

Our Region

June/July 2010



News from the Greater Wellington Regional Council

www.gw.govt.nz

Our environment

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The community mucks in Planting at Whitireia Park after the fire

Digging holes is no sweat for five-year old Julianna Jaquierey of Titahi Bay, who helped the Onehunga Bay Restoration Group plant areas of Whitireia Park that were damaged by February's fire

Wairarapa Moana launch

A project to improve the largest wetland area in the Wellington region is being launched with a weekend of community activities in mid-June

The Wairarapa Moana Wetlands project focuses on improving the health of native plants and animals, and the opportunities for people to enjoy themselves on the public land around lakes Wairarapa and Onoke. It involves iwi, hapu, the South Wairarapa District Council, Department of Conservation and Greater Wellington.

Greater Wellington Chair Fran Wilde says Wairarapa Moana is an important part of the region's identity. "In fact, Wairarapa is named after this area of lakes and wetlands. It must have been a very

prominent feature when the first people arrived."

Chair Wilde says that in recent history the area has suffered from a lack of profile, as have many wetland areas. "However, its value is understood by the people who know it, live around it and visit it – Wairarapa Moana is a real treasure."

The launch activities include:

- Launching books about eel conservation and heritage, Greytown Town Hall, 16 June, 5pm
- Wairarapa Moana Open Day, ANZAC Hall, Featherston, 19 June, 10am-3pm
- Native planting at Wairarapa Yacht Club, Lake Reserve, 20 June, 10am-1pm

10,000 trees for 10 years

This year marks 10 years of Greater Wellington's environmental restoration programme Take Care and we're celebrating with a massive tree planting day at Queen Elizabeth Park. Greater Wellington staff, care group volunteers and members of the public will aim to plant 10,000 native trees – one of our biggest planting days ever.

"Since Take Care started in July 2000, volunteer groups from around the region have put in hundreds of thousands of hours to restore rivers, streams, estuaries, wetlands, coastal dunes and escarpments [coastal cliffs]," says Greater Wellington's Environmental Education Manager Geoff Skene. "Without them we would not have achieved as much as we have."

News in brief

Managing our parks

Have your say on the *Greater Wellington Parks Network Plan – Draft*. It outlines how we manage our network of parks and guides decisions on land use, development and activities within parks. The consultation closes on 23 July. For a copy of the draft and information on making a submission, see:

www.gw.govt.nz/parks

Have your say

Kapiti Coast air quality

Greater Wellington is doing a pilot study on the Kapiti Coast this winter to find out more about air quality in the area. A temporary monitoring site has been installed in Raumati South which will provide data on levels of tiny particles in the air (PM10), which can come from home fire smoke, vehicle emissions and natural sources. For air quality information, see:

www.gw.govt.nz/air-quality-2

Keeping bovine Tb under control

Possum and ferret trapping to control bovine Tb on the plains around Carterton, Masterton, the lower Taueru River and Gladstone is due to begin in July. Traps will be used near built-up areas, while the pesticide brodifacoum will be used in bait stations in some less populated areas. The operation will not extend into the towns themselves. Contractors will be in touch with landowners before the work begins. For more information, contact:

[Greater Wellington's BioWorks, 06 378 2484](http://www.gw.govt.nz/bio-works)

10 YEARS OF TAKE CARE PLANTING DAY All welcome! Bring a spade.

Sunday 15 August from 9.30am, Queen Elizabeth Park, meet at MacKays Crossing entrance www.gw.govt.nz/10-years-of-care

WANTED: PEST PLANT

Climbing spindleberry (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) is a fast-growing vine that can grow up to 12m. It's usually found invading forest edges. It has bright green, oval, serrated leaves that may drop in colder months. Young twigs are green, often producing sharp spikes 1mm to 2mm long. Small, pale green flowers are followed by clusters of bright red or orange berries. Climbing spindleberry grows into the tree canopy and forms large masses that rapidly smother and replace other vegetation.

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



Climbing spindleberry

Welcome to *Our Region* – the Greater Wellington Regional Council's quarterly magazine. There's news and information on the work we are doing for a better region, and how you can participate to make our region truly sustainable. Your feedback is appreciated – 0800 496 734 or info@gw.govt.nz

Keeping out the cold this winter



Firewool Ltd's installer Joe Lewis (left) takes a break from installing Autex Greenstuff, joined by Dave Crout from Firewool, Greater Wellington Chair Fran Wilde and property owner Michelle Walker. Greenstuff is made in New Zealand from recycled plastic drink bottles

Wainuiomata's Michelle Walker and her four children weren't looking forward to winter in an uninsulated property. But thanks to the Warm Greater Wellington scheme, their home will be warm and cosy

Warm Greater Wellington offers ratepayers up to \$2,600 as a top up for support offered by EECA for home insulation and clean heating for their homes. This money is repaid, with interest, through a targeted rate against the property over the following nine years.

"The scheme is just brilliant. Being able to pay it off through my rates is easy and more affordable than other options. It should also cost less to heat our home over winter," says Michelle.

Her home now has underfloor insulation and a heat pump. The insulation was installed by EECA-approved company Firewool Ltd of Lower Hutt and the heat pump by Wasabi Air Ltd of Johnsonville.

Greater Wellington has so far approved financial assistance for 173 applicants across the region. Greater Wellington's Chair Fran Wilde says she's rapt at the level of interest: "It's great to be involved in a scheme that will make such a positive difference to people's lives."

The Warm Greater Wellington scheme is designed to be self-funding and will not impose any additional costs on regional ratepayers other than those who own properties covered by the scheme.

See www.gw.govt.nz/warmer-gw or phone 0800 496 734 during business hours

Sustainability tips



Save the drain for the rain

Water quality is in the news – sewage overflows, livestock in streams, and stormwater drains carrying material other than water. But there are things we can do to improve the situation:

- Save the drain for the rain – roof and roadside gutters all drain to a stream and ultimately to the sea
- Keep all roof downpipes away from sewage drains (these carry dishwashing, laundry, bathing and toilet water) to prevent sewage overflows
- Keep all livestock out of streams
- Join community initiatives to fence and plant stream edges – fences protect streams from livestock and plants filter water before it enters a stream

Some of the worst water quality in our region's rivers and streams has been found in the lower parts of these waterways: Waitohu (Otaki), Waiwhetu (Lower Hutt), Porirua, Mangatarere and Parkvale (both near Carterton), Mangaone (Te Horo), Ngarara (Waikanae), Kaiwharawhara (Wellington), Kopuaranga and Whangaehu (both near Masterton), Mangapouri (Otaki) and the Whareroa (Paekakariki).

In many of the upper parts of these rivers and streams the water quality ranges from good to excellent.

More sustainability tips:
www.bethedifference.gw.govt.nz



Encore Awards

Greater Wellington, the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation (DOC) have launched a new awards programme to honour people demonstrating a commitment to the Wellington region's environment.

The Encore Awards are open to groups, individuals, businesses and schools improving and restoring our region's rivers, lakes, wetlands, dunes and coasts, and conserving natural, cultural and historic sites. They are also open to businesses and resource consent holders reducing the impact of their activities on our region's environment.

"Many of the individuals and organisations we work with also work with DOC and it seems only fitting that we join forces to recognise their achievements," says Greater Wellington's Chair Fran Wilde.

DOC's Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservator Alan McKenzie says the Encore Awards give DOC the potential to encourage the growth of a larger community with a common interest in conservation.

There are eight award categories:

- Community Partnerships Award
- Community Leadership Award
- Business Leadership Award
- Emerging Environmental Business Award
- Meridian School Sustainable Project Award
- Meridian School Environmental Leadership Award
- Excellence in Compliance Award
- Historic Heritage Award

Applications are now open and will close on Friday 20 August. The awards ceremony will be held in November. For application forms, criteria and information about each award category, see:

www.gw.govt.nz/encoreawards

A legacy in QEP

The late Tony Edwards – Kapiti resident and scientist – was responsible for new signs that describe the fascinating natural history of Queen Elizabeth Park

The signs resulted from Tony's concerns about the environmental impact of Transit New Zealand's two-year project to improve the MacKays Crossing interchange between Paekakariki and Paraparaumu, near the entrance to Queen Elizabeth Park.

"We agreed to fund signs to enhance the public's awareness of the local geology and landforms," says Rob Whight, NZTA's Wellington State Highway Manager. "We also funded the development of a wetland area with boardwalks near MacKays Crossing and the relocation of the Queen Elizabeth Park Barn." (Transit and LTSA merged in 2008 to form the NZ Transport Agency, NZTA)



Tony Edwards

Greater Wellington's Community Projects Advisor Ross Jackson, who frequently dealt with Tony on community issues, says the signs (based on information and diagrams provided by Tony before he died last year) bring difficult geological concepts to life.



Greater Wellington's Ross Jackson (left) and NZTA's Terry McGavin, who managed Transit's MacKays Crossing project in its final year. Transit funded new geology signs that follow the park's wetland walk

"The signs show just how unique the Kapiti landscape is, both in and around the park, with its sand dunes and landforms resulting from the last ice age. And the signs are a wonderfully fitting tribute to Tony, who had a passion for helping the wider public understand Kapiti Coast's rich natural heritage," says Ross.

Tony was also a stalwart volunteer for Queen Elizabeth Park, leading geology walks as part of Greater Wellington's summer events programme.

The signs are on the Queen Elizabeth Park wetland walk, which begins outside the ranger's office at the park's MacKays Crossing entrance. For more information, see:

www.gw.govt.nz/qep

OUR ENVIRONMENT – what's your view?

Our natural resources (air, waterways, soils, coasts, and native plants and animals) underpin our quality of life and prosperity. We need to make sure these resources are managed properly – our region's future depends on it. This is where regional plans come in...

Greater Wellington is about to start work on a new regional plan and the first step is a round of workshops from July to September to hear what the community thinks.

There's no doubt that our region has a magnificent environment. We have clean air, spectacular coastlines, thriving pockets of native bush and some pristine rivers and streams.

But with increasing urbanisation and development, our natural resources are under pressure. Pollution from urban stormwater, silt from subdivision earthworks, and runoff from farms and industry are affecting water quality. And there's increasing demand for water, putting stress on some of our rivers, streams and aquifers.

"There's room to improve how we manage our natural resources. As a community, we need to decide on goals that benefit the natural environment and sustain our region's economy," says Greater Wellington's Chair Fran Wilde.

"We'll be doing our consultation differently this time. Rather than tell people what we are going to do and seek feedback on it, we'll be actively seeking ideas on what our communities value in their local and regional environment. We'll ask what you're willing to do to maintain and protect those values, and what you'd like Greater Wellington to do.

"By following this process, we'll build a strong partnership with our community that will benefit everyone and help us have the best-managed natural resources in the country," says Chair Wilde.



I don't think people in urban areas really understand how much they rely on, and are connected with, their environment. Many people simply aren't interested in natural resources management. People get it when the air is bad or if they can't swim at their local beach. But when you're living in an apartment in a built-up environment, you don't see the soils or the waterways, and you generally don't need a resource consent

Nick Potter,
Central Wellington



If we see our natural resources through Te Ao Māori [Māori world view] we start to see their importance as more than just ecosystems but about a connection between people and the land. The decline in the quality of our air, water, coasts and soils is deeply connected to the wellbeing of people. So if we want to enhance the mauri [life force] of natural resources we need the views of the whanau and hapu who have lived for generations alongside a stream or coastline. They know whether the resources are in good shape or not

Dr Jessica Hutchings,
Kaitoke, Upper Hutt



My family are big coast and parks users – the value of these open spaces is huge. While these areas are in pretty good shape, people need to continue to have access to them and they need to be protected from negligence and vandalism. If we don't protect natural resources now, our job will be so much more difficult in the future

Sandy Antipas
(with son Thorndon),
Khandallah, Wellington



We need to work together to manage the pressures on our natural environment. Having young people involved helps them to understand what can damage our natural resources and how we should protect them. Seeing is believing too. You can tell people about something a hundred times but if they don't see it they won't understand the issues

Niniwa Aporo,
Papanui, Greytown



Greater Wellington's doing a great job with possum control, which needs to continue to keep bovine Tb rates right down, and with flood protection of the Otaki River. On the downside, there isn't enough funding for flood protection for the smaller streams like the Mangaone, Mangapouri and Waitohu. From a dairy farmer's perspective, Greater Wellington and Fonterra have a good partnership, with both organisations working together on effluent management

Max Lutz, Otaki

Have your say

- Look out for workshop dates and times in your community newspaper
- Can't make the workshops? See the online survey at www.gw.govt.nz/valuing-our-environment

Contact your Regional Councillor

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Back from the fire

The community came out in force last month to help Onehunga Bay Restoration Group plant 3,200 shrubs at Porirua's Whitireia Park, following February's devastating fire. Eighty people took part in the planting day, including members of the restoration group, 40 people from the Titahi Bay Community Church and other members of the public, as well as the Department of Conservation, Greater Wellington and Keep Porirua Beautiful staff. The restoration group will hold its next planting day on Sunday 27 June. Find out more:

www.gw.govt.nz/onehunga-bay-restoration-group



Dig it! Community members help out at Onehunga Bay on Whitireia Park's north side

Local elections

From 17 September to 9 October 2010 you'll have the opportunity to vote for Councillors for the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

Greater Wellington's Council is made up of six constituencies and has 13 Councillors:

Constituency	Councillors
Kapiti Coast	1
Lower Hutt	3
Porirua-Tawa	2
Upper Hutt	1
Wairarapa	1
Wellington	5

Become a candidate

You may also want to stand for election yourself, so here's what you need to know:

- Candidate nominations open on 23 July and close at 12noon on 20 August
- Information packs are available on our website or can be picked up from our Wellington or Masterton offices
- Make sure you attend the Candidates Information Evening at 7pm on 12 August at our Wellington office, 142 Wakefield Street, Wellington

For more information, contact Greater Wellington's electoral officials on 04 381 7792.

Local Elections 2010
**YOUR VOTE
YOUR COMMUNITY**

www.gw.govt.nz/elections

Please mind the gap

Safer cycling is easy if cyclists and drivers follow these simple tips:

Mind the gap

There are many reasons why a cyclist may need to swerve, whether it's a gust of wind, a car door opening or broken glass on the road.

The New Zealand Road Code advises drivers to give cyclists plenty of room when passing them. Ideally, drivers should allow at least 1.5 metres between their car and the cyclist, and wait for a clear space before passing on a narrow road.

Cyclists should try to ride a predictable line, a safe distance out from parked cars and curbs.



Bright lights in sight

There's no need to pack away your bike because it's dark and wintry. You just need the right gear – good lights and reflectors are essential. We tested a selection of bike lights recently – find out which are brightest:

www.gw.govt.nz/be-safe-be-seen



Kids make their move

Fancy feet at Greytown School

Fancy Feet parades, group bike rides, wheels days and road safety lessons were all part of Movin'March – a week of fun activities to celebrate kids who walk, cycle, scooter and skateboard to school.

Sam Winslow, Greater Wellington's Senior School Travel Planner, says more than 11,000 students from around the region took part.

"Movin'March is a fantastic opportunity to applaud the valuable contribution these children make to the region's environmental and physical wellbeing. Children learn and have fun when they walk, scoot or cycle to school. They see so much more, learn essential road safety skills, and grow in independence and confidence."

The next Movin'March will take place in 2011 from 21 to 25 March.



What does Greater Wellington do?

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

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

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

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

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

Emergency management
Coordinates Civil Defence emergency management for the region.

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

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

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

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

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



Produced sustainably
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Transport tweets

You can now follow Metlink on Twitter and get the latest information about bus, train and harbour ferry services. Start following Metlink today!

www.twitter.com/metlinkwgtn

New Total Mobility cards

From next month, Total Mobility customers will use new photo ID cards instead of paper vouchers to pay their fare. Total Mobility is a taxi service subsidised by Greater Wellington for people with permanent disabilities who cannot use public transport. The new system is due to be fully up and running by mid-July.

Kapiti station upgrades

Work has begun on major improvements to Waikanae and Paraparaumu railway stations and is expected to be finished in about seven months:

- At Paraparaumu a second platform will be built on the other side of the tracks, and an underpass will connect the existing road subway with the new platform, replacing the current overbridge. The new platform will include a small station building.
- At Waikanae a new platform will be built at the current station location. A second carpark will be created to

the east of the tracks, with a new pedestrian level crossing connecting it to the station. A new station building will include a ticket office, waiting area and toilets.

Double tracking from MacKays Crossing and electrification to Waikanae is due to be completed early next year and the new Matangi trains should be running on the Kapiti Line by June 2011.

metlink

Greater Wellington's public transport network
0800 801 700 www.metlink.org.nz