

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL SUMMARY OF ANNUAL REPORT

1 JULY 2008 – 30 JUNE 2009



HERE ARE SOME OF THE
KEY OUTCOMES OF OUR
WORK DURING 2008/09.

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ANNUAL REPORT ON LINE
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REGIONAL COUNCIL FOR
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0800 108 838.

The Hawke's Bay region experienced yet another very dry year which impacted on the Council's natural resource management role in a variety of ways. Ongoing maintenance and improvement across flood protection and drainage progressed very well, though there was minimal testing of the system itself. Conversely, competition for both ground and surface water is increasing and this coincided with high levels of consent renewal processes and consent applications.

The 2008/09 year was also dominated by development of the Ten Year Plan or LTCCP. This was the second such plan produced under the Local Government Act which resulted in the process maturing further, and there was a concerted effort to ensure the plan had a clear strategic focus.

Critical areas identified in the Ten Year Plan include future management of the region's increasingly valuable water resources; relationships with iwi, noting demographic and Treaty settlement trends; an explicit focus of council activities on "triple bottom line" targets including environmental, economic and social dimensions consistent with the LGA "wellbeings"; and setting up related frameworks for investment decision-making within Council's investment portfolio.

Alan Dick
Chairman

Andrew Newman
Chief Executive

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

The Proposed Regional Coastal Environment Plan is yet to be made operative and there has been a focus on resolving appeals against Council's decisions on submissions through negotiation, mostly about managing coastal hazards in the region.

Environmental education activities involved school children, businesses, landowners and the general public, including supporting EnviroSchools, involvement in SeaWeek and Conservation Week, the Your Choice stormwater programme, and publications.

Scheduled maintenance for all significant wetlands was completed within time and budget. 64 grants were made totalling \$437,000, and 47 were completed (\$171,000). A major new initiative was the capital works programme to design and build access from SH2 to Pekapeka Wetland, in preparation for an interpretation centre in 2009/10.

64 grants (\$437,000) were made for biodiversity protection; 142 Regional Landcare Scheme projects (\$284,000) for soil conservation were approved. A farm visit programme was completed. Field days were held in the Huatokitoki catchment and Council successfully applied for MAF funding for a study in this catchment. A dairy liaison group has been initiated. Programmed maintenance at Tutira Country Park and the Tangoio Conservation Reserve was completed.

620 resource consents applications were processed with 106 of these publicly notified, and 97% of these were processed within statutory timeframes. The Council was ranked 14 out of 85 councils for achieving compliance with statutory timeframes for 2007/08 in the biennial MfE survey. There were 927 resource consent compliance inspections (compared with 561 last year) of 1318 consents (the highest level of monitoring to date).

All state of the environment programme science monitoring was completed and the five yearly summary report published as "Hawke's Bay Trends". Field work for the sediment quality research was completed; a transient groundwater model of the Ruataniwha Plains was delayed to June 2010; and a revision of the 2004 nitrate contaminate model of the Ruataniwha Plains was completed.

A strategic water programme was developed to improve understanding of the water resource and to review the water management framework contained in regional planning documents. Council also started looking into potential water storage options for the Ruataniwha Plains area, made progress on making Council's telemetry information systems available to consent holders, and prepared for the introduction of the NES requiring water metering.

A resource management plan change was proposed to meet the NES for Air Quality. Council has also opted for financial incentives to assist people to switch to cleaner heating, and aligned its programme in a strategic partnership with the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority's (EECA) programme for housing insulation.

Within the Council's maritime navigation and safety responsibilities, the Safety Management System was submitted to Maritime NZ and approved in December 2008.

LAND DRAINAGE AND RIVER CONTROL

Maintenance of drainage and flood control schemes were undertaken to required levels of service. An audit of the Heretaunga Plains and Upper Tukituki schemes was reported to

Council Committee in July 2009. Improvements and some capital work on some schemes were also completed as planned.

A revised project scoping report on the improving Council's understanding of the gravel transport processes in the main rivers has been developed and will be progressed through 2009/10.

Council has continued to maintain riverbank area facilities for public access and has continued to work with Rotary Pathways groups in Napier and Hastings, with a new pathway constructed on the left bank of the Clive River. Community groups successfully developed 2 BMX tracks on Council land in Clive and Taradale, and a horse trail along the Clive coastline. River mouths and lagoon outlets were kept open with 80 openings carried out in the year.

BIOSECURITY

Council possum control was carried out over 375,000 hectares, and monitoring of land under PCAs was completed with an average trap catch of 1.8%. A number of pest control research projects are underway – the test of a new gel bait for possums, testing the commercial fur recover industry as a control measure, assessing the long term economic benefit of low Bovine Tb incidences in livestock. An urban possum control operation was carried out over Napier Hill.

65 enquiries about rabbit pest control were received and landowners were assisted with information; management plans were prepared for 2 properties where rabbit numbers exceeded Mclean Scale 4. All known rookeries were treated (total 1956) and 11 enquiries resulted in 4 ground control operations to reduce agricultural damage.

The approved AHB vector possum control operation covered 24 out of 25 contracts over 253,397ha, with only one unable to be completed because of drought implications.

Plant pest control was carried out with 2235 visits to inspect sites and 2 new infestations were reported with the potential to spread – Argentine ants and Darwin's barberry. A student was fully funded by MAF /Biosecurity NZ to advocate for didymo care from November to March.

HAZARD MANAGEMENT

A review of hazard research and the development of a risk framework was completed in November 2008 and as a result the 10 year Hazards Research Plan was revised. A report modelling tsunami coastal inundation risk was completed in March 2009, and a report assessing mitigation options for Haumoana-Te Awanga coastal erosion impact was completed in April 2009 and discussed with the community.

The telemetry network has operated at 98.8% availability and key stations at 99%. Council's website now uses this data to provide flood and rainfall event information.

The Council's Civil Defence and Emergency Management responsibilities were maintained and the HBCDEM Group supported. 25 new Council staff were trained in the specific CDEM roles they have during an emergency response. 20 warnings of severe weather or other hazardous events were received and managed.

LAND TRANSPORT

The Regional Land Transport Strategy was reviewed and adopted in May 2008. Roadsawf Hawke's Bay became part of the Council; their action plans are prepared and revised quarterly

with Police, ACC, Health and district/city councils.

Council re-tendered its Public Transport services which resulted in the contract being let to a company trading under the name Go Bus. Go Bus have delivered an improved service standard for public transport on the Heretaunga Plains, resulting in increased patronage levels within the year.

ECONOMIC, CULTURAL & SOCIAL WELLBEING

Hawke's Bay Incorporated made the transition from an independent trust into a business unit of Hawke's Bay Regional Council with its own advisory board. This also resulted in a substantial refocus of activities into three output-focused work platforms - regional promotion and marketing, investment and planning, and innovation and productivity. An industry report and economic model for Hawke's Bay were produced.

Council used a series of "Embracing Futures Thinking" breakfast seminars to continue the strategic dialogue in the region. These events offered an opportunity for regional business, government and community leaders to discuss the wider strategic issues confronting Hawke's Bay and to better engage on Regional Council strategic goals.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION

Using the set of draft Strategic Goals and Objectives that Council developed toward the end of 2008, Council identified six of these as priorities for the development of the Ten Year Plan 2009-19 which was adopted on 20 June 2009.

Council increased resources in the Communications team with additional external focus on developing major regional and central government stakeholder relationships.

Over this year the significance of Treaty of Waitangi, Te Tiriti O Waitangi claims and settlements in the region became apparent. These will benefit the well-being of the claimant groups and the region as a whole, and will influence Council's natural resource management responsibilities in particular. Council has a good relationship with Ngati Pahauwera, the first of the claimant groups to be in a position to negotiate with the Crown, and Council has actively sought early discussions with them in regard to likely settlement obligations to co-manage or co-govern affected natural resources.