

Taipa WWTP evidence summary
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Introduction

My evidence covers:

- Overview of the East Coast Scheme
- The FNDC Long Term Plan
- Rates affordability
- History of Consultation with Tangata Whenua

Overview of the East Coast Scheme

The East Coast wastewater scheme was constructed in the late 1980's and services the urban coastal areas of Mangonui, Coopers Beach, Cable Bay and Taipa. The wastewater treatment plant for the East Coast scheme is located in Taipa and is referred to as either the "East Coast wastewater treatment plant" or the "Taipa wastewater treatment plant".

The scheme consists of 53.4km of reticulation, 25 pump stations and 1 treatment plant. There are 1,417 properties connected and 513 properties paying for availability to connect.

There is a high percentage of holiday homes serviced and since 2010 peak summer flows have been increasing by around 5% p.a., and annual flows by around 2% p.a. Peak loading on the treatment plant occurs during summer, whereas peak discharges from the treatment plant occur during winter.

The annual average flows to the ponds is now 500 m³/day whereas the annual average discharge from the wetlands is now 680 m³/day. The difference is due to rainfall on the ponds and wetlands. As the highest rainfall occurs during the winter months, the greatest volumes discharged are during the winter months.

The FNDC Long Term Plan

Councils Long Term Plan contains strategic priorities around healthy communities and affordable core infrastructure.

Due to the unknowns associated with the requirements of a replacement resource consent and the issue of affordability as detailed in a later section, only a nominal amount has been included into the Long Term Plan for future treatment plant upgrading. This number will be revised and consulted on once there is more certainty around the final outcome.

In round figures, every \$1 million of capital expenditure will result in an increase of \$35 p.a. for each ratepayer connected to the East Coast sewerage scheme.

Rates Affordability

FNDC have undertaken benchmarking exercises comparing water and wastewater rates to other similar sized Councils. This showed the average wastewater annual rate for similar sized Councils was \$497.49, whereas the average in the Far North area was \$973.49 per property per year. Other benchmarking showed the FNDC water and wastewater rates are the least affordable of the 50 Councils benchmarked.

History of Consultation with Tangata Whenua

Since I joined FNDC in 2013, I undertook a supportive role with consulting with representative of the 3 marae.

Prior to that date there was other consultation undertaken, around which I have little knowledge.

During consultation the expectations of tangata whenua was consistently and clearly portrayed to the Council staff present.

While a "Terms of Reference" for the group were agreed to, and a high level land disposal options report developed, the consultation failed to reach agreement of treatment and disposal options.

The representatives of the three Marae provided Council with a Mission Statement which included very prescriptive requirements. The parameters specified in the Mission Statement are too restrictive to allow for meaningful consultation. Since receiving the Mission Statement there has been minimal progress in finding a viable solution.