



Report 08.903  
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Committee Council  
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Committee  
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## Report on the Regional Sustainability Committee Meeting held on 19 November 2008

### 1. Purpose

To inform Council about the meeting of the Regional Sustainability Committee that took place on 19 November 2008.

### 2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

### 3. Report

#### Community Environmental Projects

Robyn Smith, Team Leader, Community Environmental Projects, provided the committee with an outline of the achievements and activities of community environmental projects funded by Greater Wellington during the 2007/08 financial year.

Robyn spoke to a series of photographs that showed the progression of improvements over a number of projects. Key elements to the success of projects include local community ownership and engagement, regular working bees and the established linkages of care groups with schools in most cases. Robyn mentioned that some people even travel from overseas to contribute their time to care group projects.

The committee noted that volunteer labour input ensures a significant multiplier on the Council's programme funding of \$250,000 per financial year. Geoff Skene, Manager Environmental Education, advised that the dollar value of volunteer labour has been conservatively calculated at more than \$680,000 per year based on a formula developed by the Ministry for the Environment.

Robyn Smith referred to the importance of habitat restoration undertaken by care groups in securing the future of threatened native species, many of which are found in only a few sites in the Wellington region.

The committee discussed the importance of recognising the work done by the care group volunteers – the Environment Awards Programme, sausage sizzles for care groups, and invitations to attend an event at Westpac Stadium are all ways of recognising their commitment. It was noted that International Volunteer Day (5 December) would provide another opportunity to acknowledge the commitment of individual volunteers.

The committee also viewed a short film, fronted by Dr David Bergin, trustee of the Dune Restoration Trust of New Zealand, which showed the contribution of the work of volunteers to the restoration of dunes on the Kapiti Coast. The film was made for a national housing rental company, to encourage its franchise holders to become more engaged in volunteer work in their communities.

### **Papawai-Mangarara Stream Restoration**

Following Robyn's overview presentation Peter Rewi, Chairperson of the Papawai-Mangarara Stream Restoration Group, outlined the work being done on the restoration of Papawai-Mangarara Stream, which has been supported with advice and Take Care funding provided by Greater Wellington.

Peter advised that from the development of a concept in 2001, and a hui with Greater Wellington in 2004, the project is now a community-led integrated catchment management programme, focused on restoring the mauri of the Papawai-Mangarara Stream. The trust formed to administer the funding for the restoration group has formed extensive partnerships in the community.

The stream has significant historic importance, having been first settled by Māori in the early 1800s, being a traditionally important source of mahinga kai, adjacent to the site of the first Māori parliament in 1897 and formerly utilised for transportation purposes.

The issues that the restoration group have focused on are the removal of cracked willow and water quality. The cracked willow has contributed to flooding, access and sedimentation problems.

Peter advised that the key elements to the success of the project have been community support, advice from Greater Wellington officers (particularly Don Bell and Warren Field) and Take Care funding provided by Greater Wellington (which has enabled the trust to obtain further funding from the Ministry of the Environment). He noted that the challenges ahead would involve keeping people participating in the work, ensuring that the work would be ongoing, and the availability of Take Care funding to support ongoing partnerships.

It was agreed that this initiative was worthy of recognition as an exemplar of the kind of cooperative approach Greater Wellington is seeking to foster.

#### **4. Unconfirmed minutes**

The unconfirmed minutes of the committee meeting are attached as *Attachment 1*.

#### **5. Recommendations**

*That the Council:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

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Committee

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**Attachment: 1. Unconfirmed minutes**