

Purongo Putaiao

ISSUE 10 | September 2012

Welcome

Kia ora and welcome to the latest edition of the council panui, Pūrongo Pūtaiao.

We open this panui by acknowledging those who have gone before us. Since our last edition we have lost some key members of our community. The council's former CEO, Ken Paterson died recently in Tauranga. Ken was instrumental in bringing change to the council and spearheaded the development of the Northland Events Centre.

I would also like to acknowledge the passing of Mary Wassell from Takahiwai. Mary worked with the Whāngārei Harbour Kaitiaki Rōpu and was an active member of the Patuharakeke Trust Board over a number of years. Her contribution to improving the health of Whāngārei Harbour was significant.

It seems 2012 has gone very quickly, with the end of the year already fast-approaching. We have been busy with council's latest Long Term Plan and undertaking a lot of preliminary work on a draft Regional Policy Statement. We also have many other projects on the horizon with the National Policy Statement – Freshwater and local government reform high on everyone's agenda.

Along with this issue of the panui we have also included information on our current representation arrangements review. Every six years we have the opportunity to review the way that the regional council engages with and represents its communities. In this revamp we have opted to move away from the three district council based constituencies to a new eight constituency model which we believe is more reflective of local communities.



Craig Brown Chairman

Kei roto

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Te Uri o Hau launches milestone environmental plan

A new environmental plan launched in July by Te Uri o Hau marks an historic milestone for the Kaipara hapū's role in managing its natural and physical resources.

The hapū environmental management plan, which was developed with funding assistance from the regional council, sets a clear strategy and direction for how Te Uri o Hau wants to see natural resources in its rohe managed and protected.

The plan will help to ensure that the hapū's concerns and interests are better reflected in council planning for the area.

Under the Resource Management Act 1991, councils must take into account any relevant planning document recognised by an iwi authority, such as the Te Uri o Hau plan.

Te Uri o Hau Chairperson Mihi Watene says the new plan – Te Uri o Hau Kaitiakitanga o te Taiao – will the hapu a stronger voice in central and local government decision-making within its statutory area of interest.

The regional council's Chief Executive Officer Malcolm Nicolson has congratulated Te Uri o Hau on the completion of the plan.



Te Uri O Hau Chairperson Mihi Watene (right) presents Northland Regional Council CEO Malcolm Nicolson with a copy of the hapū's new environmental management plan.

"This hapū management plan is the product of several years' worth of work in gathering input and building their strategies and policies – it really is a huge achievement.

"The regional council is building strength in their relationship with Te Uri o Hau and this plan provides for us to work together in a way that better supports their objectives."

Among the long-term objectives detailed in the plan are strategies to educate and empower hapū members to be proactive in their role as kaitiaki of natural resources, and to help whānau get involved in commercial ventures in a way that is consistent with the hapū's environmental and cultural values.

REPRESENTATION REVIEW - Have your say

Check out the summary document included with this panui on the proposed changes to the way we represent our communities and how you can have your say. The submission period runs from 1 September to 1 October.

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Marine pests found

Two unwanted pest species – Mediterranean fanworm (*Sabella spallanzanii*) and the seaweed *Undaria pinnatifida* – were recently found on the hulls of commercial vessels moored in Whāngārei.

The discovery highlights the need for all Northlanders to report suspicious marine life, and for vessel owners to regularly check hulls.

Northland Regional Council biosecurity staff removed the pests from vessel hulls and restrictions on the movement of certain vessels have been put in place.

It is hoped that fanworm can be eradicated or, at the least, its numbers reduced and breeding rate slowed.

The seaweed *Undaria pinnatifida* was also found on another two vessels moored in the same area. Divers hired by the regional council have now removed it.

Staff from both the regional council and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) will carry out regular inspections of an extended area surrounding the infestation for the next several months to confirm the Mediterranean fanworm has not spread.

Anyone (but particularly divers in and around Whāngārei Harbour) noticing strange or new marine life should report it to regional council biosecurity officers on 0800 002 004.

Information on pests generally is available online at:
www.nrc.govt.nz/nasties

Northland mapped

To meet current government requirements, Northland Regional Council is undertaking a region-wide mapping project of Northland's coastal land and outstanding areas.

All New Zealand councils must meet new government policy to identify and protect 'outstanding' areas around the coast, under the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (NZCPS).

Legal requirements aside, it will lead to better protection for the places that matter to Northlanders and help to ensure appropriate management of these areas.

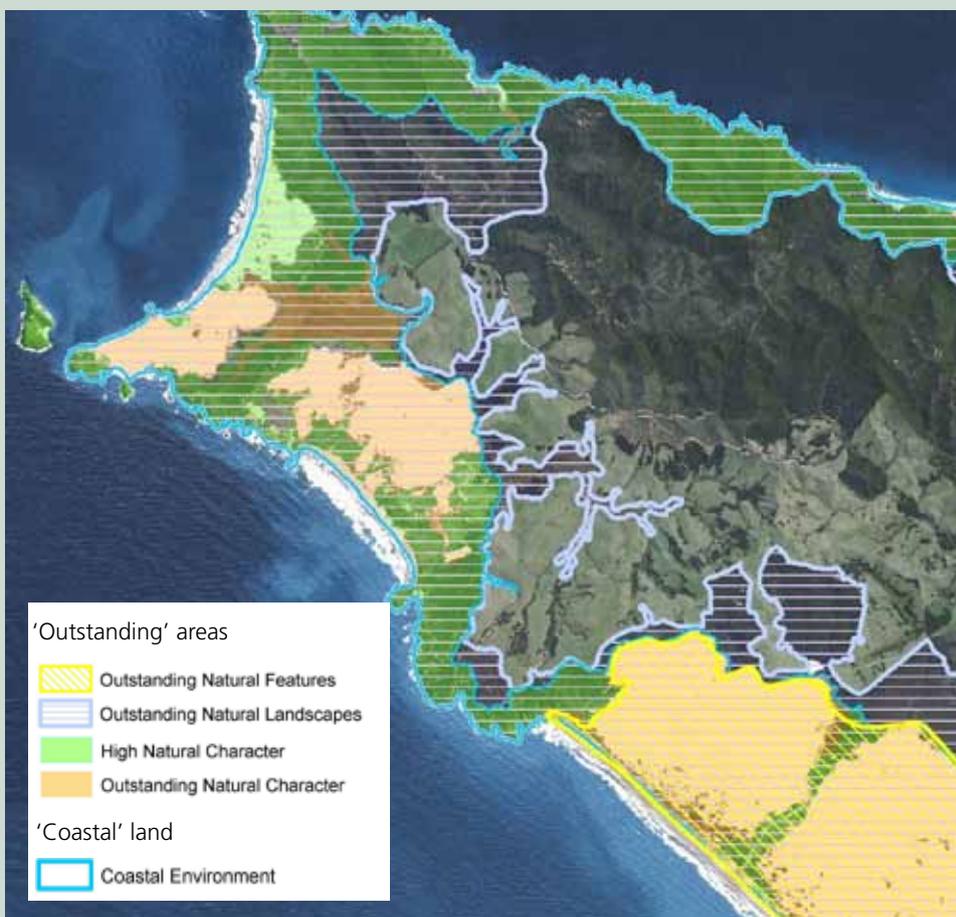
Creating maps, in consultation with the community, will mean certainty in the long-run; for landowners, communities, developers and council decisionmakers.

It'll mean landowners know where they stand – they don't have to foot the cost of assessing whether their land is in these areas, as it's already been done.

Over the past couple of months we've contacted newly affected landowners to get feedback and further refine the maps.

If you didn't receive a letter it's unlikely your property is newly affected. You can find out more about the project at www.nrc.govt.nz/rpsmaps

There'll be another chance for Northlanders to have their say and help us get these maps right when they're released for public consultation later this year as part of the Proposed Regional Policy Statement for Northland.



Long term plan adopted



Better flood protection for the Kerikeri-Waipapa area and funding for Kaitiāia's public bus service are among a variety of measures that will take effect under the regional council's recently-adopted Long Term Plan 2012-2022.

The plan maps out a path for the council over the 10 years until 2022, with a

particular emphasis on the next three years.

Almost 1200 public submissions were received on a draft of the plan, with proposals for flood protection works and ongoing support for the region's rescue helicopter service common themes amongst submitters.

Council Chairman Craig Brown says funding the plan for the coming year will see the council take a total of \$19,576,298 (incl GST) in rates for 2012/13, an increase of about 8.5%.

"That increase will add something like \$16 a year to the average regional council rates bill."

Among new targeted rates adopted is a flat rate of \$48.90 (incl GST) a year levied on about 4300 properties in the Kerikeri/Waipapa area, for maintenance and \$2.1 million of flood works to reduce flood risks in the Kerikeri, Waipapa and Wairoa River catchments.

Mr Brown says a number of submitters had asked the council to reassess the areas it believed would benefit from the

scheme and the council will look into this with the Kerikeri-Waipapa River Liaison Committee.

Another item of big flood-related expenditure signed off under the plan is a roughly \$7M detention dam to be built in Whāngārei in 2013/14.

A new targeted rate of \$15.27 (incl GST) annually will be levied on roughly 6000 ratepayers in the wider Kaitiāia area to help pay for the town's public bus service.

Councillors also agreed to slow the move of council's investment income from rates subsidies into economic development so that this happens over 10 years instead of five.

"This will help soften rates increases in coming years – but still allows us to inject an extra roughly \$500,000 annually to increase our efforts in water quality and pest management initiatives," says Mr Brown.

"Essentially, we've listened to submitters and tried to balance a number of competing factors as best we can in a way that's fairest to as many people as possible."

The final Long Term Plan is available online on the council's website: www.nrc.govt.nz/ltp

Exercise 'Shakeout' is coming!



The national earthquake drill 'Exercise ShakeOut' is coming on Wednesday, 26 September.

With almost 18,000 Northlanders already signed up when we went to print, it's looking good for us to meet our goal of 20,000 – well done everyone !

Find out more about this and other Civil Defence activities on the new Northland Civil Defence Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/civildefencenorthland

Help us spread the word by 'liking' our page and sharing with your friends.

24 teachers attend coastal workshop

The many environmental education opportunities offered by Northland's coast have been highlighted to 24 teachers at Te Moana, a special regional council workshop held in Taipā.

Teachers from Taipā to Bream Bay gathered at Taipa Area School recently to learn more about how to use the region's 3200 kilometres of coast as a fun, yet informative, teaching tool.

Councillor Bronwyn Hunt says she was impressed by the attendees' passion and commitment to improving their community surrounds through various coast-related projects.

"There's a strong environmental focus to the projects, but in many cases there are also broader social, cultural and economic benefits and that's great to see."



Twenty-four teachers attended the coastal-themed teacher workshop held in Taipā.

Teachers from 12 Northland schools attended – Blomfield Special School Whāngārei and its Kaitāia satellite, Bream Bay College, Glenbervie School, Ngunguru School, Northland College, Opononi Area School, Oromahoe School, Pompallier Catholic College, Riverview School, Ruakaka School, Taipā Area School and Te Kura Taumata o Panguru.

Farmers fined for farm pollution offences

Three separate cases of farm pollution offences have resulted in hefty fines for the farmers over the past few months.

Northland farmer Graham Owen Fox was ordered to pay \$24,000 for illegal discharges of dairy effluent from a storage tank and pond at his Donnelly's Crossing property in 2010.

The Northland farmer – who had earlier admitted both charges laid by the regional council – was sentenced on 9 July when a reserved decision by Judge Greg Davis was delivered in the Whangarei District Court.

In April, farming couple Mark and Kylie Stanaway were ordered to pay almost \$70,000 in fines and court costs for discharging farm effluent and silage leachate into tributaries of the Wairoa River at Ruāwai.

In a third case, illegal discharges of farm effluent from two feedpads at a Ruāwai farm in 2009 cost Peter Thomas Flood just under \$60,000 in fines and court-ordered costs and expenses.

Flood was sentenced in the Auckland District Court in March after earlier admitting three charges laid by the Northland Regional Council relating to a dairy farm at Ruāwai, about 30 kilometres from Dargaville.

The council's Operations Director Tony Phipps says prosecution is a last resort for the regional council, which prefers education and working with farmers to address issues, but in some cases it has little option.

He says the sentences send a very clear message to Northland's dairy farmers that effluent needed to be treated and managed properly.

Further information

If you wish to discuss anything raised in this newsletter, please contact:



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