



IN THIS ISSUE

- [Public's voice sought on 10-year plan](#)
- [How can we improve the Orbiter bus service?](#)
- [Nominations sought for advisory committee](#)
- [Water quality issues and their causes](#)
- [Major marine oil spill exercise at Tuakau](#)
- [The 2015 Effluent Expo on next week!](#)
- [Six farm environment awards finalists shortlisted](#)
- [Share or subscribe](#)

COUNCIL MEETINGS

March 2015

[Thames Valley Drainage Subcommittee](#)

Monday 16 March – 10am

[Lower Waikato Catchment Committee](#)

Wednesday 18 March – 10am

[Waihou Piako Catchment Committee](#)

Thursday 19 March –

Public's voice sought on 10-year plan



The public's voice is now being sought on a new 10-year plan that will play a key role in shaping the Waikato region's future.

Waikato regional councillors have unanimously adopted the 2015-2025 Long Term Plan Consultation Document setting out the council's proposals, rates implications and levels of service.

Council chairperson Paula Southgate said: "Over the next 10 years major changes will impact on our environment and lifestyle, and our plan looks at how we can tackle these challenges together.

"It's important to us that we continue providing good service and value, keeping costs down for ratepayers today and tomorrow.

"We're proposing to do a lot of really great work to improve water quality and protect our coastal and marine areas," Ms Southgate said.

Key proposals we're consulting on

The establishment of a regional development fund to support

10am

[Lake Taupo Protection Project Joint Committee](#)

Thursday 19 March –

11am

[Waikato Central Drainage Subcommittee](#)

Friday 20 March – 10am

[Council](#)

Thursday 26 March –

10am

For council meeting dates and agendas, please visit the [Waikato Regional Council's website](#).

regionally significant projects which build and strengthen a vibrant regional economy. The council is proposing that money for the fund comes from a portion of the council's investment fund returns, after subsidising rates and allowing for inflation-proofing. Declining a request from TBfree New Zealand to collect a rate on its behalf for vector possum control work. While the council supports the intentions of the work, the council believes there are alternative collection methods available to TBfree New Zealand and a targeted council rate is no longer the most appropriate mechanism.

Also, the plan proposes an increase in the uniform annual general charge (UAGC), meaning an increase in this flat rate for all properties in the region. However, the overall impact of this increase will vary depending on property value, as the new proposed UAGC charge will pay for services previously funded by rates based on property value.

We value feedback from the community

The consultation document and other supporting material will be available online from tomorrow (Saturday 14 March) at www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/ltp. Submissions on the plan close at 4pm on Tuesday, 14 April and can be made online, via email or letter.

“Councillors appreciate and value community feedback when making final decisions, so I strongly encourage people to tell us what they think of the various proposals,” Ms Southgate said.

As earlier advised, under the proposed plan the council's works programme for 2015/16 will be delivered on a rates revenue of \$80.1 million. That means our rates revenue from existing ratepayers is going up by just 0.2 per cent. There will be no rates increase in 2016/17, with a rise of only 0.5 per cent in 2017/18.

Across the region, it means 60 per cent of ratepayers will either have a rates decrease or an increase of just \$10 per annum.

How can we improve the Orbiter bus service?

orbiter

focus group

We need your help!



Join our passenger focus group to give us your feedback.

Contact the team at the Transport Centre on busit@waikatoregion.govt.nz or 859 0509 to register.

Thursday 19 March 4.30pm – 6pm



Do you, or anyone in your family, use Hamilton's Orbiter bus service? If the answer's yes, we need your help! [Register with our BUSIT team](#) to come along to our passenger focus group and give us your feedback to help shape the service and its marketing in the future. It's being held on Thursday 19 March from 4.30-6pm at Waikato Regional Council's Hamilton East office.

Nominations sought for advisory committee



Do you love our region's environment and want to advocate for its protection, preservation, conservation and enhancement?

We're seeking new members for a committee interested in safeguarding the region's soil, water and other life-supporting ecosystems.

The Advisory Committee for the Regional Environment (ACRE) is a consultative environmental advocacy group of 15 members which promotes conservation and good environmental policy and practice in the region, networks with other groups with similar aims and liaises with Waikato Regional Council staff and councillors to monitor and

advise on the council's policies and plans.

Nominations for the vacancies close on 30 March 2015.
Consideration will be given to the geographical spread of applicants, their associated networks and environmental knowledge.

For nomination forms and more information about the group go to www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/Acre.

Alternatively, contact Jennifer McCarthy on 0800 800 401 or email jennifer.mccarthy@waikatoregion.govt.nz

Water quality issues and their causes



How healthy are our rivers?

Find out at a drop in session

From 7 to 9.30pm in:
Tokoroa, Wednesday 1 April
Huntly, Thursday 9 April
Hamilton, Monday 13 April
Otorohanga, Wednesday 15 April

Can't make it?
Complete the survey
waikatoregion.govt.nz/healthyrivers from
30 March to
30 April

For more information
waikatoregion.govt.nz/healthyrivers
freephone 0800 800 401

Healthy Rivers
PLAN FOR CHANGE
Maniapoto Māori Trust Board
Raukawa Charitable Trust
Te Arawa River Iwi Trust

Wai Ora
HE RAUTAKI WHAKAPAIPAI
Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board
Waikato Rauapatu River Trust
Waikato Regional Council

Come to a [Healthy Rivers: Plan for Change/Wai Ora: He Rautaki Whakapaipai](#) drop in session about the Waikato and Waipa River catchments next month. You can find out the latest developments in the project, including:

- current water quality and trends in different parts of the Waipa and Waikato River catchments
- insights into factors driving water quality
- how the project's modelling and research programme will help develop options
- the project milestones and timelines.

You can also share your thoughts with the [Collaborative Stakeholder Group](#) on how they propose to:

- divide the catchment into areas to better manage water quality
- determine how healthy (or unhealthy) a water body is.

Click the image above for full details of the drop-in sessions.

Major marine oil spill exercise at Tuakau



Our regional hazards team carried out a major [marine oil spill](#) exercise at Tuakau last week.

The exercise modelled the sinking of a barge carrying 4000 litres of diesel and a subsequent leak of fuel into the Waikato River, about 2km upstream of the Tuakau bridge.

The team was tasked with preparing an incident action plan, identifying areas at immediate environmental risk (including wildlife), and deploying equipment as part of the effort to contain a large amount of diesel leaking from the vessel.

The response to the exercise scenario involved bringing in a diver to plug the leaking fuel tank on the barge and booming off oil that had leaked so it could be recovered.

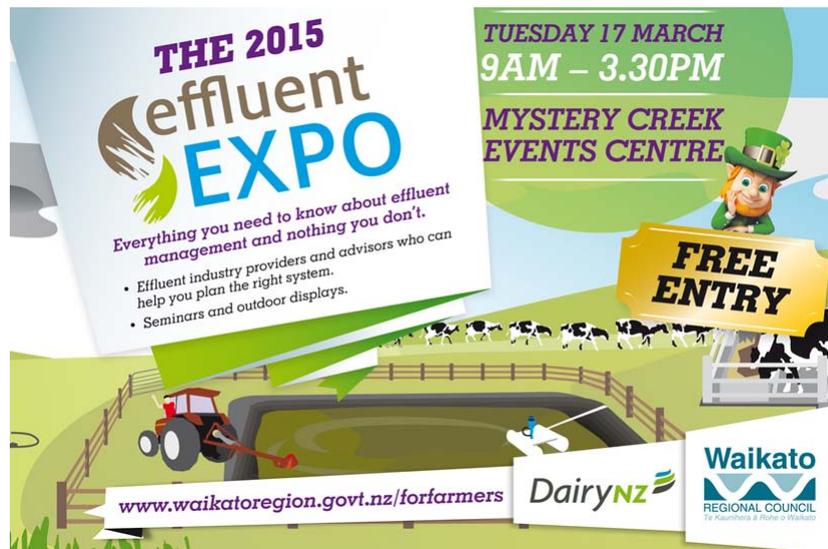


EXERCISE SITE: It was great to have a number of observers, including representatives from Waikato-Tainui, Waikato District Council, Mighty River Power, Genesis Energy, Maritime New Zealand and the Massey University Oiled Wildlife Response Unit.



IN ACTION: The exercise is an annual statutory requirement under the Maritime Transport Act and our own Waikato Regional Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan.

The 2015 Effluent Expo on next week!



The Waikato Effluent Expo at the Mystery Creek events centre next Tuesday 17 March (St Patrick's Day) is entering its fifth year and it is hoped attendance will top last year's figure of 650. Fifty-seven exhibitors are confirmed for the expo organised by Waikato Regional Council and sponsored by DairyNZ. **Click on the image above for seminar times, indoor and outdoor site maps, and exhibitors.**

[For farmers](#) ▶▶

[We're hiring](#) ▶▶

Six farm environment awards finalists shortlisted



It's just over a month until the Ballance Farm Environment Awards (BFEA) are announced at a special event at Lake Karapiro.

This year, Waikato Regional Council is sponsoring the 'Water Protection Award'.

BFEA recognises and celebrates good farm practices which promote sustainable land management through an annual awards programme which is now run in 10 regions throughout New Zealand.

The awards provide an opportunity to benchmark farms as well as a forum to share best practice and really ensure that innovative ways to find sustainable solutions within the farming industry continue long into the future.

In the Waikato this year 14 entries have been received, ranging from dairy farms to orchards, each with their own story to tell and their own innovative and sustainable farm practices to share.

Six finalists have now been shortlisted and the exciting culmination to the BFEA process is the awards dinner on Thursday 23 April at the Don Rowlands centre. To find out more about the awards and to buy tickets to the dinner. visit www.nzfetrust.org.nz.

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