

Water quality studies bring good news

Recent close examinations of trends in the quality of Taranaki's surface water have produced some very encouraging results.

Reports based on 10 years of regular state of the environment monitoring activities show that at the least Taranaki's water is maintaining its quality, and if anything, is actually improving. Furthermore, fresh water quality in the region is as good as or better than in most other equivalent waterways in New Zealand.

The reports that examine both biological and physicochemical trends are particularly encouraging at a time when water quality in the region is increasingly challenged by intensive dairying practices, says Kevin Thomas, an Opunake dairy farmer, past president of Taranaki Federated Farmers and member of the Council's Policy and Planning Committee.

As a dairy section chairman in the mid-1980s, he had first-hand knowledge of the early debate over environmental issues and the resulting partnership between the Council and farmers.

"At the time, there was a huge argument in Taranaki over how dairy farmers should discharge their effluent. These results are a vindication of current practices. The pond system is working even if the ponds are near waterways, riparian management is working and Taranaki farmers are being careful where they put their fertiliser. This is a tremendous result and the Council and Taranaki farmers deserve accolades," he says.

The evidence presented in the reports is robust enough and accumulated regularly and over sufficient time to challenge previous gloomy national predictions of increased pasture nitrate excesses and declining surface water quality caused by pastoral farming. It is also comprehensive enough to account for the influences of El Nino and La Nina climate cycles.

Chief Executive Basil Chamberlain says the results are "enormously heartening."

"These reports are not totally definitive but are very good indicative reports. They're based on rigorous science over sufficient time to allow robust statistical methods. We've been through some hard, grinding work as a community, investing and looking after



The Waiwhakaiho River

the environment. It's looking as though together we're doing a few things right. Now we have to keep at it," he said.

While the Council's 10-year state of the environment monitoring data forms the basis of the reports, a survey of the ring plain taken 25 years ago by the Council's predecessor, the Taranaki Catchment Commission, has provided additional useful information for comparison.

The physicochemical report shows that today's levels of nitrates and ammonia are substantially better than those of 25

continued on page 2

Inside Recount

- Pandemic planning
- Environmental Awards
- Oil burning power
- Students' urban design
- Taranaki Naturally gallery
- New city bus system
- Odour control investment
- Dairying strategy
- Regional policy review
- Public transport plan
- Long-Term Community Plan
- Council elections

From the Chair

The Government is to be applauded for recognising and responding in the recent Budget to the need to improve our key state highways.



The Taranaki community is to be commended too for giving a clear and consistent message to the Government that delays on projects such as the Bell Block by-pass and the Rugby Road and Normanby overbridges threaten road safety and the region's economic growth.

The hundreds who turned up to public meetings, business people who researched the commercial impacts of work delays, the Road Transport Association, district councils, Venture Taranaki, the Automobile Association and our MPs have all combined to push our case.

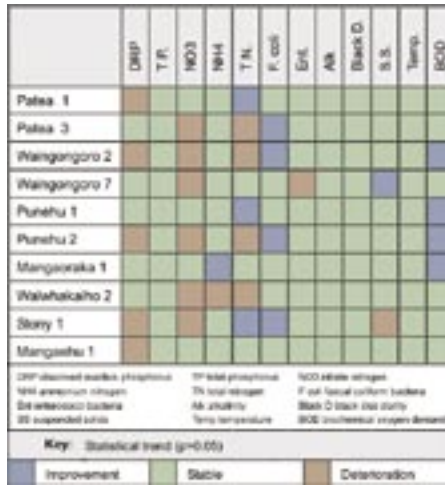
The Joint Taranaki-Waikato SH3 working party efforts have also been useful, given the announcements for road improvements at Awakino and passing lanes north of the Awakino Gorge.

Of course there is a need to focus on Auckland and fix its traffic issues. But there can be no argument for doing this at the expense of projects that are critical to the development of regions like Taranaki that have been at the forefront of New Zealand's economic growth over recent years.

This Council looks forward to continuing to work with the Government and its agencies Transit New Zealand and Land Transport New Zealand to move land transport projects forward in this region.

Already under way is the Council's review of passenger transport in the region and the development of a revised Regional Land Transport Strategy. As a result of preliminary studies, a new bus system for New Plymouth that provides additional and more regular services will be trialled for 18 months. In order to gauge the success of these changes, we need participation and feedback from our community. We look forward to hearing your opinions.

David Walter - CHAIRMAN



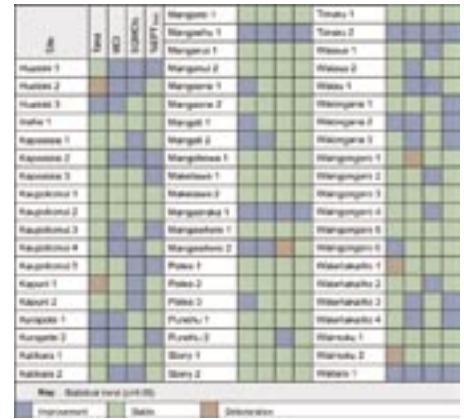
Physicochemical trends in surface water quality (1995-2005)

years ago, and probably reflect the changes in farm effluent treatment and municipal and industrial wastewater systems introduced over that time. Some recent deterioration in nitrate levels, most likely caused in part by an increased use of nitrogenous fertilisers, particularly urea, shows that management of nitrates remains a challenge for the region. Studies of Taranaki's groundwater are showing a slight decline overall in the levels of nitrates across the region but levels remain high at some sites. In due course this will reduce the levels of nitrates entering surface water from this source. Careful and informed management of nitrogenous fertiliser, extension of riparian planting and exclusion of stock from waterways are considered to be key factors for improvement.

The results show that dissolved and total phosphorus levels have been stable over the past 25 years at some sites, and have declined at others where in most instances the decline has since been halted. The trend follows the pattern of heavy use of superphosphate fertiliser in Taranaki in the 1980s and a reduction in use since the mid-1990s.

Bacteriological quality has been maintained or has improved throughout Taranaki over the last 10 years, organic contamination has been reduced, and levels of clarity and suspended solids have remained the same.

A second report prepared by the Cawthron Institute that examines trends in the region's ecological systems contains equally good news. Macroinvertebrate data was statistically analysed for 60 sites. At the first level of 'significance' or 'certainty' applied, 21 sites showed a significant improvement in aquatic ecology (MCI column in table above) and only one



Biological trends in surface water quality (1995-2005)

showed significant deterioration over the 10 years. Again, despite the increasing pressures on water quality noted in the region, the remaining sites were maintaining their water quality.

Examining the accumulated state of the macroinvertebrate data and determining biological trends was the first step in this study. Determining the causes of the encouraging results comes next. Research that correlates these biological trends with the conclusions of the physicochemical water quality report, surrounding land use and the state of riparian margins is under way.

Copies of the reports are available from the Council offices and at www.trc.govt.nz



Macroinvertebrate sampling

Council challenges RMA changes

In a strongly worded submission, the Council has asked the Government to front up to its climate change issues nationally rather than shifting responsibilities, along with unnecessary expenses, back to regional councils.

The Resource Management (Climate Protection) Amendment Bill reverses the Government's previous position that the control of greenhouse gas emissions is best addressed at national level. The Council had supported this stance which resulted in the Resource Management (Energy and Climate Change) Amendment Act and removed the need for unnecessary hearings and appeals with their consequent delays and significant expenses to resource consent applicants, submitters and the Council.

In the 10 years prior to the passing of the Resource Management (Energy and Climate Change) Amendment Act resource consent application processes, provisions in statutory plans and advocacy cost the Council almost \$1 million. Dealing with greenhouse gas emission issues and delays in the granting of consents cost resource consent applicants tens of millions of dollars.

Adopting the proposed Resource Management (Climate Protection) Amendment Bill would re-impose the former

uncertainties, inequities and costs. Furthermore, the submission argues, as the Bill is an "interim" measure, the Council runs the risk of making a considerable investment in developing regional policy statements and regional plans consistent with the new national position, only to have to re-address them once the Government finalises its climate change policies and programmes.

Energy, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change are of particular interest in Taranaki because of the region's strong dairying, petrochemical and electricity generation industries – all of which are both significant contributors to the regional and national economies, and significant sources of greenhouse emissions. The Council's state of the environment report in 2003 noted that approximately 5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide are annually emitted by industry and transport. Agricultural sources emit a further 5 million tonnes of equivalent carbon dioxide in the forms of nitrous oxide and methane. Of further concern to the Council is the fact that the Resource Management (Climate Protection) Amendment Bill fails to address non-point sources such as transport or emissions from production land or livestock, which are the most significant contributors of greenhouse gas emissions.

Pandemic planning under way

Representatives of Taranaki's industries, local bodies and emergency services and the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group have been busy since January planning an emergency strategy to deal with a flu pandemic in the region. A booklet explaining who is responsible for what, and how individuals can respond to the potential emergency will be available through libraries and on the Internet later this year.

Covered by the strategy are issues such as border management, water supply, waste disposal, transport, communications, welfare and health. A public awareness programme organised by the Council, the three district councils, the Taranaki District Health Board and the Ministry of Social Development will also get under way during the next 18 months.

Closer to home, the Council has identified among its own services those it believes are essential to the wellbeing of the community in the event of an emergency. Staff back-up measures will ensure that business in areas such as civil defence, weather and flood monitoring and incident response will continue as usual.

Regional policy statement review

The Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki that drives the management of the region's resources is now under its 10-year review.

This is the second regional policy statement to be prepared by the Council and addresses integrated management of land, water, air and the coast for the Council and the three district councils in the region.

Over the past 10 years there have been developments in environmental issues, attitudes and priorities, changes in statutes including the introduction of long-term council community plans, and new government policies, strategies and initiatives – all of which are taken into account in the new draft.

New look for Taranaki Naturally gallery



The recent refreshment of the Council-supported "Taranaki Naturally" gallery at Puke Ariki has brought some changes to the gallery's layout and a new look to the content. Pictured in the gallery (left to right) are Puke Ariki Manager Bill Macnaught, Council Chief Executive Basil Chamberlain and Council Chairman David Walter.

Of particular note in the draft Proposed Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki are new issues such as indigenous biodiversity and sustainable urban development; issues developed in other Council strategies, plans and monitoring such as soil health, coastal water quality and waste management, and minor policy shifts accommodating changes to the Resource Management Act.

The draft Proposed Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki will move through a process of legal audit and peer review and will be available for public consideration and submissions later in the year.

Environmental awards

Eleven awards for a diverse range of environmental work were presented by Council Chairman David Walter last month.

This was the 13th year of Council environmental awards that collectively amount to a very significant contribution to Taranaki by businesses, local authorities, the agricultural sector, individuals, schools and community groups. All of the projects either make a practical contribution or promote the need for sustainable management of Taranaki's natural resources.

Business/local authority category

Swift Energy New Zealand Ltd

– for community engagement and environmental management. The company operates a number of oil and gas exploration sites, pipelines and production stations and, working with their contractors, on-site staff, Council staff and the local community achieve good environmental management. All their consent applications have been non-notified, gaining the support of all affected parties through prior consultation.



Swift Energy New Zealand LTD

PPCS Ltd (formerly Richmond Hawera)

– for investment and improvement in environmental performance. The introduction of a new evaporative condenser system at the Hawera meat processing plant in 2004 has



PPCS LTD (Formerly Richmond Hawera)

significantly improved water quality in the Tawhiti Stream. PPCS approached its environmental responsibilities proactively and maintains a good level of environmental performance and compliance with resource consents.

Agricultural category

Ian and Judith Armstrong

– for advocating and implementing sustainable farming practices. The Armstrongs have protected the water quality of the many small streams and tributaries flowing through their dairy farm near Te Kiri, progressively fencing streambanks and planting riparian margins. Local schoolchildren have taken part in planting as a school fundraiser and a means of increasing awareness of riparian management in the community.



Schoolchildren planting on the Armstrongs' Te Kiri farm.

Daryl and Karyn Johnson

– for advocating and implementing a whole of farm approach to environmental management. The Johnsons recognise that the success of their business depends on how they manage their land, and they plan to leave the land in a better state than when they took over. They practice sustainable farming across all areas of their operation through resource knowledge, soil, pasture, riparian, waste and water management, wetland protection and farmer education.



Daryl and Karyn Johnson's Pukengahu farm

Mark and Claire Ogle

– for sustainable land management. A commitment to an ongoing programme of sustainable land management on the Ogles' 369 hectare sheep and beef farm at Huiroa has led them to match different land use and farm management practices. Steeper areas have been retired and 40 hectares of forestry planted, woodlots have been planted on the margins of a large gorge, poplar poles planted annually and shade for stock provided in every paddock. Rising one year old bulls are now wintered to reduce treading damage on the hills.



Mark and Claire Ogle's farm at Huiroa

Robin and Jacqueline Blackwell

– for sustainable land management. An extensive sustainable land management programme on the Blackwells' 400 hectare sheep and beef Mangaotea Farm near Tariki includes the retirement of the gullies and the intensification of the more

productive land. The Blackwells monitor the farm's soil fertility levels and assess any potential environmental impacts of intensification. Pole planting and riparian management programmes are ongoing, 30 hectares is covered in native bush or pine forest, and habitat restoration is being carried out on a number of wetland areas.



Robin and Jacqueline Blackwell with Council Land Management Officer, Jason Loveridge (left)

Neil and Denise Phillips

– for sustainable land management, environmental enhancement and environmental education. To remedy gully erosion and to protect the Patea River boundary and 2.5 kilometres of the Waihapa River on their Bird Road property, Neil and Denise Phillips have fenced and planted. Their riparian management programme has helped to restore the natural habitat and enhance the water quality in their part of the Waihapa and Patea catchments. They have hosted field days and worked closely with the Council's environmental education programme.



A Treescaping field day at Neil and Denise Phillips' Bird Road farm.

Individual/school/ community category

TSB TOPEC

– for waste minimisation and increased energy efficiency. TSB TOPEC has worked with the Council to find ways of reducing waste and improving energy efficiency, and have reduced the volume of waste sent

to landfill by 250 to 300 litres per week. Recyclables are now removed from kitchen waste, food waste is used for pig feed, hot water usage efficiency has been improved, and there are plans to introduce solar water heating.



TSB Topec

Fonterra and Hawera Rotary, Nowells Lakes Walkways project

– for environmental enhancement and development of an environmental education resource. This joint environmental protection and enhancement project on the Fonterra Whareroa site farm was officially opened last year. More than 600 South Taranaki school students and scouts planted specific areas within the five hectares of riparian margins in a small gully that leads to the lakes. Some special groves were planted with trees raised by the schools themselves. The project is a valuable resource for environmental education, and has further enhanced the natural habitat of the two freshwater lakes.



South Taranaki children at a Nowells Lake planting day.

St Joseph's Primary School Waitara

– for environmental education and riparian planting in the lower Waitara valley. The students of St Joseph's Primary School have helped plant more than 2,400 riparian plants near their school. They have increased their awareness and understanding of the environment, and have developed a sense of ownership and pride in their local environment.



Waitara riparian planting by St Joseph's Primary School

Spotswood Primary Mike Norris Memorial Outdoor Classroom

– for increasing environmental awareness and understanding. A major project to develop an outdoor classroom in a gully beside the school was initiated by the then principal Mike Norris who died during the early stages of the project. A small lake and wetland has been fenced and planted, tracks have been formed and an area set aside for an outdoor classroom. The students have a sense of ownership of the project and a commitment to ongoing maintenance and propagation for future planting.



The Mike Norris Memorial Outdoor Classroom at Spotswood Primary School



Environmental award winners for this year with Council Chairman David Walter are (left to right): back row Daryl Johnson, Bruce Colgan (Fonterra), David Walter, Doug Hutchinson (Fonterra), Ron Bremner (Hawera Rotary), third row Ian Armstrong, Karyn Johnson, Neil Phillips, Kerry Boulton (PPCS Ltd), second row Judith Armstrong, Mark Ogle, Denise Phillips, Claire Ogle, Ern Radel (PPCS Ltd), front row Robin Blackwell, Jacqueline Blackwell, Kerry Warner (TOPEC), Peter Smith (TOPEC), Bill Wanstall (Swift Energy).

New city bus system on trial

A new look bus system for New Plymouth, Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura will begin on July 1. Not only will the fronts of the city buses have a new look, but some of the routes they will be taking will be altered as well.

The changes are part of a Council review of passenger transport in Taranaki and the development of a revised Regional Land Transport Strategy. The new bus system for New Plymouth grew out of a perceived need to provide additional and more regular urban services, and to more effectively meet the needs of people who do not have access to a car or cannot drive themselves. The new routes and timetable are on trial for 18 months to gauge support for public transport, and the Council hopes to receive any feedback that can improve the system.

Most of the changes are to the four urban routes within New Plymouth that build up in frequency around midday, providing a bus every 45 minutes between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm. The buses run Monday to Friday with a limited weekend service on Saturday only.

Revised timetabling and a central hub have simplified access to the public transport system and introduced more certainty into transferring from one route to another. All the services (except the Oakura run which is available only during the secondary school term) are synchronised and converge at the Ariki Street Bus Centre where passengers can change straight away to another equivalent route at no extra charge.

Financial support by the Council and Land Transport New Zealand mean that children, tertiary students, beneficiaries, senior citizens and holders of Access cards will travel at subsidised rates. An agreement with WITT has enabled students and staff to travel free.



FARES	NEW PLYMOUTH & BELL BLOCK	WAITARA or OAKURA
Adult single fare	\$3	\$5
Adult return fare	\$5	\$8
10-trip adult concession	\$20	\$35
Children (5-15 years), secondary school and tertiary students with ID, beneficiaries, senior citizens and Access cardholders	\$1.50	\$2
10-trip concession	\$12	\$16
Children under 5	FREE	FREE
WITT students/staff	FREE	FREE

Timetables are free and are available on the Okato Bus Line buses, at libraries, information centres and service centres or on the Okato Bus Lines web site www.okatobus.co.nz.



Public transport plan looks at options

The new city bus service trial for New Plymouth is one step in a comprehensive revision of public transport options in Taranaki.

A recent review of the region's land transport strategy and its accompanying passenger transport plan closely examined the reliability and security of Taranaki's roads and rail infrastructure, the efficiency of our land transport networks and how actions in these areas could help the future development of the region. It also looked at safety issues, for example roading improvements and driver education, and how we can improve access and mobility particularly for people without their own transport.

Input from transport consultants and the community established that passenger transport brought a number of advantages to Taranaki. They include: reduced traffic congestion, roading and parking benefits, increased safety, greater mobility, environmental

benefits, increased social interaction, cheaper travel, workforce travel options and increased access to essential services and amenities.

For a public transport system to be cost effective it relies on community support. The 18-month trial of the refined bus services in New Plymouth is designed to both measure how well the service is patronised and test the changes. "New Plymouth City Bus – we run on your support," the new timetables state.

While the passenger transport plan recognises that the issues that affect passenger transport planning in Taranaki are substantially different to those in regions with larger centres of population, it recommends an examination of inter-town services as well. Opportunities remain for passenger transport operators to look at new markets, and investigations into community transport systems that link urban and rural areas of Taranaki are planned.



New Plymouth Power Station

Oil burning power proves potential

Oil burning trials carried out at New Plymouth's Power Station have shown that if needed, the station can generate electricity while maintaining air quality.

Contact Energy holds an air discharge permit that allows its power station to be operated on oil in emergencies such as the loss of gas supply to other thermal electricity generating stations around New Zealand.

The Council commissioned NIWA to operate two sulphur dioxide monitoring sites at locations calculated by computer modelling to be likely impact zones for the plume from the station's boiler stacks. The sites were on Blagdon Hill, facing the Port, and at Taranaki Base Hospital. Monitoring was undertaken between 2003 and 2005, before and during the oil burning trials. Oil was burned in trials between February and September last year, with 1200 tonnes of fuel oil burned overall.

The maximum 1-hour and 24-hour concentrations of sulphur dioxide were well below Ministry for the Environment standards and were lower during periods of oil burning. Diesel vehicles are believed to be the main source of sulphur dioxide in New Plymouth.

Odour control investment brings good results

Improved management of Osflo Spreading Industries' facilities has lifted the company's environmental performance significantly and won general approval.

Anton Naus, Osflo's site manager said that it was pleasing to see good results from the Company's commitment to an improved performance.

The Company collects chicken litter from the region's broiler farms and stockpiles it at its premises near Bell Block, before spreading it as a soil conditioner and fertiliser on farm paddocks. Renewal of the air discharge consent gave the Council, the Company and its neighbours an opportunity to explore together how the activities handling the odorous material could be improved.

As a result, Osflo invested in an odour control system designed to neutralise odours released from the litter.

The annual compliance report for Osflo Spreading Industries for 2004-2005 was one of 10 presented recently to the Council's Consent and Regulatory Committee.

Long-Term Community Plan adopted

The 2006-2016 long-Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) was adopted at the Ordinary Meeting in May. Following the hearing and consideration of 15 submissions on the draft of the LTCCP some minor editorial and budgetary changes were made.

Council Chairman David Walter said that the planning process gave ratepayers and residents an important opportunity to contribute to the discussion before the Council was committed to activities. He thanked all submitters for their valued contribution. The 2006-2016 LTCCP comes into effect on 1 July 2006.

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
Web site:	www.trc.govt.nz

AFTER HOURS CONTACT NUMBERS

After Hours Contact:	0-6-765 7127
Environmental Hotline:	0800 736 222
Civil Defence Emergency Management	0800 736 222

REGIONAL COUNCILLORS

New Plymouth Constituency:

Tom Cloke	0-6-753 5586
Moira Irving	0-6-753 3063
David Lean	0-6-753 3325
Barry Marsh	0-6-758 2252

North Taranaki Constituency:

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

South Taranaki Constituency:

Bruce Cudby	0-6-278 5573
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.

Thursday 15 June, 10.30 a.m.,
Regional Land Transport Committee

Monday 19 June, 10.00 a.m.,
Executive Committee

Wednesday 28 June, 10.30 a.m.,
Ordinary Meeting

Thursday 20 July, 10.30 a.m.,
Consents and Regulatory Committee

Friday 21 July, 10.30 a.m.,
Policy and Planning Committee

Monday 31 July, 10.00 a.m.,
Executive Committee.

ISSN No 1171-1140

Students try out urban design

Three Taranaki students had a crack at making Wellington into a more sustainable city during a youth forum in the capital in April.

Sarah Peel, (Inglewood High School), Harriet Kingston (Inglewood High School) and Alexandra Masters (New Plymouth Girls' High School) were selected to represent the region at the Sir Peter Blake Youth Environment Forum attended by 45 students from throughout New Zealand.

The three students joined an urban design group of 15 who were charged with drawing up a plan to turn Wellington into a more sustainable city by 2020. Over the three days of the forum, they consulted with Greater Wellington Regional Council officers and an architect of sustainable buildings, and produced a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation for the Minister for the Environment David Benson-Pope.

Their plan included the introduction of more swales planted to filter toxins out of



Council Chairman David Walter with students Sarah Peel, Stephen Vince, Chrystal De Cleene and Harriet Kingston (left to right). Absent: Alexandra Masters.

water entering the harbour, an upgrade of trolley buses and the phasing out of diesel buses. In an effort to reduce pollution and fuel use, they transformed the central business district into a car-free zone.

Opunake High School students Stephen Vince and Chrystal DeCleene were runners-up in the essay competition organised and judged by the Council to select forum delegates, and each received \$200 vouchers for educational resources.

Dairying Strategy Addresses Environmental Issues

A strategy designed to help dairy farmers reduce environmental impacts while maintaining financial viability was released in March.

Dairy Industry Strategy for Sustainable Environmental Management was commissioned by Dairy Insight and is endorsed by Dairy 21.

Farmers need assistance to see the many forms of value that will lead to the best management of the environment, the strategy points out. To this end, environmental issues and action need to be seen to be important within the dairy industry. The industry needs to take part in regulatory processes to ensure they are informed, scientifically based and appropriate. It needs to show progress in environmental management and efficient use of resources, and to develop effective

management tools and knowledge for the environmental impacts of dairying.

The strategy identifies as key priorities to be addressed over the next 10 years: nutrient losses of nitrogen and phosphate to water; microbial contamination of surface water; availability of water for dairying; and continued contribution to the Pastoral Greenhouse Gases Consortium.

Required outcomes are leadership and engagement (environmental leadership and participation in environmental decision-making); action (on-farm environmental management); and research (benchmarks, mitigation, performance and planning tools, and irrigation development).

Council might gain one more seat

After next year's elections the Council is likely to have one more member. The proposed extra seat will be in the New Plymouth constituency and will bring the Council into line with the representation per population requirements of the Local Electoral Act 2001.

The change is part of the Council's representation review that includes earlier decisions to not introduce a Maori constituency and to retain the First Past the Post electoral system. The Council has consulted over the proposed representation and will now publicly notify its final proposal.

Under the proposal, next year's elections could be for constituencies in North Taranaki (2 members); New Plymouth (5 members, formerly 4); Stratford (1) and South Taranaki (3).



Minister of Agriculture Jim Anderton discusses Jacqueline and Robin Blackwell's farm plan during last month's visit to study the Council's land management programme. Pictured left to right are Kevin Thomas, Past President of Taranaki Federated Farmers; Kevin Steele (partly obscured), Office of the Minister of Agriculture; Jim Anderton; Robin Blackwell, landowner; Don Shearman Council Land Services Manager and Basil Chamberlain Council Chief Executive.