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Committee Council  
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Cr Sally Baber, Chair, Regulatory Committee

## **Report on the Regulatory Committee meeting held on 2 September 2008**

### **1. Purpose**

To inform Council about the meeting of the Regulatory Committee that took place on 2 September 2008.

### **2. Reports**

#### **2.1 Proposed National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management**

A short briefing was given to the Committee on the recently released proposed National Policy Statement (NPS) for Freshwater Management. The NPS is a key part of central government's Water Programme of Action, which began in 2003. As part of the development of the NPS, the Ministry for the Environment sought comment from regional councils and other interested parties on what issues should be addressed, and Greater Wellington provided comment in March 2008 as a part of this process.

The proposed NPS outlines objectives and policies for the management of freshwater, with key goals being along the lines of addressing existing and future constraints on the availability of freshwater, addressing the effects of existing and future discharges of contaminants to freshwater, and providing more certainty with regard to competing demands for freshwater. A Board of Inquiry will now call for submissions on the NPS, although the timing on this and other information on the process around hearing submissions is yet to be finalised.

#### **2.2 Annual air quality monitoring report for the Wellington region, 2007**

The 2007 air quality monitoring report for the region was also presented at this committee meeting, along with an update on air quality for the winter of 2008. The results of the ambient air quality monitoring programme again showed in

2007 that the highest concentrations of air pollutant occurred during winter. In the winter of 2007, air quality stations at Tawa and Wainuiomata recorded one exceedance of the National Environmental Standard (NES) for PM<sub>10</sub>, and the station at Wairarapa College in Masterton recorded two exceedances. In accordance with the NES, the second of these exceedances was publicly notified in the local newspaper. Higher winter time air pollution levels are associated with periods of cold, calm weather combined with emissions from domestic woodburners. The report noted that in the current year, a mobile monitoring station will be established in the Kapiti airshed where we have not undertaken any monitoring to date. This report is the precursor to a more comprehensive report which will go to the Committee before the end of the year around our overall strategy to the management of the regions 8 airsheds.

### **2.3 Plan effectiveness monitoring report: Regional Coastal Plan**

The last of our regional plan effectiveness reports, being the Regional Coastal Plan, was presented to the Committee. The Coastal Plan is the largest of the five regional plans that Greater Wellington has, with 130 policies, 86 rules and 28 methods in place to achieve 68 objectives. The report found that in general, the policies in the Plan do give effect to the objectives, but it has been difficult to determine whether or not the changes in the environment are attributable to any particular policy. The report did show that over the last 10 years, the emphasis on improving coastal water quality has moved from managing sewage discharges into the coast, to the management of stormwater discharges. Concerns about coastal subdivision were also highlighted in the report. In relation to recommendations for the pending review of the Plan, it is suggested that the focus should be on issues around structures in the coastal marine area, discharges, and conditions on permitted activities to allow them to be adequately monitored.

## **3. Regular reporting**

Regular summary reports on decisions made on non-notified resource consent applications, pollution control incidents, and the Council's input into city and district planning were also provided. This information is now also readily available on the Council's website to ensure public accessibility of the information.

## **4. Fieldtrip**

At the conclusion of the meeting, all committee members went on a field trip to look at bulk earthworks sites at two subdivision locations in the north Wellington area. While on site, an explanation was given of the consenting process for bulk earthwork sites, on-site approaches to silt and sediment control, and how compliance is undertaken on these sites. The effects of sediment discharges to water bodies were also discussed, as was our approach to enforcement if this is required.

## **5. Recommendations**

*That Council:*

- 1. Receives the report; and*
- 2. Notes the contents.*

Report prepared by:

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Chair, Regulatory Committee

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**Attachment 1: Public Minutes**