

## CHAIR'S REPORT

**TO:** Environment & Planning Committee

**FROM:** Michael Higgins, Environment & Planning Committee Chair

**REFERENCE:** S611

**SUBJECT:** **CHAIR'S REPORT - REPORT EP09/11/08** - Report prepared for meeting of 19 November 2009

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A number of Councilors have been involved in judging for the 2009 Environment Awards over the past month. My own effort has been in the Commercial section and it is interesting to note the extent to which economic efficiency is tracking with environmental improvement. The avoided costs of electricity and the avoidance of chemical processing adds revenue to the profit margin. Companies such as the Richmond Mill and Waimea Sawmill / Gibbons group are leading NZ in their fields of endeavor. We also visited Stonefly Lodge, located well up the Motueka River off Stanley brook. The Lodge can be described as stunning in its visionary design and style. The Environment Awards programme celebrates effort made in the Nelson Tasman District and is one of the pleasures of Council life.

The TRMP amendment programme is established through to the end of this term of Council, and staff have been refining budgets for the 2010/2011 financial year. It is sobering to consider how fast the time is passing.

I attended the inaugural meeting of the Waimea Estuary steering group. Steve Markham and Neil Jackson have done well to establish a programme that opens the matter up for community contribution. The meeting with Nelson City Councilors went well, they are able to match Tasman District Council budget provisions and there is a common direction going forward.

Interesting news items over the past few weeks include the Government's assurance that they will move the aquaculture industry forward. I like to think that this will occur, but time will tell. I also note the Marlborough development of electronic frost protection for grapes. Well known vineyard and wine producer Daniel Lebrun has implemented a European system that if successful, could solve a few problems for the Tasman District Council.

Our meeting today is short, in order to allow time for Nelson City Council to make presentations on their Performance Venue proposal. I expect one more meeting for the E&P Committee this year.



Michael Higgins  
**Chair, Environment & Planning Committee**