinemuri itself. In addition, ten river sites are regularly monitored for water quality. Data from our water monitoring is reported to Waikato Regional Council for independent review.

Multiple years of data, in-house monitoring, and external verification and study of the local waterways has helped contribute towards the Ohinemuri River being one of the most comprehensively studied and understood river ecosystems in New Zealand.

A biomonitoring survey being carried out in the Ohinemuri River.

The OceanaGold Waihi Water Treatment Plant and Polishing Ponds.

Due to the current COVID-19 climate, we are postponing our planned Correnso and Project Martha Community meeting originally scheduled for Thursday the 3rd of March at 5:30 pm. We will confirm a new date and time when possible through our regular channels. Apologies for the inconvenience and we look forward to catching up with the local community when it is safe to do so.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE CONTACT US.

Community Engagement Line: **0800 924 444** | Project Information Office: **86 Seddon St., Waihi.**
Email us via our website: **www.waihigold.co.nz**

NOTE: WE ARE NOT CURRENTLY BLASTING IN THE MARTHA OPEN PIT. CHANGES TO THIS WILL BE NOTIFIED.