

Storm relief hits spot

The Taranaki Regional Council's \$500,000 Storm Recovery Package has struck a chord with farmers whose properties were damaged in the widespread flooding and slips in June.

More than three-quarters of the funding package had been allocated by the end of August, to cover replacement of riparian plants, poplar poles and retirement fencing lost or damaged in the storm.

The package is designed to help farmers mitigate the devastation to what in some cases has been years of investment and hard work that they have put into their properties through the Council's Riparian Management and Sustainable Land Management Programmes.

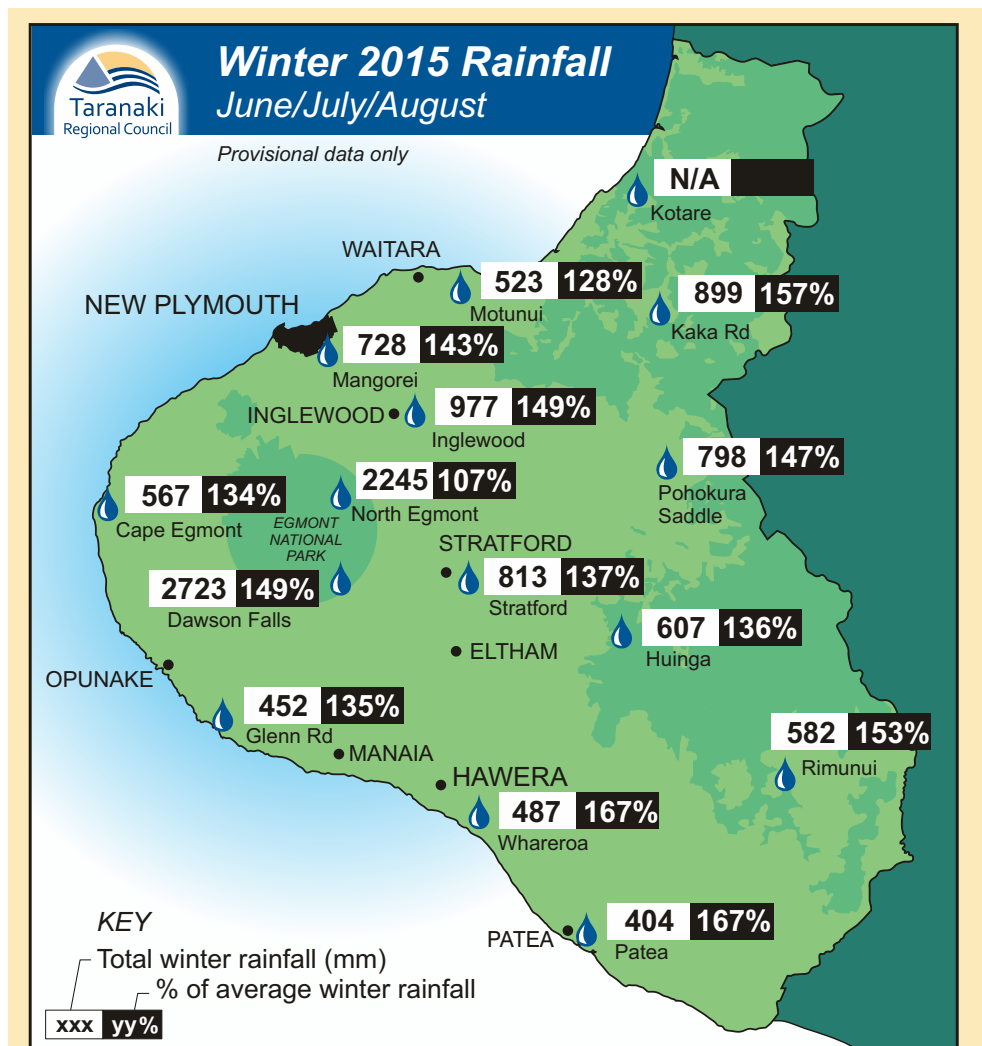
The Council's package includes:

- Supply of replacement riparian plants for riparian plan holders.
- Assistance with riparian planting.
- Supply of poplar poles and sleeves for erosion control and soil conservation.
- Assistance with delivery and planting of poplar poles.
- Replacement of damaged fencing done under the South Taranaki Regional Erosion Support Scheme (STRESS),
- Supply of grass seed for re-grassing soil slips in spring.

"Scores of replacement poplar poles are being supplied to hillcountry farmers, who use them to stabilise hillsides to prevent erosion, and the package will also cover kilometres of fence repairs and significant amounts of new grass sowing," says the Council's Director-Operations, Stephen Hall.

"The storm's impact on the ring plain was

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Mapping a very wet winter

Rainfall over the winter months of June, July and August was well above the season's normal at sites monitored by the Taranaki Regional Council, as illustrated by this map showing totals at some of our measuring stations.

The winter was the wettest on record at a number of sites, including Kahui Hut in Egmont National Park (2132.5mm, or 131% of normal; records since 2005), Mangorei Road at the reservoir (728mm, 143%, 1989), Waiwhakaiho River at Egmont Village (941mm, 142%, 1990) and Manganui River at Everett Park (844mm, 150%, 1987).

See monthly rainfall maps at www.trc.govt.nz/month-by-month-rainfall/

[Flood schemes prove their worth: Page 4](#)

From the Chair

It's great to feel spring in the air after what has been a particularly hard winter, especially for those farmers whose properties were damaged in the floods and slips that followed the 20 June rainstorm.



It was an extreme event and farmers might expect to be hit by such extraordinary damage only once or twice in a lifetime of farming. In many cases, years of investment and hard work that farmers have put into their properties through the Council's Riparian and Sustainable Land Management Programmes were devastated by flooding and erosion over a couple of days.

The Council was pleased to be able to offer assistance to these farmers in the form of a \$500,000 Storm Recovery Package focusing on repairing damage to fencing and planting that had been carried out under our Council programmes.

As you can read in this edition of Recount, the assistance has been welcomed by farmers, who are putting it to good use.

Against this background, it's also pleasing to report that the Council finished the 2014/2015 financial year in solid financial shape, with a healthy surplus and no public debt. We remain one of the lowest-rating Councils in New Zealand as we pursue our mission to work for a thriving and prosperous Taranaki. You can read more about our Annual Report 2014/2015 on P5.

Back to the weather, though, and the arrival of spring marks the start of the busy season at Pukeiti, Tupare and Hollard Gardens, the three premier heritage properties owned and run by the Council on your behalf.

All three will be fully involved in the Powerco Taranaki Garden Spectacular at the end of next month, after which there will be a busy programme of free public events including workshops, fairs and concerts. Check out the websites for more details: www.pukeiti.nz, www.tupare.nz and www.hollardgardens.nz.

David MacLeod - CHAIRMAN



Brendon Thomson and Taranaki Regional Council Land Management Officer Claire Robertson assess damage to riparian plantings caused by the June rains and flooding.

Storm package hits spot

From Page 1

very localised, with new riparian planting on some farms hit hard while more established plantings were okay. The package has funded the replacement of nearly 42,000 riparian plants so far."

The Council Chairman, David MacLeod, says farmers need to be supported in their environmental activities.

"This was an extreme event and farmers might expect to be hit by such extraordinary damage only once or twice in a lifetime of farming," he says.

One farmer pleased to receive the support is sharemilker Brendon Thomson, who lost about 1000 riparian plants, representing about two

years of work, on a 93 ha dairy farm near New Plymouth. "It's gutting to see the impact on all that hard work with the floods coming through. But we'll carry on – we have to," he says.

"The older plants survived, it's just the young ones which are vulnerable."

He says the relief package means environmental work will remain a regular part of the farm's work programme.

And he remains optimistic that despite the damage, waterways will be better off in the long run once the plantings establish.

To inquire about assistance under the package, call 0800 736 222 Monday to Friday 8am-5pm, or email riparian@trc.govt.nz or hillcountry@trc.govt.nz.



See video interviews

Go to bit.ly/TRCpackage to see video footage of farmers talking about the Council's Storm Recovery Package and what it means to them.

NZ ShakeOut | national earthquake drill | 9.15am, 15 October | www.shakeout.govt.nz

Bus passengers a happy lot

Most bus passengers have given a glowing report of Taranaki's bus services.

In recent surveys, about 90 per cent of bus passengers reported that they were satisfied to extremely satisfied with the region's three bus services – the Connector, North Taranaki's Citylink network and South Taranaki's Southlink - provided by the Taranaki Regional Council.

The overwhelming support came from a representative group of passengers, about 130 residents, who were surveyed and rated each of the services on comfort, availability, timeliness, driver attitude and price while riding the buses in June and July.

Council Transport Services Manager Chris Clarke says the results were fantastic, indicating public transport was only going to be bigger and better across Taranaki in the future.

He says the customer survey findings included:

- 90 per cent of passengers rated the Citylink service, covering New Plymouth, Oakura, Bell Block and Waitara, as satisfactory or better, with 37 per cent rating it 10 out of 10.
- 93 per cent of passengers rated the Connector service between Hawera and New Plymouth as satisfactory or better, with 34 per cent giving the service 10 out of 10.
- 95 per cent of passengers rated the Southlink services, covering Hawera, Manaia, Opunake, Patea and Waverley, as satisfactory or better, with 56 per cent rating the services 10 out of 10.



Ninety per cent of New Plymouth Citylink passengers rate the service as satisfactory or better.

Regional Transport Committee Chairman, Taranaki Regional Councillor Roger Maxwell, was thrilled with the results and encouraged more passengers and residents to provide feedback to the Council about the bus services.

“The buses are clearly a mode of transport that is valued and relied upon by many residents,” Cr Maxwell says.

He says the Council continually fine-tunes the Connector, Citylink and Southlink services to improve them and ensure they are responsive to community needs and demand.

However, Cr Maxwell says residents have a direct impact on whether bus services grow or are changed.

“There’s a partnership between Council and residents – there’s a responsibility by the community to provide feedback on services so we can measure whether they meet passengers’ needs.”

Taranaki bus timetables, information and latest news can be found at www.taranakibus.info or the Taranaki Transport Facebook Group.

Get social with TRC on Facebook and Twitter

Taranaki Regional Council's Facebook page has gone from strength to strength since its launch in April.

Intended as a community page for residents and the Council to discuss ways to improve our healthy environment and vibrant economy, it is also used to keep the community updated about environmental programmes and the assets the Council manages on behalf of Taranaki – the three regional gardens, Yarrow Stadium, Port Taranaki and public transport.

We also welcome news from others on the different ways they're supporting the region's vital environment and economy.

The page complements the Council's Twitter page, and the Facebook and Twitter pages of Taranaki Regional Gardens and Taranaki Civil Defence.



Taranaki Regional Council
Taranaki Regional Gardens
Taranaki Civil Defence



@TaranakiRC (Council)
@TaranakiRG (Gardens)
@TaranakiCD (Civil Defence)

“I'll be joining the conversations on the Council's Facebook page from time to time and look forward to interacting with you,” says the Council Chairman, David MacLeod. “Happy posting!”

Note: To report an environmental incident, call the Council's Environmental Hotline, 0800 736 222, rather than post on Facebook. The hotline is staffed 24/7 – someone will answer.

NZ ShakeOut | national earthquake drill | 9.15am, 15 October | www.shakeout.govt.nz

Waitara upgrade 80% finished



The upgrade at Waitara is resulting in a continuous riverside pathway almost to the sea.

The second stage of the \$3.2 million upgrade project to boost Waitara's flood protection is almost complete. The upgrade is designed to protect the town from a 'one-in-100-year' flood, which would be substantially bigger than the event on 20 June 2015.

Over the past two years, the Taranaki Regional Council's contractors have made good progress in raising earthen stopbanks and installing rock-basket walls, and reshaping and strengthening river banks. With the latest work taking place downstream of the West Quay wharf, the project is about 80% complete.

The Council is working closely with the New Plymouth District Council to ensure the project results in attractive and enhanced amenities including a new concrete path from the Town Bridge to the northern end of Domett Street, which is almost complete. This will create a continuous pathway along or next to the stopbank from Toohill Park, upstream of the Town Bridge, almost to the sea.

The Council is determined to see the upgrade completed to the highest reasonable standard and to be as resilient as possible. To enhance public safety and encourage use of the area, lighting will be installed along the section adjacent to Anzco and the new concrete flood wall.

The final stage of the upgrade works will involve raising the stopbank in Marine Park and on the eastern bank of the river from Gold Street to Norman Street. This will take place in the coming summer months.

A one-in-100-year flow in the Waitara River is estimated at around 3,800 cubic metres per second which is more than twice the highest flow measured at 1,640 cubic metres on 20 June. A one-in-100-year flood would be about 2.5 metres higher, with a substantially higher flow velocity.



New riverside pathway upstream of the Town Bridge at Waitara.

Flood schemes prove their worth

The flood control schemes managed by the Taranaki Regional Council performed effectively during the June flood event.

While the flows in the Waitara and Waiwhakaiho were not high compared with the maximum the schemes can handle, the speed of the water was still high and the works installed to control erosion along the river edges performed well, with no serious problems.

Some damage was sustained in the Kaihihi Stream, which is managed by the Council as part of the Okato Scheme. Repair works are now under way to protect the area adjacent to Okato.

The benefit of channel clearing works undertaken on the Waitotara River following the 2004 and 2006 floods became apparent in the June 2015 flood.

The previous work significantly reduced the level of flooding that would have occurred in

the valley. While the June 2015 flood was larger than the 2004 flood and while floodwater did enter the Waitotara Village, it was not as deep as in 2004 and the level dropped quickly.

There are a few areas of severe erosion in the Waitotara River channel, but most of what appears to be erosion is slumping of the channel banks resulting from saturation during a large flood and rapid drawdown as the flood level quickly drops. There is nothing that can prevent this from occurring.

Outside the flood control scheme areas, erosion has occurred in many of the stream channels and a significant number of bridges and culverts have been lost or severely damaged.

Problems with culverts have mostly occurred because they are too small, highlighting the need for landowners to ensure their pipes are big enough to cater for flood flows. The Council can provide information in this area.

NZ ShakeOut | national earthquake drill | 9.15am, 15 October | www.shakeout.govt.nz

Port Taranaki rises to year's challenges

Volatile trading conditions were no barrier to Port Taranaki Ltd achieving its second-highest revenue in the 2015/2016 financial year, resulting in a 10% increase in the dividend to its 100% shareholder, the Taranaki Regional Council.

Chairman John Auld says in the company's Annual Report that Port Taranaki consolidated its performance during the year, taking an adaptable and flexible approach in the face of changing demands.

Total revenue was \$49.36 million, net profit after tax was \$11.4 million and a dividend of \$4.07 million was paid to the Council. The result follows record revenue of \$55.3 million the previous year, which was one of the busiest in its history.

Chief Executive Guy Roper says the revenue result for 2014/2015 primarily reflects reduced offshore exploration and the loss of container services. However, operating expenses were well-controlled and debt levels were reduced.

While vessel arrivals were down 9%, total trade volumes were up 1.7%, with dry bulk imports making a significant contribution to the growth.

Highlights of the year included establishment of a new executive leadership team after Mr Roper was appointed to replace Roy Weaver, the successful trial of 'ShoreTension' hydraulic rams to

overcome vessel disruptions caused by long-period waves, and the freeing up of valuable storage space with the partial demolition of the old New Plymouth Power Station.

Mr Roper notes the discontinuation in October 2014 of a weekly coastal container service linking New Plymouth to Auckland and Tauranga, saying the alternatives are proving costly and inconvenient for Taranaki businesses.

"A concerted effort is being undertaken to see a resumption of this critical coastal connection," he says. "It will be imperative that the service is cost-effective and supported by customers across the region for it to be a permanent part of our logistics solution."

The company continued its strong focus on health and safety during the 2014/2015 year, establishing a dedicated sub-committee of the Board and adopting a vision of 'safely home every day for everyone involved in our business'.

Work-related injuries were down 72% on the previous year.

The Annual Report also notes with sadness the passing of Board member Craig Norgate. "Craig's strategic vision and belief in the Taranaki region underpinned his desire to ensure that the port was more than just a gateway for product – his desire was to make a real difference to the Taranaki economy as a whole."

TRC finances remain strong

The Taranaki Regional Council finished the 2014/2015 financial year strongly, with a 'pleasing' surplus despite minimal rates rises.

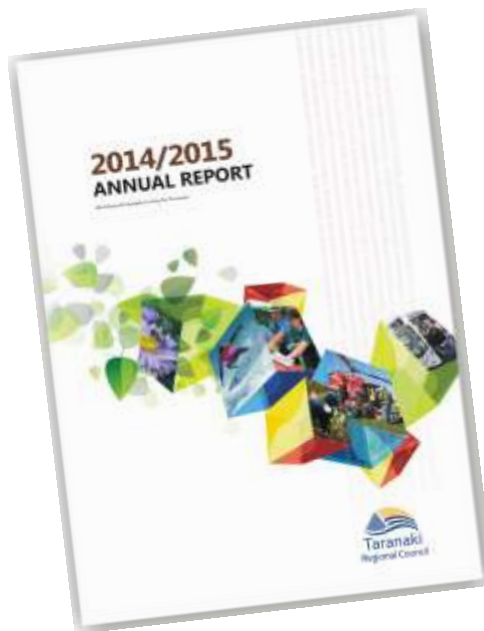
The Council's Annual Report shows it finished the year with a surplus of \$761,000. Expenditure was \$777,000 below budget while revenue was \$238,000 above budget.

Chairman David MacLeod says it was a pleasing result, as general rates have been raised by around 1.5% for each of the previous two years – well below inflation levels.

"The Council's balance sheet remains very strong with no public debt," he says.

The year's highlights listed in the report include:

- Preparation of the Council's five-yearly State of the Environment Report, Taranaki as One - Taranaki Tāngata Tū Tahī, culminating in its launch in early July 2015. The report shows great environmental progress is being made.
- The continuing review of the current Freshwater and Soil Plans, with the building blocks of a new, combined Regional



Freshwater and Land Management Plan now firmly in place.

- Continued progress on the Riparian Management Programme, with 378,000 native plants supplied to plan-holders in 2014/2015, taking the total to 3.9 million since the scheme began. By 30 June 2015,

83.6% of planned fencing and 68.5% of planned planting had been completed.

- A continued enviable record for processing consent applications within statutory timeframes, with the Council achieving 100% compliance for the 15th consecutive year.
- A major, long-term commitment to farmers affected by widespread flooding and slips in June 2015, in the form of a \$500,000 Storm Recovery Package.
- Increased visitor numbers at the Council's three premier heritage properties, Pukeiti, Tupare and Hollard Gardens, and good progress in an exciting three-year redevelopment programme at Pukeiti.
- Continued growth in passenger numbers on the urban New Plymouth Citylink bus service and the Hawera-New Plymouth Connector service.

The Annual Report 2014/2015 was adopted by the Council at its September meeting and is available online at www.trc.govt.nz.

A summary will be published in community newspapers in October.

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'A pavilion of natural materials which nestles into the surrounding natural environment ...'

Hollards heritage effort rewarded

A new building at one of Taranaki's premier heritage properties has won architectural plaudits for the sensitivity and appropriateness of its design.

The Hollard Centre, an all-weather information centre and events venue at Hollard Gardens, Kaponga, was recognised by the NZ Institute of Architects with a Local Architecture Award to Boon Goldsmith Bhaskar Brebner Team Architects Ltd of New Plymouth.

Opened in September 2013, the Hollard Centre is built on the site of the original homestead of Bernie and Rose Hollard, who founded the 4.5ha gardens and built up its world-ranked plant collection. The original floor and its markings have been retained, and visitors can see where the homestead's walls and rooms were.

The award citation describes the Hollard Centre as a pavilion of natural materials which nestles into the surrounding natural environment.

"Transition spaces from inside to out blur the line of interior versus exterior space. A warm palette of materials carry on inside to unify the main space of the open-plan pavilion. A richness is created with memories of the previous accommodation embedded into the new structure," the citation says.

Architect Glenn Brebner says designing the centre was a sensitive and respectful project.

"The new structure replaces Bernie and Rose's house in a pride-of-place location overlooking new and old garden areas," he says. "It had to be a tribute to their passion and pragmatism, and an enduring part of the Hollard Gardens experience."

Hollard Gardens is now owned and administered by the Taranaki Regional Council on behalf of the people of the region.

Intended primarily as an information centre for garden visitors and a venue for garden workshops, the Hollard Centre is also available for other public and private events.

As well as extensive interpretative material and seating for up to 100 people, it houses a library, kitchenette, projector and screen, and other facilities.

For more information about Hollard Gardens and the Hollard Centre, go to www.hollardgardens.info.

Gardens ready for busy season

OCTOBER

Sunday 4 October, 10.30am-2pm, Pukeiti: Explorer Day – native plants and their uses. Bring the family to learn some of the medicinal properties of native plants and how to harvest food from the forest. Free.

Sunday 11 October, 2pm-4pm, Tupare: Free public workshop – preparing your patch for summer. Learn about soil preparation, site selection and environmental elements of gardening, as well as the use of structures and frames and an example of a summer 'pizza garden'.

Sunday 18 October, 2pm-4pm, Hollard Gardens: Free public workshop – cheese-making. Pick up techniques to achieve success in making soft cheese and herb cheese.

POWERCO TARANAKI GARDEN SPECTACULAR (30 OCTOBER – 8 NOVEMBER)

Pukeiti

Daily, 11am and 2pm: Guided garden walk. Free.

Tupare

Daily, 9am-5pm: Exhibition – Symphony in Blue. Tupare's renowned hydrangeas are the subject of this free micro-photography exhibition at the Tupare Gardener's Cottage by Tara Jahn-Werner, who uses a small Leica digital camera to create intimate, colourful portraits.

Daily, 11am: Guided garden walk. Free.

Daily, half-hourly from 10am to 12.30pm: House tours. Free. Mobility vehicle available from carpark to house.

Friday 30 October and Friday 6 November, noon-6pm: Chapman-Taylor tours taking in the architect's work at Tupare, Wilkinson's Castle and Plas Mawr. \$85, bookings essential (festival office, cnr Brougham St and Powderham St, NP, phone 06 759 8412).

Saturday 31 October, 2pm: Photographer Tara Jahn-Werner talks about her festival photography exhibition, Symphony in Blue, at Tupare Gardener's Cottage. Free.

Hollard Gardens

Daily, 2pm: Guided garden walk. Free.



Sunday 1 November, 11am-12.30pm: 'Abundant vegie patch' workshop with permaculture designer Kath Irvine (pictured). Free. Bookings essential (festival office, cnr Brougham St and Powderham St, NP, phone 06 759 8412).

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Gains continue in freshwater quality

News about freshwater quality in Taranaki just keeps getting better, with latest ecological monitoring results even more encouraging than in previous years and longer-term trends improving markedly.

In what is considered the primary method for measuring waterway quality, the Taranaki Regional Council assesses the ecological health of freshwater at 57 sites in the region by examining what sort of tiny creatures are living in the streams, and scoring the sites using an internationally recognised index.

The latest analysis covers the 2013/2014 year, building on previous results reported in

Taranaki as One - Taranaki Tāngata Tū Tahī, the Council's five-yearly state of the environment report published in July.

The 2013/2014 scores were generally higher than typical, especially in spring but also in summer, when lower flows can otherwise be expected to have an adverse effect on water quality. Two sites recorded their highest

score ever. Incorporating the latest data meant that long-term median scores increased at 20 sites and decreased at two.

About a third of the sites had scores that were much better than would be expected at their locations, while only a small percentage were worse.

Looking at trends in results since 1995, 30 sites now show a statistically significant improvement – up from 26 in 2013 and 13 in 2008.

“It’s particularly pleasing that the number of sites showing improvement continues to increase over the long term, rather than plateau as might be expected,” says the Council’s Director-Environment Quality, Gary Bedford.

Improvements in water quality stand out particularly in the mid catchments of the

Kaupokonui Stream and the Kapoiaia Stream, the Mangawhero Stream below the Eltham wastewater treatment plant, the Mangati Stream and the Huatoki Stream above New Plymouth.

To read the latest and previous reports on monitoring of ecological health, go to tinyurl.com/TRC3f.

Results of last summer’s monitoring of popular coastal beaches and freshwater swimming spots have also been analysed and reported to the Council’s Policy and Planning Committee.

There were consistently good results from the 12 coastal beaches monitored over the summer months, with no samples revealing faecal bacteria counts above the Ministry of Health and Ministry for the Environment ‘action’ level. Waitara East Beach continued a steady improvement in recent years and was the cleanest during the 2014/2015 summer. Over the long term, Opunake and Fitzroy beaches are also consistently among the region’s cleanest.

Latest and earlier reports on our summer coastal monitoring programme are available online at tinyurl.com/TRC4a.

Results were more varied from the 16 freshwater swimming spots monitored. Five sites were consistently within the e. coli (bacteria) guidelines and another four had only one sample exceed the guidelines.

Two sites (the mouth of the Te Henui Stream and the Waiwhakaiho River site adjacent to Lake Rotomanu) failed almost invariably to meet the guideline, because of faecal contamination by birds. Cyanobacteria in its free-floating (planktonic) and mat (benthic) form was also an issue for some sites at times when river levels fell, leaving mats exposed on rocks. Latest and earlier reports on our summer recreational freshwater monitoring programme are available online at tinyurl.com/TRC3q.



Taranaki Regional Council Facts File

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Twitter:	@TaranakiRC @TaranakiCD @TaranakiRG
Facebook:	TaranakiRegionalCouncil TaranakiCivilDefence TaranakiRegionalGardens
Environmental hotline:	0800 736 222
Civil Defence freephone:	0800 900 049
NP bus information:	0800 827 287
Total Mobility:	0800 868 662

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Moirā Irving	021 944 809
David Lean	06 753 3325
Craig Williamson	027 687 4122

North Taranaki Constituency:

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Roger Maxwell	06 752 3622

South Taranaki Constituency:

Michael Joyce	06 274 5800
David MacLeod (Chair)	06 278 5577
Neil Walker	06 278 7541

Stratford Constituency:

Brian Jeffares	06 765 7773
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MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings are held at the Council chamber, 47 Cloten Road, Stratford, unless otherwise stated.

Wednesday 7 October, 10.30am: Regional Transport Committee.

Tuesday 13 October, 10.30am: Consents and Regulatory Committee.

Thursday 15 October, 10.30am: Policy and Planning Committee.

Tuesday 27 October, 10am: Executive Committee.

Tuesday 3 November, 10.30am: Ordinary Council meeting.

For agendas and minutes:
www.trc.govt.nz/agendas-and-minutes/

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