

# Our Region

December 2011/January 2012



greater WELLINGTON  
REGIONAL COUNCIL  
Te Pane Matua Taiao

## News from the Greater Wellington Regional Council

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### Great Outdoors

### SUMMER EVENTS 2012

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### The "dry" summer is here

Less stored water to go around

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Exceptional people improving the region's environment

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Shocking video a reminder that we need to share the road

Tui have become a regular feature in many parts of our region. Pest control plays an important role in bringing our native birds back...



## THE PRICE OF OUR FORESTS AND BIRD SONG

Every night possums munch through tonnes of native bush across the country, helping themselves to the eggs and chicks of our native birds along the way. If left unchecked, they can destroy a forest from the top down.

In the 1990s regional councils, the government and community groups got serious about controlling possums.

This has proven to be very successful in the Wellington region – Landcare Research estimates that our region's possum population has shrunk by 87%, with bush and birds bouncing back as a result.

The Wellington region's media regularly reports people enjoying an abundance of native birds in their gardens and the

surrounding hills. But if we want that to continue we need to keep controlling possums. The challenge is to do it safely, effectively and at a reasonable cost.

Greater Wellington makes a significant contribution to controlling pests (including possums) in the region through its Biosecurity department and BioWorks team.

There are a range of options that we use – traps, poisons used in bait stations or 1080 applied by helicopters. The trick is to find the right method for the individual area.

### WHERE ARE THE POSSUMS? AND HOW SHOULD WE CONTROL THEM?

#### IN THE MOUNTAINS

If possums are in a remote and mountainous part of the region, then 1080 from a helicopter is the best option. These areas have thick bush, steep hills and limited access – possums could be half a day's walk away. It's therefore difficult to find anyone to haul traps or bait stations into these areas and live there for months killing possums to achieve the level of control we need.

Having said that, less than 10% of the control work Greater Wellington does is with 1080 poison.

#### BUSH AROUND TOWNS AND CITIES

One of the Wellington region's great features is the proximity of bush to most of our towns and cities. A brisk 30 minute walk from all our CBDs and you can be in regenerating bush. People enjoy being near the bush and possums love to eat it.

There are several types of traps that will kill possums outright, but these can be pretty ruthless on cats and any fingers that might get caught. So they should only be used at safe distances from houses and walking tracks.

Near suburban areas poison from bait stations is often the best option. The bait stations are placed discreetly and out of children's reach, and birds and pets can't easily access the poison.

The benefit of bait stations is they keep killing possums until all the bait is gone, while traps need to be regularly checked. This keeps labour costs down and often means a larger area can be controlled for less money.

Brodifacoum poison bait is one of the best options because it kills possums and rats, and is made of cereal which makes it less attractive to pets. Cyanide and cholecalciferol poison are more

dangerous and are only used well away from houses and recreation areas.

#### BUSH AROUND FARMLAND

Two thirds of the Wellington region is farmland and this is where most of the possum control happens, mostly to control bovine Tb which threatens our dairy, beef and venison exports. Possums often carry bovine Tb and pass it on to cattle and deer.

On large farms the main risks of possum control are to stock and dogs, so traps and bait stations are fine if kept out of harm's way.

This work is paid for by the Animal Health Board, which is funded by central and regional government and the farming sector. Greater Wellington does some of this work along with other agencies and professional pest controllers.



Possums eat the eggs of native birds

Photo courtesy Nga Manu Images  
[www.ngamanuimages.org.nz](http://www.ngamanuimages.org.nz)

#### OUR WORK FOR 2011/12

This financial year Greater Wellington will spend more than \$1 million and assist 25 community groups with controlling possums. Most of this will be on public reserve land.

# WANTED: PEST PLANT



Californian arrowhead

**Californian arrowhead (*Sagittaria montevidensis*)** is an aquatic plant that can grow up to 1 metre tall in salt or fresh water. It has large glossy, green, arrow shaped leaves on a round stalk which grow up out of the water. Its flowers have three large white petals with a purple and yellow blotch at the base of each on a leafless stalk. Californian arrowhead forms dense stands that suppress native plants and block waterways. It's usually found in edges of streams, drains, ponds and wetlands.

**Seen it? Contact us: 0800 496 734  
pest.plants@gw.govt.nz**

## Active A2B

If you're keen to make the most of your journey to work this summer, Active a2b is for you. With personal support, mentoring and fun, Active a2b helps you try out new ways of getting to and from work that don't involve your car. Get out and about this summer, get fit, get active!

[www.gw.govt.nz/activea2b](http://www.gw.govt.nz/activea2b)

## Responses surge for spine survey

More than 850 people have responded to a survey that will help Greater Wellington and partners Wellington City Council and the NZ Transport Agency to improve public transport in the Wellington CBD/central Wellington area. The survey is part of the Wellington Public Transport Spine Study to develop options for a high-quality public transport spine between Wellington Railway Station and Wellington Hospital. The study will continue in 2012.

[www.gw.govt.nz/ptspinestudy](http://www.gw.govt.nz/ptspinestudy)

## Regional barometer wins national award

The Wellington region's Genuine Progress Index (GPI) has won two national awards for excellence in local government. It won the GHD Supreme award and the Joined Up Local Government award from the NZ Society of Local Government Managers. A joint council initiative, the GPI is a barometer of the region's wellbeing providing comprehensive information about the overall health of the region and how it's doing economically, environmentally, socially and culturally. The GPI is a key project of the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS), a long-term plan for the region's sustainable growth. Visit the website for the award-winning GPI project:

[www.gpiwellingtonregion.govt.nz](http://www.gpiwellingtonregion.govt.nz)

## Correction:

In the September 2011 issue of *Our Region* it was stated that Greater Wellington would make decisions on how the Parangarahu Lakes Block (in East Harbour Regional Park) should be managed in the future. This is incorrect. In fact, decisions on the future management of the Lakes Block will be made jointly by the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust (PNBST) and Greater Wellington. PNBST owns the lake beds of Lake Kohangatera and Lake Kohangapiripiri and the esplanade strips that surround the lakes.

Welcome to *Our Region* – the Greater Wellington Regional Council's quarterly magazine. Your feedback is appreciated – 0800 496 734 or [info@gw.govt.nz](mailto:info@gw.govt.nz)

## Wairarapa water project gathers momentum

Investigations into what could become one of the largest economic development projects in the Wellington region are moving into a higher gear

The Wairarapa Water Use Project aims to store some of the vast amount of water that pours off the Tararua Ranges during winter and release it to meet a variety of community and agricultural needs during the dry season.

Initial investigations have found that up to 50,000ha of land across the Wairarapa valley floor could be irrigated as part of the project. The water could also be used to meet environmental, urban and recreational needs.

A Leadership Group including environmental, agricultural, local government and iwi representatives was established in late 2009 to oversee the project.

*"Up to 50,000ha of land could be irrigated"*

Greater Wellington Chair Fran Wilde, who also chairs the Leadership Group, says the scheme has the potential to create thousands of jobs and significantly increase the region's GDP through increased production for local and export markets. "It also has the potential to benefit the environment through the long-term management of the water resource."



Greater Wellington Chair Fran Wilde says the scheme has the potential to create thousands of jobs

Potential changes in land use and opportunities for high-value uses could attract processing facilities as a result of the project, benefiting both Wairarapa and the wider region. "One of the key challenges is to ensure that the scheme and associated land management practices are positive for the environment," Fran Wilde says.

Greater Wellington has provided \$750,000 in its 2011/12 annual plan to continue pre-feasibility work undertaken by Wairarapa organisations since 2007.

*"A key challenge is to ensure the scheme is positive for the environment"*

Wairarapa irrigation specialist Greg Ordish joined the project team in September, bringing a vast amount of technical and practical experience with water systems, and an excellent understanding of irrigation and farming issues.



Wairarapa irrigation specialist Greg Ordish on the foothills of the Tararuas, with the Wairarapa plains in the background

The project plan for the next 12 months includes a detailed assessment of the demand for water, further engineering, environmental and economic studies and ongoing engagement with the community. A shortlist of schemes will then be developed for consideration.

**For more information on the Wairarapa Water Use Project, visit [www.wairarapawater.org.nz](http://www.wairarapawater.org.nz)**

**To sign up for email updates, contact:  
[bruce.geden@gw.govt.nz](mailto:bruce.geden@gw.govt.nz) or  
[greg.ordish@gw.govt.nz](mailto:greg.ordish@gw.govt.nz)**

## The "dry" summer is here

Greater Wellington is keeping you up-to-date with the water situation for Porirua, Wellington, Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt during our "dry" summer

There's less stored water to go around the four cities this summer, with one of the two Stuart Macaskill water storage lakes in Te Marua out of action to increase its resilience in an earthquake and boost capacity.

*"Even after rain, there may not be much water in our catchments"*

Councillor Nigel Wilson, Chair of Greater Wellington's Social and Cultural Wellbeing Committee, says that although the Wellington region isn't a place where you'd necessarily expect water shortages, it can happen and did as recently as 2008.

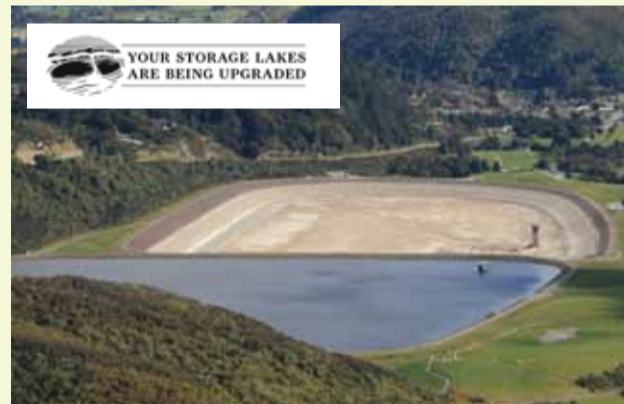
"Our water supply depends mainly on rivers and an aquifer so there could be a problem if these sources run low, especially with one lake down," he says.

Greater Wellington is working with local councils to make sure that people know this summer is different – a summer water conservation campaign is underway and Greater Wellington is providing regular updates on its website.

*"The lake beds need to be dry for works to proceed"*

"It's often hard to tell how much water is available from our rivers, just by judging the weather. Even after a heavy rainfall in the cities there may not have been much in our catchments in Upper Hutt and Wainuiomata. By providing updates, we aim to give people a better idea of exactly how we're doing for water."

Nigel Wilson says that people may wonder why the lake upgrade work is taking place during summer, when water use typically peaks. "The lake beds need to be dry for works to proceed, making summer the most



A view of the two Stuart Macaskill water storage lakes from the Ridge Track in Kaitoke Regional Park. The southern lake is empty for upgrading

likely season when the weather is dry enough."

Simple conservation measures can help you to save hundreds of litres of water:

- Put a flow control "trigger" on your hose and fit a tap timer for any "hands-free" watering
- Mulch your garden (mulch slows moisture loss by up to 70%)
- Fix leaky taps, toilets and pipes
- Put a 1-litre bottle of water (with the lid on) in the cistern of your single-flush toilet

Make sure you follow your local watering restrictions for any hands-free watering and report leaks to your city council.

The second Stuart Macaskill lake will be empty next summer. If there are any delays a lake may be empty in summer 2013/14.

**How are we doing for water and how can you help save it? You can find out by visiting [www.gw.govt.nz/water](http://www.gw.govt.nz/water)**

# ENCORE AWARD WINNERS



Plimmerton Rotary Club members at the Pauatahanui Inlet



Hutt Intermediate's Greenie Group in their greenhouse

All around the region there are exceptional people going that extra mile – and more – to improve our environment. At the Encore Awards last week they were recognised for their dedication and hard work, which ultimately makes our region a better place to live...

#### Plimmerton Rotary Club – Recreation Volunteers Award

Through the club's efforts in creating Te Ara Piko, the Pauatahanui Pathway, people can now meander their way around the Pauatahanui Inlet appreciating its natural attributes along the way.

#### "They never gave up"

The club campaigned for years to get the Porirua City Council to include the pathway in its long-term plan, and partnered with the council to bring its vision to fruition.

"All along they acted as project ambassadors, promoting it to the community at countless community meetings and festivals, organising revegetation plantings and establishing their own nursery," says Porirua City Council Landscape Architect Andrew Gray. "They never gave up."

#### Heather and Ian Atkinson, South Wairarapa – Landowners' Conservation Award

Heather and Ian are protecting and restoring the biodiversity on their organic farm, Wharerata, replacing pines in a gully with native species and linking it to a QEII Trust-covenant area of bush to add to a wildlife corridor from the Haurangi Ranges.

#### NZ Transport Agency Project Team for Emerald Glen Road extension – Excellence in Compliance Award

The NZTA-managed project team (Opus International, Fletchers, Beca, Higgins, Goodmans and Brian Perry Civil) used innovative solutions to reduce the environmental impact of this roading project.

#### Friends of Owhiro Stream (FOOS) – Community Partnerships Award

FOOS has transformed the stream into an attractive habitat for native birds and animals, and a place for people to enjoy.

#### Frances Lee – Kaitiaki Award

Frances Lee's persistence and passion over more than three decades have transformed Trelissick Park into an attractive natural wilderness only 10 minutes from the CBD, and influenced many other community and environmental issues.

#### John Morrison – Restoring the Mauri Award

John Morrison has been the driving force of the Churton Park Revegetation Group project, organising planting and weeding days, recruiting volunteers and educating the wider community.

#### Murray Bootten, Elizabeth Ferguson and Wendy Johnstone, Naenae Primary School – Meridian School Environmental Leadership Award

These school leaders have developed a school-wide approach to environmental education that's led to a high level of environmental awareness and action in the school and in the wider community.

#### Hutt Intermediate Greenie Group – Meridian School Sustainable Project Award

Five years of dedication from Greenie Group students has resulted in a vibrant garden area well utilised by other students and included in school programmes.

#### Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet – New Zealand Historic Places Trust Historic Heritage Award

The restoration of Government House highlights the commitment made by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to conserve architectural heritage.

The awards are a partnership between Greater Wellington, the Department of Conservation's (DOC) Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy and the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board.

For more details see [www.gw.govt.nz/encoreawards](http://www.gw.govt.nz/encoreawards)

## A bright future for Baring Head/Ōrua-Pouanui

Where's the most photogenic landscape on the south coast?

It's at Baring Head/Ōrua-Pouanui, according to a participant on Greater Wellington's online forum to discuss the future of Greater Wellington's new addition to East Harbour Regional Park. Other comments include "the park is so accessible from the city yet the area is so remote and wild" and "the views at Baring Head are simply stunning".

Feedback from the online forum will be used to develop a draft management plan, along with Greater Wellington's research into the park's recreation opportunities, ecology and heritage. (The forum on Baring Head/Ōrua-Pouanui has finished but you can view the comments at <http://haveyoursay.gw.govt.nz>.)

The draft management plan for Baring Head/Ōrua-Pouanui will be out for public consultation in early 2012.

[www.gw.govt.nz/baring-head](http://www.gw.govt.nz/baring-head)

### Get involved in the future of Baring Head/Ōrua-Pouanui

The Friends of Baring Head Trust is a community group formed to protect and enhance the values of Baring Head/Ōrua-Pouanui. They formed less than a year ago and have already signed a memorandum of understanding with Greater Wellington and made great progress on developing their projects. If you'd like to get involved with the Friends' work, visit their website for more information or write to PO Box 38 076, Wellington Mail Centre – they want to hear from you: [www.baringhead.org.nz](http://www.baringhead.org.nz).



The iconic Baring Head lighthouse at the Baring Head/Ōrua-Pouanui site

### Iwi inextricably linked to Ōrua-Pouanui

This land is historically significant to mana whenua. Ōrua Pouanui and the neighbouring Parangarahu lakes were important for mahinga kai (food gathering), and were launching bases for the movement of iwi both by sea and land. The two places are inextricably linked to mana whenua, and the Port Nicholson Block Settlement

Trust's support of Greater Wellington's ownership and management of Ōrua Pouanui highlights Greater Wellington's connection and special relationship with iwi.



Taranaki Whānui kaumatua Sam Jackson speaking at the opening of Baring Head/Ōrua-Pouanui earlier this year

## Checking back

We're getting into the nitty gritty of developing a new plan for the region's environment

How to look after our coastal areas, manage and respond to natural hazards and minimise pollution from urban and rural activities – these are just a few of the issues that people from across the region discussed at community drop-in sessions over the past month.

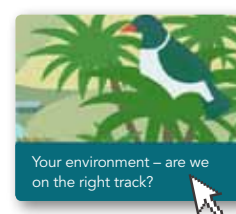
### "What do you think of our proposals for the region's environment?"

The drop-in sessions were the second stage in the development of a new regional plan for the region's environment. The first stage involved public meetings and a consultation last year to identify common themes and concerns.

"It's important for us to check back with the community – what do you think of our proposals for managing the region's environment? Are we on the right track?" asks Greater Wellington's Chair Fran Wilde.

Next year Greater Wellington will hold a third phase of community consultation covering the specific regulations and voluntary measures that will be needed to address the big issues.

Have your say



You can still have your say on Greater Wellington's proposals for managing the region's environment through our online survey: <http://haveyoursay.gw.govt.nz/your-environment>

## Contact your Regional Councillor

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## Warm GW scheme hots up

The total amount of financial assistance available from the Warm Greater Wellington scheme has doubled

Greater Wellington Councillors recently agreed to increase the spending cap from \$3 million to \$6 million per year. This means 2,300 household in the region can apply for financial assistance to install insulation and clean heat, which will make their homes warmer, drier and healthier.

Under the scheme, Greater Wellington provides up to \$2,600 per property (including GST), repayable via a targeted rate over nine years. The top-up is in addition to the assistance currently available through EECA (Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority).

Warm Greater Wellington has already been immensely popular, with 2,437 properties having installed insulation and/or clean heat since it began on 1 April 2010.

**Would you like to apply for financial assistance to insulate your home? Find out more, including terms and conditions: [www.gw.govt.nz/warmer-gw](http://www.gw.govt.nz/warmer-gw)**

## Pump it up

There's a new mini hydro-electric scheme in Wainuiomata



The new hydro-electricity generator

"The generator isn't big in size – but what it can do is enormous," said Taranaki Whānui Kaumatua Teri

Puketapu at the scheme's official opening, attended by Greater Wellington Councillors and members of Taranaki Whānui, with Reverend Boyd Reha leading a karakia and blessing of the plant.

Greater Wellington is using the water pressure from a pipeline at its Wainuiomata Water Treatment Plant to generate up to 300 kilowatts of electricity – enough to power 225 average households.

Most of the power will be used at the water treatment plant. This will save money on the electricity needed for the plant and help Greater Wellington reduce its greenhouse gas emissions (water supply activities represent 75% of Greater Wellington's emissions). Any surplus electricity will go into the local network and when the water treatment plant is turned off (eg, for maintenance), all of the power will go to the local network.

This is Greater Wellington's second mini-hydro scheme (Greater Wellington also self-generates around 300 kilowatts of electricity at its Te Marua Pumping Station).



The Reverend Boyd Reha (right) leads iwi from the building containing the hydro-electricity generator. Teri Puketapu is fourth from the left

## A two-way street

A shocking video reminds people that pedestrians and drivers need to share the road

Thousands of people have already viewed *A Two-Way Street* – a Greater Wellington road safety video showing a crash between a driver and pedestrian in Lower Hutt.

"We've got great walking opportunities in the Wellington region and the highest figures for walking to work compared to any other region in the country. But this is accompanied by a higher than average risk for pedestrian casualties," says Simon Kennett, Greater Wellington's Active Transport and Road Safety Advisor.

The pedestrian in *A Two-Way Street* was on crutches for nearly three months and the driver of the vehicle was charged with careless driving causing injury and disqualified from driving for six months.

Simon Kennett says that we all share the road – whether we're a pedestrian or a driver – so we must look out for each other. "Drivers should slow down in urban areas – safer speeds save lives. And pedestrians need to stay focused when using a road and remember to look both ways."

The video is part of Greater Wellington's work to ensure walking (and cycling) in the region is safe, convenient and pleasant.

See the CCTV footage of the crash and hear the stories at: [www.gw.govt.nz/two-way-street](http://www.gw.govt.nz/two-way-street)



Stills from the video of *A Two-Way Street*, which shows a crash between a driver and pedestrian

## Let's Carpool goes north

Let's Carpool, Greater Wellington's award winning programme, is spreading its wings

This easy, online way to find your carpool match has recently been extended to our neighbours in the north.

Palmerston North City Council is providing the programme to people in the surrounding region, including parts of Manawatu, Horowhenua, Ruapehu and Rangitikei. This partnership makes it easy for people living in one region but working in the other to share their commute.

Almost 2,000 people from more than 500 workplaces in the Wellington region have registered with the online carpooling scheme.

Find out more about Let's Carpool by visiting [www.letsccarpool.govt.nz](http://www.letsccarpool.govt.nz)

Let's Carpool can now be used for one-off trips including events in the Great Outdoors summer events programme

## What does Greater Wellington do?

**Water supply to reservoirs**  
Delivers high-quality treated water to the main reservoirs in each city.

**Emergency management**  
Coordinates Civil Defence Reha emergency management for the region.

**Environmental management**  
Ensures the region's natural resources are used appropriately.

**Flood protection**  
Helps communities protect themselves from the effects of flooding.

**Regional parks and forests**  
Maintains a network of regional parks and forests for recreational use.

**Pest control**  
Works with landowners to target pest plants and animals, and eradicate bovine Tb.

**Metlink buses and trains**  
Coordinates and funds the region's Metlink public transport network.

**Harbour safety**  
Looks after navigational safety in Wellington and Porirua harbours, and the region's coastline.

**Transport planning**  
Develops long-term plans for the region's transport network.

**Land management**  
Works with landowners to prevent or reduce soil erosion.

**Regional economic development**  
Promotes the Wellington Regional Strategy – a sustainable economic growth strategy.



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## Christmas timetables

There will be reduced bus and train services from Christmas Day until Sunday 8 January 2012. Normal services will resume on Monday 9 January. This period of limited services is longer than normal, largely to allow substantial rail work to be carried out. Please plan your travel carefully. Make sure you check the timetables on the Metlink website or pick up a Christmas timetable from your local Metlink stockist.

## Real Time heads to the Hutt

Real Time Information (RTI), which tells you when your bus will arrive, will soon be available for all Valley Flyer services. Display screens at key Hutt Valley bus stops and interchanges will be installed over the next few months. You can also get RTI from the Metlink Service Centre and from the Metlink and mobile websites.

More than 70 RTI screens are up and running in Wellington city

and suburbs. Installation of RTI totem displays on the Golden Mile – Lambton Quay, Willis Street and Courtenay Place – has been delayed due to a pedestrian safety review of the area.

RTI will be available for Mana and Newlands buses early next year after the Valley Flyer rollout has finished. It will be available for train services after this.



Greater Wellington's public transport network  
0800 801 700 [www.metlink.org.nz](http://www.metlink.org.nz)