



STAFF REPORT

TO: Environment & Planning Committee

FROM: Dennis Bush-king, Environment & Planning Manager

REFERENCE: S611

SUBJECT: **MANAGER'S REPORT - REPORT EP09/12/05** - Report prepared for meeting of 11 December 2009

1. LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

We have received two appeals since the last meeting, one is against the Lower Queen Street roading designation and the other Matiri hydro-development project. Annex 1 provides an update of consent appeals. The Gardens of the World appeal against the first decision has been withdrawn. A number of appeals remaining have been mediated and agreements reached but action rests with the other parties, not council.

2. STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT: TASMAN ESTUARIES

A report for public release is now available on the state of our estuaries across Tasman District. The main findings in the report are drawn from material presented to Council last year in a report by Trevor James on estuary management and restoration (EP08/08/09); these being: overall condition is moderate to relatively good although some indicators show poor ratings such as loss of saltmarsh and seagrass, reduced vegetated buffer, and increased sedimentation in the Waimea (fine mud discharged from up-catchment). Fine sediment deposition in estuaries lowers the abundance and diversity of life in the estuary through smothering and oxygen starvation. Loss of saltmarsh and vegetated buffer is mostly from historic reclamation and forest clearance (respectively). Sea level rise is an issue that is very likely to further diminish valuable estuarine habitat.

The Whanganui Inlet is generally in a very good state with relatively intact saltmarsh, seagrass beds and vegetative buffers. Parts of Waimea and Motupipi, and to a lesser extent Moutere, Ruataniwha and Motueka Delta, have some high rates of sedimentation as well as habitat loss. The Western Motupipi and parts of the Moutere are nutrient enriched causing some nuisance algae growth.

Programmed monitoring over the next two years are to assess the vulnerability (ie risk of degradation) of estuaries and coastal embayments throughout the region is planned (except Motupipi and Waimea where this work has been done). Following this investigation the list of estuaries included in any future estuary monitoring programme will be reviewed and we will resume the fine-scale and broad-scale monitoring methods used previously (and covered in the NZ Estuary Monitoring Protocols).

3. AQUACULTURE REFORMS

The invitation to comment on the Technical Advisory Group's report to Government on Restarting Aquaculture closes 16 December. Staff consider a submission is required if for no other reason than to emphasise the need to have specific transitional provisions for Tasman. If available we will table it at the meeting otherwise can the Committee authorise Chair and Cr Riley to approve final submission.

4. BYLAW PROPOSALS

As of 1 December Council has the power to introduce a bylaw to control "cruising" by boy racers on local streets. Staff do not consider there exists a need for such a bylaw in Tasman and therefore propose not to take any further action unless directed otherwise.

Our attention has also been drawn to Whakatane District Council's bylaw controlling vehicles on beaches with a view to suggesting Tasman District Council should have something similar. It prohibits vehicles subject to Council permit or specific authorisation (eg emergency vehicles) although there is a general exception for vehicles using designated access points for the purpose of launching boats, and for land yachts. While a prohibition is clear and unambiguous it carries with it a cost of enforcement. Council has previously taken the view that regulating vehicles on beaches is not a priority and I seek direction that this is still the case. Alternatively we can report further on the matter.

5. NEW ZEALAND GAME COUNCIL

In 2007, a Ministerial Panel was set up as part of the previous Government's Confidence and Supply Agreement with United Future, and charged with making recommendations for the future management of deer, chamois, thar and wild pigs in New Zealand, consistent with conservation of indigenous biodiversity, biosecurity, and other interests. After consultation with stakeholders, the Panel recommended that a Big Game Hunting Council be set up to co-ordinate and foster hunting and farming interests in deer, chamois, thar and wild pigs.

A Discussion Paper was released in September by the Game Animal Establishment Board who proposed the establishment of the NZ Game Animal Council with 17 representatives of the different stakeholders under an independent chair to:

- advocate for hunting and farming of deer, chamois, thar and wild pigs
- co-ordinate hunting activities

- reduce conflicts and establish national standards for hunting activities
- develop management strategies for big game animals, including wild animal management plans
- provide advice to the Minister of Conservation on the management of game animals

It proposed setting up a head office in Wellington with an annual operating budget of around \$850,000. The intention is that the Council should be self-funding, but the contribution of hunting to the management of game animal numbers should be recognised by Government. Other ideas for funding included contracting to private landowners and government agencies to manage game animals on their land.

Regional councils support the concept of well-regulated hunting and the benefits it provides for its participants and for management of game animals. Concerns that it could have implications for future use of 1080 and for biodiversity protection have been expressed. There is also concern that it could lead to a large increase in the number of deer and pigs on private and public land and encourage the release of Tb-infected animals into Tb-free areas.

Because we only received a copy of the discussion paper on 17 November, along with most other councils and submissions closed on 25 November, we have not made a submission. It does seem however that any change needs to be linked in to the MAFBNZ strategic review of a wide range of issues associated with pest management.

6. SITE CONTAMINATION REGISTER UPDATE

Quite unrelated to the current Ombudsman investigation into the non-release of information to the media, we had programmed a review of information currently held on Council's Site Contamination Register. Letters have been released to landowners seeking any reports or corrections to the information held.

7. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received.



Dennis Bush-King
Environment and Planning Manager

Consent Appeal Status

Appellant(s)	Applicant(s)	Appeal Lodged	EC Ref	274 parties
Richmond West Group	Richmond West Group	9/07/2007		
B R Reilly V Mrazek S & M Fleming Transit NZ J & C Rose 274 Parties M Cerny NZ King Salmon V Mrazek	B R Reilly	22/01/2008	2008-CHC-023	
St Leger Group Ltd	St Leger Group Ltd	13-Feb-09	2009-WLG-000023	
Fairfield Orchards Ltd Brent and Jocelyn Thompson	Fairfield Orchards Ltd	11-Mar-09	2009-WLG-000044	
Waitapu Fishing Ltd	Waitapu Fishing Ltd	16-Apr-09	2009-WLG-83	Friends of Golden Bay Brook Weatherwell Joseph Blessing
Little Sydney Mining	Little Sydney Mining	18-May-09	2009-WLG-150	L and J Johnston
Camden Properties Ltd	Camden Properties Ltd	18-Sep-09		Greenacres Golf Club Albert A Aubrey
N and L Punt	Tasman District Council	27-Oct-09	2009-WLG-195	
Whitewater New Zealand Ltd	New Zealand Energy Ltd	2-Nov-09		