

# Regional Fast Facts

## Fortnightly news from Environment Canterbury

Issue No. 293  
March 12 2010

**Councillors adopt draft 2010-11 annual plan:** Environment Canterbury councillors have adopted the draft 2010-11 annual plan for public consultation. Council carefully considered all aspects of expenditure and identified potential savings. The total rate increase has been trimmed to 4.2% down from an anticipated 7.2% in the LTCCP. The Council has also resolved to fund the Canterbury Water Management Strategy on behalf of Canterbury's territorial local authorities as requested by the Mayoral Forum. The expenditure for the first year of this project is \$3.265 million, which will be funded from a region-wide targeted rate of 4.5%.

**Regional councillors' response to Creech Report:** Environment Canterbury councillors have given their formal response to the Creech Report. Under the proposal, supported by a majority of councillors, a Government-appointed "commissioner-advisor" supported by an advisory group, would direct water management. The council would continue to govern all other functions. This proposal would allow the council to continue its governance role while preserving Cantabrians' democratic right to regional representation and provide input into water management.

**Greater Christchurch Metro Strategy Review:** A review of the Metro Strategy has begun with the aim of continuing to improve public transport in the Greater Christchurch area. Residents are encouraged to have their say about the future of public transport through a brochure which has been delivered to all mailboxes in the area or via [www.metroinfo.co.nz](http://www.metroinfo.co.nz).

**Waitaki Valley groundwater testing:** Environment Canterbury is undertaking a groundwater quality survey in the mid-Waitaki Valley between Duntroon and Otematata to provide information on the state of the region's water resource. The programme involves taking water samples from around 40 wells and testing will include nitrate, phosphorus, iron, hardness and other basic water quality parameters.

**Canterbury sharemilker fined for effluent discharge:** An Ashburton sharemilker has been fined a total of \$12,000 after pleading guilty to two charges; discharging effluent from an irrigator onto land causing ponding (which may have resulted in contaminants entering groundwater) and contravening an abatement notice. Ninety percent of the fine is to be paid to Environment Canterbury.

**World Water Day:** World Water Day is being celebrated between 2 and 5pm on Saturday March 20 at an information and family picnic afternoon at the Lakeside Community Memorial Hall, near Leeston, around one hour's drive south of Christchurch. The afternoon will include a tour of sites on Harts Creek where ecological restoration projects are underway, a chance to plant native species, and a brief talk on the Canterbury Water Management Strategy.

**Tsunami footage requested:** The Canterbury Emergency Management Office is requesting photos, footage and stories from members of the public and media outlets regarding last month's tsunami in order to build an historical record that will assist in planning for events in the future. People should send footage, photos, and stories to [tsunamistories@ecan.govt.nz](mailto:tsunamistories@ecan.govt.nz).

**Latest groundwater testing results:** Canterbury groundwater levels fell in February as a result of settled weather combined with average-to-dry conditions. Rainfall was average to below-average for the month, contributing to average to below-average river and stream flows in foothills rivers and lowland streams. The most recent monitoring data are available at: <http://ecan.govt.nz/services/online-services/monitoring/groundwater-levels/Pages/Default.aspx>. For an updated list of irrigation restrictions go to <http://ecan.govt.nz/irrigationrestrictions/>

**Wilding Pines Control Days 2010:** Environment Canterbury has organised two Wilding Pines control days coming up. The first will be held on Saturday March 20 concentrating on the eastern and southern slopes of Constitution Hill in the Upper Waimakariri. The second day is on Saturday April 10 at Corner Creek - the confluence of the Harper and Avoca River in the Rakaia Gorge - and at Cora Lynn in the Waimakariri catchment. If you would like to help contact James Hoban at Environment Canterbury on 03 371 7182.

**Latest consent hearing decisions online at:** <http://ecan.govt.nz/news-and-notice/notice/pages/hearing-decisions.aspx>