

ENVIROSOUTH

April 2010
www.es.govt.nz

Issue 19
Environment Southland News

IN THIS ISSUE:

Draft Annual Plan

Environment Awards open

New possum control programme to help farmers

Southlanders heed Civil Defence warning



for now and



Collie's Corner

Chairman Stuart Collie



Last year's annual planning round included a proposal to impose a direct charge on large scale water users for the cost of research into establishing what limits there are on the resource. It is fair to say that there was a very voluble opposition through the submission process to any form of charge, with frequent claims that there had been insufficient time for

consultation before the draft plan had been presented.

The Council acknowledged that was a valid concern and resolved to delay the introduction of a charge at that time.

We currently spend around \$1.7 million a year on scientific investigations to establish what water resources actually exist that can be drawn on sustainably, and monitor their use. This research is only necessary because of the large scale extraction from aquifers and rivers, which put considerable demand on the resource. The work we do not only gives the public an assurance that water is not being over-allocated, but also protects the interests of those who have expended a lot of capital on water extraction.

We are proposing to recover just under \$900,000 of the cost from the consent-holders who directly benefit, rather than the entire cost falling on the general ratepayer.

This is an equity argument that will no doubt spark another debate about whether those who benefit directly from consented water takes should meet a portion of the cost of investigating and monitoring the resource they use, or whether the economic benefits from water use are a public good.

You'll find more details about this on page 5 and in our Draft Annual Plan – please let us know your views. ■

Water Plan now operative

The Regional Water Plan is an important document for Southlanders as it outlines the community's goals for water. It also contains rules on discharges to water; the taking, use, damming and diversion of water and activities in the beds of lakes and rivers (for example the placement of bridges and culverts and gravel extraction).

The Regional Water Plan for Southland became formally operative in February this year but Principal Planner Rachael Millar says that many of the rules in the plan had been operative for the last couple of years, including the 3 metre intensive winter grazing rule.

"The Council wasn't able to make the whole plan operative until all of the Environment Court appeals on the plan had been resolved," Rachael says. "This occurred though agreements reached in negotiation

meetings without the need for costly Court hearings, which was really pleasing".

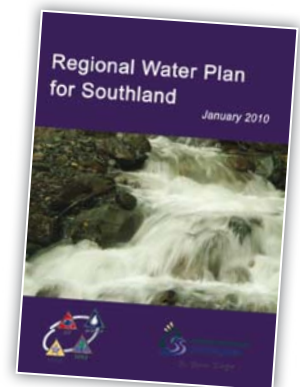
The Plan is a 'living document' with a series of updates – formally called "plan changes" – due to start this year.

Some of these will merge the rules on discharges to land contained in older regional plans into the Water Plan so that there is just one plan covering all discharges to land and water.

Other changes are also being considered to update the water allocation provisions of the plan based on the results of the Council's monitoring programme and a series of technical investigations.

You can find more information on the Water Plan, including a summary of the rules and factsheets

on key topics, on our website www.es.govt.nz, by calling 0800 76 88 45 or emailing service@es.govt.nz. ■



Regional Water Plan.

Cover photograph: Zane and Luke Moss.

Waihopai River water quality targeted



Roger Hodson tests Waihopai water.

Environment Southland's Living Streams project is encouraging the community to get more involved in looking after their waterways, by thinking more about how activities around the home can affect them.

Urban Invercargill dwellers are the new focus in the next stage of the Living Streams Programme. The programme that was set up in 2007 to work with communities to improve the water quality of Southland streams and rivers.

In Invercargill the stormwater network has been identified as a contributing factor to the poor water quality of the Waihopai River. Environment Southland has been studying stormwater drain outlets and is now working on a more detailed study of the Rosedale, Prestonville and Beatrice St areas. These studies involve taking samples from within pipe networks, not just at the outlets, to help identify where pollution is coming from.

Environmental Technical Officer Roger Hodson says part of the project is also about understanding the nature and concentration of

contaminants in the stormwater network. "We will also be taking samples of sediment in the river to test for heavy metal and pesticide accumulation."

"We are working with Invercargill City Council to identify the problem areas," Roger says. "By continuing to work together in the future we will see repairs made to broken or cross connected sewers (sewage entering stormwater drains and vice versa) and some treatment devices put in place too."

Before urban development, rainwater soaked into the ground and drained away slowly. Now in built-up areas, surface water is diverted off roofs, driveways, and roads into stormwater drains and underground pipes. These stormwater pipes carry the water away quickly, by diverting it straight into rivers, harbours, beaches and lakes.

Living Streams project manager Pat Hoffmann says that much of Southland's urban pollution happens because people don't realise where their stormwater pipes lead to. "Many people do not realise that stormwater is not part of the sewage system – so, unlike the wastewater from sinks, laundries, toilets and baths, stormwater does not get treated, it goes straight to our rivers," Pat says. "For this reason, only uncontaminated water should go down your stormwater drain."

The testing around the Rosedale area is almost complete and the next stage will move to Prestonville, in and around Beatrice Street. At the moment, Living Streams is keen to hear from interested groups in Invercargill who may have ideas for improving water quality or may have projects that could benefit from some collaboration. ■



Eco tip: Wash your car on the lawn.

Make a difference in your own backyard:

- Wash your car on the lawn with environmentally-friendly detergents or at a commercial carwash facility
- Avoid over-fertilizing your lawn
- If you must use pesticides, use the right amount and choose brands that won't harm aquatic life
- Clean up after your pet. Dispose of pet waste in the bin that goes to the landfill
- Don't leave your pet's waste in parks, gardens or alongside rivers
- Keep your car well maintained and repair oil leaks immediately
- Avoid rinsing paint brushes over stormwater drains
- Dispose of old motor car oil, paint and chemicals responsibly (some can be recycled).

If you discover or suspect discharges of contaminants into stormwater, contact Environment Southland's 24-hour pollution hotline 0800 76 88 45.



DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN

Summary of Information

The following pages contain the summary of the Draft Annual Plan 2010-11 as required by the Local Government Act. This is the summary of the information contained in the statement of proposal to adopt Environment Southland's 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan. The summary of information is required by and conforms with S89 of the Act. Unless indicated otherwise, all figures are exclusive of GST.

We invite you to make a submission on any part of the Draft Annual Plan. We must receive your submission by 4.30pm on Friday 3 May 2010.

The start of a new decade sees Environment Southland in a period of consolidation, after some significant expansion of our programmes in the past two years to meet community expectations in managing the region's resources – particularly water.

The major initiative in this year's Draft Annual Plan is the preparation of the State of the Environment Report on Water, known as "Water 2010", which is budgeted to cost \$525,015 and accounts for half of the total increase in expenditure compared with last year.

We are also proposing to increase the Biosecurity Pest Plants Rate to allow for a large increase in the funding for the removal of wilding pine trees on and around Mid Dome, which we view as the most serious biosecurity risk to Southland's high country.

Despite the proposed increase in total expenditure of \$1.135 million, many ratepayers will notice a reduction in their overall rates account. This is because we propose to collect \$782,000 less in general rates than we did in the current financial year – that is \$1,062,000 less than we forecast in the Long-Term Council Community Plan.

The reduction is made possible by the proposal to establish an Annual Research and Monitoring Charge on consented water takes. This means that some of the costs of our scientific investigations into the region's water resources, and the monitoring of the impact of water

abstractions, will be paid for directly by those who have consents to take water. Until now, the full cost has been paid for by the general rates. Assuming the charge is adopted in the form we propose, it will raise \$885,384 this year.

The dairy differential rate is reduced by \$3000 as a result of a reduction in the spending on the projects that are part-funded by that rate.

The following pages summarise the significant activities and proposals we are putting forward for your consideration, and the impact the programmes will have on your rates. Most of our activities were approved in our Long-term Council Community Plan last year and have been integrated into our programmes.

If you would like more information, please refer to the full Draft Annual Plan. You can download it from www.es.govt.nz, collect a copy at Environment Southland's office, read it at any public library, or phone 0800 76 88 45 and we will send it to you.

Last year, the proposals our draft long-term plan engendered an unprecedented level of interest and submissions from the public. Our Councillors listened and took heed of the community's concerns and made several changes as a result. You can have confidence that if you take the trouble to make a submission on any aspect of our Draft Annual Plan this year, your views will receive the same careful consideration. ■





Key Changes from the Long-term Council Community Plan

Water 2010

Water is arguably Southland's most valuable resource and one that our community is learning not to take for granted.

It is 10 years since we last undertook a comprehensive study of the region's water resources and in that time the demand for water for irrigation, dairying, industry and community use has increased far beyond what anyone envisaged at the start of the 1990s. At the same time, public expectations and concerns about water quality and availability have also changed, as have some of our legal responsibilities.

Environment Southland is preparing a new State of the Environment Report on Water, in collaboration with Te Ao Marama Inc and based on the Regional Water Plan for Southland. Called "Water 2010", its findings will inform policy development and resource management decisions for the next decade. Its main focus is the state of water quality and quantity in Southland.

"Water 2010" will be presented as four separate reports, dealing with the needs/uses of water, health, ecosystems and threats. The first of these, *Water 2010 – Our Health*, will be published within a few weeks while the rest are scheduled for release between December 2010 and June 2011.

We have budgeted to spend \$525,015 preparing "Water 2010", of which \$478,081 will be funded from a special one-off dividend from our shareholding in South Port NZ Limited. This is because the State of the Environment Report is a one-off activity that is most appropriately funded by a one-off source of income.

What do you think about the proposal to apply the special one-off dividend from South Port NZ Limited to the preparation of the State of the Environment Report? If this is an important issue for you, please let us know your views by making a submission. We must receive your submission by 4:30 pm on Friday, 3 May 2010.

Research and Monitoring Charge for Consented Water Use

The major initiative proposed by the Council this year is the introduction of an Annual Research and Monitoring Charge for consented water users.

The charge will cover 80% of the cost of the groundwater monitoring and resource investigations, and 40% of the cost of monitoring and investigating the region's surface water, including quantity and quality.

Altogether, Environment Southland will spend \$1.72 million on ground and surface water monitoring and investigations this year. Until now, the whole cost of those activities has been funded from the General Rate.

The new proposal would impose a minimum \$100 charge on all consents to abstract water, based on the amount of water that the consent holder is authorised to take with a cap of \$5,000 on groundwater takes and \$50,000 on those from surface water. It will be charged at the rate of \$1 per cubic metre for groundwater takes and \$2.50 per cubic metre for surface water takes.

This would raise \$885,384 and ensure that those who benefit from the guaranteed and exclusive right to take and use water make a direct contribution towards the cost of its management. Charges will not apply to permitted activities, including

the reasonable individual needs for domestic and stock drinking water.

The cost to municipal and stockwater supplies will be discounted 50% to recognise that a part of the take is for what would normally be permitted activities. Power generators will also be liable for the charge, with "run of the river" schemes discounted by 50% to recognise their non-consumptive use.

General rates paid by all ratepayers will decrease by \$885,384 if the proposal is confirmed, meaning that many ratepayers will have a reduction in the rates they pay Environment Southland this year.

Chairman Stuart Collie said that increasing demand for water coupled with increasing concerns about its availability and quality meant that Environment Southland was having to manage the resource more closely.

"The region's groundwater, springs, streams and rivers are all part of one system. What one person takes and uses is not available for anyone else to use."

"The entire regional economy is dependent on use of the region's water supplies. We've seen a skyrocketing increase in demands placed on these resources in the past decade. These demands have bought considerable wealth to the region but we are now at the point where great care must be taken with the resource to ensure that we do not destroy the golden goose."

"Science and planning and policy work along with tighter management is now required to enable the region's economy to continue to enjoy the benefits of this precious resource."

continued...



DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN

What do you think about the proposal to establish a research and monitoring charge for water? Do you believe we're taking the right approach to reduce the amount that the general ratepayer contributes towards investigating, monitoring and managing water, by requiring

consented water users to pay an annual charge? If this is an important issue for you, please let us know your views by making a submission. We must receive your submission by 4:30 pm on Friday, 3 May 2010. ■

Wilding Pines – a major threat to the high country

Environment Southland is proposing to increasing the amount of funding we contribute to the eradication of wilding pinus contorta trees from Mid Dome.

The pines are the greatest existing threat to the South Island high country's ecosystems and landscapes, but their control is being hampered by lack of funding and a complicated system of managing day-to-day operations.

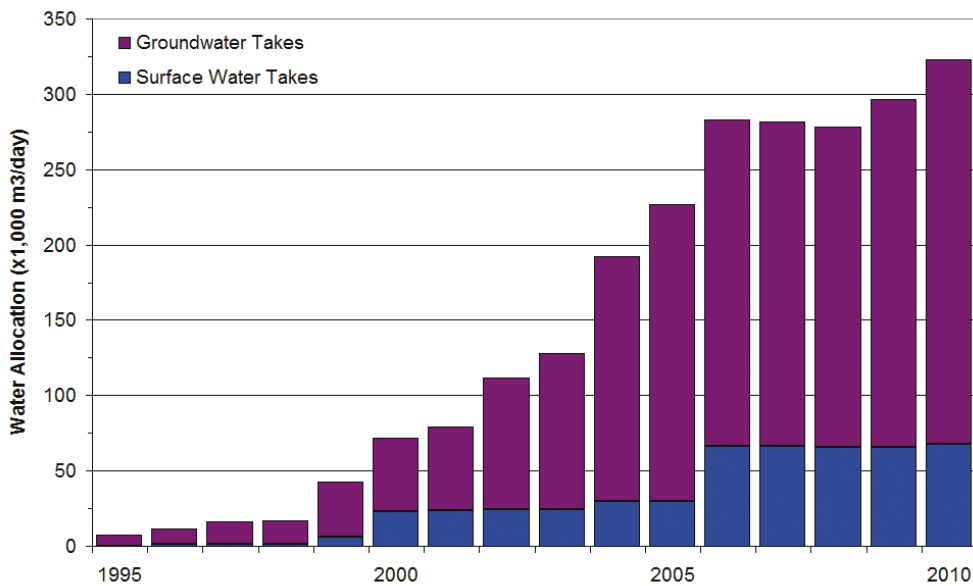
The Mid Dome Wilding Pines Charitable Trust has a 12-year work programme, which relies on funding from the Department of Conservation, Land Information NZ and Environment Southland. But the programme has only attracted half the money it needs, and applications to alternative funders such as the Lotteries Commission and the Biodiversity Fund have not been enough to bridge the gap.

Providing that the government increases the amount of money that DOC and LINZ can commit to controlling the wilding pines, Environment Southland will contribute an additional \$150,000 to the programme, to be funded from the Biosecurity Pest Plants Rate. This is also conditional on satisfactory management arrangements being reached.

What do you think about the proposal to increase funding for the control of wilding trees spreading from historic soil erosion-control plantings on Mid Dome? Do you believe we're taking the right approach by increasing the Biosecurity Pest Plants Rate to put more money into eradicating the seed source and so reduce the further spread of the trees? If this is an important issue for you, please let us know your views by making a submission. We must receive your submission by 4:30 pm on Friday, 3 May 2010. ■

Here are some examples of actual costs (excl GST) under the proposed charging regime:

| | |
|---|--|
| 600 cow dairy farm | \$100 pa for groundwater or \$210 pa for surface water |
| Kaiwera stock water supply | \$500 pa |
| Princhester rural water supply | \$100 pa |
| Large irrigator | \$5,000 for groundwater or \$50,000 for surface water |
| Invercargill City Council for municipal supply from the Oreti River | \$50,000 pa |
| Southland District Council for Winton municipal water supply | \$1,500 pa |
| Alliance Lorneville (Oreti) | \$50,000 pa |
| Meridian Energy Limited | \$50,000 pa |
| Pioneer Generation Limited | \$25,000 pa |



Demand for water in the Matakura catchment has increased 40-fold over the past 15 years. Most of the growth has occurred as a result of development of pasture irrigation in Northern Southland since 2000. Irrigation in Southland has expanded in response to general intensification of agricultural production (mostly dairying) and a changing climate. Today, 80% of water allocated in the Matakura catchment is from groundwater with 61% of water used for irrigation.



Major activities



Compliance

Our compliance staff inspect and monitor the conditions on consents and check compliance with regional rules, including discharges to land, air and water. They also provide a 24-hour pollution response and a free pollution prevention service.

Biosecurity

Marine pests are an increasing risk to Southland's coastal waters, particularly around Fiordland. We continue to work with MAF Biosecurity NZ to raise awareness among recreational and commercial boaters about limiting the spread of marine pest organisms.

Civil Defence Emergency Management

Changes in the structure of Civil Defence and Emergency Management across the region have required us to provide funding for the combined CDEM operation now located at Environment Southland. All four councils in the region are contributing to the shared service because we all have separate responsibilities, but they are best delivered collectively. We have bought a prefabricated building that will act as the Emergency Operations Centre and as a combined IT training centre for all councils. It also meets this Council's requirements for office space in an economical way.

Water Demand in the Mataura Catchment

A water demand strategy for the Mataura catchment will be undertaken this year. Part of the project will be paid with funding that was originally allocated to the Regional Water Plan, which has been completed ahead of schedule, and we have applied for national funding to pay 50% of the costs.

Warm Homes

We propose to contribute \$10,000 to the Southland Warm Homes initiative. That funding will be targeted specifically at replacing coal ranges and open fires with clean heat products. The intention is to improve air quality in parts of the region such as South Invercargill and Gore that frequently suffer from winter smog from home fires.

Planning and Policy Development

The development of the new Discharge Plan will continue in 2010/11, with widespread consultation underway among stakeholders. We are collaborating with the Southland District Council to review two of the region's cornerstone planning documents, which are both more than 10 years old. The Regional Policy Statement review is being undertaken in conjunction with the revision of the Southland District Plan, as the plan has to give effect with to the policy statement.

We will also begin to develop a biodiversity management framework for Southland.

Our pest plants programme is being expanded, targeting thistles, broom and ragwort in particular, and our Possum Control Area programme is also extended. The Regional Pest Management Strategy is under review.

The programmes listed here are part of our routine activities. You will find more details about what we do in the Draft Annual Plan. You are welcome to make a submission about any of the Council's activities if they are important to you. We must receive your submission by 4:30 pm on Friday, 3 May 2010. ■





DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN

Prospective Statement of Financial Performance

The 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan contains statements of prospective financial performance, movements in equity, financial position and cash flows together with comprehensive analysis of proposed expenditure and funding sources. The following is the prospective statement of financial performance for the year ending 30 June 2011, a table showing overall rating forecasts and a table which allows an estimate of rates payable on individual properties (excluding catchment rates).

Prospective Statement of Financial Performance for Year Ended 30 June 2011

| 2009/10 \$000 | | 2010/11 \$000 | LTCCP 2010/11 \$000 |
|-------------------------|---|------------------|---------------------------|
| Income | | | |
| 5,446 | General Rates | 4,664 | 5,726 |
| 4,513 | Seperate Rates | 5,093 | 5,025 |
| 198 | Southern Pest Eradication Society Rate | 203 | 198 |
| 276 | Levies and Contributions | 213 | 149 |
| 767 | Local Contributions | 757 | 787 |
| 631 | Rental Income | 666 | 632 |
| 4,146 | External Recoveries ** | 4,949 | 4,300 |
| 1,729 | Investment Income | 1,800 | 1,753 |
| 1,657 | Dividend from South Port | 1,657 | 1,657 |
| 19,363 | Total Income | 20,001 | 20,227 |
| Less Expenditure | | | |
| 7,590 | Salaries and Wages | 8,033 | 8,238 |
| 432 | Defined Contribution Plans | 442 | 471 |
| 626 | Other Employee Benefits | 649 | 664 |
| 474 | Depreciation Expense | 507 | 503 |
| 45 | Interest Expense | 48 | 46 |
| 1,123 | Grants and Contributions | 1,441 | 1,119 |
| 212 | Operating Lease payments | 204 | 231 |
| 2,030 | Contract Labour Expense | 2,147 | 2,031 |
| 3,495 | Cost of Works Expenses | 3,459 | 3,505 |
| 3,502 | Other Operating Expenses | 3,734 | 3,571 |
| 19,529 | Total Operating Expenditure | 20,664 | 20,379 |
| (166) | Forecast Operating Surplus (Deficit) | (663) | (152) |

** Increased by the proposed Annual Research & Monitoring charge for consented water users.

Prospective Statement of Movements in Equity for Year Ended 30 June 2011

| | | | |
|--------|------------------------------------|--------|--------|
| 68,477 | Total Equity At Beginning Of Year | 68,311 | 67,286 |
| (166) | Net Surplus / (Deficit) | (663) | (152) |
| (166) | Total Recognised Income & Expenses | (663) | (152) |
| 68,311 | Total Equity At End Of Year | 67,648 | 67,134 |

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN



Rating Levels

Table 1: Shows comparison 2009/10 actual rates to those proposed for 2010/11

| Rate | Forecast 2009/10 | | Forecast 2010/11 | | Rating Level Changes | |
|---|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------|
| | \$000s | \$000s | \$000s | \$000s | \$000s | |
| Targeted Rates | | | | | | |
| - Catchment | 2,474 | | 2,554 | | 80 | 3.23% |
| - Land Sustainability | 550 | | 720 | | 170 | 30.91% |
| sub total | | 3,024 | | 3,274 | | |
| Biosecurity | | | | | | |
| - Pest Animal | 655 | | 811 | | 156 | |
| - Pest Plant | 834 | | 1,008 | | 174 | |
| sub total | | 1,489 | | 1,819 | | 22.16% |
| Total targeted land value based rates | | 4,513 | | 5,093 | 580 | |
| General rate UAGC | 2,247 | | 1,996 | | -251 | -11.17% |
| General rate - based on capital value | 2,561 | | 2,025 | | -536 | -20.93% |
| General rate – dairy differential | 253 | | 249 | | -4 | -1.58% |
| General rate – capital value rate on dairy properties | 385 | | 394 | | 9 | 2.34% |
| sub total | | 5,446 | | 4,664 | | |
| Total rates for ES needs | | 9,959 | | 9,757 | -202 | -2.03% |
| Proposed rate collection on behalf of Southern Pest Eradication Society | | 198 | | 202 | 4 | 2.02% |
| Overall rates proposed | | 10,157 | | 9,959 | -198 | -1.95% |

Table 2: Shows comparison rates proposed for 2010/11 to those forecast for 2010/11 in the LTCCP

| 2009/10 Forecast | Rating Forecasts | Annual Plan Forecast 2010/11 | LTCCP Forecast 2010/11 | Rating Level Changes |
|------------------|---|------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| \$000s | | \$000s | \$000s | \$000s |
| 9,959 | Total rates for ES needs | 9,757 | 10,751 | -994 |
| 198 | Rates on behalf of Southern Pest Eradication Society | 202 | 198 | 4 |
| 10,157 | Total Rates | 9,959 | 10,949 | -990 |
| | Rates for ES needs are | | | |
| 2,474 | Catchment | 2,554 | 2,655 | -101 |
| 550 | Land Sustainability | 720 | 704 | 16 |
| | Biosecurity | | | |
| 655 | Pest Animal | 811 | 794 | 17 |
| 834 | Pest Plant | 1,008 | 872 | 136 |
| 4,513 | Total targeted land value based rates | 5,093 | 5,025 | 68 |
| 2,247 | General rate UAGC | 1,996 | 2,308 | -312 |
| 2,561 | General rate – based on capital value | 2,025 | 2,750 | -725 |
| 253 | General rate – dairy differential | 249 | 254 | -5 |
| 385 | General rate – capital value rate on dairy properties | 394 | 414 | -20 |
| 9,959 | | 9,757 | 10,751 | -994 |
| | Increase/(Decrease) on LTCCP | | | -9.25% |
| 56.40 | UAGC | 49.40 | 58.00 | -8.60 |



DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN

Your Rates

General Rates

If the proposals in our Draft Annual Plan are adopted, we will collect \$782,000 less in general rates than we did in the current financial year. This would be \$1.062 million or \$1,062,000 less than was forecast for this year in the Long-term Council Community Plan we prepared last year. The general rate is charged against all properties and the reduction is made possible by the introduction of the annual research and monitoring charge on consented water takes. This will shift some of the costs of our scientific investigations into the region's water resources, and monitoring the impact of water abstractions, from the general rates to those who have consents to take water.

Dairy Differential Rate

The reduction in the costs of the projects part-funded by the dairy differential rate will bring about a drop of \$3,000 in the total amount collected from that rate.

Uniform Annual General Charge

All properties pay the Uniform Annual General Charge. This year, the charge will be reduced by \$7, dropping from \$56.40 to \$49.40.

Biosecurity Rates

Wilding pine trees, self-seeding from historic plantings on Mid Dome, are the biggest pest-plant threat facing Southland. Environment Southland has been contributing \$50,000 a year to the control programme for the past two years. This year, we propose to increase that funding by \$150,000, met from the Biosecurity Pest Plant Rate.

We also propose to increase the amount of funding for the Animal Health Board's Bovine Tb vector control programme by \$35,000 on what was forecast in the Long term Plan. The funding comes from

biosecurity surpluses held from previous years.

The decision to increase the amount of funding is based on the strong industry support for the Bovine Tb vector control programme, including submissions we received from farmers during our consultation on the long-term plan last year. The local funding leverages greater amounts of AHB funding. Although there are no herds under movement control in Southland at present, the risk of reinfection has not yet been removed.

Land Sustainability Rate

This rate pays for our land sustainability programmes, which include the advisory services we provide to landowners. This year the rate is proposed to increase by \$170,000, which is the amount we forecast in the Long-term Plan. Most of the additional funding will be used to extend the Living Streams Programme.

Catchment Rates

Catchment rates will rise by a total of \$81,000, based on the works

programmes approved by each Catchment Liaison Committee in February and March. The increase is different in each catchment.

Overall Expenditure

In total, Environment Southland proposes to spend \$1.135 million more in 2010/11 than we did in 2009/10. Almost half of that – \$525,015 – is to prepare the State of the Environment Report on the region's water resources, "Water 2010". Most of that cost – \$478,081 – will be paid for by a special dividend from the Council's shareholding in South Port NZ Limited and will not be a charge on rates.

The general revaluation of the Southland District has led to a transfer of rates onto dairy properties in particular and those valuations record the growth in the number and value of dairy farms in the district. The revaluations have a direct impact on rates, but are outside the local authority rating process. ■



DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN



What are my rates likely to be?

You may wish to calculate an indication of these rates (remember they exclude our catchment rates) for your property for the coming year. Here is the method. You need to know your latest rating valuation and to select the levy for the territorial authority area containing your property. This will give a GST inclusive amount, with GST calculated at the present GST charge of 12.5%.

| For General Rate | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|---|---------------|--|
| Select your Territorial Authority | Indicative rates levy estimate | times | The Capital Value of your property | equals | Indicative 2010/11 Capital Value based General Rate |
| Southland District | 0.00010204 | | | | |
| Gore District | 0.00011592 | | | | |
| Invercargill City | 0.00010009 | | | | |
| Southland District Dairy | 0.00006465 | | | | |
| Gore District Dairy | 0.00007345 | | | | |
| Invercargill City Dairy | 0.00006342 | | | | |
| Add UAGC | | | | | \$49.40 |
| Total General Rate | | | | | |

| For Biosecurity Rate | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|--|---------------|---|
| Select your Territorial Authority | Indicative rates levy estimate | times | The Land Value of your property | equals | Indicative 2010/11 Land Value based Biosecurity Rate |
| Southland District | 0.00012216 | | | | |
| Gore District | 0.00017368 | | | | |
| Invercargill City | 0.00011848 | | | | |

| For Land Sustainability Rate | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|--|---------------|---|
| Select your Territorial Authority | Indicative rates levy estimate | times | The Land Value of your property | equals | Indicative 2010/11 Land Value based Land Sustainability Rate |
| Southland District | 0.00004837 | | | | |
| Gore District | 0.00006877 | | | | |
| Invercargill City | 0.00004691 | | | | |

The Statement of Proposal may be inspected at the office of the Council, corner of Price Street and North Road Invercargill and at the main office and each of the service centres of the Invercargill City, Southland District and Gore District Councils.

Copies may be obtained by contacting Customer Service at Environment Southland phone 03 211 5115 or 0800 76 88 45 or e-mailing service@es.govt.nz.

Submissions on the proposal to adopt the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan may be made to Environment Southland by 4:30 pm on Friday, 3 May 2010.

Summary of Information ends



ENVIRONMENT AWARDS

Environment Awards now open

We want to celebrate Southland's environmental heroes and we need your help!

Nominations are open for the 2010 Southland Environment Awards, which recognise and reward the achievements of all those in our community who are working to improve, safeguard or appreciate our region's precious environment.

People, groups, businesses, farms, schools – in fact anyone who's making a positive difference to the environment is eligible to enter.

There are great prizes including cash, travel and services provided through the generosity of our sponsors, and a category to fit every project and activity.

- individual
- schools
- community groups
- farming
- commercial
- achiever
- environmental innovator

Often people are reluctant to put themselves forward for an award, so please help them get the

recognition they deserve by filling in a nomination form. You can also nominate yourself or groups you are involved with.

Entry forms are available from Environment Southland and your local public library; you can download them from our website www.es.govt.nz; or e-mail service@es.govt.nz or phone 0800 76 88 45 and we'll post one to you.

Entries close on Friday 30 April. ■



Milligan Nurseries

Power to the school!

Not content with achieving zero waste in 2008, a group of Waianiwa School pupils have their sights set on another ambitious environmental project – they are planning to produce their own electricity.

Student Hamish Muhl, speaking on behalf of the seven members of the school's environment group, said the group was investigating using solar panels and wind turbines and improving electricity in the old building.

It's a long-term project that could take a year to set up. Their aim was to help the environment and "save money because of not having to buy so much electricity," Hamish said.

The members of the enviro group range in age from 10 to six years, and one of their challenges was working out the roles for each member.

Aside from their electrical ambitions, they also plan to continue improving the native outdoor areas around the school and remind their schoolmates to keep up the good work cutting down on rubbish.

Achieving zero waste has meant not using plastic wrap in lunches, recycling everything possible and has resulted in a virtually empty rubbish skip.

Principal Sue Walker said last year the school worked on consolidating some of the previous year's environment work and also built a herb garden.

The school still maintained zero waste, she said. "We have got to be continually going over that with the students – new ones keep dropping rubbish."

Other projects have included developing an area with a gazebo

and boggy ground, improving it through planting natives, and also paving the gazebo and adding mosaics.

Sue said the students led all the environment projects, including organising contractors, paving and timber for seats.

Membership of the environment group was highly sought after and Hamish said it was important to build a team who worked well together.

Asked what advice they could give to other school groups concerned about the environment, he suggested that a simple place to start would be getting students to take their own rubbish home in their lunchboxes each day.

Waianiwa School won the Schools Award in the 2008 Environment Awards. ■



From strength to strength: The Lignite-Pit Scenic Stop

Dave and Maria Sanderson never planned to open their unique garden and lake to the public and have a café. That is, until they were named Southland's Environmental Innovators in 2006, for turning the disused lignite pit on their Waimatua property into an ornamental lake and heritage area.

Both were surprised at the publicity it generated. "When we won the award and it went into the newspaper we had nearly 400 people, including garden groups, visit over four to five months so we ended up walking around and having lots of cups of tea," says Dave.

That set in motion the idea of making the garden public and starting a café, which opened for business in October 2007. Since then the Lignite-Pit Scenic Stop has expanded, with a large covered garden built last year to house functions and wedding groups.

The environment award judges would probably be astounded by the growth and changes in the area since visiting four years ago, when the development was only in its infancy.

Back then, the couple had removed a tremendous amount of rubbish, including felled pine trees from the historic lignite pit as well as dumped cars and fridges. Paths had been bulldozed and a large garden around the lake was planted out with a mixture of natives and exotics. Maria said people who have returned notice that the trees have grown enormously. More seedlings appearing and lots more birds are nesting in the area.

"The idea is to make something good out of something that wasn't good through bringing in birds, plants and trees," Dave says.

The café's large windows provide a pleasing vista of the impressive garden, while its walls document the history of the mine and its transformation into what it is today.

Dave is a passionate and informative guide for the numerous visitors, ranging from rose and garden groups to friendship clubs and visiting geologists. "I like to spend time with people," he says. "With groups you can tell them about the microclimate areas and how the plants are growing in lignite and it's not just a piece of land to look at." Seams of lignite are exposed in the steep banks and many of the plants, including some along the walkway grown in tires, are planted directly in lignite. Dave does not water any of them or use fertiliser and says he has learned by experience and experimenting what plants do well in certain areas as he goes.

The next plan is to have a shed filled with fossils and he also hopes to restore some of the original tractors. That will add to the working man's shed from Pine Bush Dave and Maria set up near the carpark, containing a history of the area with historic everyday objects and news clippings.

The garden is a work in progress too; a large bank was planted in natives last year and a paddock further back from the lake has been planted as a Nova Scotia forest so in about 10 to 15 years time the hillside will be a blaze of colour at certain times of the year.

But the growth isn't always smooth. They have had to contend with many water related issues stemming from, they believe, more intensive land use around them and a reduction of water entering the lake. Their waterfall dries to a trickle in the summer.

The Sandersons also intend to improve the signage to their café as many people get lost and head towards the Waituna wetlands and follow a misleading sign saying coal mine, which has actually been closed for years.

But given the challenges the couple have already overcome to create a beautiful garden and lake out of an old mine, it seems unlikely these obstacles will faze them.

David and Maria Sanderson (below) won the Innovation award at the 2006 Environment Awards. ■





ENVIRONMENT AWARDS

Saving Kereru

A large picture of a falcon stares from the main window at Russell and May Evan's Otatara house, a graphic signal to birds that danger lurks.

The decal is an important safety device for kereru, (wood pigeons) warning them that this is not another piece of bush to fly about in, but a big solid piece of glass. Unfortunately, kereru often fail to see glass windows in bushy areas and when they fly into one, they usually come off second best.

The lucky ones will end up in Russell and May's caring hands.

The dedicated couple won an Environment Award in 2006 for their long-term efforts in rehabilitating kereru and tui and assisting the Department of Conservation in a project evaluating the birds in their natural setting.

Since then, awareness of their work has grown and the SPCA, DOC, vets and individuals bring injured native birds directly to them. Russell has noticed an increase in the number of birds being injured.

In the last six months alone they have nursed 21 kereru, more than the total for the year before.

"Most injuries are caused by them flying into windows," Russell says. Consequently the Evans are keen to encourage awareness of the problem and get Otatara residents in particular to put something on or near windows by bush, such as a mobile or a decal – they have produced the flying falcon decal themselves. "One person has had two birds killed on their property and they still don't want to do anything. But we don't want to put too much pressure on them or they will stop bringing the birds to us," Russell says.



Saving sick and injured birds is a time-consuming and costly pastime. It can take up to five months, starting with hand-rearing the birds inside their house and then a move to outside cages and a "soft release" outside.

This means the couple rarely takes holidays because they have no-one to take over the constant feeding and attention, although they are training up a friend for a well-needed break. They also host school groups to learn about helping the birds.

"We would welcome it if other people wanted to learn this," Russell says. "That's why we are doing the schools thing. If we don't get some of the young ones to carry through there's no hope for the birds. There's no-one else doing it and we believe it's vital for the birdlife to do it."

Russell and May welcomed the Environment Award, because it came with a cash prize that they put towards the cost of the aviary and bird care, which they had largely been paying for themselves. They have since set up a trust to help pay for the rehabilitation work. Grants from the ILT Foundation and the

Community Trust of Southland pay for vet bills and x-rays.

The Evans' aviaries have a wide variety of native and exotic parrots – but their work in saving individual kereru has a wider aim: saving native forests.

Says May: "Kereru are the most important New Zealand native birds because they propagate our future forests from the berries they consume daily. It's essential that the numbers of these magnificent birds be kept to the highest possible levels".

In line with that aim Russell is passionate about getting rid of rats in Otatara. He believes the area will become a bird paradise once rats are gone and is working with a community group and Environment Southland biosecurity officer Tim Riding to poison the rodents. He aims to get all his neighbours laying rat poison as he believes these actions make all the difference in protecting our environment.

Russell (above) and May Evans won the Individual Award at the 2006 Southland Environment Awards. ■



Southlanders heed Civil Defence warning

Southlanders have been praised for their responsible approach to the tsunami warning issued after an 8.8 magnitude earthquake generated a tsunami off the coast of Chile in February this year.

The region's Civil Defence Controller, Neil Cruickshank, says that most boaties, divers and members of the public heeded the warnings around basic safety, staying away from beaches and avoiding tidal areas. "Many boaties and divers heard the warnings and were very cautious. Most didn't go out that day.

"There is a danger that people will start to think Civil Defence is crying wolf every time there is an earthquake, but we need to put this quake into perspective. Its magnitude made it the fifth biggest earthquake ever recorded. The largest, back in 1960, came from the same area in Chile and it generated a tsunami that caused deaths in Japan and Hawaii.

"With this in mind, a cautious approach was definitely required."

The effect on the waters around Southland was minimal, but this was not the case in other parts of the country, where divers and beach users have reported being swept up in fluctuating water levels and very disturbed currents. "It would have been unwise for people to be on the beach," Neil says.

The task of warning the public was made more difficult by the predicted timing of the tsunami's arrival on Southland shores – around 9.30am on a Sunday.

When there's a serious threat to Southland, three local radio stations have agreed to broadcast official civil defence messages. These are Classic Hits (98.8FM), More FM



Civil Defence Controller Neil Cruickshank explains the path that the tsunami took after the Chilean earthquake in February.

(89.2FM) and, if the emergency affects Eastern Southland, Hokonui Radio (94.8FM). National Radio (101.2FM) is also a reliable source of information.

Up to date information will always be posted on the Southland civil defence website www.civildefence.co.nz.

To raise awareness of the tsunami threat to Southland, coastal residents received a pamphlet late last year outlining the risks to their communities. These are also available from Environment Southland or can be downloaded from Southland Civil Defence website, www.civildefence.co.nz. ■

In a major emergency, you and your family may have to cope on your own for at least three days. Please take a moment to think seriously about how you would manage. You will need:

- non-perishable food and a means to cook it
- 3 litres of water per person per day
- radio and torch with batteries
- warm clothes and blankets
- essential family documents
- essential medicines
- baby supplies / pet food

Check the inside back cover of the telephone book or look online at www.civildefence.co.nz and www.getthru.govt.nz for useful information to help you prepare.

PEST CONTROL



New possum control programme to help farmers

The proof that possum numbers are on the rise in many parts of Southland is to be found in the increasing numbers being squashed on our roads.

Environment Southland wants to work with landowners to lower possum populations before they become roadkill, and keep them down.

A new programme is being promoted in Southland, managed by Senior Biosecurity Pest Animal Officer Dave Burgess. "This possum control programme is based on a successful North Island model called PCA – Possum Control Area," Dave says. "We will be working with local landowners to help them identify possum habitat, develop possum control plans for their property, give them expert advice and training and provide details of pest control contractors if necessary."

Environment Southland can also provide some control materials, such as possum bait and bait stations.

By setting up and coordinating PCAs, the Council aims to establish and maintain effective long term possum control.

"There are a lot of important benefits to controlling the possum population in Southland," Dave says. "Increased pasture production and stock units; less damage to crops, trees, plants and gardens; the reduced risk of Bovine TB and a healthier environment are all benefits we are hoping to achieve with this programme."

Meetings have been held recently in Winton and Otautau to present the idea of PCAs to local farmers. Those who attended were interested to find out about the level of support and help that Environment Southland could provide to landowners to control possums and other pests.

"Animal pests have an enormous impact on our land and our environment," Dave says. "We are here to help any landowner who wants to know more about controlling pests on their property."

Contact Biosecurity staff on 0800 76 88 45 or visit the Environment Southland website www.es.govt.nz for more information about possums and other animal pests. ■

Upper right: Senior Biosecurity Pest Animal Officer Dave Burgess demonstrates how to attach a Kilmore Bait Station to a tree.



Contact us

In person...

Cnr North Rd & Price St, Invercargill



**environment
SOUTHLAND**

Te Taiao Tonga

By phone...

(03) 211 5115

Free phone...

0800 76 88 45

By fax...

(03) 211 5252

Via email...

service@es.govt.nz

Or on the net...

www.es.govt.nz