



Report 09.418
Date 10 July 2009
File ENV/27/02/01

Committee Regional Sustainability Committee
Author Matt Velde Senior Communications Adviser

Proposal to merge Greater Wellington and Department of Conservation awards

1. Purpose

To seek the Committee's approval to merge Greater Wellington's Environmental Awards with the Department of Conservation's Wellington Conservancy's Conservation Awards.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

Recently Greater Wellington received a proposal from the Department of Conservation's Wellington Conservancy to merge the two organisations' Wellington region environmental/conservation awards.

DOC's Wellington Conservancy Conservation Support Manager, Ben Reddiex, spoke to members of the Greater Wellington Environmental Awards planning group regarding the proposal. He suggested a merger would reduce some of the duplication between the two awards – which often leads to the same schools and community groups winning awards in the same year – as well as reduce costs for both organisations.

DOC's Conservation Awards have been run for around 10 years in the region, and are well regarded in the community (see Attachment 2 for more information).

Greater Wellington's Environmental Awards are now into their third year, with applications for the 2009 awards opening in June. Since they started, the awards have been a successful and exciting way of recognising and rewarding our care group volunteers, schools, businesses and consent holders.

This year four new award categories have been developed to better recognise the wide range of individuals, groups, organisations and businesses we work with - a Community Environmental Leadership Award, an Environmental Protection Award for businesses involved with Take Charge and two new business awards – the Business Environmental Leadership Award and the Green Business Award.

4. Comment

GW officers see the following advantages from merging the awards:

- Potential for cost savings by having two organisations pool resources for judging, administrative and event requirements
- The ability to create a premier environmental awards for the region that recognises our environmental champions in a unique way
- Reduced competition from multiple awards (and a reduction in staff time nominating organisations for separate awards)
- The ability to enhance collaboration between central and local government
- Greater credibility and recognition for awards from having central agency on board; more status for groups
- Access to a prestigious venue, such as Beehive or the Grand Hall, at limited cost
- Potential to grow a larger community with a common interest in conservation and environmental restoration
- Greater sponsorship potential, offering a more attractive naming rights proposition for individual awards
- An opportunity to reinforce the already strong relationships between DOC and GW

There are also some arguments against merging awards, such as potential to both lose GW's identity and the awards' focus on acknowledging and rewarding partnerships with community groups, schools and businesses. However, officers believe these issues are resolvable and that the positives outweigh the negatives. It is therefore recommended that the Committee approves the merger of the two awards so a new Wellington Regional Environmental Awards can be developed for the 2010 year.

5. Communication

Further consultation with the Department of Conservation will be undertaken once a decision on the merger proposal is made.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes its contents.*
3. *Approves the proposed merger of Greater Wellington's Environmental Awards with the Department of Conservation Wellington Region Awards to take effect from 2010.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Matt Velde
Senior Communications
Adviser

Brett Sangster
Communications Manager

Attachment 1: Greater Wellington Awards

Attachment 2: Department of Conservation Awards – Wellington Region

Introducing the Greater Wellington Environmental Awards

Greater Wellington's Environmental Awards acknowledge and reward the work of individuals, schools, community groups, consent holders and businesses that go the extra mile to improve the health of the region's lakes, rivers, estuaries, wetlands, dunes and coastlines, minimise the impact of their own activities and develop innovative solutions to environmental issues.

- **The Community Leadership Award** recognises the contribution of a community member who has been working with Greater Wellington to improve the environmental health of their community and the wider Wellington region.
- **The Rata Community Partnership Award** recognises community groups working in our Take Care programme, projects in our regional parks, sustainable transport initiatives, and our flood protection responsibilities and land management programmes.
- **The Meridian School Sustainable Project Award** goes to a school that is working with us to improve the health of the environment or promote sustainability through environmental education.
- **The Meridian School Environmental Leadership Award** recognises a person's leadership on a school-wide environmental project that involves students as active participants.
- **The Nikau Compliance Award** recognises consent holders with Greater Wellington who go above and beyond the conditions of their consent and develop incredibly innovative and inspiring solutions to reduce the impact of their activities on the environment.
- **The Environmental Protection Award** acknowledges small and medium sized businesses working with us to prevent pollution and improve environmental management.
- **The Business Environmental Leadership Award** recognises businesses working with Greater Wellington to improve their environmental performance and reduce their carbon emissions.
- **The Green Business Award** acknowledges businesses that have recently started working with us (less than one year) but that are nevertheless making significant improvements in their sustainability.

Award winners (and any merit awards) are announced and presented at a function hosted by Greater Wellington in early December.

www.gw.govt.nz/environmentalawards

Attachment 2: **CONSERVATION AWARDS 2008**

Background:

The awards are organised by the Wellington Conservation Board in partnership with the Department of Conservation's Wellington Conservancy. They are presented by the Minister of Conservation.

The awards have been designed to recognise sustained commitment by an organisation or individual to a project involving voluntary effort and/or community involvement with a positive conservation outcome within the Wellington Conservancy. Nominations will also be considered from businesses or individuals that go above and beyond what is expected of them in their paid employment or business. It is hoped that by highlighting the efforts of conservation champions in our communities, we can help to inspire others to become involved in worthwhile conservation projects.

Categories:

There are eight award categories as follows:

1. **Habitat Restoration** (e.g. tree planting, riparian planting or pest control work)
2. **Recreation** (e.g. hut wardens, maintenance or development of huts, tracks or bridges)
3. **Conservation Education and Advocacy** (e.g. development of conservation education material or local conservation campaigns to promote awareness)
4. **Kaitiakitanga** (e.g. bird rescue, animal hospitals or looking after a reserve)
5. **Historic heritage** (e.g. restoration or conservation work on historic buildings, sites or other historic features)
6. **Innovation** (e.g. bright new conservation initiatives)
7. **Young conservationist** (e.g. school planting projects)
8. **Business in Conservation** (e.g. a business where whose commitment to conservation goes above and beyond what is normally found)

Criteria:

- The Judges will decide the most appropriate award category for each nomination and judge each nomination accordingly
- Winners of awards must clearly exhibit sustained commitment to a conservation project within the Wellington Conservancy that has a positive conservation outcome. The project must involve voluntary effort and/or community involvement.
- The Judges decisions will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- All nominations must be submitted on the attached nomination form and nominations from previous years will not be considered unless they are resubmitted.
- Nominees must agree to being nominated prior to the nomination form being submitted.
- The Wellington Conservation Board and Department of Conservation's Wellington Conservancy reserve the right to check the information contained on this nomination form and contact the referees.

- The Wellington Conservation Board and Department of Conservation's Wellington Conservancy reserves the right to use the information contained on the nomination form for publicity purposes.
- Wellington Conservation Board members are ineligible to nominate, however self-nominations from schools, businesses, groups or individuals will be accepted.
- **The closing date for nominations is 5 September 2008 at 4 pm.**
- Additional nomination forms can be obtained from:
 - Bronwyn Bell Tel: 04 4725 821
 - bbell@doc.govt.nz
 - OR DOC's website www.doc.govt.nz
- Nominations can be submitted to:
 - Conservation Awards 2008 Nominations
 - Department of Conservation
 - PO Box 5086
 - WELLINGTON
 - OR e-mail bbell@doc.govt.nz