

Water for the Waimea Basin

**Public meeting, Wednesday 20 August 2008,
Hope Community Church,
Ranzau Road, Hope, 7.00 pm.**

Agenda

- Welcome from Committee Chair Murray King
- Joseph Thomas, Project Manager, Background on Stage Two investigations
- Tonkin and Taylor - Technical presentation on investigations to date
- Open discussion - questions

Waimea Water Augmentation Committee

The Waimea Water Augmentation Committee (WWAC) is a community group formed to address water shortage issues for the Waimea Plains. The group includes representatives elected by the Waimea Basin Water Users Group, Tasman District Council, Nelson City Council, Fish & Game, Department of

Conservation and local iwi. The inclusion and enormous voluntary input from this range of interest groups and stakeholders from the outset of the project has been invaluable to the smooth development and completion of phase 1 of the project. WWAC is now progressing phase 2 studies.

Background

Why do we need water augmentation?

Historically the Waimea Basin has been short of water for irrigation, urban and industrial supply. Water resources are currently over-allocated by 22 percent in drought conditions for an inadequate environmental flow of 225 litres per second. If adequate environmental flows of greater than 1000 litres per second are considered in the river the over-allocation exceeds 50 percent.

At the moment about 3700 hectares of land have water permits for irrigation, but a further 1500 hectares could be irrigated if more water was available. An additional 550 hectares adjacent to the Waimea Plains could also be irrigated. With continuing growth in the district there is increasing demand for water supply to the towns and industry. Potential future regional urban water supply demand is estimated to be equivalent to 440 hectares in 100 years.

All water users have had to cope with severe water restrictions over the last few years during dry seasons. This has not only caused significant production cutbacks for irrigated crops leading to economic loss, but also affected the important environmental values of the rivers and the coastal springs that are highly valued by the community and local iwi.

Drawing off water, both from groundwater and the river has a significant detrimental effect on the low flows of the river and leads to salt water intrusion in the aquifers. The

Wairoa/Waimea Rivers are the water sources that recharge the aquifers supplying irrigation and urban water to the Waimea Plains and Richmond urban area.

Progress Report

The Waimea Water Augmentation Committee newsletter, 8 July 2008, gave a detailed account of progress in the stage two investigations and the alternative dam site, about 1 km upstream.

The geotechnical and engineering assessment of the upstream site is expected to take 12 weeks.

Work since that Report includes:

- Geotechnical investigations - the completion of field mapping, data review and scoping of the drilling programme.
- An access track to the area of interest on the right bank has been constructed. Three test pits have been dug and mapped. No obvious issues have been encountered in the work to date.
- A vegetation survey has identified sites of significant indigenous vegetation in the areas
- Water storage determination - completion of forward simulations and confirmation of water storage requirements
- Distribution - confirmation of the zone of effect.

Contact Info - WWAC Members

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WWAC members are available to answer your questions.

Lee/Wairoa Liaison Group Volunteers

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