

Report No:	REP11-07-03
File No:	E390
Date:	1 July 2011
<i>Information Only -no decision required</i>	

REPORT SUMMARY

Report to: Environment & Planning Committee
Meeting Date: 14 July 2011
Report Author: Rob Francis, Environmental Education Officer
Subject: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report covers a number of general matters concerning the activities of the Environmental Education team as well as an overview of current status.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the report be received.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

THAT the Environment & Planning Committee receives the Environmental Education Report REP11-07-03

Report No:	1
File No:	E390
Report Date:	
Information Only -no decision required	

Report to: Environment & Planning Committee
Meeting Date: 14 July, 2011
Report Author: Rob Francis, Environmental Education Officer
Subject: **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION REPORT**

1. The Environmental Education Team

- 1.1 The Environmental Education Team sits under the Strategic Development Department and has one full-time and two part-time employees.
- 1.2 The two part-time employees are Adie Leng (.6) and Claire Webster (.4). Both commenced employment with TDC on 17 January this year, replacing three contracted positions which covered Enviroschools across Tasman, and environmental activities in Golden Bay.
- 1.3 Within a small team, we aim to provide effective and timely environmental education and support to Council, to Council staff, and in the Community.
- 1.4 Environmental education and training are continuous processes of lifelong learning aimed at developing people's skills, abilities, motivation and knowledge to address current and emerging environmental and developmental problems with a view to achieving sustainable development.
- 1.5 Environmental education can take many forms and is as limited as our creativity (and resources).

2. Tasman Nelson Environment Awards 2011

- 2.1 The Environment Awards are a joint initiative of Nelson City Council (NCC) and Tasman District Council (TDC) recognising and celebrating people and organisations in our region who have demonstrated the use of good environmental practice, enhancement and sustainability. The Awards have been running since 1999 and, since 2009, have been run jointly with NCC after a break of several years.
- 2.2 The partnership between the two councils for the awards has added real value both in terms of communicating and supporting each council's objectives, and in offering a genuinely regional opportunity to our community.
- 2.3 Following on from the discussion at a previous E&P meeting, NCC have now committed to fully participate in the Awards 2011. Staff organisers are looking to simplify and streamline the Awards in response to feedback received from last year. This is expected to reduce the number of categories (11 to eight), judges required, and to reduce the overall time and resources needed. We still aim to deliver a high quality and high profile event.

- 2.4 In keeping with sharing locations (Tasman has hosted the event for the last two years), the Awards 2011 event will be held at the Theatre Royal, in Nelson. As always, Sponsors, Councillors and Council staff play an integral part in the Awards judging process and arrangements will be set in place soon.
- 2.5 A review of the Environment Awards will be conducted after the 2011 event.

3. Ecofest

- 3.1 Now in its tenth year, the Ecofest Expo, a joint event between TDC and NCC, has evolved in line with consumer preferences and is sporting a new look to reflect its evolution. What has not changed however is the event's focus - making it easier for everyone to live more sustainably, care for the world they live in, and save money.
- 3.2 Ecofest Expo will be happening at the Trafalgar Centre, Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 August. The event is very affordable - \$5 per adult, children free.
- 3.3 The focus this year is on resiliency, "building good foundations for you and your family" - with a strong alignment with civil defence. Using key messages like "Future Proof your Family" and "Expect the Unexpected" - the event this year is all about building strong and resilient communities in the face of change - whether these be climate change-driven or natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods.
- 3.4 Other Ecofest events include an Eco-Challenge featuring a number of re-expo learning opportunities across the region, and the popular eco- home and garden tours. For details check out the Ecofest website www.ecofestnelsontasman.co.nz
- 3.5 An extended programme of Ecofest events will also take place in Golden Bay over the period. This is to provide learning opportunities for Golden Bay people, who are unlikely to make the trip to the Expo. Other Eco-Challenge Ecofest events will also take place in Motueka, Murchison, and Richmond.
- 3.6 Ecofest was recently a finalist in the category: Central and Local government stepping up -in the Ministry for the Environment "Green Ribbon" Awards.
- 3.7 At present, a review of Ecofest is being held to determine best options moving forward, post-2011 event.

4. Enviroschools

- 4.1 The Enviroschools Programme offers a framework to:
- Link environmental education projects together.
 - Have an environmental vision for the school.
 - Support the schools in planning and activating projects.
 - Assist the integration of environmental projects into the organisation and operation of the school.
- 4.2 It is the "Ripple" effect, starting from the children at school, which then spreads sustainability message and practice among school families, and throughout the wider community

- 4.3 Of the 11 2010 non-Golden Bay Tasman Enviroschools, eight continue to develop their Enviroschools process. The other two schools and Early Learning centre have had staff changes so asked for facilitation after Term 2.
- 4.4 So far this year, Adie has assisted two schools and two early childhood centres to become Enviroschools.
- 4.5 The Enviroschools reflection process used last year with Salisbury, Ngatimoti and Greenwood kindergartens, when they became recognised as having achieved Bronze or Green-Gold Enviroschool levels, provided clear next steps for their continuing progress. Greenwood wants to go for Silver level this year.
- 4.6 Presently, we are developing a TDC/NCC partnership with Nelson Kindergarten Association to become an Enviroschool and having lead teachers trained in Enviroschools Early Years.
- 4.7 The Enviroschools programme is facilitated in six education centres in Golden Bay.
- 4.8 Two Enviroschools workshops at Parklands School in Motueka and Waverley Street Kindergarten in Richmond have been held to promote sustainability learning.
- 4.9 An essential aspect of the Programme has required input into national Enviroschool efforts, one of which included a survey of the depth of environmental sustainability efforts of all Enviroschools.

5. Schools

- 5.1 There are other schools in the District with keen teachers doing environmental work but their schools are not ready for the Enviroschools Programme. We continue to support these teachers with resources, advice and promotion of good practice.
- 5.2 We produce a quarterly online regional environmental newsletter for schools called “Ecobuzz”; produce a yearly calendar of Environmental Events; and contribute to “Boredom Busters” and “Youth Jam”
- 5.3 Across Tasman we attempt to create a partnerships between freshwater “owners or guardians” and a school close by “adopting” an area to look after.
- 5.4 On request, EE staff has facilitated other TDC staff to visit and present to school groups around their area of environmental expertise.
- 5.5 We would like to survey the depth of sustainable community efforts of all schools in the District.

6. Environmental Education Events

- 6.1 The Māori new year is marked by the rise of the group of stars known as Matariki (or Pleiades; Seven Sisters). Matariki occurs at the end of the harvest season. People gather to remember the past and plan for the New Year. Conservation and respect for the environment are strong themes for the celebration of Matariki. Over the month of June a number of Matariki-themed environmental events were held around the

Waimea Inlet and Tasman Bay. They included two community tree plantings, storytelling, bird spotting, exploring early Māori life on the inlet, displays at libraries, a photography competition and family fun days.

- 6.2 Seaweeek, Conservation Week, World Environment Day, Earth Hour, World Wetlands Day have all been celebrated this year with public events and/or promotion through Council and general media.

7. Community Vegetable Gardens

- 7.1 Not long ago, recycling, organic gardening, sustainability and slow food were a way of life and a necessity. Most people in this country were avid practitioners. Being green saved them money and gave them a fruitful, fulfilling life. The more we can demonstrate to people that green choices will benefit them, as part of the environment, the more likely it is that they will be prepared to make it a priority.
- 7.2 At present the DHB and TDC are working collaboratively to support the establishment and maintenance of community gardens in Tasman. This has assisted the Motueka Community garden getting established and maintained. A regional meeting of community gardens will be held in spring to determine how community gardens across the region can be supported and gain self-reliance.

8. Good Wood

- 8.1 Tasman District Council and Nelson City Council sponsor a Good Wood scheme to encourage people to sell, buy, and burn Good Wood. To be Good Wood merchant, suppliers must guarantee to supply to the public either dry seasoned firewood suitable for immediate use, or green (unseasoned) firewood delivered sufficiently far in advance of winter so that, if properly stored by the user, the wood will be seasoned for use the following winter.
- 8.2 At present there are 10 Good Wood firewood merchants in Tasman and Nelson. These are visited and monitored through the year, as well, an annual meeting to discuss issues and improvements is held.

9. Networking

- 9.1 Networking and collaboration with others is an integral part of our Environmental Education (EE) approach.
- 9.2 The EE team works closely with Nelson City Council (NCC), Department of Conservation (DOC), Nelson Environment Centre, Waste Education Services and others.
- 9.3 Important forums include:
- Top of the South Environmental Educators (TOTSEE) -meets four times a year
 - The Sustainability Forum -meets every six weeks

10. Big Beach Clean Up 2011

- 10.1 This first Tasman Bay Big Beach Clean-up, covering around an astounding 291 kilometres of coast, was jointly organised by the DOC, TDC, NCC and NELMAC in November last year. Around 800 volunteers collected 10.5 tonnes of rubbish. David Stephenson of TDC Engineering assisted us with this project.
- 10.2 Planning is underway for a repeat effort this year, on Saturday November 19.

11. Climate Change

- 11.1 Some scientists believe that climate change is the most health-damaging problem humanity has ever faced. While some people in the community are not convinced, we feel it is important to disseminate the most up-to-date information to Tasman residents, so that they can make informed decisions.
- 11.2 On Wednesday 3 August, our EE team has organised three leading New Zealand specialists to explain the nature of climate change, its impacts on New Zealanders' health, properties, infrastructure, environment and rural industries. Dr Jim Salinger Auckland Climate Scientist, Professor Caroline Saunders of Lincoln University and Rod Oram, Business Journalist, will speak on "Maintaining farm productivity and profits in an uncertain climate".
- 11.3 This is a high profile event that will provide Tasman residents with the latest information on climate change science and how it affects rural industries in our area.

12. Local Environmental Projects and Events

- 12.1 Claire organises and runs a gardening competition each year hosted by the Golden Bay Community Board. The main theme is growing food at home, school and work. Other support is provided to local environmental events on a case-by-case basis e.g. Motueka's Godwit celebration, Tasman Valley streamcare.

13. Tikanga Māori

- 13.1 We have been able to support staff and Councillors with resource and information relating to tikanga Māori (things Māori). This has included advice, and kanohi-ki-kanohi (face-to-face) meetings with Iwi.

14. Promotion

- 14.1 It is important that TDC is communicating with the community about environmental issues and themes. At the end of the day the environment is about all of us and our ability and willingness to "do the right thing".
- 14.2 Promotion of stories, events and issues is carried out regularly through the Council Website, Newline, Fresh Fm, media releases, and in local media across the region.
- 14.3 Displays are also produced when appropriate for TDC public areas, libraries and at relevant events e.g. opening of the new Nelson Environment Centre

- 14.4 It is necessary to introduce the concepts of sustainability and community resiliency to the community, in a way that creates the greatest possible engagement and participation.

15. Customer Response

- 15.1 The EE team routinely responds to customer queries. We see this as an important part of our work and try to respond and/or refer them in a timely manner. Queries can vary widely:

- Where do we get worms for worm farms?
- How can we learn about gardening?
- Can we supply information about managing fireplaces?
- What support is there for stream and Coastcare groups?

16. TDC Work

- 16.1 Where possible the EE team actively works with and supports other TDC departments, Councillors and staff e.g. planting events, walking and biking, Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori, waste education
- 16.2 “Secondhand Sunday” was run successfully as a pilot in Golden Bay in partnership with TDC Engineering and Waste Education Services. We hope to run more of these events in spring.

17. EE Strategy

- 17.1 Work is continuing to deliver a draft Environmental Education Strategy to Council for adoption this calendar year.

18. Sustainable Business Advisor

- 18.1 This position began in August 2009. It attracts most of its funding through Ministry for the Environment, with small contributions (and governance) from NCC and TDC, the Economic Development Agency and the Nelson Environment Centre. This is a free service available to all businesses in the Nelson-Tasman area.
- 18.2 Over the last two years the Sustainable Business Advisor has worked with over 120 different businesses and organisations (including NCC and TDC -see below) recommending actions to reduce energy, water and waste. Most of the actions have related to energy. Recommended actions (with less than a three year payback period) have included: lighting upgrades, heating/cooling measures, use of solar, cylinder wraps, changes to management of office equipment, power meter optimisation, heat recovery, insulation, fuel replacement, bulk power purchasing, and heat pump installation.
- 18.3 During the next year, as well as “face-to-face” energy consults the Advisor (David Francis), will continue to support the development of several work streams including: ICE biofuel purchasing group (a regional supply has now been established), boiler biofuel purchasing group, pilot photovoltaic project, solar thermal solarwall installation, forest waste reuse, and a pilot to convert wood waste to liquid fuels.

19. TDC Energy Assessment

- 19.1 At a meeting of staff late in 2010, it was identified that TDC could benefit from developing an Energy Strategy that provides an overview for energy-related issues that are confronting the Tasman district, now, and into the foreseeable future.
- 19.2 It was commented that as a starting point it would be good for TDC to “get our own house in order” as regarding energy use and conservation.
- 19.3 To this end, David, the Sustainable Business Advisor, is currently undertaking an energy assessment of TDC.
- 19.4 Using the data available David is evaluating the various TDC facilities and identifying those that offer easily implemented measures to reduce energy (and save money). He is working with the E-Bench system to make it a more useful management tool in terms of reporting and assisting the facilities staff at the Council to monitor energy use ongoing.

20. Waimāori

- 20.1 Waimāori is an action-based stream-care programme that encourages schools and communities to become kaitiaki (guardians) of their local streams. The free programme is based on the premise that working with schools is an effective way to reach the wider community. It recognises the critical importance of educating young New Zealanders in the care of their natural and historic heritage. It offers a link from education to restoration - with education as the starting point for ongoing action.
- 20.2 The programme has been running since 2004, is now managed by Tiakina Te Taiao, and is funded by NCC, Department of Conservation and TDC.
- 20.3 At present, the stakeholders are looking at the programme moving forward into the 2011/12 year.

21. Focus until next E & P meeting

- 21.1 Ecofest, Tasman Nelson Environment Awards, Enviroschools

22. Recommendation

That the report be received

23. DRAFT RESOLUTION

THAT the Environment & Planning Committee receives the Environmental Education Report REP11-07-03



Rob Francis
Environmental Education Officer