

Water committee progress

There has been real progress in water management in Canterbury this year, with water plans beginning to appear via the community-led Canterbury Water Management Strategy.

The first plan, the Proposed Hurunui and Waiau River Regional Plan, was notified on October 1 and public submissions closed on December 2.

The plan was written to recognise and give effect to the 66 recommendations made by the Hurunui-Waiiau Zone Committee, which was set up in October 2010 under the Canterbury Water Management Strategy.

Environment Canterbury Commissioner David Bedford, the Council's representative on this zone committee, is pleased with the outcomes to date. "It is fair to say that reaching consensus has been challenging for every member of the committee, as personal priorities have had to be put to one side to achieve the jointly agreed targets that the zone committee shares. In the end, working together to achieve agreement has prevailed."

The zone committee spent more than a year in dozens of meetings. It held a series of public meetings involving more than 300 people, received written feedback from 125 people on its recommendations, and held extensive discussions with a wide range of stakeholders throughout the district. Hearings by an independent panel will be held in early 2012.

Perky pair enliven Christchurch Central Station

A barista who juggles the tamper as he makes your coffee is now happily housed at Christchurch's sunny Metro Central Station. Paulus van Bussel, the juggler, and his wife Lou dispensed caffeine fixes and food in Cathedral Square for five years before 22 February.

They've now set up Escarto Espresso at Central Station, conveniently placed for Metro users and people shopping at the Cashel Mall Re:Start.

Lou and Paulus are looking forward to a busy summer with more and more people visiting the city and the upcoming Buskers Festival drawing people into town (worldbuskersfestival.com). >> For more on Metro, see page 2 >>



Lou and Paulus van Bussel at Escarto Espresso kiosk, Metro Central Station, Christchurch.



Greg Byrnes, General Manager of Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust, surveying native fish in the lagoon.

A 200-year vision for Tūtaepatu Lagoon

Tūtaepatu Lagoon is a special place nestled behind the sand dunes near Pegasus township and Woodend.

The lagoon is known for its rich and diverse flora and fauna, for its very significant cultural values and history, and for recreation opportunities in Tūhaitara Coastal Park (which includes Tūtaepatu Lagoon).

Tūtaepatu was transferred to Ngāi Tahu ownership in 1998 as part of the Treaty Settlement. The area was a significant mahinga kai resource for local Maori and contains urupa (burial sites) related to the nearby Kaiapoi Pa site.

It's also an exceptional 49 hectare freshwater lagoon just a few hundred metres from the sea, formed by the upwelling of groundwater as it approaches the coast. Spring-fed streams are common in coastal Canterbury, but most lagoons are connected to the sea and a freshwater lagoon of this size is unusual.

For many years Tūtaepatu Lagoon has been hidden behind a screen of exotic willows and weeds – but this is changing thanks to the work of the Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust, with funding from Waimakariri District Council and from Environment Canterbury via the Canterbury Water Management Strategy.

People can now view Tūtaepatu Lagoon from a new platform built in an area cleared of willows on the eastern side of the lagoon, which is accessible on foot or by bicycle.

Restoration work began last year and includes the clearing of weeds such as Old Man's Beard and female Grey Willow. Fencing has also been built to protect parts of the lagoon.

A number of regionally rare and significant native plants were found during the initial weed control work, including the soft tree fern, hounds' tongue fern, and native clematis. These existing native plants form a valuable seed source for nearby areas in Canterbury.

More than 4000 native plants have now been planted, including baby versions of the spectacular Kahikatea – New Zealand's tallest native tree – which will become a key element of the regenerating forest in the coming decades.

Looking further ahead than most, Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust has a 200-year vision for restoration of the lagoon and surrounding areas. The Trust aims to ensure that Tūtaepatu is protected and restored, recognising the huge ecological and cultural significance of the site.

"The key to the restoration of Tūtaepatu Lagoon is to understand that this project is inter-generational. Our role, today, is to provide the support to allow nature to do what it has always done. The actions of today in this fantastic environment will be realised hundreds of years from now," says Greg Byrnes, General Manager of Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust.

\$40,000 for restoration work this year has come from the Waimakariri Zone Committee (an Immediate Steps Freshwater Biodiversity grant) with \$20,000 provided by Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust.



Central Station in the heart of Christchurch.

Metro Christchurch returns to the heart of the city

Christchurch's Metro bus services have taken a positive turn with the opening of the new Central Station interchange in the city, new services to the new commercial work centres and improvements to existing runs.

"As the rebuild progresses, people's travel patterns will continue to change," says Environment Canterbury Commissioner Rex Williams. "Expect more Metro changes as time goes on. But it is great to see some improvements after such a challenging time. Metro needs to make people's lives better and offer viable, affordable travel choices. If you are not already a Metro user, give it a try this summer."

Central Station, which adjoins the much-praised Re:start City Mall on Lichfield St, behind Ballantynes, is in full swing. Buses flow through with real time information at each platform, waiting rooms, shelter from the weather, toilets, a Metroinfo office and a proper coffee operator, Escarto. Tubs of colourful gazanias and trees make this a green, pleasant place to catch your bus.

The new silver Comet links the city's increasingly busy northwest, including Sheffield Crescent, Christchurch International Airport (Orchard Road) and Hornby. It runs every 30 minutes on weekdays and at weekends, and every 15 minutes at peak times, connecting existing Metro services with the expanding business centres.

The Comet's route is dotted with sports facilities – cricket and soccer grounds at Bishopdale Park, hockey fields at Nunweek Park, tennis courts and rugby grounds at Burnside Park, and rugby league grounds at Crosbie Park in Avonhead. If shopping is your preference, it takes you to the Hub and Dress Smart in Hornby, Avonhead Shopping Centre, Bishopdale Mall, Papanui and Northlands shops.

A number of routes in the east are now back to more reliable frequencies and routes as roads have been repaired. The 5 New Brighton/ Southshore runs every 15 minutes to Eastgate and the new Central Station, and the 21 Mt Pleasant, 23 Woolston and 40 Wainoni services all connect with Eastgate. A Metro trial service, the 535 Eastgate Link, connects communities without local supermarkets in Lyttelton, Heathcote and Ferrymead, to Eastgate.

A new 40 Middleton Metro service runs through the increasingly congested Middleton/Tower Junction/Annex Road business hubs. The service is an extension of the existing 40 Wainoni and provides a direct service for people living east of the CBD and working between the central city and Church Corner. It runs every 30 minutes on weekdays and weekends, and every 15 minutes at peak times. It also connects people to the Addington Raceway and Events Centre, the CBS Arena and rugby league grounds.

New shuttle services begin on December 12 in the city's east, where road and bridge damage have prevented access by full-size buses. The 511 Avonside and Dallington Link and the 512 Avondale and Aranui Link provide four services a day each, Monday to Saturday, for these communities to the Palms and Eastgate and places in between. The Avondale and Aranui Link goes via Wainoni Park and Pak'n'Save Wainoni Rd.

For further information, phone Metroinfo on 03 366 88 55 or go to www.metroinfo.co.nz. You will also find the very latest Metroinfo on Facebook.



Ready for blast-off on The Comet.



Environment Canterbury's Commissioner Rex Williams at the launch of the 40 Middleton.

"If you are not already a Metro user, give it a try this summer"

Banking on flood protection

The first year of the Waimakariri Flood Protection Programme construction programme is now complete. The project will protect Christchurch city, Selwyn and Waimakariri District residents from the effects of a significant flood in the Waimakariri River.

Over the past 12 months, the team has constructed 3.3 km of new secondary stopbank along the Waimakariri River, upgraded a large portion of the primary stopbank downstream of the State Highway 1 Bridge (including some major earthquake repairs) and placed 7,500 tonnes of rock protection at the northern end of the State Highway road and rail bridges.

Year 2 of the programme focuses on protecting the southern abutments of the State Highway road and rail bridges. 28,000 tonnes of rock are being placed around the bridge abutments and along the motorway stopbank by the Otukaikino Stream. The team will also be constructing some small sections of stopbank in the Sawyers Arms Road and Johns Road area. This will complete the secondary stopbank from the airport through to the confluence of the Otukaikino Stream with the Waimakariri River.

Environment Canterbury thanks landowners, neighbours and the public for their cooperation and patience.



Rock is sourced from View Hill near Oxford.

Agrecovery comes to Canterbury for agrichemical collection

The Agrecovery Chemicals programme will be holding its second collection of unwanted and expired agrichemicals in the Canterbury region shortly. The first collection, held in February 2011, resulted in the largest single Agrecovery agrichemical collection to date, with 2060 kg of chemicals picked up from properties in Canterbury.

The programme is available for all primary sector users of horticultural and agrichemicals, including farmers, growers, contractors, veterinary clinics, golf courses and others. It is easy to use, safe and fully compliant. The programme offers a fully auditable record of disposal which farmers and growers can use for NZGAP and other quality assurance programmes.

Anyone wanting to dispose of unwanted agrichemicals needs to book with Agrecovery prior to the collection event. In the case of the upcoming Canterbury collection, the booking deadline is Friday, 13 January 2012.

Following the booking, Agrecovery assesses which chemicals can be disposed of for free and which are eligible for subsidies for the cost of collection and disposal. For the upcoming collection Environment Canterbury will be providing partial subsidies for some chemicals.

Contact Agrecovery on freephone 0800 247 326 or online at agrecovery.co.nz



Local kids dig deep for river restoration

Three students from Merrin School recently rolled up their sleeves to help improve the health of a local waterway.

Last year, Beth Wray, Rebecca Franks and Miah Jamieson decided to collect money at Avonhead Mall to help improve the Avon River/Otākaro. The trio became interested in the river after they created flyers and posters for a school project highlighting the issues the waterway was facing. The girls managed to raise \$176, which they donated to Environment Canterbury's Improving Urban Waterway Health programme.

In November this year, after delays due to Christchurch's earthquakes, they finally got the chance to put the money to good use. The girls decided on a programme of planting at Crosbie Park, a short walk from their school.

Together with their classmates, Christchurch City Council and Environment Canterbury staff, the class planted 55 plants in three areas. Tussock grasses were planted in the downstream section of the stream, ferns underneath the bridge, and a mix of pittosporum, flax, and cabbage trees were planted further upstream.

The plants will help reduce sediment run-off getting in to the stream and will provide shade for the stream and the aquatic species that live in there. The plants will also enhance the native biodiversity of the area.



Environment Canterbury's Michael Lester (left) with Hide Spraying's Andrew Hide.

Congratulations to the following businesses that have successfully adopted the Pollution Prevention Programme:

- Ansell Eurospares, Christchurch
- Atkins Panelbeaters Ltd, Christchurch
- Brown and Shipman, Timaru
- Bumper Replacements (NZ) Ltd, Christchurch
- Couplands Bakery Hornby, Christchurch
- Ellesmere Motor Bodies, Leeston
- J A Ward Limited, Christchurch
- Hide Spraying Limited, Rangiora
- Maintenance Unlimited, Christchurch
- Mazline Partsworld, Christchurch
- Perfect Autobody, Christchurch
- R O Jones Panelbeaters, Christchurch
- South End Panel and Paint, Rangiora
- Straight 'N' Paint Limited, Rangiora
- Submarine Spares Subaru, Christchurch
- Terry Stevenson Panel Beaters, Christchurch
- Weston Animal Nutritional Foods, Rangiora



Preventing pollution is common sense and can save your business money:

- Reduction in accidental releases of materials.
- Improved storage and handling practices.
- Better maintained premises.
- Reduced compliance costs.
- Reduced clean up costs.
- Improved equipment maintenance.
- Improved company image.

Stay safe this summer

Even in summer the rivers in Canterbury can rise very quickly and without warning, especially if there's been rain in the mountains. Always use your common sense when swimming and check the water for hazards before entering.

- Before you use a river – whether for swimming, angling, kayaking or boating – be sure to check the weather forecast. You can also visit our website or call our Riverline on **0900 74 837** (charges apply). The information is updated twice daily and more frequently during floods.
- Don't camp in riverbeds. River levels can rise rapidly overnight. If you are downstream of a hydro dam, be aware that river levels can rise even if there is no rain, during any planned hydro spill.

- Keep out of riverwater that's discoloured or brown with mud: this is an early warning that a flood is heading downstream.
- Never drive through flood waters. It is difficult to determine how deep the flood waters might be.

We measure river levels twice daily from remote monitoring stations so the immediate state of the river could be different from the recording.

You can receive text messages about river levels. Visit www.ecan.govt.nz to find out more.

Water quality

We've upgraded our swimming water quality maps online to make them easier to use. Visit www.ecan.govt.nz (search under "swimming") to find out whether your favourite swimming spot is suitable for swimming this summer. Updates are also available on Facebook at [canterburyrecwater](https://www.facebook.com/canterburyrecwater).



Fire safety

During the summer months, the heat and lack of rain can increase the risk of fires. Reduce your risk with a few simple precautions:

At home:

- Cut grass on lawns and in paddocks close to buildings on your property.
- Remove dead plants, debris and burnable material from your section.
- Remove leaves and debris from rain gutters and downpipes.
- Keep a garden hose connected for use in case of fire.
- Maintain clear access routes to your water supplies and around buildings for fire appliances.
- Check the batteries in your smoke alarms and make sure your insurance covers fires.

On holiday:

- Check with the local authority about whether outdoor fires or barbecues are permitted.
- If they are, make sure embers are out in campfires and barbecues when finished. Pour water onto any fire site and make sure it is completely out before you leave.

Remember: You may be responsible for any cost recovery of an outside fire.

Rural fire risk

Although the fire risk is not high at present because of recent rain, we recommend that rural landowners keep on top of any grass and vegetation growth before it dries off later and becomes a real fire risk.

Wearing lifejackets critical to safety on water

As summer approaches, one of the best things people taking their families out on the water can do is make sure everyone in their boat is wearing a well-fitting lifejacket, Coast and Waterways Safety Manager Evan Walker says.

"Most drownings in boating accidents involve craft under 6 metres long. We want the message out to skippers that making sure you and your family are wearing a lifejacket is the best thing you can do for your family."

Wearing a lifejacket in craft under 6 metres in Canterbury waters is now required under new bylaws operative since June this year. "We've introduced this rule because it's so important to the safety of people on the water," Evan says. It's also consistent with Maritime New Zealand's proposed national rule.

People who spend time in, on and around the water should take time to familiarise themselves with the new bylaws, available from Environment Canterbury.

"We've made the bylaws much easier for people to understand, with changes to the wording, full-colour maps and a user-friendly, glovebox-sized format."

Environment Canterbury staff and boating safety officers will be on the water when the boating season starts later in the year to educate people about the new bylaws and maintain high standards of public safety.

Download the bylaws at www.ecan.govt.nz/navbylaw, or ask for a hard copy from Customer Services on **03 353 9007** or toll-free on **0800 324 636**.



Keeping stock out of natural waterways

New rules excluding stock from natural waterways in Canterbury are designed to safeguard and improve water quality.

We recommend that everyone who manages stock should take the time to understand these rules and put measures in place to ensure stock are kept out of natural waterways.

From June 2011, livestock access to natural waterways is allowed only if there are no significant adverse effects, which include: heavy pugging (trampling of the soil) in rivers, lakes, or wetlands; visible discolouration of water: an increase in bacteria levels; and any obvious evidence of faecal matter in waterways. Additional rules from June 2012 will prohibit all stock from entering natural waterways.

Methods to reduce stock access to natural waterways include: permanent or temporary fences, and new bridges or culverts for stock to cross waterways. Farmers can also avoid planting winter feed crops in paddocks with natural waterways.

For more information or advice, call Customer Services on **0800 324 636**. More information on the new rules is available at www.ecan.govt.nz/nrrp

Open-source data from Environment Canterbury

Some of our most popular data are now available at a new website: data.ecan.govt.nz. This website contains a directory of our publicly-available datasets. The information, which is all free, currently includes air monitoring data, water monitoring data, basic consent data and geographical map layers. More data will be added in time.

It's aimed at people or organisations who might want to develop applications for public or private use, such as mash-ups, online interactive maps or smart-phone applications. Our datasets have already been used to build an iPhone application that shows water quality for the region.

The website is still in beta mode, so if you are interested in using our information, let us know what you think via the website's online feedback form.

<http://data.ecan.govt.nz>

CHRISTMAS HOURS

All Environment Canterbury's offices will be closed during the Christmas period, from 1pm on December 23 to January 8 inclusive. If you need to contact us urgently during that time, please call 0800 324 636. We will be open again on January 9. Best wishes for the festive season from all of us.

Environment Canterbury Offices

Christchurch PO Box 345 Christchurch 8140 P. 03 365 3828	Timaru 75 Church Street PO Box 550 P. 03 687 7800	Kaikoura 73 Beach Road PO Box 59 P. 03 319 5781
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Contact details

Online: www.ecan.govt.nz
Email: ecinfo@ecan.govt.nz
Customer Services: 0800 EC INFO
Free phone: 0800 324 636
or Christchurch: 03 353 9007

Contact the Commissioners:
0800 COMMISSIONERS
(0800 266 647)
commissioners@ecan.govt.nz

Metroinfo ChCh: 03 366 8855
Businfo Timaru: 03 688 5544
Pollution Hotline: 03 366 4663
(inside Christchurch) (24 hours)
Pollution Hotline: 0800 76 55 88
(outside Christchurch) (24 hours)

Civil defence: 03 366 2359
River & flood infoline: 0900 74837
(charges apply) 0900 RIVER
River report: www.ecan.govt.nz/riverreport
Riverflows: www.ecan.govt.nz/riverflows
Laboratory: 03 353 9720