



STAFF REPORT

TO: Environment & Planning Committee

FROM: Claire Webster, Environmental Education Officer

REFERENCE: A902

SUBJECT: **REPORT ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS 2006 – REPORT EP06/12/08** - Report Prepared for 6 December 2006 Meeting

A very successful awards programme run this year. The entry forms were revamped as was the system for displaying them. Over 30 applications were received.

Sponsors – Fonterra (for the Most Improved Dairy Farm) declined to be involved but all other sponsors were happy to remain sponsors. The Historic Places Trust sponsored \$500 rather than the \$300 they have in past years. The Cawthron Institute Trust Board moved from the School project category to the new Individuals and Pairs category and contributed \$1,000 rather than \$500. The School Award just had one part to it this year as it now runs alongside the National EnviroSchools Award programme. Landcare Research was the sponsor of the Supreme Award for \$1,000.

Judging – each of the six categories has a panel of three judges – one Councillor, one staff member from the sponsoring company and one “local expert” or a staff member. There were no applicants in the “Most Improved Dairy Farm Award” this year. Coordinating panels of three judges for each category with the applicants for a day of visiting is rather complicated and does ask a lot of the judges however I see each year the incredible benefits of the face to face visits and talking for all involved. These days are a hidden part of the success of the awards.

The Ceremony – a larger venue was needed than the Council Chambers so it was held at Silkwoods Organic Café – a delightful venue. Over 100 people attended the ceremony (only 60 RSVP were received however!). Tim Morice MC’ed proceedings and supplied a very professional touch. As applicants received their award a power point presentation run in the background showing slides of what the project/business was. This added interest and learning opportunities for the audience. Winners of each category were also offered the opportunity to speak – all did.

Next year the “Primary Producer” and “Most Improved Dairy Farm Awards” will be revamped. The intention is to combine them and focus on only one aspect each year – for example - wetland restoration projects, riparian planting and erosion prevention, and innovative energy efficiency examples are all possible topics.

The Environmental Awards continue to be a very positive way to encourage people to move toward sustainable environmentally friendly practices and to say thank you to many people who go out of their way to make a positive difference to our community and environment.

Claire Webster
Environmental Education Officer