



**greater WELLINGTON**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL  
Te Pane Matua Taiao

If calling please ask for: Democratic Services

2 August 2019

## **Environment Committee**

Order Paper for the meeting of the Environment Committee to be held in the Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Level 2, 15 Walter Street, Te Aro, Wellington on:

**Thursday, 8 August 2019 at 9.30am**

### **Membership**

Cr Kedgley (Chair)  
Cr Brash (Deputy)

Cr Blakeley  
Cr Gaylor  
Cr Laidlaw  
Cr McKinnon  
Cr Ponter  
Cr Swain

Cr Donaldson  
Cr Laban  
Cr Lamason  
Cr Ogden  
Cr Staples

Barbie Barton

Ihaia Puketapu

***Recommendations in reports are not to be construed as Council policy until adopted by Council***

## Environment Committee

**Order Paper for meeting to be held on Thursday, 8 August 2019 in the Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Level 2, 15 Walter Street, Te Aro, Wellington at 9.30am**

### Public Business

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3.	Public participation	
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**Please note these minutes remain unconfirmed until the meeting of the Environment Committee on 8 August 2019.**

**Report 19.275**

20 June 2019

File: CCAB-10-732

**Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Thursday 20 June 2019 in the Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Level 2, 15 Walter Street, Te Aro, Wellington at 9.30am**

**Present**

Councillors Kedgley (Chair), Blakeley, Brash (Deputy Chair), Donaldson, Gaylor, Laban, Lamason, Laidlaw, McKinnon, Ogden, Ponter, Swain, and Staples. Barbie Barton and Ihaia Puketapu.

**Public Business**

**1 Apologies**

*Moved*

*(Cr Donaldson/ Cr Brash)*

*That the Committee accepts the apologies for absence from Cr Laidlaw.*

**2 Declarations of conflict of interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

**3 Public Participation**

Victoria Rhodes-Carlin spoke to items 5 and 6 on the agenda.

Judy McKoy spoke on behalf of Friends of Taupo Swamp, Mana Forest&Bird, Porirua Harbour and catchment community trust, QE2 National Trust, Guardians of the Pauatahanui Inlet and Pukerura Bay Residents Association regarding the protection of wetlands in the Wellington Region.

Andrew Donald spoke to item 7.

Ian Gunn spoke to item 7.

4 **Confirmation of the public minutes of 9 May 2019**

*Moved* (Cr Kedgley/ Cr Blakeley)

*That the Committee confirms the public minutes of the meeting of 9 May 2019, Report 19.182.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

5 **Climate Change Information in the 2018-19 Annual Report**

Tracey Plane, Manager, Strategic and Corporate Planning spoke to the report.

**Report 19.246** File ref: CCAB-10-725

*Moved* (Cr Donaldson/ Cr Blakeley)

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Endorses the proposed approach.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

6 **Climate Change Update**

**Report 19.268** File ref: CCAB-10-730

*Moved* (Cr Blakeley/ Cr Kedgley)

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Requests the Chief Executive to prepare a report to the 25 June Council meeting recommending that Council support the declaration of a climate emergency, as proposed by a recommendation adopted at Council's Climate Change Working Group. This report should note the legislative context; the urgent need to reduce climate emissions and transition to a low carbon economy; the need for greater government action to encourage the electrification of public transport; update of electric vehicles and funding to support climate change adaptation work; the process undertaken by other local governments in New Zealand; the work already underway or planned by Greater Wellington to address climate change; the need to collaborate with iwi and other Councils and the wider community on further implementation of actions to reduce our emissions, and any implications of such a declaration for Greater Wellington.*

*Moved as an amendment (to replace part 3 of the motion)* (Cr Brash/ Cr Staples)



*3. Requests the Chief Executive to prepare a report to the next meeting of the Environment Committee providing options for Council regarding Greater Wellington Regional Council declaring a climate change emergency, as proposed by a recommendation adopted at Council's Climate Change Working Group. This report should note the legislative context; the urgent need to reduce climate emissions and transition to a low carbon economy; the need for greater government action to encourage the electrification of public transport; update of electric vehicles and funding to support climate change adaptation work; the process undertaken by other local governments in New Zealand; the work already underway or planned by Greater Wellington to address climate change; the need to collaborate with iwi and other Councils and the wider community on further implementation of actions to reduce our emission and any implications of such a declaration for Greater Wellington.*

The amendment was **CARRIED**.

The substantive motion was put:

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*
- 3. Requests the Chief Executive to prepare a report to the next meeting of the Environment Committee providing options for Council regarding Greater Wellington Regional Council declaring a climate change emergency, as proposed by a recommendation adopted at Council's Climate Change Working Group. This report should note the legislative context; the urgent need to reduce climate emissions and transition to a low carbon economy; the need for greater government action to encourage the electrification of public transport; update of electric vehicles and funding to support climate change adaptation work; the process undertaken by other local governments in New Zealand; the work already underway or planned by Greater Wellington to address climate change; the need to collaborate with iwi and other Councils and the wider community on further implementation of actions to reduce our emission and any implications of such a declaration for Greater Wellington.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10am and reconvened at 11:30am.

## **7 Te Kāuru Upper Ruamāhanga Floodplain Management Plan**

Bob Francis, Chair of the Te Kāuru Upper Ruamāhanga River Floodplain Management Plan Subcommittee and Wayne O'Donnell, General Manager, Catchment Management introduced the report. They acknowledged Siobhan Garlick and Gary McPhee, members of the subcommittee who have passed away since its formation.

Updated words to sections 4.4.7 and 2.6 of the Floodplain Management Plan were tabled at the meeting.

**Report 19.247**

File ref: CCAB-10-726

*Moved*

*(Cr Staples/ Cr Donaldson)*

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*
- 3. Endorses the Te Kāuru Upper Ruamāhanga Floodplain Management Plan for consideration and adoption by Council, subject to the Te Kāuru Upper Ruamāhanga Floodplain Management Plan documents submitted to Council incorporating any minor amendments considered appropriate by the Chief Executive and Council Chair as an outcome of further engagement with Rangitāne o Wairarapa.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

**8 Review of the Navigation and Safety Bylaws**

Grant Nalder, Manager, Harbours (Harbourmaster) introduced the report.

**Report 19.237**

File ref: CCAB-10-723

*Moved*

*(Cr McKinnon/ Cr Brash)*

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*
- 3. Supports the proposed review process.*
- 4. Agrees that seeking public feedback is the beginning of the review process.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

**9 General Managers' Report**

Barbie Barton, Chair of the Farming Reference Group spoke to this report, updating the Committee about areas of interest to the Farming Reference Group. Ms Barton spoke about the dung beetle release, and how it is a staged approach but is too early to tell whether the population is actually growing. The Farming Reference Group endorses the idea of a biodiversity project but has concerns about the lack of land-owner representation.

**Report 19.202**

File ref: CCAB-10-722

*Moved*

*(Cr Gaylor/Cr Lamason)*

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

The meeting closed at 12:42pm

Cr S Kedgley  
(Chair)

Date:



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**Please note that these minutes remain unconfirmed until the Environment Committee meeting on 8 August 2019.**

**Report 19.252**

11/06/2019

File: CCAB-12-415

**Public minutes of the Te Kāuru Upper Ruamahanga River Floodplain Management Plan Subcommittee meeting held in the Choice Room, Greater Wellington Regional Council, 34 Chapel Street, Masterton, on Tuesday, 11 June 2019 at 3:00pm**

**Present**

Bob Francis (Chair), Councillor Brian Deller (Carterton District Council), Councillor Barbara Donaldson (Greater Wellington Regional Council), Stephanie Gundersen-Reid, (from 3:05pm), David Holmes, Deputy Mayor Graham McClymont (Masterton District Council), Councillor Adrienne Staples (Greater Wellington Regional Council), and Michael Williams.

**Public Business**

**1 Apologies**

*Moved*

*(Mr Holmes/ Cr Staples)*

*That the Subcommittee accepts the apologies for absence from Kate Hepburn, Janine Ogg and Horipo Rimene.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

**2 Conflict of Interest declarations**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

**3 Public Participation**

**4 Confirmation of the minutes of Hearings Subcommittee of 29, 30 April and 22 May 2019 and of the subcommittee meeting on 11 April 2019.**

*Moved*

*(Mr Williams/ Mr Holmes)*

*That the Subcommittee confirms the minutes of 11 April 2019, Report 19.149*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

*Moved*

*(Mr Holmes/ Cr Staples)*

*That the Subcommittee confirms the minutes of the Hearings Subcommittee of 29 and 30 April and 22 May 2019, Report 19.163.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

Stephanie Gundersen-Reid arrived at 3:05pm during consideration of this item.

## 5 **Te Kāuru FMP Phase 2 Summary Report**

Francie Morrow, Project Manager, Floodplain Management Plans, spoke to the report. She advised that it consists of a background and outlines the three phases of the floodplain management planning. The Subcommittee has been through the development options.

**Report 19.229**

File: CCAB-12-399

*Moved*

*(Cr Donaldson/ Mr Williams)*

*That the Subcommittee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*
- 3. Endorses the Te Kāuru Upper Ruamahanga Floodplain Management Plan – Phase 2: Preferred Options Summary Report*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

## 6 **Report of the Te Kāuru Upper Ruamahanga Floodplain Management Plan Hearings Subcommittee**

Francie Morrow, Project Manager, Floodplain Management Plans, spoke to the report. The report outlines the background and process of the hearings and of the submissions received. There have been some updates made since the report was written namely the report being revised to be in line with Masterton District Council community outcomes and there have been some changes made to the wording. The maps for the urban reach of the Waipoua are now labelled as interim.

**Report 19.232**

File: CCAB-12-400

*Moved*

*(Cr Staples/ Mr Holmes)*

*That the Subcommittee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Endorses the recommendations of the Hearings Subcommittee as set out in Section 4.*

The motion was **CARRIED**

**Noted:** The Sub-committee noted the worthwhile process of the hearings and the changes subsequently made to the Flood Management Plan.

7 Te Kāuru Independent Model Audit report

**Report 19.233**

File: CCAB-12-401

*Moved*

*(Cr Staples/ Cr Deller)*

*That the Subcommittee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

The motion was **CARRIED**

8 Te Kāuru Upper Ruamāhanga Floodplain Management Plan

**Report 19.234**

File: CCAB-12-402

*Moved*

*(Mr Holmes/ Cr Deller)*

*That the Subcommittee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Endorses the recommendations of the Hearing Subcommittee to remove the detail of the Waipoua urban area including the flood hazard map. Notes the changes made to the FMP by the Hearings Subcommittee and the further work to be done by officers with the Waipoua Urban River Management Group in the Waipoua urban reach.*
4. *Acknowledges the interim status of the maps.*
5. *Endorses the Te Kāuru Ruamāhanga River Floodplain Management Plan for consideration by the Environment Committee and adoption by Council.*

The motion was **CARRIED**

**Noted:** An email from Subcommittee member Horipo Rimene was read to the meeting.

9 Te Kāuru Upper Ruamahanga FMP Project Manager's Report

**Report 19.235**

File: CCAB-12-403

*Moved*

*(Mr Holmes/ Cr Deller)*

*That the Subcommittee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

The motion was **CARRIED**

The meeting closed at 4:40pm.

Bob Francis  
(Chair)

Date:

**Report** 19.291  
Date 25 June 2019  
File CCAB-10-738

**Committee** Environment Committee  
**Authors** Al Cross, General Manager, Environment Management and  
Wayne O'Donnell, General Manager, Catchment Management

## Action items from previous meetings

**Attachment 1** lists items raised at Environment Committee meetings that require actions or follow-ups from officers. All action items include an outline of current status and a brief comment. Once the items have been completed and reported to the Committee they will be removed from the list.

No decision is being sought in this report. This report is for the Committee's information only.

### Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

Report approved by:

**Al Cross**  
General Manager,  
Environment Management

Report approved by:

**Wayne O'Donnell**  
General Manager, Catchment  
Management

**Attachment 1:** Action items from previous meetings



**Attachment 1 to Report 19.291**

**Action items from previous Environment Committee meetings**

<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Action point</b>	<b>Status and comment</b>
20 June 2019	<p><b>Resolution</b></p> <p><i>Workshop to be arranged to advise councillors about the implications of declaring a climate change emergency.</i></p>	<p><b>Status:</b> <i>in progress</i></p> <p><b>Comments:</b> <i>workshop on 8 August</i></p>
20 June 2019	<p><b>Resolution</b></p> <p><i>An email update to be provided to Committee members regarding the flood warning process and when it will be going live.</i></p>	<p><b>Status:</b> Completed</p> <p><b>Comments:</b> email sent 1 August 2019</p>
20 June 2019	<p><b>Resolution</b></p> <p><i>Report back to the next Environment Committee meeting on all bottling consents.</i></p>	<p><b>Status:</b> Completed</p> <p><b>Comments:</b> refer to report 19.323</p>



**Report** 19.292  
**Date** 8 August 2019  
**File** CCHSTR-5-64

**Committee** Council  
**Author** Andrea Brandon, Programme Lead Climate Change  
Jake Roos, Climate Change Advisor

## What is a Climate Emergency? (Information Paper)

### 1. Purpose

To present background information to the Environment Committee in considering the 'Climate Emergency' movement. This will help inform elected members prior to making a decision on this issue at the 21 August Council meeting.

### 2. Background

At their meeting on 20 May, the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) Climate Change Working Group unanimously agreed that GWRC should join other councils in declaring a climate emergency. On 20 June the Environment Committee considered the recommendation, prepared by Cr Sue Kedgley, Chair of the Environment Committee and Cr Roger Blakeley, Chair of the GWRC Climate Change Working Group. Staff were asked to bring more information to the 8 August Environment Committee meeting.

At the GWRC Climate Change Working Group on 21 June it was agreed that the paper to the Environment Committee would focus on background information related to the climate emergency movement, with a further paper with issues and options presented to the 21 August Council meeting.

### 3. Climate Change

Climate change is arguably the biggest environmental challenge we have ever faced and it affects everyone in the region. It is widely acknowledged that climate change is already impacting ecosystems and communities around the world, with increasingly frequent and severe storms, floods and droughts; melting polar ice sheets; sea level rise and coastal inundation and erosion; and impacts on biodiversity including species loss and extinction.

The 2018 Special Report on the impacts of 1.5 degrees Celsius (°C) of global warming above pre-industrial levels prepared by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concludes: limiting global warming to 1.5°C would

require ‘rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban and infrastructure (including transport and buildings), and industrial systems. Global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) would need to fall by about 45 percent from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching ‘net zero’ around 2050. This means that any remaining emissions would need to be balanced by removing CO<sub>2</sub> from the air’<sup>1</sup>.

The world is currently on course to be approximately 4°C warmer than it was in preindustrial times by the year 2100, a situation that would regularly make outdoor conditions across large areas of the tropics lethal to humans without the protection of air-conditioning, severely reduce global food production and cause multi-metre sea level rise that would inundate large areas of human settlement. This scale of climate disruption is likely to lead to dramatic reductions in human population and eco-system collapse.<sup>2</sup> The probability of this outcome will increase as long as net emissions of greenhouse gases continue.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was established to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere to a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system. Despite a near universal membership of 196 Parties to the UNFCCC, global emissions of human induced greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise. The New Zealand Government’s response to climate change has ramped up over the last 18 months<sup>3</sup> in order to drive a whole of government transition to a low greenhouse gas emissions economy and ensure a climate resilient future.

While these actions are important, there is mounting concern that the urgency required to address climate change, identified in the 2018 IPCC Special Report, requires a more rapid response than either the international or national process will deliver. Concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are now higher than any time in the last 3 million years<sup>4</sup>, and annual global greenhouse emissions, including carbon dioxide and methane, continue to increase as a result of human activities.<sup>5,6</sup>

#### **4. How climate change is impacting the Wellington region**

Greater Wellington Regional Council has commissioned research to analyse tide gauge records in the region in order to understand the trends in local sea level. The research shows that since records began in 1890, sea level has been rising at an average rate of 2.2 mm/yr. That sums up to an increase of nearly 30cm over this period and represents over 30% of the tide range. In addition, records of vertical land motion measured by continuous GPS, show that the region is currently subsiding tectonically at rates equal to that which sea level

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/2018/10/08/summary-for-policymakers-of-ipcc-special-report-on-global-warming-of-1-5c-approved-by-governments/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ipbes.net/news/ipbes-global-assessment-summary-policymakers-pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Initiatives include the proposed Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill, currently before the House, which sets a new emissions reduction target for 2050 and establishes a Climate Change Commission, along with amendments to existing climate change policies to strengthen the national response.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nbcnews.com/mach/science/carbon-dioxide-hits-level-not-seen-3-million-years-here-ncna1005231>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.iea.org/geco/emissions/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://climatenixus.org/climate-change-news/methane-surge/>

is rising, ie, around 2 mm/yr. Thus, at present, the relative sea level trend is effectively double the long term annual average.

This sea-level rise is already having impacts on our activities and infrastructure in coastal areas. The Cook Strait/Wellington areas and the east coast of the region are more vulnerable to storm inundation and rates of coastal erosion due to their smaller tidal range when compared to other parts of New Zealand. We are also seeing an upward trend in temperature across the Wellington Region.

Even if greenhouse gas emissions are stabilised globally, sea-level and average daily temperatures will continue to rise. Rainfall is projected to increase in the west of the Wellington Region and decrease in the east of the region. Heavy rainfall events are projected to increase across the region while inland Wairarapa is likely to become more drought prone. Extreme weather events are predicted to occur more frequently across the region. Changes in ocean acidity may have significant impacts on New Zealand fisheries and aquaculture into the future.

As sea levels rise, total storm inundation levels will threaten low-lying areas of Wellington central city, potentially large areas of Petone and Seaview, and to a limited extent Evans Bay and smaller areas of the Miramar Peninsula. Along the Kapiti Coast, sea level rise and total storm inundation levels will threaten Otaki Beach, low-lying areas of Waikanae and Paraparaumu Beach, and narrow margins of the Porirua Harbour, especially the CBD.

More importantly, these changes will all impact on our core business. Changes to the climate will exacerbate the impacts and risks on Wellington Region's indigenous biodiversity, primary industries, biosecurity, fresh water security and wildfire incidence. Our coastal, low lying and flood prone communities and infrastructure will become more vulnerable. In fact, no one will be immune, as both rural and urban economies and communities in the Wellington region are being and will be more adversely affected as time goes on.

## 5. What is a Climate Emergency?

The concept of a 'Climate Emergency' and the 'Climate Mobilisation Movement' were first described in a paper Published in April 2016 by United States-based psychologist Dr Margaret Klein Salamon.<sup>7</sup> She and the activist groups that form the broad 'climate mobilisation movement', such as the Extinction Rebellion, School Strike 4 Climate and the Sunrise Movement define their objectives as:

*'...for governments to declare a climate emergency and mobilise society-wide resources at sufficient scale and speed to protect civilisation, the economy, people, species, and ecosystems (from the climate crisis).'*

The goals of the movement are:

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.theclimatemobilization.org/emergency-mode>

- To build public awareness that we are in a climate emergency which threatens life as we know it
- To demand that governments declare a climate emergency as a public signal indicating that governments and society will be mobilised in emergency mode until the emergency passes; and
- To demand a climate mobilisation of sufficient scale and speed to protect everything we want to protect<sup>8</sup>

Proponents of declaring a climate emergency explicitly cite the USA’s society-wide mobilisation to defeat the Axis powers during World War II as the example of the scale, speed and competency which is required to successfully address the climate crisis. They characterise an emergency response as being starkly different from ‘business as usual’, in that addressing the emergency becomes the affected societies’ number one priority, rather than just one of many competing priorities.

Recently Prof Joseph Stiglitz, recipient of the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2001, voiced his support for a WWII-style climate emergency mobilisation, saying ‘the climate emergency is our third world war’.<sup>9</sup>

In more recent work, Klein Salamon (2019)<sup>10</sup> examines the theoretical discussion of what emergency mode is, compared with the normal business-as-usual mode, to illuminate what actions would look like if a climate emergency is declared (see Table 1).

**Table 1 - Characterisation of ‘normal mode’ versus ‘emergency mode’**

	<b>Normal mode</b>	<b>Emergency mode</b>
<b>Priorities</b>	Many balanced priorities	Solving the crisis = One top priority
<b>Resources</b>	Distributed across priorities and saved for future	Huge allocation of resources towards solution
<b>Focus</b>	Distributed across priorities	Laser-like focus
<b>Self-esteem source</b>	Individual accomplishment	Contributing to the solution

### 5.1 What are the legal implications of declaring a climate emergency?

There is no legal definition of the term ‘climate emergency’ in New Zealand legislation (eg, under the Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act 2002). As the declaration has no legal status, there is no precise definition of what constitutes action to meet such an emergency.

<sup>8</sup> <https://climateemergencydeclaration.org/about/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jun/04/climate-change-world-war-iii-green-new-deal>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.theclimatemobilization.org/emergency-mode>

As far as we are aware, declaring a climate emergency does not carry any legal obligations on the organisation declaring it. However, legal liability regarding climate change is a very complex issue.

In March this year, Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) commissioned Jack Hodder QC to look at the legal risks that councils faced by either recognising or ignoring the threat of climate change in their decision-making. He found a growing number of cases brought by frustrated communities and individuals around the world, and concluded it was only a matter of time before similar actions were taken here.<sup>11</sup> It has just been announced that the Thames-Coromandel District Council is being taken to court over its decision in April **not** to sign a declaration on climate change.<sup>12</sup>

## 5.2 The reaction to the declarations

There have been positive and negative reactions to governments and councils declaring climate emergencies. Key themes are that it is a symbolic, political, but empty gesture on the negative side through to being seen as an important step in increasing action for climate change. Professor Bronwyn Hayward, a Lead Author of the 2018 IPCC Special Report, warned that the use of alarmist language can induce paralysis and panic rather than action. Links have been made to a decline in mental health as people feel hopeless about the enormity of the problem, a condition that has been called 'climate grief'. Some communities are more vulnerable than others, and contributing to their grief could have negative consequences for mobilising action. There will equally be consequences for communities where no action is taken to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Declaring a climate emergency does serve a purpose as a 'call to action' that has moral and leadership force. The current surge in declarations has certainly raised the profile of climate change and brought the issue into focus in the media.

## 6. Who has declared?

The first government body to declare a 'climate emergency' was the municipality of Darebin in Melbourne, Australia in December 2016. As of 1 July 2019, 717 jurisdictions in 16 countries have declared a climate emergency. Populations covered by jurisdictions that have declared climate emergencies amount to over 135 million citizens, with 40 million of these living in the United Kingdom<sup>13</sup> <sup>14</sup>. Cities making declarations include London, Bristol, Vancouver and Basel.

At the time of writing this paper, eleven councils in New Zealand had declared, including four in the Wellington region (ie, the Kāpiti Coast District Council, Wellington City Council, Hutt City Council and Porirua City Council) and three regional government organisations (ie, Environment Canterbury,

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/Uploads/f488365773/Climate-change-litigation-Whos-afraid-of-creative-judges.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.msn.com/en-nz/news/national/council-taken-to-court-over-lack-of-action-on-climate-change/ar-AADMuKE?ocid=spartandhp>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.caceonline.org/councils-that-have-declared.html>

<sup>14</sup> These statistics are increasing on a daily basis and are likely underreporting the true numbers taking this action

Auckland Council and Hawkes Bay Regional Council). Many other councils across New Zealand are also considering making declarations.

On 28 May 2019 Green Party Member of Parliament (MP) Chloe Swarbrick attempted to pass a motion to declare a national climate emergency in Parliament, but this was defeated by opposition MPs.

### **6.1 What additional actions have been taken by those declaring climate emergencies? Have they switched into emergency mode?**

The level of increased ambition announced by the New Zealand councils that have declared a climate emergency to date has been variable. Some have announced new and additional actions while others have referred to their existing work programmes upon declaring their emergencies. The most common additional action has been decisions to set targets for reducing emissions.

Beyond New Zealand's shores, we see a similar range of responses to the climate emergency declarations by various national and sub-national jurisdictions. The most common additional action has been to announce an emissions reduction target of some sort at the same time as the declaration.

None of the actions taken following these declarations could be considered as reflective of an emergency mode (Table 1). We have not seen a single response that has elevated climate change to its government's or council's top priority, or mobilised 'huge' resources, with a laser-like focus.

Announcing a climate emergency, therefore, has no precedent set that would require unprecedented action, the reprioritising of resources and/or decisions to stop funding projects to be taken.

GWRC is taking considerable action on the climate crisis (see [Attachment 1](#)) when compared with most other councils around the country, as shown in a recent stocktake of climate change mitigation activities taken by LGNZ<sup>15</sup>. One exception is that GWRC does not have any formal emissions reductions goals, either for the organisation or for the region. A carbon neutrality target for the organisation is however being considered.

## **7. Next steps**

GWRC is holding an emissions reduction target workshop on 9 August to agree a target for the organisation.

Following the workshop, officers will prepare a paper for the 21 August Council meeting that will take a regional view of the actions GWRC could take, including:

1. Internal actions, the organisation's carbon neutral target and cost implications (largely on mitigation)

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/Uploads/f4cafb5ec0/46628-LGNZ-Summary-of-Emission-Reduction-7-Proof-FINAL.pdf>

2. Regional actions, influence and collaboration (which also includes adaptation)
3. Our role in Central government advocacy (mitigation and adaptation); and
4. Tabling any recommendations from the 8 August Environment Committee meeting including whether to declare a climate emergency or not

## **8. Recommendations**

*That the Environment Committee:*

1. *Receives the report*
2. *Notes the content of the report*
3. *Notes that GWRC is holding an emissions reduction target workshop on 9 August*
4. *Notes that a full paper will be prepared to go to Council on 21 August*

Report prepared by:	Report prepared by:	Report approved by:	Report approved by:
<b>Jake Roos</b> Consultant	<b>Andrea Brandon</b> Programme Lead Climate Change	<b>Tracy Plane</b> Manager, Strategic & Corporate Planning	<b>Luke Troy</b> General Manager, Strategy

**Attachment 1: GWRC's existing climate change work programme**



## Attachment 1 GWRC's existing climate change work programme

GWRC recognises the significant role we play in responding to climate change and the challenges that brings to our region. The effects of climate change carry tough economic and social implications for our communities, with increased risks to settlements, infrastructure and ecosystems from rising seas, storms and flooding.

GWRC's strategic approach to climate change is to align and coordinate climate change actions across GW's responsibilities and operations. We have created a climate change strategy for the region. Our strategy is to build on work programmes already underway, raise awareness of climate change drivers and impacts, and help to co-ordinate regional effort through collaboration and partnerships. Actions that have been implemented or are in progress are summarised below within three key strategic areas:

- 1. Cleaning up our own act**
- 2. Working with others in the region to influence emissions reductions and improve our resilience**
- 3. Advocating for action**

#### **Cleaning up our own act**

GWRC is acting to reduce GHG emissions across all its areas of influence, including its own operations. The following actions have been taken or are underway:

- Climate change effects must be considered in all council and committee reports, and officers are provided with guidance and training on how to carry this out
- GWRC's treasury risk management policy has been amended to drive the divestment from any direct investment in fossil fuel extraction industries and investigate existing non-direct investment, with a view to prevent future investment where practical
- Establishing a GWRC Climate Change Working Group
- GWRC has an electric-first vehicle policy for all corporate fleet renewals
- Planning for substantial reforestation on its land as a part of the One Billion Trees programme
- Setting a target date for achieving carbon neutral status as an organisation
- Taking the opportunities to minimise emissions of its new central Wellington offices, joining the CEMARS emissions management and reduction scheme and disclosing its climate relating risks through the Carbon Disclosure Project, and to be included in the Annual Report recognising Council's fiduciary duty

- Announcing its ambition to be the first region in New Zealand with an all-electric bus fleet, and through the recent procurement process, has facilitated the introduction of 10 electric double-decker buses to Wellington, with a commitment to introduce another 10 in 2020 and a further 12 in 2021
- Influencing the procurement process for the new bus operating contracts, resulting in over 50% of the regions oldest buses being replaced with modern low emission buses delivering improvements in both environmental and customer experience outcomes
- Developing of a pathway to transition to a fully electric bus fleet

### **Working with others to reduce emissions and improve regional resilience**

GWRC understands the importance of working alongside others to achieve resilience and ease the transition to a low emissions economy for our region. We are actively pursuing opportunities to build climate action by working with others through the following projects:

- Commissioned NIWA to prepare a "Wellington Region climate change projections and impacts" report in 2017. Convening the Wellington Region Climate Change Working Group, made up of elected representatives of the nine Wellington Councils
- Supporting various collaborative projects that have emerged from this group on both mitigation and adaptation, including the coastal adaptation subgroup, the draft EV Support Strategy and the 2050 Emissions Calculator
- Leading the Regional Natural Hazards Strategy and since 2010 has included climate change considerations in its flood hazard assessments (ie, increased rainfall intensity and sea level rise)
- Providing data and research on projected regional climate impacts across the region including:
  - Publishing seasonal climate updates on the website
  - Providing a regional sea level rise and storm surge impact modelling tool
- Investing in high quality public transport services throughout the region
- Partnering in the Lets Get Wellington Moving programme, the transformation of the transport network in Wellington City, including a substantial shift to public transport, walking and cycling
- Developing a coastal erosion plan for Queen Elizabeth Park
- Influencing its CCOs and investments to manage their greenhouse gas emissions
- Convening the Wellington Region Erosion Control Initiative, running the Warm Greater Wellington home insulation scheme and the Take Charge business pollution prevention programme, participating in the Permanent Forests Sink Initiative and undertaking riparian and wetland protection and planting programmes

### **Advocating for action**

GWRC regularly takes part in advocacy (for example to central government, and via proposed remits to LGNZ) to encourage others to increase their efforts in addressing the climate crisis.

Specific actions include:

- submitting to the Environment Select Committee on the proposed Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill
- submitting to Local Government New Zealand's Climate Change Mitigation Reference Group on the stocktake of Council's actions related to climate change mitigation, and the sector's position on the topic
- submitting to the Ministry for the Environment on amendments proposed to the Emissions Trading Scheme (NZ ETS) and PFSI settings
- the submission of Remit to 2018 AGM of Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ): "GWRC asks that LGNZ, consistent with the Local Government Position Statement on Climate Change 2017 and the Local Government Leaders' Climate Change Declaration 2017, advocate to all major banks that they transition away from investments in fossil fuel industries, and consider opportunities for long-term investments in low- or zero-carbon energy systems." The Remit was lost by 5% of vote
- the submission of Remit to 2019 AGM of LGNZ: "That LGNZ recommends to Government that they establish an independent experts group to develop a new funding policy framework for adapting to climate change impacts as recommended by the Climate Change Adaptation Technical Working Group (CCATWG). This new experts group would be supported by a secretariat and stakeholder advisory group." The Remit was passed by 95% of vote

GWRC has five staff who effectively work on climate change-related matters. These are the Programme Lead – Climate Change (1.0 FTE), Climate Change Advisor (0.8 FTE), Senior Environmental Scientist (Climate Change) (1.0 FTE), Senior Policy Advisor (Hazards) (1.0 FTE) and Sustainability Coordinator (0.6 FTE). These staff work across all of GWRC's business to lead and advise on climate change opportunities and risks.



**Report** 19.311 - Climate Change Working Group Update  
**Date** 8 August 2019  
**File** CCHSTR-5-80

**Committee** Environment  
**Author** Suze Keith, Climate Change Advisor  
Andrea Brandon, Climate Change Programme Lead

## Climate Change Working Group Update

### 1 Purpose

To update the Environment Committee following the latest meetings of the Wellington Region Climate Change Working Group and the Greater Wellington Regional Council Climate Change Working Group.

### 2 Background

Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), along with the region's city and district councils, established a Wellington Region Climate Change Working Group (WRCCWG) in 2017. GWRC convenes and chairs the group, which comprises a councillor from each council across the region and three iwi members nominated by Ara Tahi.

GWRC also has a Climate Change Working Group. This group meets every 6-8 weeks to discuss climate change matters.

The Committee has requested regular updates on the two working groups.

### 3 Updates from working groups

#### 3.1 Wellington Region Climate Change Working Group

The WRCCWG provides a forum for councils and iwi to network, discuss issues, share information and, where appropriate, achieve a consistent approach across all jurisdictions on climate change mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation (preparing for impacts such as sea level rise, drought and enhanced natural hazards effects). The WRCCWG is supported by two officer-level groups, the Low Carbon Transition Steering Group (mitigation) and the Natural Hazards Strategy Working Group (adaptation). It also has formed a sub-group of both councillors and officers to develop a plan for community-led coastal adaptation planning.

The WRCCWG met on June 17 during which:

- A panel discussed the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill, providing input for council submissions;
- Updates on the coastal vulnerability assessment, the Low-carbon transition steering group and Electric Vehicle Support Strategy were presented; and,
- Councils reported on their current climate-change-related work programmes.

During the meeting it was established that there was a high level of overall support for the Zero Carbon Bill and that the majority of councils were doing some form of submission. The group established that there were some common concerns regarding the Bill, including:

- The absence of an inclusive role for local government in mitigation and adaptation;
- The exclusion of adaptation in the purpose section of the Bill;
- The duplication of reporting requirements for local government;
- That a cascade of policy amendments is required to enable local government to respond and that needs to happen rapidly; and,
- Consideration of the necessary reallocation of resourcing, and, that equity and just principles are embedded in the decision-making.

With regards to the coastal vulnerability assessment, the group discussed that the social context has changed, with communities ready to hold hard conversations about climate change adaptation and there is a growing call for action. Next steps are to release the coastal vulnerability assessment and use it and the sea level rise and storm surge tools to drive a consistent regional response. The coastal vulnerability assessment was presented to the Mayors on 21 June with the intention of a collective release on 27 June.

There has been a widespread response to the call for declaring a climate emergency, with Kāpiti Coast District Council (KCDC), Porirua City Council (PCC), Hutt City Council (HCC), Wellington City Council (WCC) having made the declaration. In addition:

- KCDC are briefing their iwi governance group to start their coastal adaptation process;
- PCC are drafting their climate change strategy;
- WCC received 1200 submissions, many from young people, on their Atakura – First to Zero Blueprint, and,
- Wairarapa councils are joining up to employ a climate change officer; Masterton District Council are CEMARs accredited, with first audit shortly;

Carterton District Council are hosting a Resilient Thinking Workshop and South Wairarapa District Council received a high level of climate change-related submissions to their annual plan consultation.

### **3.2 Greater Wellington Regional Council Climate Change Working Group**

At the 24 June meeting, the Working Group discussed the mechanisms for increasing the profile of climate change in annual plan and annual reporting processes, including how GWRC's recent membership of Carbon Disclosure Project can and can't fit with standardised local government reporting.

The group also discussed writing a letter to the Ministers of Transport and Climate Change to advocate for the introduction of policies to ramp up the uptake the electric vehicles in New Zealand. This has since been partially addressed through the introduction of the Clean Car Standard and Clean Car Discount policies, and as such GWRC will be submitting on these policies (deadline 20 August 2019).

The Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) remit, regarding the establishment of an independent expert group to progress the development of a new funding policy framework for adapting to climate change impacts (as recommended by the Ministry for the Environment Climate Change Adaptation Technical Working Group), received 95% support at the LGNZ Annual General Meeting.

The Zero Carbon Council Workshop scheduled for 9 August was discussed, including the identification of key note speakers and confirmation that Rod Oram will facilitate the day's work. The purpose of the workshop is to set a corporate emissions reduction target for GWRC, and all councillors, Executive Leadership Team (ELT) members and a representation of staff from across the organisation have been invited.

The timing and process for the group to propose that GWRC declares a climate change emergency was agreed with a background paper going to the Environment Committee on August 8 and a broader report to full Council on August 21. The report will include the decisions reached at the Zero Carbon Council workshop held August 9.

The submission to the Zero Carbon Bill was discussed, with initial feedback offered and agreement made to run an Environment Committee Workshop to seek input from others.

Cr Brash reported that she would be attending, in her role on the Water Committee, a climate change workshop with Wellington Water (WWL) on 12 July. The purpose of the workshop is to explore WWL's response to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

## **4 Communication**

No external communication is proposed as an outcome of the consideration of this report.

## 5 Consideration of climate change

The matters addressed in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the Greater Wellington's Climate Change Consideration Guide. Because this report addresses the actions of Greater Wellington's Climate Change Strategy directly, climate change assessments are not required.

## 7 The decision-making process and significance

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act).

### 7.1 Significance of the decision

Part 6 requires GWRC to consider the significance of the decision. The term 'significance' has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

### 7.2 Engagement

No engagement is required.

## 8 Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

**Suze Keith**  
Climate Change Advisor

**Andrea Brandon**  
Programme Lead – Climate  
Change

Report approved by:

**Tracy Plane**  
Manager, Corporate &  
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**Luke Troy**  
General Manager, Strategy



**Report** 19.323  
**Date** 31 July 2019  
**File** CCAB-10-749

**Committee** Environment Committee  
**Authors** Jude Chittock and Mike Thompson

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to outline the basis for our water management regime, and explain how we apply this to water take consent processing, decision making and compliance monitoring.

## 2. Background

Due to recent media attention on water bottling in the Wellington region the Environment Committee requested a paper describing our water management regime around water take consenting and monitoring across the region. It was also requested that we provide detail about the current state of effects from water bottling consents.

## 3. Water management regime and water take consenting and monitoring

### 3.1 National and regional policy drivers for water management

For background, the higher order planning instruments directing management of water takes are as set out below. These planning documents set out how we as a regional council have to consider applications for water takes. Our regulatory role is effectively constrained by these documents:

#### *The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)*

Section 14 of the RMA generally restricts the taking, use, damming or diverting of water unless the water is for an individual's reasonable domestic needs or animal drinking water and does not have an adverse effect on the environment.

Section 30 of the RMA gives regional councils responsibility to control the taking, use, damming, and diversion of water, and control the quantity, level and flow of any water body. If appropriate, regional councils can establish rules in a regional plan to allocate the take and use of water.



Allocation of water is on a first come first served basis. The RMA does not focus on who uses water and why. It is effects based legislation. To be able to control who uses water there would need to be an environmental effect that needs addressing.

***The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014 (amended 2017) (NPS-FM)***

The NPS-FM requires regional councils to establish objectives and limits for fresh water in their regional plans. In the Wellington Region, the NPS-FM is primarily being implemented through the Whaitua process.

***The Regional Policy Statement 2013 (RPS)***

The RPS identifies that; the ecosystem function of some rivers, lakes and wetlands has been impaired by activities such as taking water from rivers and groundwater connected to rivers, wetlands and springs, and there is an increasing demand on limited water resources. The RPS has objectives and policies relating to water allocation.

***Regional Freshwater Plan 1999 (RFP) and Proposed Natural Resources Plan (PNRP)***

The RFP includes water allocation limits, minimum flows and water levels, and management units. The RFP is being replaced by the PNRP which includes:

- a region-wide framework for allocating water that addresses minimum flows, allocation limits (core allocation) efficient use of water and managing adverse effects, and
- application of a region wide framework to catchments in the Whaitua chapters

As more data and knowledge have been collected over time in the Wellington region, significant advances have been made in developing models (by Council scientists and technical experts) since 2005 that better define and quantify surface/groundwater connectivity for the Ruamāhanga, Hutt and Kāpiti catchments.

The PNRP identifies two sources of water available (1) from rivers, lakes and areas of groundwater directly connected to rivers and lakes; and (2) from areas of groundwater not directly connected to surface water

These two sources of water are referred to in the PNRP as “core allocation for surface water” and “core allocation for groundwater”. As shown in Figure 1, groundwater that is directly connected with surface water is allocated with surface water in the same bucket. Groundwater that is not directly connected to surface water is allocation within a separate groundwater bucket.

# Allocation buckets

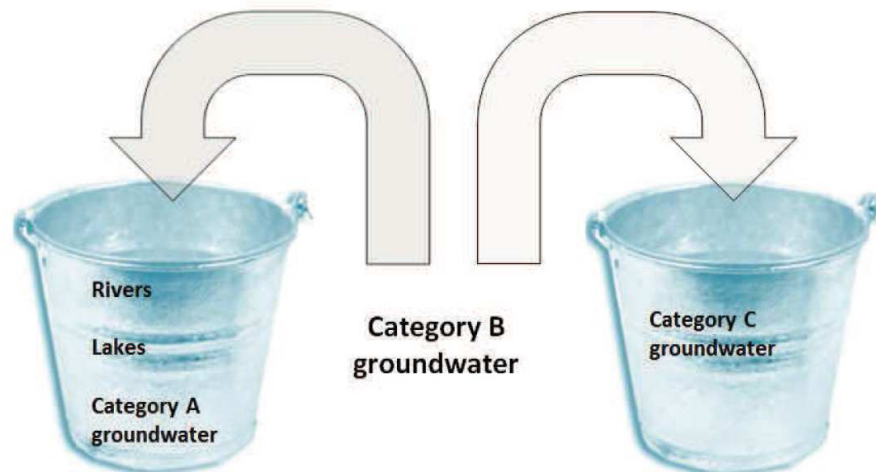


Figure 1: the core allocation “buckets”

New policies and rules exist under the PNRP which *take a more rigorous approach to water allocation* including ensuring the health needs of people have priority of use during times of water shortage. Apart from the health needs of people, there is no particular priority afforded to differing uses of water.

## 3.2 Water take consent process and decisions

When someone has determined that a resource consent is required under our regional plans, they prepare an application and submit it to GWRC for consideration. Anyone can apply for a resource consent for any purpose, including overseas interests. There are no grounds in the RMA to reject or decline an application on nationality.

Applications for resource consents must include an assessment of environmental effects that will occur as a result of the activity and assess whether the proposed abstraction is consistent with the objectives and policies of the RFP and PNRP.

The following matters are considered when making decisions on water take applications:

- Whether the allocation of water remains within a sustainable limit (see section 3.4.3 below as to how allocation limits are determined)
- Whether the amount of water requested is reasonable and an efficient use of water. (There are policies to assist assessing this e.g. irrigation rate, water conservation, efficient use criteria and unused water)
- Localised effects – groundwater interference effects, depletion effects on wetlands, downstream effects on other users,

- Effects on surface water and minimum flows
- Salt water intrusion
- Effects on ecological values
- Effects on cultural values

It is not our role to make a judgment on the merits of the purpose for which the water is sought. As stated above the RMA and Council's ability to impose controls under it do not focus on who uses water and why. It is effects based legislation. To be able to control who uses water there would need to be an environmental effect that needs addressing.

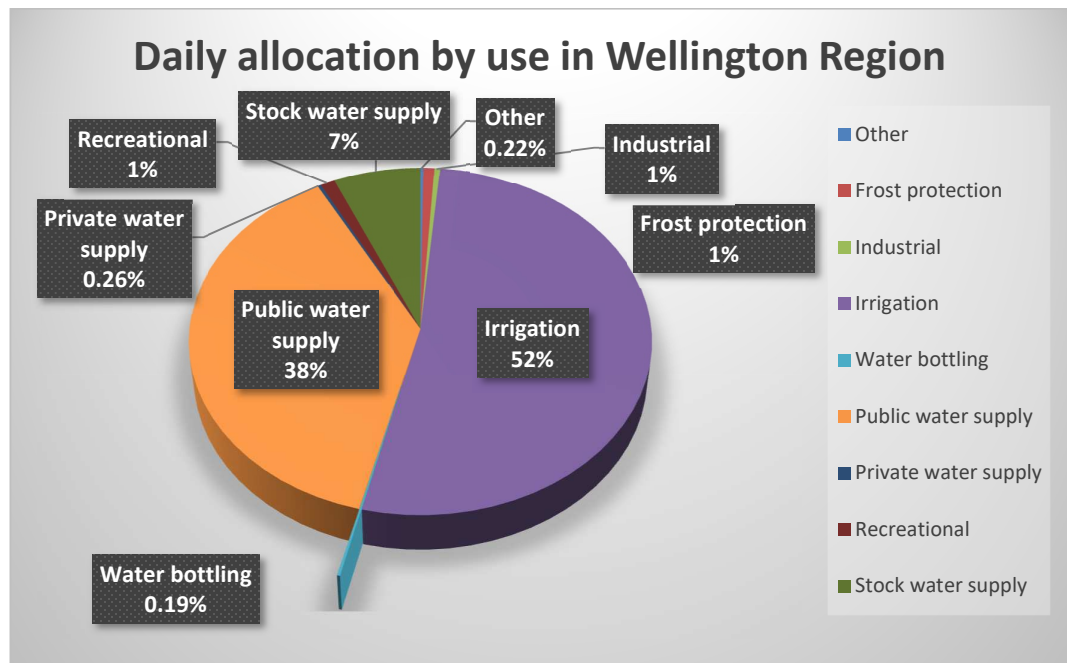
We have developed a standard set of consent conditions that apply to the vast majority of water take consents. These conditions include:

- Specifying the maximum rate of take
- Limiting abstraction to ensure minimum flows are protected if the water take is from a river, stream, or groundwater area directly connected to a water body.
- Requiring a water measuring device (water meter) for any take over 5 litres/sec and verification of that device
- Standards for reporting water take records e.g. from telemetered 'live' water data to daily/weekly water take records submitted once a year
- Review conditions if certain situations arise e.g. seasonal groundwater or surface water requirements change, and a change to minimum flows

A water take consent is issued commonly for 5-15 years. The main driver for the consent term is the common expiry date for differing catchments and groundwater management zones.

### **3.3 Water use in the Wellington region**

There are nearly 600 consents to take and use water in the Wellington region. The majority of consents are for irrigation purposes. There are three consents for water bottling purposes, with the vast majority of the water allocated in the Wellington region being for public water supply or for irrigation purposes. Based on daily allocation, water bottling represents only 0.19% of the total amount of water allocated in the Wellington Region, as shown in the graph below:



### 3.4 Water bottling

#### 3.4.1 Current water bottling consents

The water bottling consents are located in the Upper Hutt Groundwater Zone (Heretaunga Water Limited) and the Lower Hutt Groundwater Zone/Waiwhetu Aquifer (Petone Property Holdings Ltd and Petone Pure water Company Ltd). The table below sets out the amount of water that can be allocated from these groundwater zones (as specified in the regional plans), the percentage that is currently allocated, and the proportion that is allocated for water bottling purposes.

Groundwater Zone	Amount of water available for allocation (m3/year) as specified in the regional plan	Percentage of allocation limit that has been allocated	Percentage of allocated water that is authorised for water bottling
Lower Hutt Groundwater Zone/Waiwhetu Aquifer	36,500,000	86.3% (c. 83% is allocated for public water supply)	2.6%
Upper Hutt Groundwater Zone	770,000	40.1%	23.3%

#### 3.4.2 Current water bottling consent applications

There are currently two applications being processed (as at 29 July 2019):

**Petone Pure Water Company Limited** – lodged an application on 1 March 2018 to renew an existing consent (as mentioned above). This consent is for taking and using groundwater for water bottling purposes from a bore located at Jackson Street Gear Island, Petone. GWRC are currently awaiting further

information on the location of the bore of the proposed water take as this may have changed since the original proposal. The applicant originally applied for the same amount of water (as outlined in the table above) although may now be increasing this. No decision has been made on this consent application yet.

**20-24 Hautonga Street Limited** – lodged an application on 28 June 2019 for a new consent to take groundwater from a bore located at 20-24 Hautonga Street in Petone for water bottling purposes. The application is to take groundwater at maximum rate of 20 litres/second 24 hours a day, 8,640 m<sup>3</sup>/week with an annual volume of 432,000m<sup>3</sup>/year (1.2% of the overall allocation limit for the Lower Hutt groundwater zone (as a comparison the public water supply allocation in this groundwater zone is 83% of the total allocation limit)). The applicant is seeking a consent period of 30 years. This application is currently being considered by GWRC. A decision on whether the application will be notified has not yet been made, and as such no decision has been made on this consent application.

An update on the current state of this application will be provided at Environment Committee.

### 3.4.3 Allocation and monitoring

#### **Developing and setting allocation limits**

Allocation limits (or ‘amounts’ as they are described in the PNRP) have been set across the region for major catchments and groundwater zones. In general terms, these limits (and their associated rules) are based upon consideration of one or more of the following:

- Typical river base flow in summer when water demand is highest;
- Average annual catchment rainfall;
- Aquifer water levels and, in particular, saline intrusion risks;
- Cumulative effects.

In developing provisions for the PNRP, a series of technical programmes including groundwater modelling were undertaken to determine metrics across the region for the above parameters. These metrics were then used in combination with other knowledge about catchment/aquifer risk to establish proportions of allocable flow from rivers and streams and groundwater.

Information for setting allocation limits is never perfect due to the complex and dynamic nature of water systems and decisions. Science is improving all the time, as is information about the community values attached to the water resources. The Whaitua process will provide a good opportunity to bring up-to-date thinking into the allocation management regime and make changes to limits as appropriate.

At the time the allocation limits were introduced to the PNRP, climate change was not explicitly or quantitatively accounted for. This was for two reasons. Firstly, there were generally no signals in monitoring data of rapid and systematic changes occurring in the availability of water resources, and secondly, because climate change projection information was insufficiently downscaled for the region to be particularly useful for allocation limit setting. However, it is important to note that risks associated with a drying climate are not ignored in the overall approach to managing water takes. For example, groundwater allocation limits have been geared towards ensuring sustainable supply during successive dry years rather than average years and minimum flow policies in rivers and streams ensure that the risk of a drying climate is carried more by water users (i.e. they will have to restrict or cease take more often) than instream values. Furthermore, the general approach to grant shorter consent terms than in the past allows new climate change science to be factored into allocation limit revisions within time frames that appropriately mitigate risk.

In recent years more detailed climate change projection data has become available for the region. This new information has been taken into account by the Ruamahanga whitua committee when reviewing allocation limits and it is anticipated that other committees (including the Wellington and Hutt Valley) will do the same.

The groundwater and surface water resources in the Hutt Valley was reviewed in July 2015 (in report: *Conjunctive water management recommendations for the Hutt Valley*, Gyopari 2015) and this information was used to inform sustainable allocation limits for groundwater zones in the PNRP. The review resulted in the groundwater allocation limit in the Upper Hutt aquifer system being reduced very substantially from 26.9 million m<sup>3</sup>/year to 0.77 million m<sup>3</sup>/year. The basis for this reduction was recognition of the potential impact of groundwater takes on the Hutt River (as discussed in Section 3.1). The new PNRP limit ensures that the total cumulative depletion effect of groundwater takes in the Upper Hutt zone does not exceed about 1% of a summer low flow. While not explicitly based on climate change objectives, the reduction of the allocation limit in Upper Hutt is consistent with taking a more cautious view on future water availability.

For the Lower Hutt aquifer (Waiwhetu Aquifer), the groundwater allocation limit was increased slightly from 33 million m<sup>3</sup>/year to 36.5 million m<sup>3</sup>/year. This was based on a new understanding of the yield (from revised groundwater modelling) that could be sustained by the aquifer before the risk of salt water being drawn in became unacceptable. However, it is noted that the increased groundwater allocation volume (36.5 Mm<sup>3</sup>/yr) can only be fully utilised if there is surface water allocation also available (due to the connection between the ground and surface water resources).

In addition to the revised groundwater allocation limits, the PNRP also introduces a new surface water allocation limit for the Hutt River (the RFP did not specify an allocation limit for this river). The limit is 2,140 litres/sec and has been determined as a proportion (50%) of mean annual low flow. Current allocation via resource consent, including all depletions associated with

connected groundwater takes, is 2,425 litres/sec and therefore no further surface water is available to allocate. This also means that new groundwater takes from both the Upper and Lower Hutt aquifers will be constrained to those that either demonstrate a low connection to surface water or are small.

### **Environment monitoring**

Monitoring of allocation is generally undertaken at catchment and aquifer scale (rather than local to each consented abstraction) using the GWRC state of environment monitoring network. This network comprises about 50 river and stream flow sites, 15 wetland and lake level sites and 150 groundwater bores. Periodic reviews of data (for example, in 2011 a region-wide report and whaitua specific reports more recently) focus on whether any patterns in flows and levels are suggestive of non-sustainable allocation. For example, declining summer low flows over time that cannot be explained by natural climate trends would be cause for concern and would be further investigated.

This type of monitoring informs us about the cumulative impact of abstractions in a catchment or groundwater zone and helps assess whether allocation limits for those zones are appropriate. Additionally, sometimes monitoring of local streams or groundwater levels by a consent holder is also required to provide more specific information about the effects of their particular activity on water resources.

We currently monitor water levels in one bore in the Upper Hutt aquifer. This is the Trentham Memorial bore located about 1.4km to the south of the water bottling site in Upper Hutt (Heretaunga Water Ltd). Monitoring records shows no systematic or significant trend in time since 1994 to now that would suggest non-sustainable allocation is occurring. Between 2006 and 2015 GWRC also monitored a bore at the Heretaunga Water Ltd site (when it was under Coca cola ownership). Again no systematic or significant trend over that time was observable in the data.

Rainfall and river flow data monitoring show no significant change in long term patterns of recharge to the aquifer (which determines water availability).

GWRC have a saline intrusion risk management framework for the Lower Hutt Groundwater Zone (GWRC, 2015). This framework relies on the following principles:

- Maintaining minimum groundwater levels along the Petone foreshore
- Maintaining a positive offshore hydraulic gradient; and
- Direct detection of water quality changes (increase in salinity).

The management of the aquifer is based on trigger levels using 24-hour average levels at McEwan Park and TS Tamatoa. The groundwater gradients are also monitored between McEwan Park and Somes Island and TS Tamatoa and Somes Island, as well as on shore.

Monitoring records shows no systematic or significant cases of minimum groundwater levels along the Petone foreshore, or development of negative gradient and also no significant changes have been observed in groundwater salinity that would suggest non-sustainable allocation is occurring.

### **3.5 Compliance monitoring**

GWRC operates a Strategic Compliance monitoring programme. This means that we do not monitor every active resource consent, but we focus our monitoring on activities with higher risk. For water take consents, this means that we do not monitor low risk water take consents. These are generally takes less than 5 litres/sec in catchments or aquifers with low allocation pressure. However all other water take consents are monitored currently on an annual basis. Monitoring is primarily completed by auditing water take records to ensure consent holders comply with all their limits specified in the consent conditions. All three water bottling consents are monitored annually by GWRC.

### **3.6 What's happening at Environment Canterbury (ECan)?**

In 2018 Aotearoa Water Action challenged in the High Court ECan's decisions regarding three water bottling consents. In October last year the determination on the first part of the dual challenge was released. The determination related to whether the three water permits which had historically been used by a wool scour and freezing works could be used for water bottling.

The consents had been issued for 'industrial use' and were transferred to Cloud Ocean Water Ltd and Rapaki Natural Resource Ltd in 2016 and 2017. Central to the High Court's preliminary decision was whether water take consents are somewhat generic - can an ambiguous "industrial" consent be used for water bottling for export if the same quantity of water is abstracted?

The judge found that while the water permits had been issued for 'industrial use', the consent applications detailed proposals to take water for use at a freezing works and a wool scour and it was this detail that defined the scope of the application. The consents held by the companies cannot be used for large-sale water bottling operations.

The challenge also considered whether bottling water for export could be said to be an 'industrial use'. Although it had been determined that the consents could not be used for water bottling, the question was addressed for completeness. The judge determined that a water bottling plant could be said to be an 'industrial activity'. He noted that this does not alter the fact that the bottling of water for export is a very different sort of activity from operating a freezing works or wool scour.

The High Court decision confirms that water permits can only be used for the purpose specified in the consent application. Should consent holders wish to use the water for a different purpose (including those who have acquired a permit through a consent transfer) then an application to change their water



permit or for a new water permit is required. GWRC's practice is already consistent with this approach.

We have reviewed the consent applications for the three water bottling consents within the region and confirm that the application documentation for all three consents details proposals to take water specifically for commercial water bottling.

The second part of the High Court challenge by Aotearoa Water Action is whether Environment Canterbury's decision on new consents for water bottling were processed in accordance with the RMA. This is currently still before the court.

#### **4. Communication**

No external communication is proposed as an outcome of the consideration of this report.

#### **5. The decision-making process and significance**

No decision is being sought in this report.

##### **5.1 Engagement**

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

#### **6. Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*



<b>Report</b>	<b>19.310</b>
Date	1 August 2019
File	CCAB-10-751
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Environment Committee</b>
<b>Authors</b>	<b>Lucy Harper, Caroline Watson</b>

## **Use of the streamlined planning process – Plimmerton Farm rezoning**

### **1. Purpose**

To provide background information for the recommendation that the Committee supports Porirua City Council (PCC) in their application to use the streamlined planning process available under the Resource Management Act 1991. The process will be used for a district plan change to rezone Plimmerton Farm. This support (should it be given) will be in written form to the Minister for the Environment.

Note that this commitment is only to support the use of the streamlined planning *process*, not the actual *content* of the plan change. Our assessment as to how the plan change gives effect to regional planning documents and manages environmental effects will be completed as consultation proceeds and in the submission process on the provisions in the plan change and any future resource consent applications.

### **2. Background**

#### **2.1 The Plimmerton Farms site**

PCC is making an application in September to the Minister for the Environment to use the streamlined planning process (SPP) to progress a district plan change to rezone land on the north side of Porirua Harbour. The plan change is known as Plimmerton Farm Proposed Plan Change.

PCC is asking Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) to support their application to use a streamlined planning process to rezone Plimmerton Farm.

Plimmerton Farm is located beside State Highway 1 north of Porirua, and is owned by Plimmerton Farm Ltd. It has a site area of 385 hectares being the largest single rural landholding in the Plimmerton area. The land is currently zoned 'rural' under the Operative Porirua City District Plan but has been identified as a growth area of Porirua City since 2009.

The new zoning would be called 'Plimmerton Farm Zone' which, amongst other things, would enable residential development (2,000 dwellings). A variety of housing densities are proposed (medium to high density to rural lifestyle) as well as a retirement village with 150 dwellings and some mixed use commercial/retail development.

The Porirua Growth Strategy 2048 identified that the district has insufficient housing and land supply available to satisfy demand from years 3 to 30. PCC would like to respond quickly to ensure adequate land is available to address this housing shortfall and meet their obligations under the National Policy Statement for Urban Development Capacity 2016.

Concerned community members from Friends of Taupō Swamp and Catchment Incorporated addressed the Environment Committee meeting of 20th July 2019, and asked that GWRC oppose this streamlined planning process sought by PCC. They believe there is not enough information to inform this plan change and are concerned that the fast-tracked streamlined planning process would have negative impacts on Taupō Swamp. The Swamp is managed as a GWRC Key Native Ecosystem site.

Issues have also been raised by Plimmerton residents who are concerned about the implications of the development on the flooding hazard in Plimmerton.

## **2.2 RMA Streamline Planning Process**

What is it?

- An alternative method for plan making under the Resource Management Act 1991.
- A request to use a streamlined planning process is made to the Minister for the Environment by a Local Authority and is based on a set of entry criteria.
- Process and timeframes are customised to achieve a (comparatively) faster than the conventional plan making process under the RMA.
- The process is intense with tight timeframes and significant public consultation and engagement, particularly at the front end.
- The proposed plan change is publicly notified with submissions called for.
- If approved, the Minister is the decision maker (not Council) and there are no appeal rights.
- A judicial review can be taken to the High Court.

## **2.3 Why use a Streamline Planning Process?**

The RMA otherwise only has one statutory planning process (Schedule 1) and associated timeframes to prepare and change plans, no matter how simple or complex the proposal. It can take years to develop and finalise a plan change and these timeframes are considered too long to be able to respond to urgent

issues such as housing provision. This is one of the reasons for the recently announced review of the resource management system.

## 2.4 Timeline of planning development

This is not a recent consideration. The area has been identified for at least 10 years as an area of future urban growth for Porirua City:

Key date	What happened
2009	Plimmerton Farm identified as part of a potential growth area in the Porirua Development Framework
2012	Porirua Harbour and Catchment Strategy and Action Plan
2014	Porirua Harbour and Catchment Joint Committee established
2014	Plimmerton Farm was identified in the North Growth Area Structure Plan
2014	Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua committee established and collaborative process starts
2016	National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity promulgated
2017	Porirua City District Plan review begins
December 2018	Stage 1 workshop – PCC, GWRC and Plimmerton Farms Ltd to discuss possible resource consents
March 2019	Porirua Growth Strategy 2048 approved
2019	Ongoing discussions with GWRC Regulation team
April 2019	Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Implementation Programme and Ngāti Toa Statement completed
July 2019	Regional Council decisions on Proposed Natural Resources Plan
September 2019	Likely date for consultation on draft Porirua City District Plan (completion 2025-30?)

## 2.5 Other options considered by Porirua City Council

PCC considered three other Resource Management Act planning pathways that could be used to enable the Plimmerton Farms development:

- Resource consent process – considered the least preferred option, as the underlying zone is rural and a development of this scale would be a non-complying activity and not supported by objectives and policies of the Operative District Plan.
- Private plan change – the conventional private plan change process is likely to take longer as it includes being subject to appeals, and is unlikely to deliver sufficient new housing in time to meet the 3-10 year timeframes.
- Proposed Porirua City District Plan – The advanced nature of development plans for Plimmerton Farm are unlikely to match up with notification of the Proposed District Plan.

## 2.6 Why Porirua City Council chose the Streamlined Planning Process

The streamlined planning process enables PCC to more effectively meet their obligations under the National Policy Statement for Urban Development

Capacity and have a timely response to meet housing demand that has been identified in their Growth Strategy.

The Plimmerton Farm proposed plan change is considered by PCC to meet key criteria required to enter the streamlined planning process, including meeting national direction and responding to a significant community need. If successful, the process would result in the delivery of a substantial amount of new housing faster than a conventional RMA approval process.

PCC are comfortable that the streamlined planning process still involves the robust consideration of the proposal along with a detailed assessment of environmental effects and measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate effects. There is also community and stakeholder engagement provided for through the process and submissions can be made. By retaining control of the plan change process, they can ensure alignment with community objectives (including whaitua objectives) and provisions in the district plan review, as compared to a private plan change process.

### **3. Why we support this approach**

#### *Meeting the requirements of National Policy Statements (NPS)*

Both Councils have responsibilities under the NPS for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) and the NPS for Urban development Capacity (NPS-UDC). The plan change supports PCC to provide for urban development and also allows an early opportunity to implement some of the NPS-FM recommendations of the Porirua Whaitua Implementation Programme (WIP) and Ngāti Toa Statement of Intent.

There is significant potential here to design an innovative approach that protects sensitive areas, integrates green infrastructure and delivers quality urban design while meeting demand for housing provision. The recently announced review of the resource management system emphasises the slow nature of the current planning framework. This alternative approach allows us all to try something different that focuses on multiple outcomes, in a timeframe that is responsive to need.

#### *GWRC's ability to input and influence*

The streamline planning process requires early and extensive consultation, which is the best opportunity to influence the direction and achieve the outcomes that our communities are seeking.

Although we have not seen the content of the plan change, we have been involved and provided input from GWRC departments throughout the district plan review process, the development of the growth strategy and more recently in pre-application discussions for resource consents required by the Plimmerton Farm development. These opportunities have resulted in many of our policy directions being integrated into draft provisions in the district plan particularly around roading layout, water management and the use of green infrastructure and we anticipate these directions are reflected in the Plimmerton Farm plan change.

As an example, Porirua City Council are completing an assessment of how the recommendations in the Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Implementation Programme and the Ngāti Toa Statement of Intent would be actioned through the development of Plimmerton Farm and at what stage.

Building on that assessment and as a second piece of work informing the plan change, PCC is developing a set of 'Freshwater Principles' for consultation with stakeholders. Any application for subdivision and/or earthworks within the Plimmerton Farm Zone will be required to provide an assessment against the Freshwater Principles. These will inform the matters of discretion/ policy framework for the proposed plan change and ensure that PCC have sufficient scope to decline an application that is not consistent with these Principles.

There will also be an 'Aquatic Ecosystem and Habitat Action Plan' for the site which will provide specific detail and parameters on how the WIP objectives (not covered by the Freshwater Principles) can be achieved on the Plimmerton Farm site. This approach provides an opportunity to input and set parameters for the whole site, rather than a piecemeal approach to the development.

GWRC is responding to both of these pieces of work, including through consent pre-applications. Implementing the direction of the WIP, Statement and the Proposed Natural Resources Plan (PNRPP) to achieve protection of the natural values of the site and maintenance or enhancement of waterways, and water quality would be key outcomes which we would be looking to achieve.

#### *Stand-alone and tailored process*

A plan change allows a tailored approach to integrated development with site specific provisions. Using the SPP means that the urban development and environmental outcomes appropriate for this site will not be diluted by the requirements debated under the review of district plan process. It also provides a testing ground for potential future district and regional plan provisions. As PCC notes, they retain control of the plan change as compared to responding to a private plan change to rezone the area.

#### *Length of a traditional RMA process*

Every council in New Zealand is aware of the length of time, cost and resources it takes to finalise RMA plans and processes. The changes to the RMA have allowed for this process in specific circumstances, one of which is implementing national direction.

This plan change could serve as an example of how to use a (relatively) speedy process without losing quality of consultation or environmental outcomes. This process can also be used to inform the review of the resource management system – demonstrating an integration approach resulting in multiple benefits achieved in a timely fashion.

#### *Perception from some parts of the community*

There is a risk of a negative reaction from members of the community and community groups who may see the Council as fast tracking and favouring development over environmental management. From our meetings with PCC, we do not believe that this is the case.

Supporting the streamlined planning process does not restrict our ability to provide input to consultations, to assess and submit on any issues in the plan change which do not meet our policy direction and environmental management responsibilities and to process regional resource consents. Neither does it restrict the ability of the community to input into the process. Any plan change must give effect to the Regional Policy Statement and follow direction in the Proposed Natural Resources Plan. The plan change will also be informed by the recently completed whitua process.

#### **4. Communication**

No external communication is proposed as an outcome of the consideration of this report.

#### **5. Consideration of climate change**

The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the GWRC Climate Change Consideration Guide.

##### **5.1 Mitigation assessment**

Officers have considered the effect of the matter on the climate. Officers recommend that the matter will have no effect.

Officers note that the matter does not affect the Council's interests in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) or the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI)

##### **5.2 Adaptation assessment**

Officers have considered the impacts of climate change in relation to the matter. Officers recommend that climate change has no bearing on the matter as the recommendation is simply to follow a particular resource management process.

#### **6. The decision-making process and significance**

The decision requested is for GWRC to provide a letter of support to the Minister for the Environment for the application by Porirua City Council to use the Streamlined Planning Process for the rezoning of Plimmerton Farm. The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002.

##### **6.1 Significance of the decision**

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking into account the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines. Due to the procedural nature of this decision officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

## 6.2 Engagement

Due to its procedural nature and low significance, no engagement on this matter has been undertaken.

## 7. Recommendations

*That the Committee*

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.
3. **Notes** that officers recommend supporting Porirua City Council's application for a streamlined planning process via a letter to the Minister for the Environment.
4. **Notes** that this approach does not preclude our ability to ensure the regional planning framework is implemented in a robust manner.
5. **Approves** the recommendation to provide a letter of support to the Minister for the Environment for Porirua City Council's application to use a streamlined planning process for the Proposed Plimmerton Farms Plan Change.

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**Report** 19.300  
Date 26 July 2019  
File CCAB-10-747

**Committee** Environment  
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## General Managers' Report to the Environment Committee on 8 August 2019

### 1. Purpose

To inform the Environment Committee of Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) activities relating to the Committee's areas of responsibility.

### 2. Key/Strategic issues

#### 2.1 Wellington Regional Biodiversity Framework launch

The Collaborative Working Group for the Wellington Regional Biodiversity Framework has held two business meetings and is making good progress on defining how it will operate. A successful public launch was held at Te Papa on Saturday 20 July. Around 60 people including councillors, non-government organisation members, community group members and others joined the Collaborative Working Group to celebrate the start of the project and discuss what it could achieve. There was plenty of enthusiasm and good will from attendees and inspiring stories shared. Participants also provided input via a workshop session to contribute ideas on what a Framework could deliver for the region.

#### 2.2 One Billion Trees progress

A four year contract (2019/2023) with Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) for the Wellington Regional Erosion Control Initiative (WRECI) programme is currently awaiting approval with MPI. The contract, which is for \$7.6 million over four years is anticipated to be finalised in August.

Following a meeting with Te Uru Rākau (TUR is Forestry New Zealand, a branch of the Ministry for Primary Industries) we have agreed with TUR staff to complete a detailed expression of interest for a One Billion Trees partnership grant to support a number of GW programmes that will incorporate activities

across Land Management, Parks, Flood Protection and Biodiversity departments. The expression of interest, being led by Land Management in coordination with other departments, will be submitted in early August and will then follow a formal application process with the aim to have a contract in place by the end of 2019.

### **2.3 Proposed Natural Resources Plan at decision stage**

The Council's decision on the Proposed Natural Resources Plan was publicly notified on 31 July. There are some changes to the notified version as discussed at the Council workshop on 30 July.

Officers will be discussing the changes with submitters and internal staff at a series of meetings and workshops. One of the most pressing are any changes in relation to the Plimmerton Farms development and Streamlined Planning Process application.

The decisions are now open to appeals. The appeal period will close on the 11 September. We will then enter a period of mediation and then finally court.

### **2.4 Central government reforms start rolling out**

We are expecting a large number of government proposals in the coming weeks. The Minister for the Environment has announced a comprehensive review of the resource management system, which is due to report-back next year. Further consultations are also expected on:

- A replacement for the National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity (early August)
- Changes to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (August/September)
- A new National Environmental Standard on Freshwater (August/September)
- A draft National Policy Statement on Highly Productive Land (August/September)
- A draft National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (September/October)
- Other proposals (including waste tyres, possibly air quality, waste levy, ETS, etc.).

Given the late timing of some of these consultation in relation to the local government elections, there will need to be a discussion at some point about delegations to make submissions on behalf of the Council.

### **3. Catchment Management**

#### **3.1 Land Management**

##### **3.1.1 Wellington Region Erosion Control Initiative (WRECI)**

2018/19 completed the ninth year of the WRECI programme and the final year of a four-year co-funding contract, 2015-2016 to 2018-2019, with the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI).

In 2018-2019, 718 hectares of erosion prone land was treated. This work consisted of 464 hectares of willow/poplar planting, and 254 hectares of afforestation or native reversion land retirement. This work involved planting over 210,000 trees consisting of 21,500 willow/poplar, 180,500 exotic forestry and 8,500 native. In 2018-2019 work was carried out on 194 properties.

The WRECI programme achieved significant growth in this four-year period. From 2015-2019 erosion treatment was completed on 2,044 hectares of erosion prone land, compared to the 872 hectares treated between 2010-2015.

##### **3.1.2 Priority catchment contestable fund**

The farm planning and contestable fund programme is aimed at assisting good management practice and innovation in intensive farming areas. The programme funded a total of 51 projects in the 2018-2019 financial year. 76% of which were located in priority catchments within the region.

Highlights of the programme for Q4 included committing to the continuation of the dung beetle programme into 2019-2020 financial year along with the completion of an innovative bioreactor project that uses woodchips to remove nutrients from groundwater.

##### **3.1.3 Riparian Programme**

The Riparian Programme grew substantially in 2018-2019. Sixty five new riparian management plans were approved.

Work was carried out at eleven category 1 high value sites – as identified in the Proposed Natural Resources Plan. All of these category 1 sites were located in the Wairarapa. Five of them were significant to mana whenua.

The majority of the riparian projects approved and implemented were category two sites. Six category two plans delivered works in the Western side of the region.

14 non-priority plans carried out riparian work this year - seven of those were located on the western side of the region.

Cumulatively, the work noted above produced:

- 41.5 km of riparian fencing, and
- 23,750 trees planted

##### **3.1.4 Land management advice**

Land Management advice is an important part of the Land Management department's core work and a key element to GW's ability to enable catchment communities. Advocacy and extension services range from advice on the core programmes of the department to general good land use practices. Land

Management Advisors are a key connecting hub for landowners to connect with relevant research, experts, land use innovations and learning opportunities. Methods for providing this service in 2018-2019 included events such as:

- Participating in a variety of rural discussion groups across a number of areas
- Partnering with primary industry led initiatives with shared land use objectives including dairy, horticulture, meat production and forestry
- Encouraging participation and supporting the Ballance Farm Environment Awards
- Knowledge sharing with land management experts across New Zealand through forums such as the New Zealand Association of Resource Management
- Assisting central government with policy development including membership on the stakeholder working group of the one year review of the National Environmental Standard – Plantation Forestry
- Collaborating with Crown Research Institutes on regionally important research projects, such as Manaaki Whenua's Smarter Targeting of Erosion Control (STEC) programme.

#### 3.1.5 Catchment Schemes

Scheme work programmes are currently focusing on winter planting works necessary to protection road access for the rural communities of the Whareama, Mataikona, Homewood, Kaiwhata, Maungaraki, and Awhea catchments.

### 3.2 Biosecurity

#### 3.2.1 Predator Free Wellington

Predator Free Wellington – Miramar eradication project has reached another significant milestone – the final operational stage. After almost a year of planning and preparation the actual control operations are in full swing. Control gear is deployed at over 3000 residential properties and in coastal reserves.

A meticulously planned grid of deadly bait stations and traps has been expertly deployed by 16 GWRC staff and ten contractors. Active baiting and trapping will continue for six months. This is a world first attempt at predator (rat and mustelid) eradication in an urban environment.

#### 3.2.2 Regional Pest Management Plan 2019-2039 (RPMP)

The review of our pest management direction for the next 20 years has been completed by the RPMP becoming effective on 2 July 2019, after a three year process involving staff, science advice and cost benefit analysis, followed by extensive consultation with agencies, stakeholders and the public.

### 3.2.3 Pest Plants

Total Control and Surveillance and other RPMS programmes were completed for the year. Aerial spraying of boneseed was completed at Wellington South Coast. This is a long term control programme over the large area of coast.



#### *South Coast – boneseed aerial control*

Manchurian wild rice control (part of National Interest Pest Response programme funded by MPI) was carried out successfully for the year.

### 3.2.4 Pest Animals

Rabbit numbers have reduced through natural causes or virus activity over the majority of the region but high numbers still persist in localised areas. Landowners requiring assistance still account for a large part of staff activity. Due to the changes in procurement and use of vertebrate toxin agents by WorkSafe private landowners without a business on their property are now unable to purchase magtoxin fumigant, making it harder for them to control rabbits themselves.

The 2018-2019 KNE work program was completed on schedule.

Staff are preparing to respond to the pending East Harbour mast event. If monitoring indicate continued rise in rat numbers, control operations using cholecalciferol will go ahead.

### 3.2.5 BioWorks

In June BioWorks completed the annual RPPCP, undertaking possum control over 116,700 hectares and mustelid control over a further 3,900 hectares. We completed an additional 6,700 hectares of possum control during the year above our annual plan. Possum control results were satisfactory with the achievement of RTC 4.0% (vs below 5% target) from a selection of projects covering over 45,000 hectares.

Planning for the proposed Wainuiomata Mainland Island aerial 1080 control operation continues. The predicted mast year is occurring as increased rat numbers have been identified by monitoring within the area. We are currently negotiating risk mitigation requirements with Wellington Water Limited, to ensure the integrity of the public water supply. Aerial application of 1080 baits is proposed in spring.

OSPRI New Zealand have declared a further 42,000ha bovine Tuberculosis free in June within the Masterton District. These areas have now been incorporated into the RPPCP and control of approximately 19,600ha of this area will commence in the 2019-2020 year. Planning has commenced for the 2019-2020 with the programme including 94,600ha of possum control and 4,300ha of mustelid control.

## 3.3 Biodiversity

### 3.3.1 Freshwater Fish Programme

- The first workshop of the Fish Passage Guidelines Implementation project was held on 18 July. Attendees at the workshop largely consisted of staff from GWRC departments (Biodiversity, Flood Protection, Land Management, Environmental Regulation, Environmental Science, Environmental Policy, Parks, Customer Engagement and Te Hunga Whiriwhiri) as well as representatives from external partners the Department of Conservation and Wellington Water. The purpose of this workshop was to introduce the issue of fish passage to the team and have some initial discussions around developing an approach to exploring how GWRC can adopt the New Zealand Fish Passage Guidelines and Assessment Protocols

### 3.3.2 Wetland Programme

- 55 landowners with wetlands are now signed up to the Wetland Programme (a total of 78 wetlands as some have more than one on their property). 41 of these wetland sites have approved Wetland Restoration Management Plans

### 3.3.3 Key Native Ecosystem Programme

- Trap catch data is now more easily accessible as IT have developed a new data management system for Biosecurity. This will allow us to analyse data and more easily which will influence our management at sites.



- Monitoring in May showed that rat tracking rates at some KNE sites are on the increase as was predicted to occur following the ‘mega-mast’ (heavy seeding in New Zealand’s forests). Rates have increased markedly in the two mainland islands, part of Wainuiomata/Orongorongo and East Harbour Northern Forest KNE sites, and the highest rat tracking rate since monitoring began in 2011 was recorded at Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui KNE site. Planning is underway to take additional control measures over the next few months in the mainland islands
- Two community planting days were held at the Queen Elizabeth Park KNE site. Five hundred sand binding plants (e.g. pingao and spinifex) were planted on the foredune at the northern end of the park to help build resilience from storm surges. Another five hundred plants were planted to buffer the northern wetland. Over 50 people attended each, including noticeably more younger people than have attended previous planting days.



Figure 1 Community planting day on the fore dunes of Queen Elizabeth Park KNE site

### 3.3.4 Collaborative Restoration Projects

Construction works are nearing completion on the Wairio wetland regeneration project, and monitoring of water level and flow, birds, fish and vegetation will soon commence. This project, on the eastern shores of Lake Wairarapa, involves multiple departments working together and aims to increase water levels in Wairio wetland to enhance wetland habitat by re-diverting water from Matthew’s Lagoon.

### 3.3.5 Biodiversity Advice

Staff finalised and published the guidance document: *Writing a Planting Plan: A technical guide for the Wellington region*. The guide is written especially to

assist anyone who needs to prepare a planting plan as a requirement of a resource consent. It sets out is the information a resource consent might require the planting plan to contain.

Biodiversity and Environmental Policy staff worked together to facilitate a workshop to clarify the differences between mitigation and offsetting under the PNRP ecological effects management policies. Participants were invited from across GWRC with support from five external experts. Outcomes from the workshop will be used in a guidance document on this topic planned for release later this year.

### **3.4 Flood Protection**

#### **3.4.1 Asset Management & Operations**

Willow and native planting programmes are now underway across the region. Staff are cutting willow poles from river buffers and preparing native planting sites for community groups to plant out. In total 16,400 willows and 21,900 native plants are planned to be planted.

The Hutt Valley Rotary Club initiated another successful planting day on the Taita Berms on 29 June with a good turnout of members and staff planting 800 native trees. Following the planting the majority of the group then went down to Melling Bridge in support of the initiative to progress the Melling Link project. The Hutt River trail continues to attract high numbers of users and is one of the most popular locations in the Wellington Region.



Rotary Club planting day Taita Berms

The Wairarapa team have also tidied up a number of river sites to make them more accessible to the public and created some additional areas for the community to enjoy.





Gladstone River Scheme public area at Wardells Bridge

Along with the recently planted willow poles, native planting will be incorporated into these sites. The team is working alongside property owners, community groups, TA's and other Council teams to support their planting aspirations at these sites within the scheme areas.

River works in the Waikanae River associated with the Mackays to Peka Peka (M2PP) expressway project are now complete apart from some native planting and post project ecological monitoring. The work involved some gravel extraction and the reshaping of the channel meander under and just downstream of the expressway bridge. The works were funded by the M2PP project but undertaken by GWRC. Given there has been little physical work of this nature recently in the bed of the Waikanae River the work was well received by the community.

In channel works for the Peka Peka to Ōtaki (PP20) Otaki River expressway bridge are almost complete. A number of meetings are planned over the next few weeks to enable the large crane to be moved to the northern abutment where the final spans can be lifted into place. The project is very fortunate to have completed the bridge without a significant flood event in the river.

Weather, swells, low river flows and/or storm events during June-July have resulted in the Lake Onoke coastal spit being blocked to Palliser Bay three times during the period. Staff working on a rostered system have monitored these events and completed three mechanical openings to date.

Each event has taken seven days' work, on average, commencing from the date of the block occurs to the day the spit has been opened and has developed sufficiently for the water to flow into the bay and lower the water levels in Lake Onoke. For a successful opening we need to have the weather, river flow and sea swell conditions aligned.



Lake Onoke spit: Mechanical opening to Palliser Bay

### 3.4.2 Investigations, Strategy and Planning

The Investigations, Strategy, and Planning teams main focus areas are the two Wairarapa Flood Management Plans (FMP); the Waiohine and the Te Kāuru. Alongside these we are delivering survey, gravel analysis, hydraulic modelling and advisory services.

Te Kauru has been adopted by Council and the team is now focusing on the handover and initial implementation actions, and will later in the year be shifting focus to Waiwhetu stream in Lower Hutt and the Lower Wairarapa Valley.

#### **Floodplain Management Plans (FMPs)**

##### Waiohine FMP, Upper Wairarapa Valley

A community led project is currently underway to understand the flood risk and develop mitigation options.



#### **Progress to date:**

The Waiohine project team is continuing to work through the river management, emergency management and environmental aspects of the FMP. The team are currently developing a draft River Plan document to show to the community in early August. Recent drainage works at the Te Uru o Tane urupā to alleviate some ground water issues has prompted a presentation to the urupā trustees to confirm the details around the drainage/flooding issues. As part of this process a working group with the trustees will be established.

**Looking forward:**

Over the next quarter the project team will be finishing engaging with subject matter experts, deliberating and decision making ahead of producing a first draft of the plan. This first rough draft is expected to be delivered in August.

**Te Kāuru FMP**

This project is the completion of the Floodplain Management Plan for the upper Wairarapa Valley.

**Progress to date:**

At the last Environment Committee meeting on 20 June 2019, the Environment Committee recommended the Te Kāuru Upper Ruamāhanga FMP to Council for adoption, subject to minor amendments as agreed with Rangitāne o Wairarapa. Two amendments to the FMP were tabled at the meeting reflecting discussions already underway with Rangitāne. On 25 June 2019, Council adopted the FMP subject to minor amendments as agreed with Rangitāne.

On 17 July 2019, officers met with a Rangitāne representative and there was an agreement that no further amendments were required to the FMP other than those indicated at the Council meeting around Rangatane involvement in cultural health monitoring and recognition of the need to take into account the Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board when it is establish. Rangitāne are keen to be involved in the implementation of the plan to ensure the best outcomes moving forward.

**Looking forward:**

The next steps for this project include:

- A final workshop with the Te Kāuru Subcommittee advising of the outcomes of the council processes and thanking them for their dedication to the project;
- Progressing the formation of the community group considering options for the Waipoua River urban reach;
- A comprehensive ‘hand-over’ of the Te Kāuru FMP to the Flood Protection Implementation team; and
- Working with the Wairarapa Integration Team to ensure best outcomes across the Te Kāuru catchment in alignment with all GWRC projects and processes.

## Mangatāreere FHA

A community led project is currently underway to create an integrated catchment plan for the Mangatāreere Stream, which will include determining the flood risk to Carterton.

### **Progress to Date**

A Steering Group has been established for the project, and the first Steering Group meeting was held on 17 July 2019.

The Project Team has completed 6 working days to date and had discussions on a range of topics, including the Ruamāhanga Whaitua and the pNRP, Fensham Reserve and wildlife corridors to the Tararua Ranges, and historic flood events that have impacted Carterton.

### **Looking forward**

The next steps for this project include:

- Scoping the hydraulic modelling required.
- Engaging a consultant to undertake the modelling
- Continuing to gather data on historic flood events.

## Otaki FMP review

The Otaki FMP was approved in June 1998 which outlined the river management, major flood defence projects and environmental actions to manage flooding on the Otaki River. This FMP is being reviewed to confirm that it is still appropriate and to confirm progress against the implementation actions.

### **Progress to date:**

The project team has discussed the major projects with Nga Hapu o Otaki and Kāpiti Coast District Council (KCDC). Work is ongoing to confirm the scope of the remaining projects and their priority.

### **Looking forward:**

The next step for this project is to confirm the priority order of the proposed engineering responses listed with the FMP and reviewing progress with the Implementation team.

## Flood Warning review

Emergency Management is considered one of the key risk management tools available to Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) and Territorial Authorities. Several projects and study work have indicated that improvements are required in this area and that three key challenges currently exist;

- **Limited alignment in response procedures across GWRC and Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office (WREMO);** Current procedures are not aligned and do not support an effective, regionally consistent emergency response.
- **Limited forecasting capability currently;** GWRC has limited capability to provide flood warning across the region which will enable proactive emergency management.
- **Low level of risk awareness within communities;** Limited awareness within communities that have been identified as being at risk of flooding on what the risk is and how to respond.

This programme is required to address these challenges.

### **Progress to date:**

Project board established for this programme comprising of Manager ESci, Manager Flood Protection, and GM WREMO. The procurement plan and documents have been drafted ahead of tendering for a consultant to deliver the proposed projects.

### **Looking Forward:**

A joint workshop with WREMO Duty officers will be held to reconfirm the current operational procedures. Procurement process and establishment of project teams to deliver the projects that respond to the three challenges above. These projects are aligned to the three challenges above;

- Flood awareness – Developing awareness materials in collaboration with WREMO to raise community awareness of flood risk.
- Flood warning – Continuing the development of flood forecasting models for the region.
- Flood Response – Reviewing and aligning the flood response procedures from WREMO, Hydrology, and flood protection.

## 3.4.3 Floodplain Management Plan Implementation

### Riverlink, Hutt City, Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River

The Project office for Riverlink has commenced establishment with appointment Martin White as the project Director and Tom Hurdley appointed as Project Manager, further appointments are being considered.

Isthmus (and their team comprising of Tonkin and Taylor, GHD and Holmes) have been appointed as consultants for the preparation of design work and the necessary resource consents for delivery of RiverLinks Hutt City Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council components.

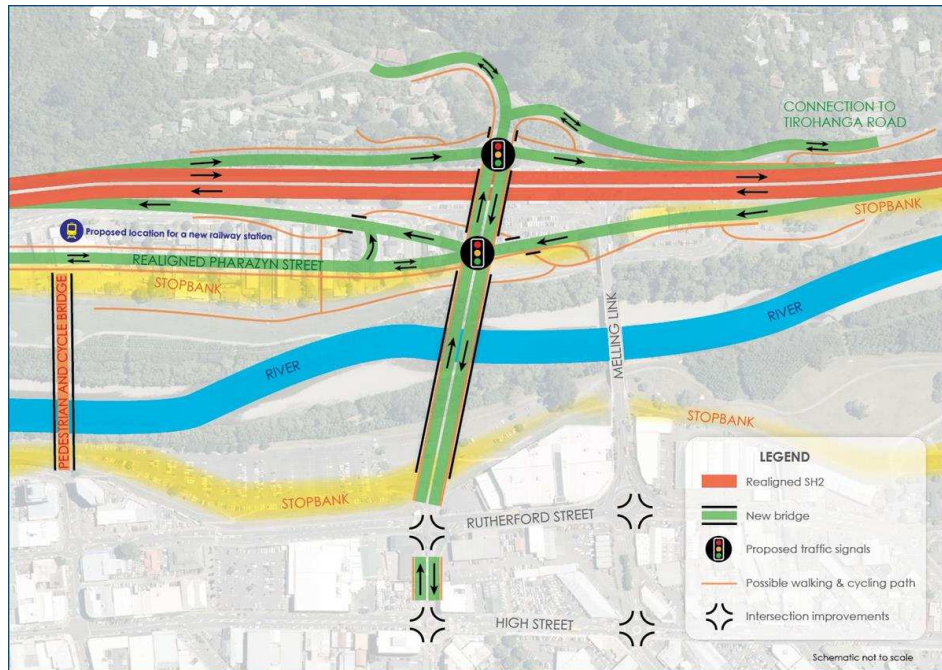
Geotechnical investigations are being carried out in parallel with this process to provide both supporting information for the consenting process and to enable NZ Transport Agency to complete their Detailed Business Case for the Melling Transport Components part of RiverLink. The picture below shows the first drilling site on Pharazyn St adjacent to Melling Railway station.



*RiverLink Geotechnical Investigations – Griffiths Drilling, Pharazyn St Site, Hutt City*

On 17 April, the New Zealand Transport Agency confirmed a preferred interchange option for the Melling Transport improvements. An extract from their information release is included below;





Preferred interchange option - a diamond interchange connecting with Queens Drive

## Melling transport review complete

In August we told you we were taking a fresh look at the Melling transport improvements project - the NZ Transport Agency's component of the RiverLink partnership. This was to ensure the Melling transport improvements project met the new priorities set out in the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS).

The re-evaluation is now complete and it has confirmed the project meets those strategic priorities. Our next step will be to complete the detailed business case (DBC) for the project, before seeking funding for further design and consent.

A preferred interchange option has also been selected from the shortlist shared with the community in 2018. The preferred interchange option is a Diamond Interchange Connecting with Queens Drive.

[www.nzta.govt.nz/melling-improvements](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/melling-improvements)

Considerable effort has also gone into maintaining awareness of the next stages of the project with presentations to:

- Friends of Belmont Regional Park
- Institute of Public Works Engineers Australia (IPEWA)
- Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce
- LGNZ Conference - Regional Sector Group Tour

## Pinehaven Stream FMP Implementation, Upper Hutt, Te awa kairangi/Hutt River

### **Plan Change 42**

We have received the consent order removing the final appeal to Plan change 42 and a report recommending the plan for adoption is to be presented to Upper Hutt City Council (UHCC) on 14 August 2019.

### **Implementation**

The Wellington Water Project Manager updated Upper Hutt City Council about design and implementation progress, providing the presentation given to this subcommittee at its meeting on 14 May 2019.

The project team has met with property owners and occupants adjacent to the area that the works are to be carried out to make sure that they retain a high level of project engagement ahead of consent applications.

The current programme aims for consent applications to be lodged before the end of the calendar year, and will endeavour to carry out the culvert upgrades for Sunbrae Drive and Pinehaven Road in 2020.

## Gibbons St Erosion repair, Upper Hutt, Te awa kairangi/Hutt River

The construction of a 200 metre rock line to the design channel alignment has been completed including reinstatement. Areas of the site remain closed off to allow the reinstatement works to establish.

The construction works took 10 weeks to complete with no health and safety or environmental incidents reported. The works cost just under \$600,000 and we have received confirmation of payment of \$290,000 for the works from NZTA for their share of costs.

## Convent Road Flooding Issues, Waitohu Stream, Otaki

Design work continues for the Convent Road flooding issues adjacent to the Waitohu Stream and Mangapouri Stream. The first series of hydraulic modelling runs of revised options to address the flooding risk have been completed and are being considered by the project working group. An additional option has been proposed by the project working group and this will be considered alongside the current options. This additional option may provide broader benefits and more opportunity for freshwater quality and biodiversity outcomes to be delivered through the project.

## Rock Supply Investigations, Region wide

Investigations to find potential, regionally sourced rock supply to provide the next twenty years rock requirements for large projects and maintenance work has narrowed down to a cluster of sites for further investigation. The work includes consideration benefits that may arise from having closer rock supply sources, including potential for reduction in carbon emissions that may be associated with longer road haulage or barge delivery supply routes.



## **4. Environment Management**

### **4.1 Environmental Science**

#### **4.1.1 Responses to questions about air quality**

At the last committee meeting (20 June 2019), the following questions were asked about GWRC's air quality programme:

1. When will the results from air quality monitoring in Carterton be available (and what that means)?

In 2014 the Ministry for the Environment gave approval for GWRC to disestablish the Wairarapa airshed and replace with a smaller Masterton urban airshed for compliance monitoring with the National Environmental Standard (NES) for PM10. A condition of this approval was that GWRC would monitor PM10 in Carterton every three years to make sure that the PM10 standard was being met.

Carterton winter air quality has been measured in 2010, 2013, and 2016 and now in 2019. The [technical report](#) on the past monitoring is available on our Air Quality Science webpage. The last (2016) and current Carterton monitoring campaign measured both PM10 and PM2.5. In 2016 we found that daily PM2.5 levels failed to meet the World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline. We are monitoring PM2.5 (in addition to PM10) this year so we can assess whether Carterton qualifies as a polluted airshed (if and when a new PM2.5 NES is released). It also provides evidence to support our better burning campaign.

2. What monitoring of PM2.5 do we do in Wellington?

PM2.5 has been measured in the Wellington central, Masterton and Wainuiomata for a few years now. PM2.5 levels are relatively low in central Wellington because there isn't a lot of wood burning (which is the dominant source of PM2.5 in the region). Traffic is only a minor contributor to PM2.5 as most of the traffic emitted particles are ultrafine (less than 1 µm). There is also quite a high background of fine sea salt that contributes to PM2.5 levels measured in coastal areas. At our central monitoring site we measure black carbon (ultrafine soot) which is a better indicator of particles from vehicle exhausts, especially diesel, than PM2.5. Black carbon is a known human carcinogen as well as a short-term climate pollutant (causes warming).

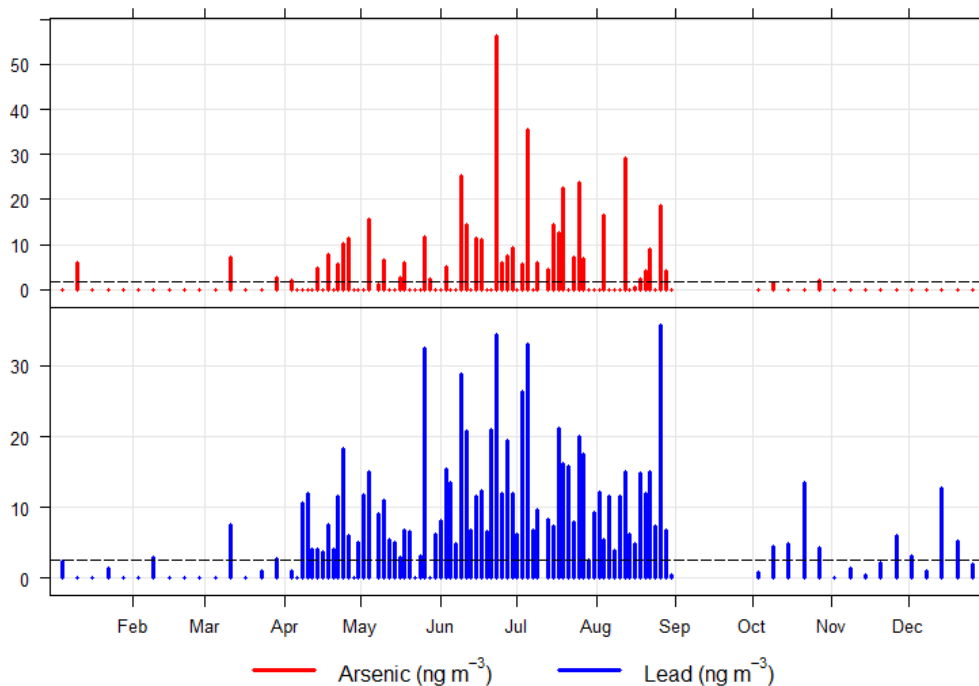
#### **4.1.2 PM10 exceedances in Masterton**

Masterton's air quality is still not meeting the national environmental standard for fine particle air pollution measured as PM10. So far we've recorded seven exceedances of the daily standard this winter (one more than for the same time last year). These exceedances were notified in the Wairarapa Times Age on 20 July 2019 as required by the regulations.

#### 4.1.3 Masterton air pollution study completed

A study to identify the sources of the high levels of fine particle air pollution (PM2.5) was conducted in Masterton last year. The study found that emissions from home fires produced 90% of all fine particles emitted in winter. Both arsenic and lead were found in those fine particles, albeit within national guidelines for long-term exposure in outdoor air. Most places in New Zealand where burning wood for home heating is common, show the same winter pattern of arsenic and lead in air.

Arsenic is released into the air when treated timber (treated with copper chrome arsenate, CCA) is burned. Lead is thought to originate from burning wood coated in old lead-based paint. Both metals are highly toxic and don't break down in the environment. These results are being used to help educate public on better burning practices.



**Levels of arsenic (top) and lead (bottom) found in PM2.5 in Masterton in 2018 (the dashed line shows the detection limit).**

#### 4.1.4 Better burning campaign – phase 2

Mid-July 2019 saw the launch of our second campaign of information and advice on better wood burning practices in order to improve the environment around us and the impact on people's health. This year we've launched a video that includes a new character called Frank the crayfish <http://www.gw.govt.nz/better-burning/>.

He's an environmental champion who's fed up with people doing things that harm our environment. We are using Frank to head an environmental education campaign to help us discourage people burning treated timber and other waste wood in their home fires. A new rule in our Proposed Natural Resources Plan

(Rule 6) bans the burning of these materials but we have no practical means of enforcing this rule so we have adopted a ‘social behaviour change’ approach.

## A frank conversation about... what to burn

🕒 12 July 2019 4:17pm

Better burning, or “smoke-free” burning, is better for your health and can save you money.

Meet Frank the crayfish. He cares about the environment, and your health.



To become a better burner check to see that you are using a great fire-lighting technique, suitable wood and an efficient wood burner.

This winter, we're starting a frank conversation about treated timber in particular.

### 4.1.5 Raingauge network reaches Titahi Bay

The Hydrology team has completed the installation of a new rain gauge monitoring site at Titahi Bay. The gauge is sited inside the Radio NZ compound within Whitireia Park. RNZ has been very supportive of the installation and overall project and is a great example of partnership between GWRC and stakeholders.

The installation is a further addition to the Wellington Water Raingauge Network operated by GWRC to provide advance warning of urban stormwater flooding issues during heavy rainfall events.



Titahi Bay raingauge installation at RNZ compound, Whitireia Park

#### 4.1.6 Kaiwharawhara Stream flow monitoring

A new flow monitoring site has been installed on the lower reaches of the Kaiwharawhara Stream. The stream originates on the slopes of Mt Kaukau to the north and within Zealandia to the south and also flows through the Otari-Wilton bush. It is a significant urban stream and this flow monitoring will aid other investigations such as aquatic ecology and sediment loads.



*Kaiwharawhara Stream flow monitoring site*

#### Sediment gauge installed Pauatahanui

New sediment gauging equipment was installed recently at the Pauatahanui turbidity monitoring site. This equipment is an essential part of any good sediment monitoring programme allowing us to measure the amount of



sediment entering Porirua Harbour from the catchment streams. Soil erosion is a major issue in our region, and low energy estuary environments such as Porirua Harbour are especially vulnerable to the effects of too much sediment.

The equipment is used to determine how sediment is distributed across the stream channel and how representative the turbidity sensor is of that sediment load. Wendy Purdon was instrumental in the site setup and the slack line installation, purchasing of equipment, learning how to use it and training up the rest of the team.



L-R (top) Aquatic team check the new platform, Wendy shows Shyam how to use the winch. L-R (bottom) up close of sediment bomb and sediment bomb being deployed.

Mid-July 2019 saw the launch of our second campaign of information and advice on better wood burning practices in order to improve the environment around us and the impact on people's health. This year we've launched a video that includes a new character called Frank the crayfish <http://www.gw.govt.nz/better-burning/>.

#### 4.1.7 Space Time Imagery Velocity

The GWRC Hydrology team hosted a New Zealand Hydrological Society training course in mid-July on the application of Space Time Imagery Velocity (STIV) to measure flow in rivers. This emerging technology is particularly useful for measuring flood flows where it is difficult to use our traditional methods which might involve entering the flooded river. A group of 35 hydrologists from around the country attended the three day training.



*NZ's finest hydrological brains gathered on the banks of the Hutt River*

#### 4.1.8 Hinau fruit-fall monitoring in East Harbour Regional Park has indicated that a Hinau fruit tell the story

Hinau fruit-fall monitoring in East Harbour Regional Park has indicated that a significant mast year is underway as predicted. This data, plus the rodent monitoring information that is provided by Environmental Science (gathered every three months), is feeding into decision-making by the Biodiversity and Biosecurity departments about extra baiting that may be required to bring rat numbers down before the bird breeding season starts in spring.

There is also a concern regarding the impacts of the mast year (which provides plentiful food for pests) in Wainuiomata Mainland Island, especially as 60 rifleman were recently translocated to Zealandia.

#### 4.1.9 Wellington City bird counts

The latest Wellington City Council bird monitoring report provides an eight-year record of changes in bird diversity and abundance across the city reserves. It shows a substantial increase in the proportion of bird species ranked Nationally Threatened or "At Risk" over that time. There has also been a significant increase in the average number of native forest birds, especially tui, kaka, kakariki, North Island saddleback and kereru. The efforts of Zealandia, GWRC's pest control across the reserves, and the increasing urban pest control taking place across the city are considered to be responsible for the increase in birdlife being recorded.

#### 4.1.10 Waiwhetu aquifer emerging contaminant study

Working with Wellington Water Limited (WWL), Environmental Science sampled sixteen bores and four surface water sites for emerging contaminants in March. This 2019 investigation replicated a 2017 study except that sampling was done under high pumping conditions, so that maximum drawdown to the wellfield could be achieved to better understand potential contamination flow paths to the aquifer. Emerging contaminants were found to be at very low levels, but the investigation has helped to identify flow paths. The information will feed into studies for WWL about the best locations for drinking water bore sites.

#### 4.1.11 Freshwater monitoring training and education

Staff have been out and about over the last six-weeks engaging, empowering and educating community groups about what lives in their local freshwater stream:

- Staff showcased some ‘freshwater friends’ at Ahi Kā – Matariki ki Pōneke 2019 along Wellington’s water front. Fish on display included four out of five species of whitebait such as a giant kōkopu, as well as redfin bullies and giant bullies. This was a fantastic opportunity to increase people’s awareness that these native fish migrate through a maze of piped streams beneath our feet. And also a chance to educate – what we tip down the pipes ends up in the streams these fish live in.
- Staff from Masterton and rangatahi from the South Wairarapa Kahui Ako Kaitiakoi Academy spent a chilly morning in early July catching, and looking at, macroinvertebrates from the local river to help celebrate the arrival of Matariki.
- Training for community groups on how to monitor their local stream began at the end of June. Sheryl Miller (ESci, GWRC) and Liz Gibson (Mountains to Sea Wellington) have produced, and are delivering, modular training sessions based on NIWA’s stream health monitoring and assessment kit (SHMAK). Sessions have been held in Featherston and Masterton, attracting a variety of people including local farmers, an artist and rangers from Pukaha/Mt Bruce.
- Bart Cox, Natasha Tomic, Brett Cockeram and Sheryl Miller, along with Liz Gibson (Mountains to Sea Wellington), attended a noho marae at Papawai to introduce rangatahi from Ngā Kanohi Marae o Wairarapa to aspects of freshwater monitoring. The stream that runs behind Papawai Marae has been inundated with sediment in the recent months, which has smothered the stream bottom, so it was a good surprise to find a diversity of macroinvertebrates. The local tuna also came for a visit.







## 4.2 Environment Regulation

### 4.2.1 Non-notified consents processed

Between 1 June 2019 and 22 July 2019 a total of 60 consents have been granted on a non-notified basis. A summary of the type of consent and the area to which it pertains is set out in the table below.

Territorial Authority	Coastal Permit	Discharge permit	Land use consent	Water permit	Total
CDC		1			1
HCC		6	8	2	16
KCDC			2	1	3
MDC			16		16
PCC	4		2		6
SWDC		2	5	2	9
UHCC			1		1
WCC	2	1	4	1	8
Region wide					
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>60</b>

There were no particular non-notified consents of note with the predominant consent type being for land use consents, mainly for bores.

### 4.2.2 Customer service feedback

We frequently survey consent applicants about their experience with the resource consent process. In the survey we invite feedback on various aspects of the consent process including pre-application advice, timeframes, communication, costs and consent conditions. Some of the positive comments submitted in the past year were:

*“very very helpful”*

*“I appreciated an adviser calling out to our premises to go through the documentation that was required to be completed”*

*“The consent process was smooth process with good communication”*

We also ask overall how satisfied consent applicants are with our customer service from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). The average of our overall customer service is 4.23. This is positive as over 84% of consent applicants who responded are either satisfied or very satisfied.

### 4.2.3 Consenting

#### Manchurian Wild Rice spraying

GWRC Biosecurity has applied to renew their consent to aerial and ground based spray Manchurian Wild Rice (MWR) with herbicide Haloxyfop at Te Harakeke Wetland located in Waikanae. The applicant proposes to begin spraying as early as 1 November 2019 and carry on through to April 2020. The wetland has high significance to mana whenua, has outstanding indigenous biodiversity values and comes under the Key Native Ecosystems Programme.

Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust (TAKW) and the Department of Conservation were notified of the consent application and have both lodged submissions in opposition of the proposal and requested to be heard at a hearing. The applicant has requested the application be put on hold to allow them to discuss access to part of the wetland with a landowner.

#### Eastern Shared Pathway

HCC has applied for consent to construct a shared cycling and walking path seaward of the Eastbourne Road. We have requested further information on a number of topics, and are awaiting that information before the consent is publically notified.

#### Silverwood subdivision Whitby

Construct Facilities Limited has applied for the regional consents to develop an 84 lot subdivision off Navigation Drive in Whitby (bounded by Transmission Gully and the Whitby Link Road). The project involves culverting the James Cook Creek, cut and fill earthworks including the reclamation of ephemeral flow paths in gullies on the site as well as stormwater and discharge management.

#### 4.2.4 Pre-application

##### Wairarapa Water Use Storage (WWU) Project

GWRC officers (Environmental Regulation and Policy teams) have had a few pre-application meetings with the planning consultants leading out the WWU project. The project scope is to be determined and we are still awaiting to hear if the investors are going to proceed with the project and lodge an application.

##### Porirua wastewater collaborative pilot project

A Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) workshop was held on 25 June 2019 at Ngāti Toa's rooms in Takapuwhia. The MCA is a tool to help understand the overall findings from the comparative assessments and provides a numerical summary of the pros and cons of the nine short-listed options. Representatives for Wellington Water (and their expert panel), Ngāti Toa, Regional Public Health, GWRC, Porirua City Council and Porirua Harbour Trust attended the full-day workshop.

The criteria included: water quality, public health, tangata whenua values, growth, social and community, technology, resilience, natural character, landscape and visual amenity, and cost. The top three options from the MCA were: option (9) being twin storage in the network/existing standard of treatment/discharge from a new long ocean outfall; option (8) being a combination of storage and conveyance in the network/existing standard of treatment/discharge from a new long ocean outfall; option (3) being twin storage in the network/existing standard of treatment/discharge from the existing shoreline outfall. The preferred option will be presented to the Joint Venture (JV) committee (WCC and PCC councillors) in August 2019. The JV will make the final decision on the option to carry through to the detailed design, assessment and consenting phase for the plant and network. The resource consent applications for treatment plant discharges are due to be lodged in February 2020.

### Petone to Ngauranga cycleway

Following the recent presentation to Council, Beca on behalf of NZTA have begun engaging with the Environment Regulation Science and Policy departments, on their proposal to construct a shared walking and cycling path from Petone to Ngauranga. This project would involve extensive reclamation of the harbour edge. They have a lot of work to do to meet their proposed timeframes to lodge the application. You can see their vision here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMM2V3kb4tc>

### Pinehaven streamworks project

GWRC have been giving pre-application advice to WWL and their consultants in relation to the proposed streamworks project for Pinehaven Stream. The purpose of the proposed works are to reduce flooding at this location, including culvert and bridge renewals/upgrades, stream bank works, securing secondary flow paths, channel realignment in one location, etc. Consents will be jointly applied for from GWRC and UHCC and publically notified. Consent lodgement is estimated for September 2019 and WWL propose works to be undertaken this financial year.

## 4.2.5 Compliance, Investigations and Enforcement

### **Silverstream Landfill**

GWRC has completed an investigation into the odour from Silverstream Landfill on 17 May 2019 and have confirmed that there was a breach of the odour consent condition. As a result, GWRC issued HCC the consent holder with an infringement notice (fine) and an abatement notice, as well as abatement notices to Waste Management NZ who operate the landfill and Pioneer Energy who operate the landfill gas collection system. The abatement notice outlines the seriousness of the offence, and supports our message that future breaches may be dealt with more severely. The recipients have all been cooperative and we are continuing to work with HCC and the other parties to ensure they operate within their consent.

### **Forestry**

We are currently investigating a number of forestry sites where significant environmental effects have been noted. In the most advanced investigation we are at the stage of having laid charges against five parties for unauthorised discharges, depositions to and disturbance of a river bed, and breaches of the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry.

## 4.3 Environmental Policy

### 4.3.1 Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara Committee update

The Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara Committee has held six meetings to date and has commenced its phase of understanding the whaitua. Over the next several months, the Committee will be learning about the constraints and opportunities related to water issues in urban and rural landscapes within the whaitua.

At the most recent meeting on 22 July 2019 held at Silverstream Retreat, the Committee learned about river management and ecological outcomes. They heard from a series of speakers from GWRC's Flood Protection team, including Graeme Campbell on the history and legacy of development in the Hutt River valley, Colin Munn on the current floodplain management plan, and Alistair Allan on new integrated approaches such as Riverlink. Mark Heath from the Environmental Science department presented on the ecological impacts of river management and opportunities for improvement.

At the 10 June 2019 meeting, the Committee heard from Ra Smith of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee about a high trust model for collaboration followed by a workshop on consensus-based decision making.

The work programmes of the communications/engagement and policy subgroups are underway. The subgroups test ideas and help the Project Team develop content prior to each Committee meeting. The communications/engagement subgroup has created several tools for engagement, including an online presence on Facebook and Have Your Say. They have also launched a survey for the community to provide input on a 2120 vision for the whaitua. The policy subgroup has furthered progress on problem definitions and the policy framework which are aligned to the Committee's foundational kawa framework.

#### 4.3.2 Coastal vulnerability report release

The coastal vulnerability assessment report, which was finalised in June, has been socialised with all councils in the region, culminating in the Mayoral Forum on 21 June. The aim of this was to allow councillors the chance to discuss the results of the study and to seek a consensus on releasing the report. Councils were happy with the findings of the work, but wanted advice on the legal implications of the information for inclusion in LIMs before it was publically released.

Legal opinions are currently being sought on this with a view to producing a coordinated approach that all councils can agree with. An interactive online sea level rise and coastal inundation tool has been developed in conjunction with the report using data that underpinned the vulnerability analysis. The legal opinion has also considered this tool it is appraisal of the information. When this is completed, the Mayors will be informed with a summary and the report will be released in conjunction with a media statement and comms plan. The report and associated maps will be made available on the GWRC website.

## 4.3.3 City and District Council plan changes and resource consents

<b>Territorial Authority</b>	<b>Status of Document</b>	<b>Name of Document</b>	<b>Main topics commented on</b>	<b>Action</b>
Upper Hutt City Council	Proposed plan change	Proposed plan change 42 Mangaroa and Pinehaven Flood Hazard Extents	Flood hazard and policy provisions	Save our Hills have withdrawn their appeal and the file is closed. The Jeffries appeal has been resolved by the addition of an advice note to the relevant chapters advising that regional consents may also be required. Now pending Council decision from UHCC.
Wellington City Council	Proposed plan change	Proposed District Plan Change 83 – Kiwi Point Quarry	Effects of proposed quarry extension for gravel extraction activities on biodiversity	Plan change approved. Awaiting notice of any appeals on our issues.
Hutt City Council	Draft plan change	Draft district plan change significant natural areas	Identification and protection of significant biodiversity provisions	Awaiting resolution in the Environment Court of a previous plan change removing blanket protection for urban trees, prior to any further direction on the Forest and Bird legal action.
Hutt City Council	Draft private plan change	190,236,268 Stratton St and 310 Normandale Rd	Stream retention, earthworks and indigenous biodiversity	Consultation on layout and lot numbers as changed from rural to rural residential.

<b>Territorial Authority</b>	<b>Status of Document</b>	<b>Name of Document</b>	<b>Main topics commented on</b>	<b>Action</b>
Porirua City Council	Notified resource consent	12 lot subdivision and construction of 10 buildings in the Rural zone Plimmerton	Possible stormwater management issues	Application being assessed for need for submission.
Porirua City Council	Preparation for Draft District Plan	District Plan Review	Alignment with policy and operational matters	A draft is now due in September.
Kāpiti Coast District Council	Decision version	Proposed District Plan Decisions version 2017	Joined as S274 party to appeals on matters in submission	Issues with the layout of areas in the structure plan for the city centre and traffic continue to be unresolved.
South Wairarapa District Council	Proposed private plan change and resource consent	Orchards Retirement Village Greytown	Storm water management and transport connectivity	Submission lodged.

#### 4.4 Parks

In conjunction with the Parks, Land Management have engaged a consultant to prepare a Farm department Environment Plan (FEP) for QE Park- the intention is to complete this work by September this year. The first key milestone will be presenting to the Whareroa Collaboration Group meeting on 1 August to discuss FEP opportunities. Much of the focus will be on exploring innovation and opportunities with an eye to a potential retreat from farming at the end of the grazing licence period in 2025.

Park visitation and satisfaction levels (97%) have both increased to the highest levels to date, and we continue to receive very positive visitor feedback about their park experiences. Visitor usage growth across the network has increased on last financial year by 5% to 1.84m visits. Approximately 74% of surveyed respondents visited a GW Park in the last 12 months (compared with 72% the previous year).

Low levels of dissatisfaction continue to be in the same areas as past surveys: the number of public toilets; signage/information provision; and the accessibility of facilities, such as trails or toilets, for the equipment you are using, e.g. wheelchairs, walkers, baby strollers. Our work programmes are gradually addressing these issues, with the construction of a new public toilet at Tunnel Gully, and a facility building at the Upper Terrace campground at

Kaitoke and improved structures accessibility (with the planned replacement of the swingbridge at Kaitoke). Signage remains an ongoing focus across the Parks network – representing a key opportunity to improve visitor experience of our protected areas.

Parks has been working closely with New Zealand Plant Producers Incorporated as they look to introduce a framework to formalise and recognise work plant producers currently undertake to manage pests. It will help plant suppliers identify, control, manage or avoid pest and biosecurity hazards in their nursery and production processes, protecting the producer, their customers, the environment and the economy from the inadvertent introduction and dispersal of a plant pest.

The MIRO Nursery, that grows plants approximately 4,000 plants pa for East Harbour Regional Park, volunteered to be a pilot (one of 20 nurseries nationwide) for these guidelines. Parks has been involved with this process to ensure that volunteer nurseries are treated fairly and that the protocols agreed are in proportion to the risks involved and not too onerous for the volunteers.

Progress with implementation of the proposed new GWRC field radio system is going well. Resource consent has been granted for the Mt Wainui repeater site work. The Parks fleet hardware is purchased and ready for installation in 2019/20.

### **Queen Elizabeth Park**

The winter planting programme is well underway with good support from the community and corporate volunteers. Half of the 12,000 nursery-grown plants are in the ground; the final Spade Aid event will see the last 5,000 planted. The events team are busily marketing this with many posters being spotted on trains and in the Wellington Railway station.



**COR associates planting at QEP, they have attended plantings for the last 10 years**

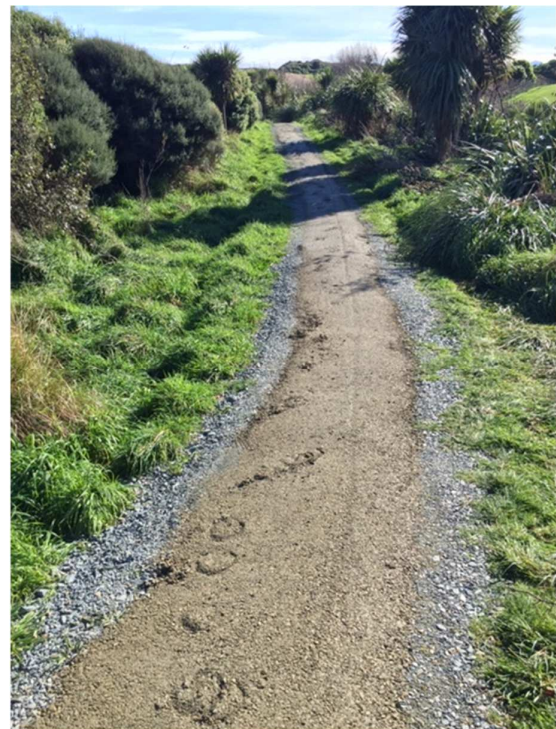
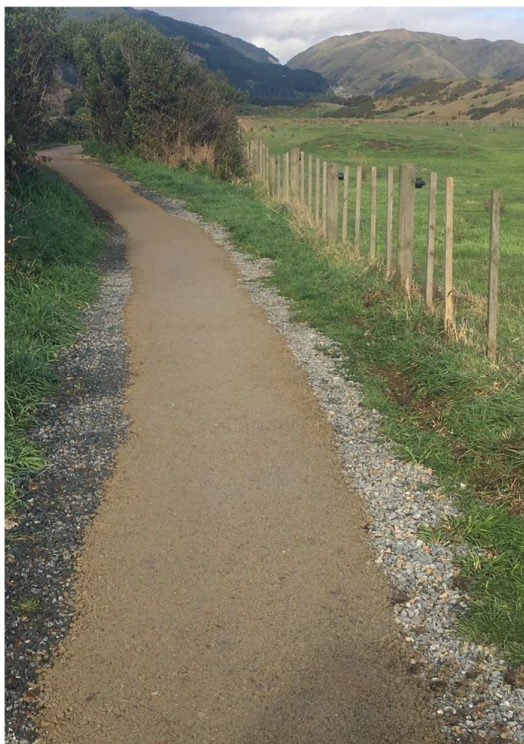


The draft Coastal Erosion plan for the Wellington Road section of Queen Elizabeth Park – status update. The draft plan is complete, public consultation undertaken. Submissions being analysed and to be reported to Environment Committee

Consultants have prepared an Outline Plan approval application for the northern Coastal track reroute has been prepared, and construction will take place this winter, provided that planning approval comes through before the spring winds begin (to avoid sand blow outs and destabilisation of dunes).

Work to upgrade a carpark at the US Marines Memorial site is complete - enhancing disabled access to the site and the bird hide in the nearby Marines wetland.

The Whareroa Stream track upgrade work is continuing. The results look pretty good, although its popularity is becoming a bit of an issue – with damage observed from an increase in horse-rider usage of this newly metalled track



(photos below).

*Whareroa Stream track upgrade hoof and tyre wear*

Site preparation work for the Mackays Crossing entrance area is underway with the clearance of exotic trees. The ringed Poplar was made available to the public as free firewood via a Facebook post that received 32,000 hits. There were many comments passing on thanks to GWRC for making this available.





**Poplar trees being removed as part of enabling works for new QEP entrance project.**

The aerial spray operation was completed over two half day operations working in optimal conditions. The work was completed with no major issues and an audit of the work by a Biosecurity Officer found it well planned and delivered.



**Aerial weed control at Queen Elizabeth Park**

**Battle Hill Farm Forest Park**

Arbor Day plantings around the new RDA arena were cancelled due to inclement weather, but were later completed with the help of a corporate group.

The retirement of approximately 5 hectares has been completed adjacent to the Battle Hill Bush Reserve. Site preparation over the last few months has enabled

3 hectares of planting this year (around 6,300 seedlings) with the balance to be completed in 2020.



**Battle Hill retirement site with planting underway.**

### **Belmont Regional Park**

The new track to connect Hill Road and the Old Coach Road is largely complete with 1500 metres of gravel added to wetter sections using a helicopter to transport gravel to site.



### **Gravel flying on new track in Belmont Regional Park**

We are working with Iwi to name the track and once this has been achieved signage will be completed. Once all works are completed we will arrange an official opening. In the meantime the track is being well used and we have received plenty of positive feedback.

Fencing works related to the TG project are largely complete and mitigation planting works well progressed for this year. We have begun discussions with the TG project team to address track reconnections and signage requirements once access is reinstated.

### **Whitireia**

Restoration plantings have begun, some concerns have been raised around planting around culturally and archaeologically significant sites. We are working on a way forward to complete this year's plantings and a process for future years.

### **Metro Forests**



The cutting rights holder, RMS, currently has the Rights on the market. Bidders have been visiting the forests and doing inventory checks over the last 4 weeks. This process is being managed by an independent consultant and PF Olsen, so GWRC staff have no involvement. This process should be completed towards the end of August, with offers to follow. GWRC has been offered the opportunity to be involved in the next stage prior to sale finalisation.

GWRC is also in negotiation with RMS over the Market Rental Review to determine the new annual per hectare rental for the Cutting Right. GW currently receives \$62 per hectare and this is likely to increase.

### **Akatarawa Forest**

Track metalling of the Cannon Point walkway track was all but completed, providing an excellent all weather surface for bikers and walkers. This is the most popular track along with Birchville Dam in the Forest. Together with Upper Hutt City Council we are working with the new landowner to secure permanent access across the private land section from Tulsa Park.



**Newly metalled section  
of Cannon Point  
Walkway, Akatarawa  
Forest**

The Akatarawa Park Ranger has been working with volunteers from Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee (ARAC) to improve the Orange Hut water supply. Through minor improvements to the pipeline there will be a more consistent water supply to the toilet, and improved availability to forest users.

### **Pakuratahi Forest**

The new Tunnel Gully toilet construction is progressing well. The septic tank and all underground services are complete. The new building is starting to take shape and will be commissioned soon. Located at the upper Gums picnic area

and within easy reach from the Remutaka Cycle Trail, we expect this facility to be very popular with park users.



**New toilets under construction at Tunnel Gully**

### **Kaitoke Regional Park**

Parks staff, PF Olsen (Forest managers) and NtrailZ (Volunteer trail builders) did a walkover of the K2 Flow track in Kaitoke Hill to assess the impacts of recently planted pine trees close to the riding track. It was agreed that trees within 1.5 metres of the track could be removed so they didn't continue to grow into the riding line. This was a good outcome for the users and demonstrated the strength of the relationship between the three parties.





**Pine trees showing good growth, but now is the time to remove those threatening the trail**

Eastern Parks staff had a project day to remove old willows along Farm Creek that were becoming a hazard for campers. These days provide a good opportunity for Park Rangers to work as a team, as much of their day to day work is often done alone.



**Parks project days: removing old willows at Kaitoke RP campground; removing invasive sycamores at Wainuiomata Recreation Area**

## **Wainuiomata Recreation Area**

The Eastern parks team had a project day to remove the remaining sycamores that were adjacent to the walking track and therefore cannot be drilled and filled. This project has been led by the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Park Ranger and partnered with Hutt City Council to work on removing sycamores from their land at Richard Prouse Park. GW Biodiversity has also contributed funding to pay for contractor time felling more difficult trees.

GWRC hosted a Dark Sky event in partnership with the Astronomical Society at Wainuiomata Lower Dam in July that attracted nearly 100 visitors to the park. They were shuttled up to the dam from the carpark, where there were several telescopes setup to assist with star gazing. Feedback from visitors was excellent, and the event attracted a broad range of ethnicities and ages.

We are likely to make this a regular parks event fixture. Parks will also explore the possibility of Wainuiomata Lower Dam site becoming a Dark Sky Park or Reserve; the only one currently in New Zealand is in the Mackenzie Basin near Tekapo.



**Dark skies event at Wainuiomata Recreation Area**

## **East Harbour Regional Park**

Works continue on the Baring Head Lighthouse Complex restoration project, with Hammond Decorators painting the garage and generator building exteriors. The two houses will be painted in October. The painting of the buildings has been sponsored by Dulux, which is a key project partner at Baring Head along with Naylor Love.





**Newly painted generator house and historic garage at Baring Head lighthouse reserve**



## 4.5 Harbours

### Navigation aids

Work is continuing on Barrett Reef buoy before it is swapped for the one currently at the entrance.

Work is about to begin on the foundations for the Hinds Point lighthouse.

The Oriental Bay swims raft have been removed for the water and the Wellington harbour 5 knot zone marker buoys have all been cleaned and had their moorings serviced.

### Port and Harbour Marine Safety code and Harbour Safety

A draft report from the external review group was received early July, The review was favourable and positive. We are seeking clarification to some points raised and will present the findings at the next Committee meeting.

The Harbourmaster attended the Code forum in Auckland along with the CEO. We heard from a variety of speakers talking about data gathering and analysis as well as human factors in incident analysis. This meeting was followed by the Navigation Special Interest Group where data gathering, recreational regulations and bylaws were discussed. Working group have been set up by the SIG to look at some of these areas. The Wellington Harbourmaster is part of the Bylaw working group. There was discussion around issue in different parts of the country including the America's Cup, commemoration of Cooks arrival and use of the RMA for 'no take' areas in coastal waters. Most Regional Council have entered into an information sharing agreement with Maritime NZ in relation to incident information and notifications.

The Harbourmaster and deputy met with Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) controllers in Porirua to discuss respective roles and how we can work together in the event of a natural disaster and recovery or a maritime mass rescue incident.

Late one evening Beacon Hill reported a fishing vessel was towing a second, disabled fishing vessel into the harbour in poor weather conditions. Beacon Hill alerted the Harbourmaster who in turn called out the Maritime Police. The vessels were closely monitored through the entrance until in a safe location and despite a couple of problems they resolved the situation safely. Both vessels were about 30 metres in length.

Two ships had engine problems in Cook Strait. Both were resolved relatively quickly and without the need for external assistance.

We have had two instances recently where ships came within harbour limits to register their arrival at the port before going elsewhere to wait for their pilot. This contravenes the Maritime Rule on Pilotage and in one instance occurred in strong southerly conditions. In both cases Beacon Hill was advising the ships they had to stay further away. This was discussed with Centreport and the Deputy Harbourmaster attended a port shipping agents meeting to discuss this. In conjunction with Centreport we are looking at how we can give them

an option to register their arrival further from the harbour entrance, which can avoid congestion and keep them outside of the compulsory pilotage area.

We were involved in the examination of a Pilot Exemption Candidate and the marking of a blank chart for a trainee pilot. Both candidates completed their charts to a high standard.

### Recreation

Maritime NZ has confirmed funding for additional summer recreational enforcement and education. This will allow us to increase the amount of time we have our boats patrolling on the water, weather permitting. As part of this agreement Maritime NZ are also proving safety branded items to be given away in our safe boating packs.

In a slightly unusual task, we assisted Environmental Protection to gain access to a moored boat to turn off the bird scary that was annoying local residents. It wasn't actually bothering the birds. Mana Coastguard were exercising that evening and kindly provided the transportation.



The Matariki skyshow was delayed one day due to an unfavourable forecast and went ahead on the Sunday night in near perfect conditions. We had our boat *SeaCare* patrolling the exclusion zone along with the Maritime Police and Coastguard. There were fewer boats on the water than at previous fine weather Guy Fawkes displays.

Life jacket testing was carried out for Wellington Rowing Club and TS Tamatoa Sea cadets. This is a free service we offer, usually through clubs, to ensure that lifejackets are still fit for purpose. We tested 153 jackets in total and 17 of them failed to meet the required standard.

The Chilean navy training ship *Esmeralda* made a visit to Wellington, it was seven years since she was here and made an impressive sight on the harbour.



### **Oil spill Response**

An annual equipment service and audit was held in conjunction with Maritime NZ staff.

There is a planned demonstration of some of our spill equipment in early September around Queens Wharf as part of a maritime navy careers and information expo.

## **5. The decision-making process and significance**

No decision is being sought in this report.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking into account the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines. Due to the procedural nature of this decision officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

### **5.1 Engagement**

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

## **6. Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

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