

GUARDIANS OF PAUATAHANUI INLET

PO Box 57034 Mana, Porirua

www.gopi.wellington.net.nz

September 2005



Coastal Highway or Transmission Gully – where do Guardians stand?

There are many reasons why individual members may support one or other – or neither – of these alternative routes, but the responsibility of the Guardians as an organization is to advocate for the protection of the ecological, social and cultural values of the Inlet. Thus our submission on the Western Corridor Study must concentrate on arguing that any solution to the region's transport problems takes adequate account of the impact on the environment of the Inlet and on its cultural and social value to the community.

With the exception of the unknown effect on tidal flow of yet another bridge across the mouth of the Inlet, and given that they will be designed to prevent stormwater borne pollutants reaching the Inlet (which is entirely possible and could be insisted on as a condition of resource consent), neither alternative road is likely to have a significant direct effect on the ecological health of the Inlet. What must be examined is the indirect effect of their impact on the volume of traffic using the roads around the Inlet.

Ideally the opportunity should be taken to reduce the current high impact of roading. Traffic volume on Grays Road and SH 58 is increasing markedly and already severely compromises the safety and enjoyment of recreation cyclists and pedestrians as well as being responsible for raising concentrations of pollutants in the water and sediments of the Inlet close to levels known to be dangerous to the health of the animals and plants that live there. Traffic volumes are predicted to increase by at least 20% in the next five and 50% in the next ten years.

About half of the traffic on SH 58 comes from Whitby but the other half and virtually all of that on Grays Road is in transit between SH 1 and the Hutt Valley. These volumes are now such that major upgrades of Grays Road and SH 58 will soon be needed to prevent stagnation of the traffic flow. Such upgrades will undoubtedly include widening and straightening, both of which would have very considerable negative impacts on the ecology and aesthetic values of the Inlet and its marginal wetlands. These issues are largely ignored in Transit's reports and analyses of the two options.

In this respect it is clear that upgrading the Coastal Highway will have little or no impact on reducing the volume of traffic between the Hutt Valley and Paremata–Plimmerton, although some reduction may occur if the Korokoro–Grenada link goes ahead. However, Transmission Gully has the potential for a major reduction.

Your committee recommends that we make a submission based on the above analysis. We would like to have your views on this, preferably by letter to PO Box 57 034, Mana, Porirua or by e-mail to Nadia Webster, our Secretary, at nadia.emile@actrix.co.nz.

I encourage you also to make your own submission on this very important issue – which goes well beyond the environmental impact on the Inlet. There is sufficient dissension at political and bureaucrats level about the preferred option for it to be very important that the members of the public make their opinions known.

Submissions to Greater Wellington Regional Council close on 4 November. Forms are available from GW and at Porirua City Council offices and at libraries and on the GW website – www.gw.govt.nz. Background and technical information is available on this site. Other useful information, comment and analysis is on the website of the Transmission Gully Action Group – www.gullynow.co.nz.

John Wells
Chairpersons

More →

PCC Annual Plan

You will be pleased to note that in response to our submission on the draft Annual Plan 2005–06 PCC has now included in the adopted Plan funding for stabilisation and hydromulching of the bank below Molyneux Close in order to prevent erosion of the clay into the Inlet.

Sedimentation of the Inlet

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A recent report on the history of sedimentation in the Inlet concludes that since the mid 80's sedimentation rate has increased to about 4.6mm/yr, nearly double the average rate for the past 150 years. This is serious and it is recommended that tight controls continue to be kept on urban development as a source of sediment and that controls be introduced to prevent sediment flow to streams when harvesting plantation forests. Uncontrolled erosion could double the current sedimentation rate. Further details available on our web site.

Cynthia's farewell

Cynthia Petersen, our long serving secretary, was farewelled at the AGM on 30 June. After being in charge for eight years she had decided to retire to the Kaipti coast for a well deserved rest! We will miss her and wish her well. Margaret Richards, Vicky Froude and Chris Richmond were other long serving committee members who declared it a day, together with Susan Chapman; we will miss their enthusiasm and expertise. Nadia Webster has replaced Cynthia as Secretary and Susan Jane Owen, Janet Ryan and Tony Shaw have joined the committee.

STOP PRESS!

**THE ANNUAL INLET CLEANUP
WITH KEEP PORIRUA BEAUTIFUL
WILL BE ON**

SUNDAY, 27 NOVEMBER

HOT NUMBERS FOR THE PAUATAUANUI INLET

Pollution i.e. Discharges of contaminants to air, land, stormwater drains, streams, rivers and the sea and after hours consent compliance ring

GREATER WELLINGTON 0800-496 734 (24 hr)

Boating infringements ring GREATER WELLINGTON 384-5708 (24 hr)

Fisheries ring MINFISH 460-4702 (24hr)

For Wildlife Reserve ring DOC 472-5821 (day) 0800 DOC HOTline or 0800 36 24 68 (a/hrs)

Let us know what you have reported so we can keep an accurate record.

John Wells ph 234-1788 wellsjm@xtra.co.nz