

# Recount

## Students promote environmental issues

The three students who represented Taranaki at the first National Youth Environment Forum in Wellington in September returned enthusiastically promoting the cause of waste reduction and management.

Gemma Cartwright, Hawera High School; Samantha Jamieson, New Plymouth Girls' High School, and Greg Severinsen, New Plymouth Boys' High School were chosen to attend the National Youth Environment Forum as the result of their entries in an environmental essay competition. At the invitation of Minister for the Environment Marian Hobbs, they joined about 50 other young delegates to discuss current issues in managing the country's environment.

Gemma Cartwright reported to the Council that once the group realised they weren't going to change the world in a week as habits, opinions and views were difficult to modify, they concentrated on what young people could achieve themselves.

"It is up to us to take environmental issues into our own hands and come up with solutions."

Regular youth forums both nationally and

regionally and recycling programmes in schools, she said, were good ways to start.

The key point of the forum, Samantha Jamieson said, was the importance of education and awareness in today's society.

"We agreed that if people were aware of environmental issues surrounding landfills, aware of greenhouse gas emissions and their effects, aware of how easy reducing, reusing and recycling actually is, then this planet may retain some of its natural values. My opinion is not that nobody cares, it's that they are not actually aware of the damage that is occurring to our precious environment. Natural resources are not endless and they do not know exactly what they can do to help."

Greg Severinsen stressed the importance of working together in the interests of the environment.

"Councils and the Ministry have to work closely with farmers, fishers and industrialists if anything is to be achieved. I learned most clearly that any issue relating to the natural environment is not straightforward, no matter how simple it may seem. People have to be consulted, debated and compromised with before a

positive outcome can be reached."

The students were addressed by Marian Hobbs and the Minister of Land Information and Youth Affairs John Tamihere, the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment Dr Morgan Williams and speakers from the Ministry for the Environment (including former Council Director – Resource Management Bill Bayfield) and from other environmental organisations.



Taranaki's delegates to the first National Youth Environment Forum are from left Gemma Cartwright, Samantha Jamieson and Greg Severinsen.

## New pest plant control has local trial

A biological control for the pest plant giant buttercup is now being trialled in Taranaki. The trials conducted by AgResearch, Lincoln, and Council staff are being carried out at three sites in heavily infested areas. The naturally occurring fungus *sclerotinia sclerotiorum* has already recorded a kill rate of up to 65% in trials in the Takaka district.

Application of the fungus during Taranaki's spring is ideal as the host plant needs to be damp for about a week. The fungus does not harm grass or clover and the plant is unlikely to develop resistance with prolonged use. The use of a biological control is appropriate for market demands to reduce chemical use.

Giant buttercup *ranunculus acris* is a

containment pest plant in Taranaki, that is, an abundantly growing plant that needs to be prevented from spreading further and to be reduced where practicable.

Initially, phenoxy type herbicides were used to control the pest plant which built up resistance to the spray. Indications

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## From the Chair

The Council's annual report for 2002/2003 has been released recently along with a summary booklet distributed throughout the region. The report summarises what has been a busy and successful Council year.



Chairman David Walter

A highlight of the year was the launch by the Minister for the Environment, Marian Hobbs, of the state of the environment report *Taranaki – Our place, our future*. This report demonstrates the commitment of Taranaki people to protecting our environment for the future, and a willingness to work with other groups and agencies which together allow Taranaki to move forward in ways unparalleled in New Zealand.

This has been a successful operational and financial year. Financially, the Council is in a strong position with an operating surplus for the year some \$290,000 ahead of budget. Operationally, the Council has been busy and productive across a range of activities. The preparation and implementation of more than 100 riparian plans is directly related to the Council's continued investment in technology which will stand us in good stead as the dairy industry addresses matters such as the Fonterra Clean Stream Accord.

The possum control re-treatment exercise in conjunction with the Department of Conservation's work in the Egmont National Park is another of the year's activities to be noted. This top-up of the work carried out by farmers on 337 properties adjoining the park over the past ten years covered an impressive 27,610 hectares.

During the year, Stage I of the planning process for the future development of regional gardens Tupare and Hollard Gardens, along with rhododendron garden Pukeiti, was completed. The development of detailed Stage II asset management plans for the three properties is well under way.

Other key operational highlights include: the processing of over 500 resource consents within the statutory deadlines; the successful compliance monitoring of significant resource uses; the response to almost 500 pollution incident notifications; the completion of a review of the Port Taranaki navigation and safety by-laws; the completion of maintenance works on the Lower Waitara River Flood Protection Scheme; the supply of 115,000 riparian plants; and the extension of the self-help possum control programme to 188,300 hectares on 2,951 properties.

The Council's focus for this current year is on the implementation of new legislation including the Local Government Act 2002 and the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.

As part of the Local Government Act, the Council, along with the three district councils, is determining the outcomes sought by the community for the immediate and long-term future of the region. The results will become an important ingredient in the Council's first long-term Council community plan.

The success of the Council over the past year is due both to the commitment of the councillors and to the dedication and professionalism of its staff headed by Chief Executive Basil Chamberlain. With the continued assistance of our community, we can look forward to another satisfying year enhancing our region's future.

David Walter - CHAIRMAN

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## New pest plant control has local trial

are that the plant may also develop resistance to the new synthetic herbicides.

Giant buttercup is a problem in many dairy pastures throughout Taranaki, Golden Bay, Hawkes Bay, South Wairarapa, Horowhenua and some parts of South Waikato. The plant is unpalatable to grazing livestock and can dominate pastures and reduce milk yield. Recent research has put the cost to the dairy industry in the 2001/2002 season at \$156 million in lost milk solids revenue. Most of the loss occurred in Taranaki (\$111 million) and the Takaka district (\$11 million).

It is anticipated that the Taranaki field trials will develop into major pasture trials by next season and that in future, land occupiers may have both herbicide and biological control to use in combatting giant buttercup on their properties.



Giant buttercup is a problem in many dairy pastures. The pegged area demonstrates the effectiveness of the trial control.

## Contaminated sites clean-up deals to potential problems

Following an estimation by the Ministry for the Environment in 1993 that there could be around 10,000 contaminated sites in New Zealand, the Council has been assessing the extent of the problem in Taranaki.

During the past ten years, Council officers have visited and assessed every known site. Out of some 1100 sites identified, only 12 sites have been found to require active management.

Of the 12, there are five whose clean-up is being managed by the current property owners or occupiers. Council staff routinely and frequently visit these sites and liaise with their owners. The remaining seven sites will be remediated by the Council, in association with the relevant district councils, in order to reduce the risk of any harmful effects to the environment.

None of the sites poses a high risk to the environment. The current clean-up aims to ensure that any contaminated sites in Taranaki are dealt with effectively once and for all.



# Community outcomes project seeks more feedback

The preliminary results of a comprehensive project that identifies the issues on which Taranaki people want councils and other organisations to focus, will soon be available for public consideration.

A draft final report outlining the community priorities, roles and responsibilities identified so far is expected to be available before Christmas. A flyer asking for community comment on a freepost tear-off will be in every letter box in the region around the same time and all written feedback is required by the end of January 2004. A hearing by the three district mayors and the chairman of the Taranaki Regional Council will then hear submissions in early February before the final report is published.

The process is a result of changes brought by the new Local Government Act 2002, which came into force at the end of last year, and under which, local authorities have acquired new powers and assumed new obligations to their communities. As part of an adjusted accountability, they must identify their community outcomes or, in other words, ask their communities what they want to see happen, and monitor the progress towards these goals. The process is to be repeated every six years.

The Taranaki project has been carried out jointly by the South Taranaki, Stratford and New Plymouth district councils and the Taranaki Regional Council. Everyone has the opportunity to have a say on what the community would like to see happen over the next ten years or so. Taranaki is one of the first regions to have started the process, the results of which are required to be included in the long-term community plans of all councils for 2006. A project team of senior managers from the four Taranaki councils is overseeing the local project and much of the community consultation has been managed by independent research firm A C Nielsen Ltd.



A Stratford focus group discusses priority issues for Taranaki.

In September, lively discussions were held at a series of public meetings in Hawera, Stratford and New Plymouth. Meetings were held also with leaders of a variety of businesses and groups and with representatives of Crown agencies, and a regional hui took place. Discussions with a series of focus groups were organised to gain further information and a telephone survey of over 500 Taranaki residents was completed in November.

Details on the community outcomes process can be obtained directly from the councils or from the Taranaki Regional Council website, [www.trc.govt.nz](http://www.trc.govt.nz). The draft final report will be available from the region's libraries.

## Regional policy statement is under review

The Council's 2001 regional survey of environmental attitudes, its state of the environment report published this year and the current project seeking proposals for community outcomes will provide valuable, up-to-date information for the review of the Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki.

The Council's current Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki, which was the first completed in the country under the then new Resource Management Act 1991, began operating in 1994. The Act requires that a full review of every policy statement is begun within 10 years.

The Council's review is already under way, allowing sufficient time for the necessary submissions and hearing processes.

The Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki states:

- the significant resource management issues for the region;
- the resource management issues of significance to iwi authorities in the region;
- objectives sought to be achieved, policies in relation to the issues and objectives and methods to be used to implement the policies;
- the reasons for adopting the objectives, policies and methods;

- the environmental results anticipated from implementing the policies and methods;
- the processes to be used to deal with issues which cross local authority boundaries;
- responsibilities for dealing with control of the use of land for natural hazards, hazardous substances and indigenous biological diversity;
- procedures to be used to monitor the statement's efficiency and effectiveness; and
- any other information the Council considers appropriate.

An interim five year review of the policy statement completed in 1999 indicated that 95% of all the methods listed had been implemented in part or in full, and that it was working well. However, there have been a number of external changes in that time that might require some revision of the original document. They include amendments to the Resource Management Act, developments in case law, advances in good practice, approval of the Council's full suite of regional plans, changes in issues, priorities and community attitudes, and new national statements and strategies.

It is expected that a discussion document will be available for community and stakeholder comment early next year.



# Biosecurity strategy gets under way

Successful implementation of the recently released Biosecurity Strategy for New Zealand Tiakina Aotearoa – Protect New Zealand will require considerable effort, time and resources. By all accounts, however, they will be worth it.

About 60% of New Zealand's exports and 20% of our Gross Domestic Product depend on efficient and healthy primary production. Importing countries are becoming increasingly concerned about any potential risks to their own production systems and their consumers are more wary of pests and diseases that could be carried on produce.

Biosecurity, or "the exclusion, eradication or effective management of risks posed by pests and diseases to the economy, environment and human health", will ensure that the country can produce efficiently and trade freely.

The strategy was drawn up by the Biosecurity Council at the request of the Government and following mounting pressures and public expectation. Taranaki Regional Council Chief Executive Basil Chamberlain, was a member of the Biosecurity Council as a representative of the country's regional councils.

Late last year, a draft strategy, Guarding Pacific's Triple Star, was released and attracted nearly 150 submissions including those of the Taranaki Regional Council which pointed out a shortage of matters of detail, and a need for assurance that current problems would be effectively addressed.

The Council has a vital interest in ensuring that New Zealand has effective and efficient biosecurity. Our economy relies on agriculture and is dependent upon keeping pests and diseases, such as foot and mouth disease, out. As pest management agencies, regional councils may have to deal with any pests that escape into the environment.

The final strategy notes that New Zealand's existing biosecurity system has kept our livestock among the healthiest in the world, and our fields and forests highly productive and tradeable. Our national biological assets now, however, are under greater threat than ever before.

The strategy points out that as a nation, we rely on trade and travel, so robust biosecurity is fundamental to our future prosperity and well-being. As the volume of goods and people, their sources and

the speed of their movement increase, so do the chances of exotic pests arriving with imported goods and passengers. Equally reliant on an efficient biosecurity system as our economy, are the biodiversity of our country and our own health.

The strategy concludes that New Zealand's biosecurity systems have to evolve quickly and perform even better. They need to become more extensive as the border becomes more diffuse, to be more adaptable in order to respond quickly to unpredictable threats, and more robust to repel invading species.

While full implementation of the strategy is expected to take up to five years, work on 10 high priority recommendations has begun. They are:

- make MAF clearly accountable for overall management of the whole biosecurity system, on behalf of all New Zealanders;
- put in place the necessary systems, structures and capabilities within MAF to support its role – starting with strong strategic capability;
- establish governance mechanisms (including a reconstituted Biosecurity Council and chief executives' forum) to support this strategy's implementation and monitor performance;
- encourage all New Zealanders to support and participate in biosecurity through a social marketing programme;
- identify ways to involve Maori in biosecurity issues and decisions, nationally and locally;
- identify, prioritise and review current and emerging risks – from pre-border to pest management and across aquatic and terrestrial environments;
- establish national leadership and co-ordination of pest management;
- recognise the contribution of science to biosecurity (strategically and operationally) and fund it properly;
- ensure decision-making processes take account of risks to the economy, biodiversity, taonga, human health and lifestyle in setting priorities; and
- increase funding over the next five years for priority areas and build organisational capability across the system.

# Teacher workshops prove popular

The professional development workshops provided by the Council for Taranaki teachers this year attracted a diverse and enthusiastic group of educators.

Around 25 teachers attended each of the four workshops and were introduced to such environmental topics as Pond life, Explore your local stream, What's with the weather and Environmental games.

Invitations to the workshops are sent out via the Council's S.I.T.E. newsletter to schools and registrations are made on a first-in-first-served basis. Four workshops were held last year and three in 2001.

The aim of the workshops is to

familiarise teachers with environmental issues and to provide them with resources and ideas that will appeal to their students. The activities are sufficiently varied to cater for teachers of students at all levels from new entrants to secondary school students and the courses have a content base appropriate to all.

The workshops are held at times that best suit the schools and, where possible, avoid the need for relieving staff. Helping teachers with environmental resources is regarded by the Council as a worthwhile and efficient way of educating as many people as possible about environmental issues.



Taranaki teachers learn environmental games at the Stratford Council offices site.



# Survey and collection will address rural waste

A survey of waste generation and disposal and a collection of hazardous wastes, both planned for rural Taranaki early next year, will provide the Council with valuable information on how farmers are managing farm waste. Opportunities to enhance waste management for the region's rural communities also will be identified.

The survey, which is believed to be the first of its kind in New Zealand, will be an important first step in dealing with the disposal of solid waste from farms in the region. Around 100 farms of varying types, sizes and locations within Taranaki will be investigated at first hand during February next year. Information required includes the types and quantities of wastes produced or stored on farms and their methods of disposal.

While Taranaki farmers have responded well to previous environmental initiatives such as the collections of unused agrichemicals or hazardous wastes, it is recognised that they can't readily access recycling schemes or other waste collection options. The regular disposal of empty 20-litre agrichemical containers and bale wrap, for example, remains an unsolved problem.

The project aims to identify sustainable and environmentally effective waste management strategies for farmers that are economically viable and able to be adopted throughout rural New Zealand.

A team made up of representatives from Federated Farmers, Stratford District Council, Queen Elizabeth II National Trust, Farm Wise Consultants, Fonterra, the Fonterra Shareholder Council and the Taranaki Regional Council have prepared the survey and successfully applied to the MAF Sustainable Farming Fund for a subsidy. Council officers will carry out the investigations.

A collection of hazardous and special wastes in rural Taranaki planned for March next year is the most recent in a series of similar events. In 1992-1994, the Council ran a very successful series of hazardous waste collections throughout rural Taranaki that gleaned around 20 tonnes of material including 6-7 tonnes of intractable agrichemicals such as organochlorines. Collections in urban centres followed in 1995-1996.

In conjunction with the three district councils, the Council repeated the collections in 2001 with greater

individual response, gathering around 13 tonnes of material including 7.5 tonnes of organochlorines and PCBs.

Drop-off facilities are now provided by district councils at their transfer stations where usage is steady but volumes are small. Disposal of hazardous wastes from farms which may be some distance from the facilities is often inconvenient and potentially unsafe.

The Council has applied to the Ministry for the Environment for funding for the project. It is proposed that a specialist company with a mobile collection unit will spend a week in Taranaki, travelling to up to 15 rural locations for collection and will dispose of intractable and hazardous wastes. The Council and the three district councils will provide labour and other assistance.

Both the survey and the collection are key elements in delivering the Regional Waste Strategy for Taranaki, prepared by a forum made up of representatives of the Council and the New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki district councils, which is in step with the recently released New Zealand Waste Strategy.

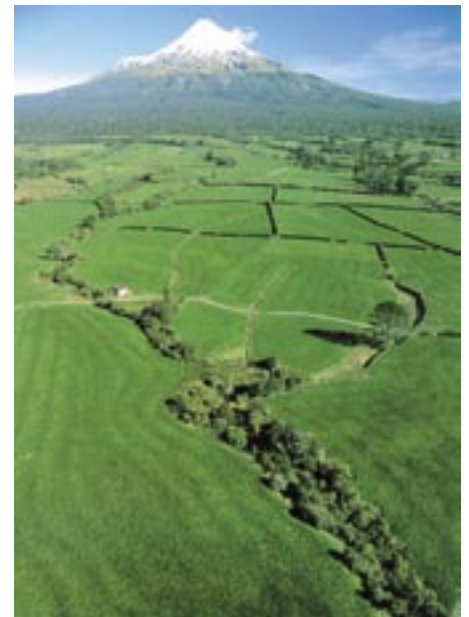
## Riparian plan numbers soar

The Council prepared 100 riparian management plans covering 660 km of stream banks between 1 July and 30 September this year – more than the number prepared for all of last year (61 plans covering 261 km).

The introduction of new GIS (geographic information system) technology has revolutionised the preparation and presentation of the plans and sped up the planning process. Council staff now produce a laminated A3 colour aerial photograph of the property with the proposed works illustrated. On the reverse side are tables used to calculate costs, implementation schedule and recommended plant lists. Additional information required is provided in appropriate information sheets and in a short video explaining how to carry out riparian management.

An increased demand for plans has arisen in response to the increased promotion of riparian management by the Council for specific catchment areas.

The Council has now prepared over 600 riparian plans, many of which have their planting completed. The amount of riparian planting required on the plans currently being implemented varies from around 1 kilometre to 22 kilometres and is often carried out in stages as time and finances permit. Between January and March each year, Council staff visit the developing sites to check on progress and to establish plant orders for the following season. With around 400 properties in development phase, it is estimated that around 200,000 plants will be provided at cost in the next planting season.



Riparian management is increasingly protecting Taranaki's river and stream margins and water quality.



# National environment standards receive comment

The Ministry for the Environment is currently developing a package of national environmental standards and is seeking public feedback. A national roadshow, Talk Environment – Roadshow 2003, held over October and November enabled the community to hear and comment on the Ministry's proposals.

Of particular note to Taranaki are:

- national environmental standards to prohibit the burning of tyres and oil in the open, landfill fires, road tar seal burning, high temperature hazardous wastes incinerators, unlicensed school and hospital incinerators, and the burning of coated wire to recover metals;
- national environmental standards requiring landfill gas collection and destruction, with flaring of gas likely to be the most common option. Beneficial uses of methane such as electricity generation would also be acceptable. These standards would not apply to sites that accept only cleanfill;
- a national environmental standard for emissions from new coal and wood burning appliances installed in homes in urban areas, based on particle emission rates;

- national ambient air quality standards for priority contaminants – carbon monoxide, particles, nitrogen oxide, ozone and sulphur dioxide. The proposed ambient standards will set national concentration limits, a maximum number of allowable exceedances, an absolute maximum concentration limit for the exceedances that trigger enforcement action and a monitoring method;
- a national environmental standard to improve the protection of drinking water sources. Features of the proposed standard include definitions of drinking water source, water quality grades, and monitoring and sampling requirements.
- a national policy statement for indigenous biodiversity, which will set out a national direction for sustainably managing indigenous biodiversity on privately owned land. It will state objectives and policies for the management of indigenous biodiversity with local government to decide on the methods that best suit local conditions.

The Council has made submissions on both the proposed landfill gas and ambient air quality standards on the community's behalf, following public

notification. Details of other proposed national standards are now awaited and the Council will make submissions on proposed biodiversity initiatives when the national policy statement is released.

The Ministry has sought feedback also on the potential development of a new process to address the challenges associated with major projects, such as power generation, ports, airports, prisons, roads or energy development.

The objectives of the programme include developing a process that will:

- reduce delays and other unacceptable costs;
- improve environmental outcomes;
- ensure that issues of national significance are appropriately addressed in decision making; and
- maintain the principles of the Resource Management Act.

Feedback was generally positive towards the potential change, particularly the statement of government position that would give a national view on major applications for local government consideration in the decision making process.

# Harbour wardens are appointed

Thirteen honorary harbour wardens have been re-issued or newly issued with warrants to carry out their role at Port Taranaki.

The harbour wardens all have maritime and boating expertise and experience. While they do not have full enforcement powers, they are able to keep the boating public up to date with navigation by-laws for Port Taranaki and its environs, and with safe boating practice.

Where the by-laws are broken, harbour wardens remind those responsible of the requirements of the by-laws and take sufficient details to pass on to the Harbourmaster who is able to take action.

New regulations which came into operation in July this year define three areas within the port that cater for different uses.

One area provides a safe zone for swimming, boat mooring and kayaking and has a speed restriction of 5 knots. In a second area the 5 knot speed restriction is lifted to provide a safe zone within the shelter of the breakwaters and beyond for water skiers, windsurfers or jet skiers. The third area is restricted to port activities.



Harbour users, such as these young sailors, benefit from the watchful eyes of Port Taranaki's harbour wardens



## Flood control remains a vital Council role

The Council, as a catchment authority, is responsible for providing advice and assistance to landholders for the control of rivers and flooding and for the construction of flood protection schemes as necessary. Comprehensive flood protection schemes have been established at Waitara and Waiwhakaiho and three smaller schemes are located in eastern Taranaki.

The major re-alignment and channel training works completed ten years ago at Waitara, are still working well and the regular checks ensure they stay that way. A detailed hydrographic survey of the river channel between the river mouth and the State Highway 3 bridge has been completed and has confirmed that both the channel and the bed are in good condition. Other work during the past year has included maintenance and extension of rock bank lining, excavation of gravel where it was not wanted, placement of rocks and further gravel where needed, and the addition of new groynes.

Scheme maintenance on the Waiwhakaiho site this year has focused on vegetation and weed control. The scheme has two components – river training channel management and stopbanks beside the Waiwhakaiho River and a gabion crate flood wall constructed on private land adjacent to the Managone Stream. The Council contributed to the construction of the Managone works in recognition of their regional off-site benefits and has a maintenance agreement with the property owners. Negotiations are currently under

way with the New Plymouth District Council for the acquisition and transfer of the lands on which the Waiwhakaiho River stop banks have been built.

Channel clearing of the Makuri, Toko and Mangaotuku streams in eastern Taranaki take place when needed. This year, the Council assisted local land occupiers to remove silt, aquatic weeds, stumps, logs and willows along their river frontages to improve potential flood flows through low-lying land. In the Makuri Stream, a self-propelled weed cutter boat from Hawkes Bay was put through its paces in a trial run. The boat squeezed through narrow sections of the natural channel but managed to clear weed from substantial lengths of the stream.

The Council's telemetry system measures rainfall and river levels at sites throughout the region and is the main source of flood information which is relayed to emergency services, road controlling authorities, district councils and the community. It was a quiet year. Only 15 special weather warnings and 13 weather watches were received from the Met Service.



Work on rock bank lining on the Waitara River ensures the flood protection scheme is in top order.

## Waiokura water is under scrutiny

As part of the ongoing move to improve the water quality of the region's rivers and streams, land occupiers in the Waiokura catchment are being encouraged to carry out riparian management.

The Waiokura Catchment has one major stream with four adjoining tributaries in the upper reaches. Unlike other ringplain streams, it does not have its source within the National Park and consequently has generally lower water quality affected by adjoining intensive land use. The area is one of four catchments in the country being used in an ongoing study of land uses and associated water quality conducted by NIWA and AgResearch. Other catchments in the study are in Southland, Canterbury and Waikato. An interim report released by NIWA shows the effects of diffuse source

runoff on water quality in the Waiokura catchment.

A flyer prepared by the Council and delivered to the relevant properties, including the 46 farms that have some part of their property within the catchment, outlines the health of the catchment and the advantages of riparian planting, including alignment with the Fonterra Clean Streams Accord that takes effect from 1 June next year. Riparian plans have already been prepared at no cost for 17 properties in the catchment.

For information about riparian management plans, contact:  
The Taranaki Regional Council Land Management Section  
Phone: 06 765 7127 or 0800 736 222

## Taranaki Regional Council Facts File

**Address:** Private Bag 713  
Stratford  
**Street Address:** 47 Cloten Road  
Stratford  
**Telephone:** 0-6-765 7127  
**Facsimile:** 0-6-765 5097  
**Email:** info@trc.govt.nz  
**Website:** www.trc.govt.nz

### EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Emergency Management: 0-6-765 7127  
Flood Alert: 0-6-765 7127  
Pollution: 0-6-765 7127  
Environmental Hotline: 0800 736 222

### NON-EMERGENCY AFTER-HOURS CONTACT NUMBERS

Emergency Mgmt: Bev Raine 0-6-758 1110  
Security: Dave Digby 0-6-765 6463  
Port Taranaki: 24 hours Capt.  
Ray Barlow 0-6-751 0200  
Pest Animals: George Gallop 0-6-762 2894  
Pest Plants: Brian Calkin 0-6-758 5359

### REGIONAL COUNCILLORS

#### New Plymouth Constituency:

Tom Cloke 0-6-753 5586  
David Lean 0-6-753 3325  
Barry Marsh 0-6-758 2252  
Claire Stewart 0-6-758 8861

#### North Taranaki Constituency:

Roger Maxwell 0-6-752 3622  
Donald McIntyre 0-6-762 4701

#### South Taranaki Constituency:

Ian Armstrong 0-6-761 8052  
David MacLeod 0-6-278 5577  
Neil Walker 0-6-278 7541

#### Stratford Constituency:

David Walter (Chairman) 0-6-762 7822

### MEETING SCHEDULE:

The Taranaki Regional Council operates to a six-weekly committee and Council meeting schedule.

Wednesday 4 February 10.30 am,  
Consents and Regulatory Committee

Thursday 5 February 10.30 am,  
Policy and Planning Committee

Monday 16 February 10.00 am,  
Executive Committee

Wednesday 25 February 10.30 am  
Ordinary Meeting

Tuesday 2 March 10.30 am,  
Civil Defence Emergency Management Group

Wednesday 17 March 10.30 am  
Consents and Regulatory Committee

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# Report examines coastal access

A Council report that analyses public access to Taranaki's coast and the significance of various areas along the 263-kilometre coastline has identified 69 sites as locally or regionally significant and has assessed their public access. The coastline study preceded the current national interest in ownership of the foreshore and seabed and was prompted by the growing interest in coastal subdivision, particularly in North Taranaki, and in response to concerns that access to the coast was diminishing.

The 69 sites equate to one third of the coastline and are significant for a mix of scenic, amenity, recreational, ecological, cultural and historical values. Over 95% of them are wholly or partly publicly owned and 58% of them are easily accessed. Sites that are not readily accessible to members of the public have either physical constraints, a need to safeguard associated values or a lack of or poorly defined legal access. The study has also turned up a number of paper roads which, although they appear on titles, are not well known by the public.

The perception that public access to the coast had diminished in recent times due to coastal subdivision is noted in the report. However, while changes in social conventions, ownership and land uses may have contributed to the loss of public access at the land holder's pleasure, coastal developments with their creation of esplanade strips and reserves, are often the means of providing legal access to the coast.

The report was compiled by the Council with assistance from the Department of Conservation and New Plymouth and South Taranaki district councils.



Access to the Manawapou River mouth in South Taranaki along with 68 other coastal sites is studied in a Council report.

# Recreational water quality comes on line

Swimmers will once again be able to check water quality ratings on the Council web site [www.trc.govt.nz](http://www.trc.govt.nz) before heading off to their favourite beaches or rivers this summer.

The monitoring of popular bathing sites resumed in early November and will continue until the end of March next year. Council officers measure concentrations of indicator bacteria at 19 beaches and 10 river sites in order to assess the possible presence of other disease-causing organisms such as bacteria, viruses and protozoa. Two days after the sampling, the results are posted on the web.

Access to the water quality ratings on the web site is gained by clicking on "Recreational water quality" then on "monitoring" and then selecting the relevant beach or river area.

The web site shows the bacteriological

count measured in the water at each beach or river sampling area and indicates surveillance and action limits.

Signs have been erected at the main beach and river sites, alerting swimmers to the on line service.

Water quality monitoring since 1995 as part of the Council's State of the Environment monitoring programme, has shown that Taranaki's most popular swimming spots consistently meet the safe level for national bathing standards.

Bacteriological water quality can decrease in rivers and streams, and subsequently at beaches, as a result of heavy rainfall and can take up to two days to clear. Where increased bacteriological levels unrelated to rainfall are detected at any of the sites, extra sampling or investigations will be carried out to determine the cause.



Scientific officer, Maureen O'Rourke takes samples for water quality checks. Photo courtesy Daily News