



Media information

4 November 2014

Council moves to clean up stream

Plans to largely remove treated urban effluent from the Mangatarere Stream during summer are well underway, following approval for the Carterton District Council to irrigate it on additional land.

Late last month Greater Wellington Regional Council issued consent to irrigate treated wastewater onto 19 hectares of Daleton Farm, a council-owned property adjacent to the Carterton wastewater treatment plant.

“This is one of several steps towards our long-term vision of improving fresh water quality by removing treated effluent from streams,” said Carterton Mayor John Booth. “A lot of hard work from both councils went into the consent process which went smoothly and is a significant step towards a sustainable, safe, long-term solution.”

Greater Wellington Regional Council chair Fran Wilde said the initiative was ‘ahead of its time’. “We commend the proactive approach taken by Carterton which not only meets current regulations but anticipates the new draft regional plan.” The new plan, called the draft Natural Resources Plan, promotes discharge of waste water to land over fresh or coastal water.

“We are now getting on with this quickly so we can start irrigating in January,” John Booth said. “We are pleased to have awarded the contract to supply the centre pivot irrigator to local Carterton company GVE Electrical and Pumping after receiving quotes from several suppliers.”

“The beauty of the system to control the irrigator is that it can be programmed to release only the water that is needed on a particular soil type,” John Booth said. “It’s a sophisticated and precise piece of equipment that controls the rate of irrigation, and therefore the amount of nutrients going into the soil, depending on conditions.”

Other projects to improve treated wastewater quality are showing positive results. Early test results from a new ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system installed last month show less than four bugs per 100 ml after treatment, well under the allowable limit of 100 bugs per 100ml. The new UV plant allows wastewater to be disinfected to a higher level before discharge to land or water.

Replanting of the wetlands within the treatment plant which allow further treatment of the bacteria is also underway.

“These latest activities are only a start and in years and decades to come there is a lot more to do,” John Booth said. Council had consulted directly with affected parties and would continue to receive and provide information and receive feedback through a Community Liaison Group dedicated to working with council on wastewater issues.

“We also recognise the excellent work already being done upstream by the community through the Mangatarere Restoration Society and the regional council’s Farm Environment Plans which all combine to help improve the health of the stream. All residents can also play their part by reducing the water and pollutants they individually put into the wastewater system.”

Carterton District Council plans to increase the total irrigated area of Daleton Farm to about 35 hectares, further reducing discharges to the Mangatarere. Other uses of the land will ultimately include more storage of treated effluent to increase the potential for land disposal. Areas around Daleton Farm will be planted to improve amenity value.

The Community Liaison Group will meet on Monday 10 November at 7.30pm in the Carterton Events Centre. The meeting is also open to the public.

ends

Background

- In late 2012 Carterton District Council purchased farmland adjacent to the Dalefield Road wastewater treatment plant with the intention of using this land to irrigate treated wastewater
- Resource consents allowing Carterton District Council to continue to discharge from the waste water treatment plant to the Mangatarere Stream were issued in October 2013.
- These consents last for four years and come with a large number of conditions.
- During that time Council needed to put forward proposals to reduce treated effluent being discharged into the Mangatarere Stream.
- A Community Liaison Group, which included submitters on the 2013 consent, has been established.

Urban residents of Carterton can help reduce the amount of water and pollutants going into the wastewater system by:

- Conserving water throughout the household
- Making sure downpipes are not illegally connected to the sewerage system
- Ensuring low-lying gully traps are raised above ground level
- Carefully disposing of wipes, nappies, sanitary goods, chemicals, fats, oils, medicines, plastics
- Using phosphate-free detergents