



Lake Rotoiti Community Association Incorporated

Kia Ora from Lake Rotoiti

Welcome to the June 2006 winter newsletter, the first under our new name and banner: Lake Rotoiti Community Association.

While our name has changed the Association's commitment to promoting the interests of Lake Rotoiti and its communities hasn't, and we continue to be very active in debating the many issues facing us with both district and regional councils as can be seen from our Chairperson's Report.

Water Quality remains a major issue. It has been a long struggle to see the first projects starting to be put in place to improve water quality of Lake Rotoiti. We are at the point where the Mourea / Okawa Bay sewerage scheme is about to be commissioned and we are still hopeful that construction may start on the Diversion before the end of the year. RDC is talking to Okere Falls, Otaramarae and Whangamarino about their planned sewerage scheme, so it seems that progress is being made and it is understandable that we might all start to feel that the Water Quality issue is 'under control'. Sadly, this is not true. Without some very hard decisions being made about land use in Rotoiti and Rotorua catchments we are at best just delaying the inevitable continued decline of our lakes. Many of these decisions involve Lake Rotorua and are outside of our direct influence. The Lakes Water Quality Society plays a vital role in representing the concerns of the Lakes Communities as to the wider catchments, and we encourage you all to support them by becoming a member if you are not already. Without continued community vigilance any progress made to save the lakes will quickly slip away. While our councillor contributors in this newsletter support our belief in the need for land use change, they are a minority on Council and as in the past, the community will need to lead the way.

I encourage you to read our submissions to Environment Bay of Plenty and RDC where your committee has presented some controversial, but we believe necessary, proposals to preserve the lakes.

Rating has also returned as an issue this year, and we presented a very full analysis and some suggested solutions in our submission to RDC.



Okere arm, looking towards Okawa Bay.

To those of us lucky enough to live permanently at the lake, May seems to have been very wet! While sensible people have been staying inside the almost daily downpours seems only to excite the fly-fishermen and women! The latest Fish and Game magazine carried a large article on Rotoiti fishing, and whether it is this or word just getting round, combined with the fact that it is as wet out of the water as in it, the fly-fishers have been flocking to the lake shores over the last few weeks. Change of light one recent evening saw Ruato Bay populated with fly-fishers from one end of the beach to the other!

Rain withstanding, winter has its own special beauty at Rotoiti, and we look forward to seeing you around the lake over the coming months.

- Phill Thomass



The perfect spot for winter - Manupirua Springs.

LTRRA Becomes LRCA

Following resolutions at recent AGMs, your committee is delighted to announce that the Lake Rotoiti Community Association Incorporated (LRCA) was registered under the Incorporated Societies Act on the 19th April 2006.

In the past the Lake Rotoiti Ratepayers & Residents Association has operated as a community based group of individuals with no legal standing. The LRCA is a separate legal entity from its members. It provides a number of benefits including its ability to contract in its own name without personal liability for its members. The Inland Revenue Dept. has granted the LRCA charitable status which will assist in raising money for future projects and will minimise administrative requirements.

For your further information including the objects and rules of the LRCA, a copy of the constitution is available at www.societies.govt.nz. The registration number of the Society is 1806375.

While you will observe little change to either this and future newsletters, or the operation of the Society, we believe the change is significant and represents a reinforced commitment by all members to act in the best interests of Lake Rotoiti and its community.

STOP PRESS! The Lake Rotoiti Care Group has just been awarded a WeedBusters Award from DOC.

Chairperson's Report

Tena Koutau Katoa

I was hoping that by the time I wrote my report this June, we would know the outcome of the Environment Court Appeal decision for the Ohau Channel Diversion. There are 2 appeals to the granting of Resource Consent and the hearing of the appeals is on July the 3rd. I am sure most of you will join me in the hope of a satisfactory outcome and that construction of the diversion wall will start this year as originally planned.

There is no doubt in my mind that once in place we will see a major improvement in the health of the Lake.

However although I rejoice in the fact that we can reduce around 75% of the nutrient inflow in one single action for Lake Rotoiti, I am deeply saddened that we are yet to make the hard decisions necessary to reduce the nutrients to a sustainable level for Lake Rotorua.

The fact is that land use can not continue in its present form if we want to save the Lakes.

And although it is probably going to upset a number of farmers in our community, we have to make land use change an urgent action and stop the flow of nutrients into the lakes NOW!

The Rotorua Lakes still continue to die faster than action is being taken! And while I applaud both Councils' efforts over the last 3-4 years, the warnings and scientific evidence that have been apparent for around half a century are still not being heeded as far as land use and its effects on the environment are concerned.

Changes on the land are going to have to happen now. We are already about 40 years past the point where action should have been taken.

One dairy farm can leach 6-7 tonnes of Nitrogen a year and while riparian planting and buffer zones are effective in substantially reducing phosphate run off, they do not reduce the nitrogen load to water courses at all; further, while some management solutions have been identified, changes in land use and land use management for the large part have yet to be tackled. Legislation that will allow farmers to change and penalise those who simply won't is imperative if the current nutrient loads to the Lakes are to be reduced.

40 years ago was the date of major increases in development in the Lakes Catchments. Lakes Rotorua and Rotoiti were already in trouble. Yet successive central and local governments actively promoted farming in our Lakes catchments without providing the framework for their environmental protection and indeed showed very little strategic direction or mindfulness for the environment. The costs associated with the Lakes restoration are certainly not within the financial capability of our community, who are already funding their share of the costs in the form of sewerage reticulation schemes. Funding should come from those responsible for polluting in the past, and those who continue to pollute in the future. I feel strongly that the Government has a serious and over-riding responsibility to fund the major cost for their restoration.

The Lake Water Quality Society's recent Symposium and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's latest report titled "Restoring the Rotorua Lakes - the ultimate endurance challenge" highlight the enormous costs in financial and human terms required to save the Rotorua Lakes.

If we as a Community and Country continue to pollute the way we have in the past then our environmental resources especially water will not be sustainable for future generations. The task is indeed Herculean but it is NOT impossible.

Throughout the year we have been involved in a number of "strategies" being developed by Rotorua District Council.

In particular the recently adopted "Lakes Recreation Strategy" guides how our Lakes are to be used in the future. The LRCA will have a voice on the Recreation Forum, which together with other Lake Ratepayer groups, Fish and Game, ENVBOP, RDC, and DOC will ensure the Lakes are protected and maintain their special features while also fulfil a role for recreational users.

The "Open Space Strategy" and "Entranceways Strategy" which are being developed at present will influence how our parks and outdoor spaces will look in the future, and while we support in principle the development of these, we question whether RDC has the financial resources to implement them. Most of Rotorua's entranceways and highway corridors into the city are infested by blackberry and gorse and our district's lay-bys are in a dilapidated state. Rotorua District Council will have to look a lot further than the Government Gardens to improve the appearance of our entrance ways if we want to reflect a positive impression to visitors to our district.

There is no doubt that Rotorua City is visually very attractive, a great deal of money has been spent in the beautification of its parks and facilities. In contrast the rural areas struggle to get our verges and footpaths maintained to an adequate standard let alone beautified in any way, the responsibility for this often resting with the community itself. If Council wants to attract the "new age" visitor or prospective resident to our district then they will need to spend a lot more money and effort in this area as Taupo and Queenstown Councils have.

The Mourea /Okawa Bay Sewerage scheme is almost operational (see report later). Congratulations to all those involved in what is the first physical step in the endeavour to clean up Lake Rotoiti. The Council has come back to the Community with what I believe is a more affordable option for sewerage reticulation for the Communities of Okere Falls, Otaramarae and Whangamarino. They have completed the preliminary design and now that they have support from the Community will proceed with the detailed engineering.

Without doubt a reticulated sewerage scheme will be the most affordable option for the community. New rules under the Regional Council's OSETP will mean that by 2010 all properties in the Rotorua Lakes Catchments will need to replace their existing septic tanks with advanced nutrient stripping systems if they are not connected to a reticulated scheme. These systems are at present not eligible for the same subsidies as community schemes and the cost of one of these systems is estimated at between 25 and 30 thousand dollars.

Of course there are some in our community who because of where they live will not be able to join a reticulated scheme. Under the present rules they are not eligible

for subsidies. The LRCA is doing every thing we can to correct this. Why should those who are disadvantaged by geography not enjoy the same financial benefits as those who are able to connect to a community scheme? Watch this space!

The Committee has just completed submissions to the 10 year plans of both Rotorua District Council and Environment Bay of Plenty. (Featured in this newsletter). As you can appreciate these take a great deal of time and effort from your Committee, accordingly I extend my thanks and appreciation to those who assisted in the preparation of these.

This year our submission to Environment Bay of Plenty has again focused on the Lakes Protection and Restoration Programme. We totally support all policies designed to protect the Lakes from further degradation. We have urged ENVBOP to treat land use change as an urgent action and as such develop and implement policies that will minimise the impact of land based activities on the Lakes.

Similarly in our submission to RDC we emphasised the need to develop environmental and land use policies in their District Plan designed to improve the quality of the district's Lakes. We also questioned the costs of the Tourism sector on the general ratepayer, and their accounting policy when depreciating RDC assets.

We approve Council's decision to delay changing the Rating Policy until next year. We have asked Council to review their timetable and Council costs, and to begin consulting with the community at the earliest opportunity.

We are delighted to see work being done at Hinehopu Scenic Reserve. The improvements are being undertaken jointly by RDC and the Department of Conservation. RDC has plans to seal the road which extends from Tamatea Street into the Reserve in the next financial year.

A Transfer Station for the eastern end of the Lake is still being actively investigated. Council have at present 2 options for a site. Watch this space!

The Committee meets regularly with both Councils and continues to work pro-actively for the community.

We are, however, over worked.

Most of the Committee on the LRCA are also important and active committee members for OTHER organisations around the Lake. We are still without an official Secretary, and as a result this has put an extra burden on those existing committee members who already have quite enough on their plates!

If anyone is able to do the job of Secretary or just help out please contact us. The Association can only continue to function adequately in what I believe to be a very important role if we have enough people to do the work.

No reira Tena Koutou Tena Koutou Tena Tatou Katoa.

Sally Brock.

Interested in Contributing?

We are always pleased to receive items for inclusion in this newsletter. If you have an article or short story, or memories of the lake you'd like to contribute, please contact Phill Thomass, email lrca@thomass.net



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Ecological Care Group Report

It has been a busy year with a number of projects happening around the Lake.

We have now completed planting at Te Akau Road and it is looking fantastic. The initial planting done just over 2 years ago have rocketed ahead, and are now requiring very little maintenance. This is mainly due to the mulch that has been applied around the plants over the summer months, which keeps weeds at bay and moisture in at the root base.

This winter we completed the planting on the Urupa side of the road, and applied some more mulch.

An ongoing regime of weed control is required until canopy cover is achieved, when the reduction of light and size of the plants prevents vigorous weed growth.

We have had a very enthusiastic group of people involved at our working bees and planting sessions, at Te Akau Road all volunteers encouraged by the positive impact to the entrance to our road.

The Te Akau Scenic Reserve has had a number of working bees, mainly to control weed growth. It has been transformed however just by the regular weed control and mowing of the grassy area underneath the pylons.

We had a major planting session at the Kaituna Lake edge at the beginning of August. What an event that was! We managed to coincide our planting day with the opening of the new Okere Falls Store.

About 50 people turned up to plant over 1000 plants! It took virtually no time at all!

The store provided fresh coffee and bratwurst, welcome refreshment after the digging!

It certainly looks great now as the plants are beginning their spring growth, especially after those few years when

there was nothing but weeds and, subsequent to spraying, bare earth!

Our new major project is Whangamoa Point Restoration, which is a Department of Conservation managed Reserve just past the "narrows" opposite Tumoana Point.

The whole Reserve is infested with gorse, which requires cutting and removing and subsequent weed control for a couple of years before restoration planting can begin. We had our first working bee at the Point in October. About 18 people turned up in grotty weather, and managed to clear about one third of the point! It has made a huge difference, just having the gorse removed.

The Okawa Bay Care Group has been applying a weed control regime to the plants that were planted last year. A few have suffered damage by rabbits, geese and swans! But most are coming along nicely.

Plants lost over the summer period will be replaced next winter.

The Te Arero Bay project seems to be finally under way. There have been some delays with landowner negotiation and red tape! We hope to report major progress next newsletter!

We are regularly doing beach clean ups which are a great social event, when we go out and about in our boats, have a picnic and remove weeds and rubbish from our lovely beaches.

If you want to be involved in any of the above projects, or want to be contacted when these events are about to happen, please ring me 3624764 and register your name for contact.

- Sally Brock

Community Constable's Report

Our Community Constable, Mark Wirihana, is on leave at the moment. Senior Sergeant Brent Crowe has kindly provided this issue's report.

I am happy to say that there has been very little in the way of reported crime in the Rotoiti area over the last two months, which is consistent with a downward trend in crime for the whole of the Rotorua District. This trend is due in part to an increased awareness and vigilance of people who care about the community they live in. In my opinion crime prevention is everyone's business and we each have a part to play in keeping crime out of our neighbourhood.

A great way to further strengthen your community's resistance to crime is to become part of the Neighbourhood Support Group. In many cases Neighbourhood Support Groups formalise existing links between neighbours and send a clear message to potential offenders that they are placing themselves at considerable risk of being detected by entering your street. It is all about removing the opportunity for that offender to offend in your area.

Neighbourhood Support is an effective tool to assist in removing this opportunity. Did you know that of all the burglaries reported to Rotorua Police 85 to 90 % occur in non Neighbourhood Support Group areas?

To get involved in a Neighbourhood Support Group in your street please contact Barrie Fenton on (07) 349 9470.

*- Brent CROWE
Senior Sergeant Community Services
Rotorua Police.*

The Rotoiti Fishery - 2006 Winter

With the onset of winter we have seen the angling hotting up around the lake, particularly along the shorelines from Hauparu Bay right through to Hinehopu. The Fish & Game angler surveys that have been carried out over the summer have showed that the excellent trout growth seen in the lake has continued throughout the season and we are expecting some excellent fishing this 2006 winter. The trout being caught over the summer were on average larger than they have been since we started surveys in 1996. The frequency of trophy trout (4.54kg or 10lb plus) this winter was estimated to be around the one-in-twelve figure, and early winter surveying has shown that the big fish might actually be coming in more frequently than that! The winter shoreline effort is increasing and we expect it to peak over the next six weeks, going from the next new moon on 27 May through to just after the 26 June. Fish & Game staff surveyed over 35 anglers fishing last Saturday night, even with the Super 14 semi finals on, so expect some intense fishing pressure this year. Lake Rotoiti is producing the best fish of all the lakes at the moment and the reputation for quality fish, along with the good catch rates are dragging anglers in from both the other lakes and international waters. As well as monitoring the state of the fishery, Fish & Game are very busy making sure anglers are represented in all the Rotorua Lakes Action Plans and Working Party processes that are happening in the region. It is a busy time for everyone and we are all working towards the common goal of clean lakes, and great fishing! Make sure you enjoy what is left of the 2005-06 fishing season on Rotoiti as it has been the best for many years.

*Rob Pitkethley, Senior Fish & Game Officer, Fish & Game
New Zealand, Eastern Region*

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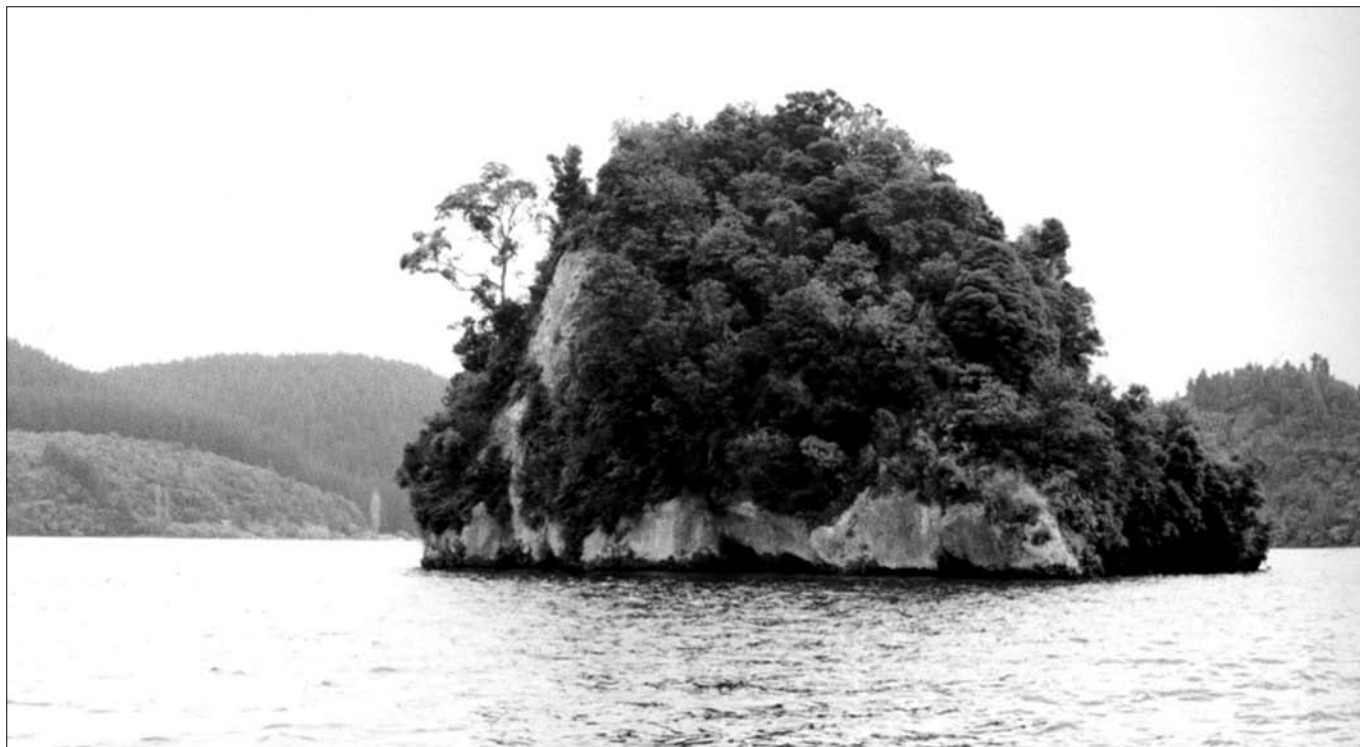
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Pateko

A small island lying east of Motuoha off the northern end of Paehinahina Peninsula. William Wade visited the area in 1838 and described Pateko:-

“The island is high and rocky; but a good part of it, on the side facing Motuoha, covered with verdure. Its steep sides had been perforated by the people to form ruas or caves for the storing of kumaras or potatoes. The mouths of some of the ruas were open, others closed by square wooden doors. A few natives were living on the rock as guardians of the stores... we rowed round it, and found the back side nothing but perpendicular rock without perforations.”

Local traditions claim that the deep water on the eastern end of the island was the home of a legendary monster named Mataura. As protector of the lake, his particular task was to warn local residents, particularly Ngati Hinekura, when they were in danger of attack from hostile tribes.

He would also appear disguised as a huge tree drifting in the water with weed hanging from every branch, or sometimes as a mamaku with its fronds resting lightly on the surface. This was a clear indication that someone of chiefly rank was soon to die.

The island, though small, was an important pa, particularly during the time of Te Rangikaheke and his son-in-law Puwhakaoho II. While living there, Te Rangikaheke is said to have procured eels from the Kaituna River as

a special gift for his wife Ngatomokanga (?), who was pregnant at the time. The gift was made during a large gathering on the island. Ngatomokanga stood in front of the crowd without clothes, only her hands covering her nakedness. She jumped from the island into the water and all present then knew her child would be female. The prediction proved true, and the daughter, Honea, eventually married Puwhakaoho II.

A large house named Hireo stood at Pateko. It was originally erected at Hireo Pa on the lake's northern shore. When that pa was abandoned the house was dismantled and re-erected on Pateko. Another house, Rangiwaka, was built during Puwhakaoho's time. There was also a carved pataka named Te Rangiuuora, owned by Te Tauhu. It eventually came into the possession of Te Rangikaheke who, it is said, shifted it to Mokoia Island.

Once abandoned as a pa Pateko became an important urupa, many of note being interred there. The bodies of those killed at the battles of Te Arikī were said to have been buried after tangihanga at both Te Ruato and Tapuaeharuru. Sometime later, under the direction of the great Ngati Tarawhai tohunga Tumakoha, they were disinterred and taken to various other urupa for final burial.

This shortened text reproduced with kind permission of D.M.Stafford from his book Landmarks of Te Arawa Volume 2: Rotoiti, Rotohe, Rotoma pg 88

Lakes Update from EBOP

Lake modelling scenarios

How does Environment Bay of Plenty know whether an action like the Ohau Channel diversion, or cutting back farm nitrate leaching will actually improve water quality?

Professor Hamilton and David Burger from the University of Waikato have developed computer models to predict this for Lake Rotorua and Lake Rotoiti. David has combined two models, a lake ecology model and lake hydrodynamics model, and added in measured field data to align the model with reality.

Initial scenarios show that halving the amount of nutrients that get into the lakes from land use will have very little impact in the short term but are critical for long term recovery. But reducing the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus that is released from the lake bed could have a significant short term impact (16% less algae in the first three years alone). It will be necessary to focus on both catchment inputs and sediment releases of nutrients.

All major lake improvement actions will be run through the model to predict what effect they will have on lake quality over initially 3 year and 10 year periods.

Have your say at the 2007 local body elections

As a result of the involvement this Society has had with the proposed community board, we have become aware that there are a significant number of rateable properties in the Rotorua lakes area whose owners are not currently enrolled to vote at local body elections.

We understand there are approximately 3000 properties in the proposed community board area, but only 2528 people registered to vote. With say one and a half people average per property, we speculate that nearly half of the properties that pay rates in the area have no electoral say. We assume that most of these properties are owned by people who reside out of Rotorua.

Our Council politicians are elected by votes on a first past the post system and the voice of our community becomes proportionately weaker with everyone who can't or does not vote. It is evident that, as the Society consults and lobbies Council on various matters, we are up against groups and communities that represent a greater number of votes than we do and the political reality is that our Councillors react to votes.

The two big issues we currently face are the restoration of our lakes including sewerage reticulation, and Council's proposed changes to our rating system. As an example, following last year's property revaluations, some residential lakefront properties are facing rates next year of \$6,500 or more, plus EBOP rates, plus sewerage and other targeted rates as these come on stream. It is essential that we speak with the strongest possible voice to achieve a rating system that is fair and equitable to all.

Fortunately, all is not lost.

Section 24 of the Local Electoral Act 2001 provides that every person who is registered as a parliamentary elector outside the Rotorua district qualifies as a "ratepayer elector" provided that person is on the appropriate valuation roll as a ratepayer of a rating unit within the district. There are one or two further qualifications depending on individual circumstances but essentially, we understand there can only be one ratepayer elector per rateable property.

As usual in these matters, a form needs to be filled in and this can be downloaded from www.rdc.Govt.nz [Type "ratepayer elector" in the search box on the home page, then click "go", then click "Enrolment form for ratepayer elector"]. Alternatively, contact us and we can mail you a form.

If you are not already on the Local Body electoral roll, we invite you to take the effort to enrol. Completion of the form won't take you too long and we believe your support in this way is necessary and will be much appreciated as we continue to work on your behalf.



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As the weather is getting cooler the house sales at the Lake appear to be warming up. During the autumn months I have sold a property on an average every three weeks, with no sign of this slowing down. As I only sell Lake Properties on Rotoiti, Rotoehu, Rotoma and Rotorua, I have a firm finger on the pulse of the market. If you would like a free appraisal of your property phone me now.

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Rotoiti Property Values - from the perspective of the Real Estate agent

Well what an interesting year! Sales generally over the lake properties around Rotoiti have seen little action over many seasons, I feel largely because of so much negative press regarding water quality on Rotoiti.

Up until November 2005 sales were averaging some 14 % above the then current valuation. Then things took off, with sales rocketing to a point where sales were averaging between 31% & 59% above the 2001/04 Rateable Valuations. The new valuations in November had major increases on average so one has to be cautious about ensuring these are taken into account when appraising properties now.

During November 05 to January 06 we were enjoying the growth in the market being experienced throughout the country and confidence was returning, with the more positive comments being made by the local authorities to commit to fixing the lake water conditions. Those with some local knowledge understood that to purchase now would be prudent, because there was certainly room for a catch up in values to be experienced with Rotoiti properties in comparison to what was being paid on our neighbouring lakes of Okareka and Tarawera.

Around late January 2006 some caution was returning to the market because of uncertainty regarding the effects of rising interest rates and the economy. This resulted in a drop in confidence, followed with the easing in the rate of growth in values.

The real estate market now seems to have settled into a steady pattern, a very balanced market where there are plenty of listings, as is apparent with the number of signs being displayed in our lakes community. There's no recession in sight but a firming of values. This comment is reinforced by the steady stream of genuine buyers who are taking longer to commit to a property.

April was great. The Easter weekend could not have been more perfect as the sun shone down and holidaymakers flocked to the region. Properties in the \$500,000 to \$700,000 are selling steadily, those properties at the top-end, are taking a bit longer. Having said that, a property listed on Saturday in Hauparu Bay (Auckland Bay) was under contract within a week for \$1.525 Million, exceeding the previous sale in the bay in November which sold for 1.2 million.

Generally, the length of time it takes to sell a property is extending and traditionally the real estate market slows over winter. But as long as the interest rates remain stable, property should keep turning over nicely and I am not predicting much change in prices.

If vendors want to move, they should be prepared to invest in serious marketing, to ensure you are getting your property in front of those genuine purchasers, who unfortunately appear to be from out of town, making it hard to get the marketing in front of them. A good agent knows who they are!

Wishing you all a great year ahead.

- Steve Howard



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Lakes Water Quality Society News

At the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 30 January 2006 it was announced that Ian McLean was retiring from the Chair of Lakes Water Quality Society to pursue commercial endeavours in Romania. I would like to acknowledge the tremendous achievements of LWQS under his skilful and experienced guidance. Ian has been instrumental in motivating the community and their representatives to lift the debate and level of scientific understanding on lake water quality issues. Ian has been made a Life Member of our society and we wish him well in future endeavours.

LWQS hosted the 5th Symposium "Wonderful Lakes – What Value? Who Pays?" on the 6th and 7th March 2006 at the Park Heritage Hotel, Rotorua and it was useful in bringing together a wide range of perspectives and views on the economic, environmental and social impacts of the Lakes.

There is no question that "Polluter pays" will be the future approach from Councils to recover costs of "clean up" programmes. However, the issue of "Who Pays" for past pollution was strongly debated. The response which drew favoured status was one of "Legacy Pollution" which should be paid for by Central Government as in the past they controlled the environment for land use and human waste. While EBOP and RDC have committed their share of the costs of restoration in their budgets for the next ten years the Government is not prepared to hand out \$100 million directly. They are prepared to look at each project on a case by case basis. This means that it is important that all parties work closely together to ensure communication and understanding of the issues. The need to have full community support for the Lakes restoration programmes is essential to gain the necessary commitment from Central Government.

There is no doubt some lakes are going to take decades to restore. Community commitment will need to stay the

course for their restoration programmes to be effective. We all need to commit to education and understanding of the issues so we can pass the challenges and tasks to future generations.

The Joint Strategy Committee, comprising EBOP, RDC and Te Arawa, is working well and a definite partnership of interest exists. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment has called for wider community representation on this committee to achieve more effective buy in and LWQS strongly supports this.


Dr David Hamilton of Waikato University and Mr Paul Dell of EBOP continue to champion the Lakes Restoration Programmes. They have our full support and confidence. The Ohau/Okere arm wall has received resource consent and objections will be heard on 3rd June 2006 in the Environment Court at Rotorua. We remain confident that approval to proceed will be forthcoming.

EBOP are currently developing a Lakes weed strategy. We understand a combination of spraying and harvesting is being considered to control Lake weed. Our submissions have focused on minimal cost programmes to be effective in controlling weed around jetties and navigation channels and for Lakes residents to have easy access to those managing the programme.


Over this last summer algal bloom did not cause as much inconvenience to users of the lakes. This in turn meant that people have moved the Lakes issues down their list of concerns. While all parties now appear to be working well together in programmes to restore the Lakes, this process will take many years and generations. LWQS is committed to monitor and review the process. Unacceptable nutrient flows into the lakes mean that there has to be an enormous change of thinking in how we use the land around waterways and lakes. This is the difficult part as it needs some hard decisions.

LWQS always needs your support.

- John Green, Chair, LWQS



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Mourea/Okawa Bay Sewerage Update

Yes, we're nearly there. After years of lobbying successive councils, since 1988 in fact, the Mourea Okawa Bay sewerage scheme is about to become a reality.

It has long been the desire of the Mourea, Okawa Bay, Brunswick, Rotokawa, Whangamarino, Okere Falls and Otaramarae communities who share this eastern scheme to play their part in cleaning up the Rotorua lakes and Lake Rotoiti in particular. With this scheme officially costing a total of \$36.7M, it represents a major financial commitment by the eastern community to address both the health risks, and the environmental impact, of sewage based nutrients flowing into our lakes and causing excessive algae and/or weed growth.

It is worth noting that in addition to the official \$36.7M cost of the scheme, unsubsidised costs faced directly by existing and future households in the eastern area to either connect to the scheme or install the required OSET alternative, totals a further estimated \$7.3M. The eastern community acknowledges the financial assistance received from the Ministry of Health and the ratepayers of both the region and the district, without which the scheme would not have been possible, and also the part Rotorua District Council and Environment Bay of Plenty have played in facilitating this project.

A letter from Council dated 19th January advised that the intention was to make the whole scheme operational by mid to late April 2006. At the time of writing in early May, and following complications with an unexpected underground river of water adjacent to a main pumping station in Ngareta Road (residents have been telling Council about this as a source of drinking water for years), we now expect the system to be "commissioned" by the end of May. At that stage residents will need to make their own arrangements to connect which will be the major first step to cleaning up the water in Okawa Bay and Lake Rotoiti.

Council has recently resolved that the (GST inclusive) capital cost per household will be:

- Okawa Bay \$6,256.00 [or \$491.64 as a targeted rate per year for 25 years];
- Mourea \$4,041.00 [or \$317.58];
- Duxton \$169,726.00 [or \$13,337.53];
- Marama Point Resort \$3,231.00 [or \$253.89].

Householders will be required to connect to the scheme but can elect to pay the above capital contribution in one voluntary lump sum or as a targeted rate for 25 years. In addition a sum (\$306.00 proposed for the 2006/07 year) will be set and charged annually for the operational costs of the scheme.

Householders, or their contractor (see advertisement in this newsletter), will need to obtain a permit from Council before connecting. Application can be made on an "Application for Building Consent" form at a cost of \$155.00 (for administration and inspection) together with an "Application for Wastewater Connection" form at no cost where a service connection has been provided at or within the property boundary. Council has agreed to waive the "Certificate of Title" fee although an alternative proof of ownership is still required. Council has agreed that a copy of your latest property valuation is an acceptable alternative providing the ownership details are correct.

West Rotoiti Volunteer Fire Unit

It's been fairly quiet on the fire fighting front since our last report with one notable exception. In the wee small hours of Friday 3rd March we were advised of a scrub fire at Hells Gate. We arrived at a similar time to the Rotorua brigade to find the scrub behind the complex well ablaze and heading towards pine plantations. We wondered how the fire started as there appeared to be no one around. We were later told it was instantaneous combustion of sulphur.

While half our crew were involved with transporting water from Brunswick Park in our truck, three of us were assigned to duty on the fire front. The fire was attacked from several positions and was finally contained. It was then time to extinguish any hot spots.

Dragging fire hoses around in the dark through burnt scrub over rough terrain was a new experience for us and we were relieved when everyone was called off the fire front because of the drifting sulphur fumes.

After a hot drink and a lot of hanging around we were finally relieved of our duties and arrived home in time for a late breakfast.

This was a great learning experience for us and we feel we are now better prepared if a similar incident should occur in our neighbourhood.

*- Kevin Jensen
Chairman*

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Community Boards - The Way Forward

Our 2005 newsletters backgrounded community boards, what they are, what their advantages are, who is elected to them, what they cost to run, etc., and have also summarised the proposal of electors delivered to Rotorua District Council, Council's subsequent rejection of the proposal without community consultation, and the statutory appeal to the Local Government Commission [LGC].

Following this appeal in late February / early March, the LGC called for submissions from the community. We understand that a total of 62 submissions were received with 60 being in favour of a community board and only 2 against. Our thanks to those who have contributed to this high level of support.

Quite independently and separately from this elector initiated process, Council is required to undertake a review of its representation arrangements before the 2007 local body elections. This process commenced in the middle of 2005 and has resulted in Council initially resolving to:

- retain the First Past the Post electoral system for 2007; and

- not establish one or more Maori wards.

Council is also required to:

- identify any communities of interest;
- determine effective representation for these communities of interest; and
- ensure representation decisions are fair for all electors of the district.

Following Council's deliberations on these issues, they have determined that representation for the 2007 elections will be:

- 12 councillors and the Mayor
- No wards (all councillors elected district-wide)
- No community boards

and have sought submissions from the community on these matters.

The Lake Rotoiti Community Association Inc. [LRCA] and other ratepayer organisations in the lakes community support the no wards proposal but will, through the submission process, seek to reverse Council's community board determination.

Should Council reject our submissions and subsequently resolve to proceed to the 2007 elections without the Rotorua Lakes community being represented through a community board, we anticipate that appeals to the LGC on this matter will follow.

We have received advice from the LGC that they will hear any appeals to the representation review process, together with the appeals to the elector initiated proposal, in Rotorua during the same week but at separate hearings. Given the timetable for the representation review process, we would not expect these appeal hearings until September/October, or even November, this year.

- Brentleigh Bond

Septic Tanks and the On-site Effluent Treatment Regional Plan

Do you have a septic tank?

If so, you need to know about Environment Bay of Plenty's Reviewed On-site Effluent Treatment Regional Plan. It has just been reviewed to protect the sensitive Rotorua lakes catchments better, as well as coastal and harbour areas.

Because many of the on-site effluent treatment systems in the Bay of Plenty are very old and very basic, the plan now has rules in it to ensure they are not causing more damage to our lakes and waterways.

You could be affected by two parts of the plan.

Maintenance Programme

In the Rotorua district lakes catchments, many new properties are being put on a compulsory maintenance programme. This involves cleaning out and inspecting septic tank systems within specific timeframes. This affects the lakeside community of Rotoma and properties within 200 metres of a lake edge that are not earmarked for sewerage reticulation. These properties must have inspections completed by 1 December 2006. Many communities (e.g. Tarawera and Gisborne Point,) have been on the maintenance and inspection programme for some time. If your system fails the inspection then you may need to modify your system to meet our standards. *Properties in Okareka, Okere Falls, Otaramarae, Brunswick, and Rotokawa are no longer required to have inspections as they will be reticulated within 5 years.*

Septic tank upgrades

You may also have to upgrade your tank, or apply for resource consent before December 2010 if you live in Brunswick, Rotokawa, Okawa Bay/Mourea, Okere Falls, Otaramarae, Gisborne Point, Hinehopu, or Okareka, or live within 200m from the lake edge. For people who live in Hamurana, Rotoma, and Tarawera the due date is December 2014.

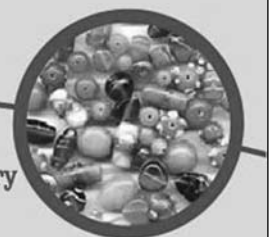
No new conventional septic tank systems are permitted in the Rotorua lakes catchments without resource consent.

We'll be sending out more information about the changes to property owners later in the year.

To help you work out what parts of the plan will affect you, we're creating a booklet "Dealing with your wastewater". This is a guide to the Reviewed On-Site Effluent Treatment Regional Plan. You'll be able to download it from our website in August. If you want to find out more about how the plan will affect you, contact Paul Futter or Sam Weiss at Environment Bay of Plenty on 0800 ENV BOP (368 267).

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North Ward Councillors Reports

Charles Sturt

Greetings. Its fantastic to advise that Council has received 302 submissions to the draft 10 year long term council community plan (LTCCP).

LTCCP

While this is an important indication of what Council wants to do over the next 10 years, there are other matters where more detailed investigation is needed. The District Plan and its development will commence in July 2006 and will indicate the land uses, Industrial Estates and other land based activities that can occur under certain land use categories. Council needs to be bold with this plan as the Land Use regulations must change if the deterioration of the lakes caused by other than natural influences is to be arrested.

They will not prove popular in some sectors of our community but I have to say the legacy we leave for our children and grandchildren must be a cleaner environment as well as sustainable practices at the Lakes Margins and the respective catchments which have enriched our lakes for the past 50 +years.

Quite frankly the land use changes must happen within the next 5-10 years otherwise the measures taken by the Rotorua Lakes Joint Committee comprising EBOP, RDC and Te Arawa will count for nothing. Land Use changes must be seen as a practical way of reversing the environmental damage which you in the lakes areas of the district endure each summer. While sewerage lakes side settlements is the first step it is only a small part of eliminating nutrients flowing into the Lakes. Lake Rotorua must be the first priority in my view as this is where for 50 years raw and crudely treated human waste was deposited. The Rubbish Tip - as it was then called - was situated at the current City Sewerage Treatment Station site and for 35 years it leached straight into Lake Rotorua.

Council made a major decision by pumping the sewerage from Mourea and now Lake Okareka back to the Treatment station in the City. The option to find a disposal ground in your catchment was a no-brainer for me.

I must say under the leadership of Lyndsay, Jim and now you Sally the Lake Rotoiti people have always had a strong, proactive voice and while sometimes the relationship has been tetchy (mainly due to procrastination) your opinions and efforts are respected and welcome.

Rating Policy

Council is currently looking at the options for changing the rating system from a Land base to a new Capital system. I was at the forefront of not rushing this very important piece of work. We did not have understanding around the council table and more importantly the facts/options were and aren't understood by the people of the Rotorua District. This is a very complicated issue and we are charged under the Rating Powers Act and the Local Government Act to provide a funding model that is fair and equitable, and that takes into account the ability to pay. The 13 differentials, 43 different types of ratable groups, Uniform Annual Charges, and going to a more user pays model by targeting rates to those who directly benefit are all issues we need to come to terms with. My focus in the remainder of this term is shifting rates from the general rate to more user pay rates targeted at those who can be identified to take up those charges. The reason the Targeted Rate on Tourism failed was because a blanket charge across all those in the CBD

resulted in furniture sales business paying more than a Tourist focused business like Skyline Skyrides etc.

What I have advocated is that Council must come out to the community with a Vision of where we should go on Rating and to let the community select the best options. While we were elected to make decisions we must firstly get the input of the Community, however other community groups have asked us to come up with a policy and bring it to the people to discuss. This must and will be done in my view.

Water Supply

After years of trying to get a Council supply in the Mourea, Okawa Bay, Brunswick and Okere Falls areas it is time to move toward a supply that can be relied on. When I lived in Ngongotaha in the old County/Urban Days Ngongotaha had a water supply with meters, in Kaharoa you watched every drop as the base cost of supply before you turned on a tap was approx \$350-00 P.A. However in the city there are no restrictions on water supply at all, no maximum amount or restrictions in any way, although businesses are metered. I'm sure we need to have a conservation plan put in place to ensure that the city supply is sustainable and with growth booming in the city I believe it's time to come forward with such a plan. I will be guided by you the people of the Lakes as to what your needs are and who will pay. The subsidies are not going to be there forever.

Again to you all out there you are well represented by Sally, Brentleigh and the team. If you have any thoughts please ring me on 07-3493315 or email charleswsturt@hotmail.com

Best wishes

Cr Charles W. Sturt

Chairman Finance and Strategic Planning Committee.

Member of Combined Lakes Strategy Committee, Energy

Events Centre Working Party

Ngati-Whakaue Reserves Protocol Committee Audit and Creative NZ Local Committees.

From Your MP...

The last publication on the status of our Lakes was the Report from the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment.

Dr Morgan Williams, though pleased with the excellent progress of local authorities and the Te Arawa Trust Board, has signalled that more work needs to be done.

I agree, and have met Bill Bayfield, the new CEO of EBOP from the Ministry for the Environment, to canvas ideas that will engage "townies" in the Lakes restoration project. We all need to be involved, and feel that everything we can do to make a difference is being done.

The Local Government and Environment Select Committee that I chair is visiting Canberra and New South Wales in June to follow issues of water quality, stand alone sewage schemes and water allocation.

I will be happy to report back to the Lakes Joint Committee on our return.

Kind regards,

Steve Chadwick.

North Ward Councillors Reports

Russell Judd

Some of you may recall me making some strong statements about land use and its effects on our lakes when I first got onto Council. It's been a year and a half now and all I really see in terms of change of practice has been two workshops and several examples of farmers making minor practical changes to management. Meanwhile urban and lakeside ratepayers have been paying millions for their efforts to do their part with sewerage schemes and clearing forest for dairy farms is rampant in the Central North Island. To be honest, until the Okawa Bay/Mourea scheme is switched on nothing has changed. From now on I am going to be identifying why farming must go on the Pumice Plateau and throughout NZ in General. It's controversial so here goes;

Farmers in The Waikato and Bay of Plenty are only really farming on the basis of capital gains. When capital gains are not considered in a farmers financial analysis their Return On Investment is between 0 and 3%, depending on if you allow for inflation.

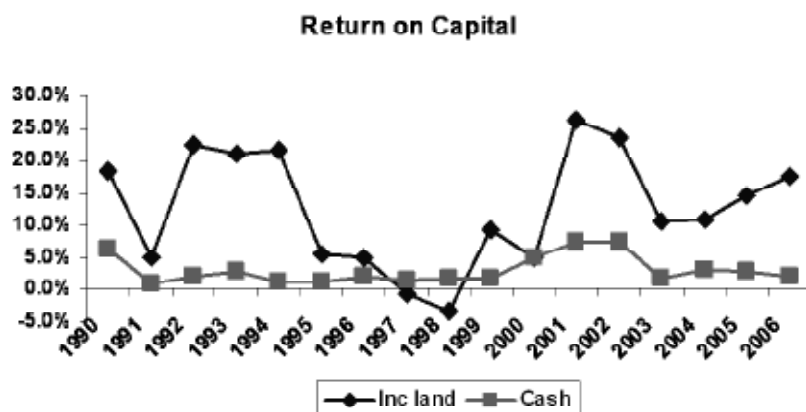


Fig .1. National Dairy Return on Capital. MAF data. Waikato/BoP not much better.

So why would you go farming? The average 90 day bank bill rate for the last 10 years was 6.6%! If you're farming you're also contributing approximately 70% of the nutrients to our lake and are a major contributor to green house gasses. I can show you as plain as day from MAF data etc. that dairy farmers are only in the business for capital gains on land.

The deforestation happening in the Central North Island is occurring because land valued at less than \$4000/ha under forest can be cleared, converted to dairy and sold for \$12000. An \$8000 gain before a cow even sets foot! Fig 2. describes why sustainable forestry is so much the superior land use over farming and others in terms of sustaining human life.

		Direct Benefits							
		Improves Water Quality	Sustenance	Improves Air Quality	Free Public Access	ROI Above Bank	Significant Employer	Net Fuel Source	Source - sustainable building products
Primary Industry	Intensive Agriculture/Hort	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes		
	Forestry	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Electricity (renewable)					Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Tourism					Yes	Yes		
	Potable Water		Yes			Yes	Yes		

Fig 2. Forestry out performs all others in terms of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

The Net Present Value of the average forestry investment versus farming investment is \$1200/hectare and \$1100/hectare respectively. However forestry is being strangled by land values, forced up by farm investment (similar scenario for young families buying first homes!). Forest owners can't carry high land values for 26 years (harvest). Land values have squeezed out any real gains in farming, and forestry can only survive on Maori and freehold land or land under claim by Maori. New Zealand is in bad shape because of property inflation and it must stop. We can start making a difference by eliminating farming in our region on the basis of water quality. Dairy farmers could always start cropping for alternative fuels like ethanol and bio diesel. Now that's an idea.

On a final note, please continue pushing for User Pays, UAGC, Capital Value etc. as this effort will surely pay off in the end. I believe Rotorua District Council is a service provider and not a social agency, and therefore should not be in the business of taking from the rich and giving to the poor. Central Government is already doing this, so there is no need for RDC to do the same. Regardless of income, each person costs RDC approximately the same amount to provide services for. Your constant efforts are bearing fruits as there have been 3 major advancements in favour of user pays in the last year to show for them (identifying SUIP's and therefore greater number of UAGC's collected, Development Contributions, resolution to get a report into targeted tourism tax – currently 5% of general rate). I encourage you to keep up the pressure.

Russell Judd.

The Lake Rotoiti Classic and Wooden Boat Association

Well another year of the Lake Rotoiti Classic and Wooden Boat Association is nearly over. I believe we have had a great year. We started it with the Fishing Contest at Labour Weekend, plus the launching of Kotuku. The fish weren't plentiful, (I think it's us, and not the fish) and once again Brian and Faye Stamp helped with the judging. Bill and Cherry Fowler again hosted the event in their boat shed. It is a great chance for all of us to get together after the winter to discuss what we all have planned over the summer and tell all those fishing and boating stories. We had the opportunity to assemble on Sunday and watch the re-launching of Kotuku - it was a wonderful spectacle with Boat Harbour at Otaramarae full of Classic boats gathered to welcome Kotuku back to our ever increasing fleet. I understand that we have a further 4 Classic boats that have come to live regularly on the Lake, and the rumours I am hearing there looks like a further 4 in the coming year.

The next event on our calendar was the inaugural Light Parade. This project was instigated by Aaron Martin and we held it on the evening of New Years day. Although we didn't have a full flotilla the boats we had looked spectacular, and I am sure that this will become a major event for the classic boats on the lake as well as a major highlight for the residents of the lake - they tell me that the sight of the boats in Te Weta bay was really special. So watch out for it next year.

Our next event was our annual Classic and Wooden Boat Parade Weekend - note this is becoming a weekend and not just a parade. The weekend started with a classic and wooden yacht race, two races were held on Saturday from the beach at Whangamoa Point, and in addition we held 2 seagull outboard motor races. These events were really fun and everyone participating enjoyed themselves - at one stage there I think we were very lucky not to have someone without toes, the way everyone was crowding around the seagull outboards.

On the Saturday evening of the weekend we held a get-together for all participants. This year Alan and Ronda Clark hosted the event, and we had a wonderful time with over 100 people attending. We plan to move this event to various properties on the lake.

This year our Parade was on the Sunday. This was the 9th organized annual parade of the classic and wooden boats on the lake and the second organized by the association, and we saw a record number of entries. I believe that this year's event was the best ever and we were very privileged to have the beautifully carved Arawa Waka from the Te Waiareke Trust leading the event. The start was excellent with the boats parading around the buoys at the start enabling the people on the shore to get a good look at all the boats. Another first for this year was to parade around Otaramarae - we plan to continue this and it gives the general public another opportunity to view boats on the lake. The Parade Day was very successful. This year we made the decision to dispense with the giving of prizes, it was felt the day's activities should be about celebrating the boats and the efforts that every one puts in into them whether they are a dinghy or a launch. It was great to see outsiders join in for the day, and this year has resulted in at least one new boat being purchased to be housed on the lake. On Monday, Waitangi Day, we had planned a day

with some of the boats tied up at the motor camp marina. However the weather was blowing straight down the arm and only about 6 boats were there. It was interesting to note that a number of the public did come to look at the boats and this is something we need to think about and look at ways we could incorporate this in the future.

I must take the opportunity to thank all those that sponsored the large road side signs that you would have seen around the lake, these were outstanding in all ways, and certainly drew attention to the event. I would also like to thank those that supported the advertising in the booklet we produced this year - without their generosity it would mean entry fees, or membership fees for the association would be higher and we are trying to keep costs down and keep it simple.

On Easter Monday several of the committee plus a few extras got together to trial a Poker Run. This is an event that has the boats travelling around the lake to different destinations - at each of these destinations you draw a card, at the final destination the boat with the best hand wins a prize. I must say we had a wonderful afternoon. I am sure after the success of this event that this will become a regular event on our calendar.

During the year members of the association helped clear the gorse and blackberry off Whangamoa Point. This group, ably lead by Bill Fowler and Sally Brock, have transformed this point from an area where we could not even land on the beach, to an area that will be a real picnic spot on the lake in the future. A lot of work is still required to control re-growth and clear the stumps, and once this is in hand we will look at a native replanting plan for the area. I'm sure that those of you who travel past this point have noticed the dramatic transformation.

We plan a full calendar of events for the coming year. The Annual General Meeting of the Association is on the 17th of June.

- Grant Cossey
Commodore

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Join a Community Group and help your local environment

Thousands of people in the Bay of Plenty are really passionate about helping the environment. They sometimes work alone but many are members of community groups that care for a local native bush reserve, estuary or stream margin, or area of sand dunes. These groups are well supported by a number of agencies and organisations, which provide advice and materials.

Coast Care Bay of Plenty is a massive success story of this kind. Coast Care now consists of 28 groups dotted along the curve of the Bay of Plenty coastline. About 1100 volunteers are on the mailing list, and many are totally dedicated to the cause of restoring our region's sand dunes. To do this, they work in partnership with Environment Bay of Plenty, Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty, Whakatane and Opotiki district councils, and the Department of Conservation.

Over the past decade or so, they have planted more than 300,000 native dune plants over 30km of barren sand dunes. Many of the plantings are of species that were once widespread in the region but, due to damaging actions of the past, are now found in only a couple of locations.

Coast Care recently received an award from the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. At the ceremony, President Ian Spellerberg stated that "Coast Care Bay of Plenty has implemented the most important dune restoration and care programme in New Zealand and this contribution to sustainable coastal management is world class".

The re-planting of the dune environment increases the Bay of Plenty's biodiversity by providing valuable habitat for many native species such as reptiles, birds and insects. Dune planting projects establish sand foredunes and reduce sand loss, which can control coastal erosion. In many re-planted areas the foredunes are now so well established that native shrub and tree species can be planted on the back dunes, providing more habitat for native species and further increasing biodiversity.

For information on Coast Care projects contact Environment Bay of Plenty on 0800 ENV BOP (368 267) or visit Environment Bay of Plenty's website.



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SAILS ON THE LAKE

Notes from the Bay of Plenty Yacht Squadron

As is pretty evident the end of Daylight saving has brought with it the secession of Wednesday night racing, but not the end of all activity from the Squadron. Indeed, the frequently brilliant Autumn weather that we experience between the bouts of wet and gloom serve to attract members out on the lake for that 'one last cruise' before winter sets in. In fact, some members have managed several 'last cruises', and report that fortitude and hardiness have not even figured in the equation!

Sunday racing has echoed this experience, to date, and we are reminded that winter sailing can often be a near-idyllic experience, provided one is suitably prepared. Very often winter can bring calm cloudless days, and while one is definitely not tempted to plunge into the lake, there are many joys to be experienced. For those of you who have never been sailing, the next few months, when the squadron is not quite so busy, may just be the time to see what the attraction is. If you are tempted just give me a call on 3487305, and I will do my best to arrange an outing for you.

Recently Blind Sailing New Zealand announced the New Zealand teams to enter the Blind Sailing World Champs in New York later this year. We are very proud to announce that the following members of our club have been selected: Shannon Leslie, Dick Lancaster, Eddie Moree, and Rob Aislabie as blind sailors, and Tony Thomson and Tony Poolman as sighted members of the team.

All credit must go to these sailors for their dedication and refusal to be held back by what is a most serious disability. A huge thank you (and a great measure of credit) is also due to squadron member Tony Thompson who saw a way that our squadron could contribute to the quality of life of those we affectionately call the "blindies". Since he first became involved in this branch of the sport Tony, who is now Chairman of Blind Sailing NZ, has tirelessly, and irresistibly promoted events, cajoled people into lending their precious boats, pursued sponsorship, organised regattas and held training days. His efforts have been most amply rewarded by these successes and he deserves all the credit and thanks we can offer him and his team of sighted tacticians, boat-owners and shore crew. Now go and bring back that World Cup!

*- Bruce Holt
Rear Commodore*

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SUBMISSION TO THE DRAFT LONG TERM COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLAN 2006-2016

Lake Rotoiti Community Association welcomes the opportunity to make submissions on the LTCCP 2006-2016.

We are heartened to read that the future improvement in the water quality of our lakes is one of the major strategic issues addressed in the plan.

These Lakes are vital to the social, cultural, environmental and economic wellbeing of our district, the Bay of Plenty and New Zealand.

Plan Reference – Page 133

We acknowledge Councils aim to develop environmental and land use policies to maintain or improve the quality of the districts environment for current and future generations. We ask the Council act on the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment in his report “Restoring the Rotorua Lakes” April 2006.

We understand that the formal review of the District Plan is to be started in July 2006. We believe that it is imperative that changes in the District Plan facilitate land use change in the Lakes’ catchments with the aim of reducing nutrient loads to the Lakes, and yet accommodate the financial needs of Landowners and Farmers. Community involvement is imperative to ensure that the right changes are made that will satisfy the needs of the Lakes and Landowners. We request that Council involve the Community where changes in the District Plan are being considered.

Plan Reference - Page 275

We note that Council will start formal consultation about the rating system at the end 2006 with the introduction of a new rating policy in July 2007. We submit that this is too late for meaningful consultation. We ask that Council begins consultation with the Community as soon as possible and that it provides adequate information for discussion.

Plan Reference – Page 280

We support the UAGC rate of \$420. This supports the fact that costs are caused by people of the district, and reflects the level of services supplied rather than ability to pay. This concept is also reflected in setting the rates on a differential basis, which achieves a fair distribution of the general rate and better reflects benefits received and costs attributed.

We support the Lakes Enhancement rate as a contribution by every ratepayer to an improvement in lake water quality. Over 80% of Rotorua residents use the Lakes on a regular basis, and therefore should contribute to their improvement.

We note that a 5% increase in rates will be applied to the district. How is this related to increased expenditure or activity? Increase in expenditure is calculated at 2-3 % so how is a 5% increase justified?

Plan Reference – Page 168

We would like to see Council develop a sustainable water supply strategy for the Rotorua District, and encourage Council to investigate innovative ideas in providing the region with water. Most water used in our District is NOT used for drinking. We would like to see Council develop a strategy whereby storm water is utilized in providing water for industry and grey water in dwellings.

Plan Reference – Page 167

We support lakeside settlement sewerage schemes. We believe the entire community will benefit from the establishment of these schemes, just in terms of promoting and creating a better environment. We commend Council for seeking a more affordable sewerage scheme for the Okere Falls Otaramarae and Whangamarino communities.

Some of our Ratepayers will not be able to connect to a reticulated supply because of the position or topography of the site. We ask Council to seek alternative subsidies for those who cannot connect to a reticulated supply through no fault of their own.

We ask Council to seek sites outside the Lakes catchments for a new wastewater treatment plant. We acknowledge that an upgrade of the current plant is now operational and performing within its resource consent conditions, however the reduction of nutrients is still not zero. We believe that a wastewater treatment plant outside the catchments and the associated reduction in nutrients is vital for the future sustainability of our district.

Plan Reference - Page 106

We commend Councils aim to enhance the urban and rural environment with excellent open space, design, planting and interpretation. We acknowledge the development of the Open Space and Entranceways Strategies. We assume that there will be the financial resources available to fund the activities identified, otherwise what is the purpose of developing them?

Most of the entranceways into Rotorua are in a degraded state, especially those reserve areas adjacent to the Lakes. With the exception of the Hamurana Reserve area, most of the potential reserve spaces around Lakes Rotorua Rotoiti are infested with blackberry and willow.

Lake Rotoiti borders two major State Highways, and is one of the first attractions visitors see of our district, yet except for a couple of degraded lay-bys visitors can not pull over and enjoy the experience. Compare this with the entranceways leading to Taupo, where all reserves adjacent to the Lake are mown and planted with facilities for visitors to stop and rest. There is certainly the same opportunity for this to be achieved in the areas between the highways and Lake Rotoiti.

We would like to see Council include in the Open Space and Entranceways Strategies a commitment to create reserves adjacent to the Lake to a similar standard to those around Lake Taupo.

Plan Reference - page 147

Tourism

In a November 2001 Report to Local Government New Zealand, the NZ Institute of Economic Research (Inc.) and McKinlay Douglas Ltd comment that “councils whose districts have high visitor numbers be encouraged to consider the use of differential rates, and targeted rates once they become available, to recover some of the costs of local government services attributable to visitors”.

The table on page 148 forecasts 3.632 million visitor nights for 2006/07, an average of 9,950 per night, or 14.9% of the district’s estimated population as at November 2005 of 66,900 (page 22).

It is submitted that, as visitors make effectively no contribution to the UAGC (\$10 million) or the Lakes Enhancement Rate (\$0.4M), it is realistic to look to the visitor industry for their \$1.55 million share of this. There is

additionally the direct budgeted cost of the economy group of \$2.9 million. Accordingly, the ratepayers of the district will be supporting the tourism industry by a minimum of \$4.45 million or 4.8% of the budgeted income for 2007. *In other words, if the visitors were directly charged this amount, this Council could go to the ratepayers this year with virtually a nil rate increase, a situation that would be warmly welcomed.*

The NZIER and McKinlay Douglas Ltd's report discusses the issue at section 7.5 and concludes that councils, with the differential and targeted rating powers that are available to them, should be encouraged to recover at least part of these costs from businesses that serve visitors.

We accordingly submit that the 2006/07 Annual Plan should include a targeted differential rate on accommodation providers and tourism operators by using a multiplier of 0.0435 based on land value sufficient to collect the targeted \$4.45M. *We have not been able to obtain accurate land valuations for properties that fall into this category but have assumed that they represent 20% (\$102.3M) of the total business land value (\$511.6M) for the district.* Based on the above assumptions and as an example only, the 135 room Rydges Hotel at 270 Fenton Street would attract an additional rate of \$2.47 per room per night

This system has been practised for over ten years by the Queenstown Lakes District Council who incidentally, has obviously never seen fit to burden their ratepayers with the costs of tourism marketing. We submit that the present Rotorua system with the tourism industry enjoying commercial profits by "free-riding" on the backs of the ratepayers is neither fair nor equitable.

Rotorua is a cheap destination. Travel in other parts of New Zealand and overseas indicates that nowhere is comparable accommodation offered at the same price as in Rotorua. You enter the city on SH 5 from the south and the first motel you see is selling rooms from \$59.00 (*Rotorua Motor Lodge*). Arrive on the same highway from the north, and the price starts even lower at \$55.00. The equivalent of \$33.00 US. (*Rotorua Hideaway Lodge*).

In a lead article in the Daily Post on the 17th July 2002, tourism industry leaders in Rotorua expressed concern that the city was losing its place as a premier tourism destination because its rooms were too cheap. Tracey Thomas, General Manager of the Millennium Hotel is reported as saying "Rotorua faced losing its reputation as a quality destination if it did not increase its prices". Richard Mayhew, General Manager of the Royal Lakeside Novotel is reported as saying "our products are one of the cheapest in the world. When you consider the attractions we have got, they shouldn't be". Lake Plaza Rotorua Hotel General Manager, Harry Salisbury, said "these are the rates that are letting everyone down because the international tourist is getting it too cheap".

As a more up to date example, a recent price comparison of various Heritage Hotels in New Zealand indicates that, in spite of the 2002 publicity, nothing has changed. For the night of Sunday 19th March 2006 the quoted rates were Auckland \$165 and \$159; Wellington \$159; Nelson \$109; Hanmer Springs \$130; Christchurch – no availability; Queenstown \$125; and Rotorua \$95.

There would appear to be no problem with the ability and the capacity of the accommodation industry to digest

the proposed targeted rate by passing it on to visitors. The reality is that such a rate will not only allow the tourism industry to stand on its own feet without being a beneficiary dependant on the welfare of the long suffering ratepayer, but also serve to improve Rotorua's reputation as a quality destination.

Rotorua is arguably one of the world's unique tourist destinations. Why do we sell ourselves so cheap?

Plan Reference - page 290

Development Contributions

We fully support the proposed development Contribution Policy.

Depreciation Funding

We understand it is a legal requirement to fund depreciation from rates. RDC are not explicit in their accounting policies statement on "Funded Depreciation". We refer you to Environment Bay of Plenty Draft Ten Year Plan, page 51, (Volume 1 of 2) under "Notes for Interpreting the Financial Statements". These statements are all very clear on Depreciation.

In the case of Rotorua District Council we believe there is one accounting policy which results in over depreciating by up to two times the real cost of the asset to RDC. Specifically it is the depreciation policy where subsidies, grants or donations are received by RDC to fund specific asset purchases. Given the huge planned capital cost of Lakes Sewerage Schemes, roading and Events Centre, we believe this is a very important issue to clarify and resolve with RDC.

These are:

- Ministry of Health grants for sewerage schemes
- EBOP subsidy for sewerage schemes
- Land Transport NZ roading subsidies
- Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust grant for Events Centre
- Many others

Over the period 2007-2016 subsidies and grants of \$164,704,000 are planned to be received by RDC for specific asset acquisitions. The total purchase of Fixed Assets over the same period is planned to be \$444,375,000. Thus subsidies and grants will represent 37% of total assets acquired.

What is the anomaly?

For example, the planned Okere/Whangamarino Sewerage Scheme (page 217, Draft Ten Year Plan)

	NZD
Total cost	7,545,789
Ministry of Health Subsidy (50%)	3,772,894

Cost to RDC, to be recovered from Ratepayers	3,772,895

The current accounting policy for this scheme will result in RDC recording in its Fixed Assets the Scheme at \$7,545,789 and NOT \$3,772,895, thereby increasing its Equity by \$3,772,894, being the Ministry of Health subsidy. This practice results in the asset being depreciated over its useful life to \$7,545,789 depending on Residual Values. This amount will then be recovered through funded depreciation via rates from Ratepayers. However, on behalf of Ratepayers, RDC only spent \$3,772,895. This policy, in this example, results in Ratepayers paying twice for the one asset.

The plan is therefore misleading when it says "cost to

be recovered from Ratepayers” \$3,358,895. Why?

Because the RDC General Rate of \$414,000 will be paid by Ratepayers (all) and the cost of \$3,358,895 will indeed be \$7,545,789 by way of depreciation via a targeted rate or a general rate. We understand Council are still deliberating on this policy area.

Solution

RDC should change their depreciation policy on all assets which have been funded from capital grants and subsidies from non-RDC sources to depreciate that portion of the asset paid for by RDC only. With planned subsidies and grants of \$164,704,000 over the next ten years the existing policy of RDC means Ratepayers will, over the useful lives of those subsidised assets, pay an extra \$164,704,000 via their rates. Proof of this is evidenced on page 211 (Draft Ten Year Plan) under “Operational Funding” where RDC plan to make a surplus from operations of \$38,997,000 over ten years. This surplus is primarily being driven by Depreciation funding.

Income Statement Surpluses

Over the ten year period (2007-2016) RDC plan to achieve Net Surpluses between Revenues and Expenses of \$120,476,000. Whilst we support the need to recover ones costs, we DO NOT support RDC profiting from its Ratepayers.

The Wellington City Council, for example, rebates their operating surplus after funded depreciation, back to their Ratepayers in the year after the surplus has been audited. We believe a fiscally responsible Council should recover its costs from Ratepayers under a fair and equitable rating policy. However, any surpluses should be rebated back to Ratepayers in the following year after audit.

Plan Reference – Pages 194/5 – Airport

Our review of the Draft Ten Year Plan indicates funding of the Airport as follows:

Total over ten years	(\$)
Fixed Assets acquired	54,688,000
=====	
<i>Funded by:</i>	
Loans	15,123,000
Capital Grants / contributions	18,560,000
Depreciation	10,930,000
RDC (net)	10,075,000

	54,688,000

Revenue	27,429,000
Expenses	25,351,000

Operating surplus	2,078,000

Observations:

(1) We suspect, but it is not clearly stated, that the depreciation costs are fully funded by the RDC Ratepayers, i.e. \$10,930,000 over ten years. We seek clarification of this matter.

(2) RDC is expecting Capital Grants of \$18,560,000 – we request what is the source of these grants and on what terms and conditions. We would like to understand the risks, obligations and commercial circumstances associated with these substantial grants.

(3) Cost of Service Statement (page 194) makes no mention or disclosure of the lease arrangement (s) between RDC and RRAL. Such an arrangement represents a

material transaction between the two entities. Why is it that no disclosure or mention of lease arrangements is in the Plan?

(4) The surplus noted in the LTCCP over ten years totals \$2,078,000 on net RDC funds employed of \$10,075,000, plus arguably the capital grants of \$18,560,000, which equals \$28,635,000. This gives an average annual return to RDC of less than 1%. On the face of it Return on Investment is grossly inadequate.

(5) We note on page 346 of the LTCCP that RRAL is a Council Controlled Trading Organisation. The information provided on pages 346-349 does not comply with the Companies Act 1993, nor do the disclosures meet fully with generally accepted accounting and reporting standards. With the information provided on pages 193-197 and 346-349 of the LTCCP it is not possible to make informed judgements concerning the operations and commercial risks and financial viability of the Rotorua Airport. We request that RDC redress this matter with urgency.

(6) RDC’s Governance Statement does not cover Council Controlled Trading Organisations (CCTO). Is it Council’s policy to appoint independent, commercially competent and experienced outside directors to their CCTOs? If not, why not? We are specifically referring to Rotorua Regional Airport Limited.

We would like to be heard in support of this submission.

Yours Faithfully

Sally Brock

SUBMISSION TO THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENT BAY OF PLENTY 10 YEAR PLAN 2006-2016

We commend Environment Bay of Plenty’s efforts and commitment over the past year in progressing urgent actions, which are designed to make a significant contribution to improving the quality of Lake Rotoiti in the short to medium term.

We look forward to the commencement of construction of the Ohau Channel diversion. We feel this single action will indicate to our community, Environment Bay of Plenty’s commitment to the Lake Restoration Programme.

We commend Environment Bay of Plenty in making environmental protection and enhancement a focus in this years plan.

Plan Reference - Page 121

We acknowledge the enormous efforts made to date with the Rotorua Lakes Protection and Restoration Programme. We commend the progress made with the diversion wall proposal which is required to quickly reduce nutrient inflow to Lake Rotoiti from Lake Rotorua. We look forward to the resolution of issues regarding the Resource Consent application and construction of the wall at the end of this year.

The costs associated with the restoration of the Rotorua Lakes are likely to be enormous, and are simply not able to be funded by this region alone. Most of the problems we are experiencing know are as a result of Government policy with regard to intensification of land which occurred decades ago. We believe this “legacy” pollution and the effects it is now having in our Lakes is the sole responsibility of Government.

We also note that the Te Arawa Settlement acknowledges that the ownership of the Lake water column rests with the Crown and as a consequence so too does the responsibility for the restoration of those waters to their former pristine Lake water quality. We urge ENVBOP to seek funding from Government to pay for all the effects of legacy pollution, which includes removing or capping the sediment in the Lakes that is now a significant source of nutrients into the water column.

We support the Proposed the Water and Land Plan, and support a review of its provisions relating to nutrient management. We support the On Site Effluent Treatment Regional Plan, which mitigates the impact of septic tank nutrient loss into our environment. We acknowledge ENVBOP's objectives for the Rotorua Lakes restoration programme over the next 3 years. We ask that all actions required to reduce the effects of nutrients in our Lakes are treated as urgent actions, and are acted on as soon as possible.

While we recognise the financial support given to district council's for small scale sewerage schemes, we believe an anomaly exists in the requirements for subsidy which impacts those in our community unable to join a community scheme, through no fault of their own. The financial impacts of the OSETP with regards to installing a nutrient reducing system by the year 2010 are understood. We request that EBOP apply a similar subsidy to OSET systems in those areas or dwellings that due to geography are unable to connect to a reticulated system. At present the rules are in place, but to date no OSET system capable of fulfilling the criteria in the plan exist.

Plan Reference – Page 113

It is well understood that most of the problems we are experiencing on the Land is coming from Land based activities. While we acknowledge ENVBOP's efforts to date, we believe it is time to become tough with Land owners and Farmers who continue to pollute. Farmers in our opinion are delaying in finding solutions that will ultimately cost them money. They are hoping that science will find a way to allow them to keep farming in the way they have in the past. There lies a conflict of interest. Farmers are in the business of making money, like any other business owner. They are not capable of fixing the problem, because they have a financial interest not to make changes.

We are concerned that Farmers have hijacked the Land use Focus Group, and the Lakes and Land Care Trust, for the purpose of causing delays in finding real solution to the problem. We submit strongly that land use change has become an urgent action, and urge ENVBOP to treat it as such. Intensified land use around the Rotorua Lakes is no longer sustainable and tough choices will need to be made in order to save the Lakes for future generations.

We acknowledge ENVBOP's huge financial assistance to Land owners in preparing Environmental programmes.

The cost to Landowners in some instances is minimal, however any cost is a potential problem with multiple owned Maori land. Some of these trusts have few assets or financial resource and even in those cases where there is a willingness to participate in an Environmental Programme; they don't want to lose revenue because of land retirement and cannot afford to pay their cost of the physical work. This is an area that needs to be addressed if

retirement and land use change is to occur for the benefit of the Lakes health.

Plan Reference – Page 323

We fully support the concept "Polluter Pays" and as such support a targeted rate applied to the future polluters of our Lakes. We support the concept that the amount targeted should relate to the amount of nutrient loss to the environment. We feel the applied rate to those properties over 4 ha for the 2006/2007 financial year is far too low, and sets precedence for what will be set as a targeted rate next year.

Plan Reference - Page 171

Regional Parks have a positive impact by preserving the special character of our region, and providing an open space for recreational activities. It also engages the community in the protection and enhancement of natural and cultural heritage values.

We believe that the Rotorua / Rotoiti Action Plan will recognise the opportunity for further Regional Parks to meet the needs of the Lake, in the terms of the reduction of nutrient flows (change of land use) and people for their needs for quality open space experiences.

Plan Reference – Page 281

We urge EBOP to take responsibility jointly with Rotorua District Council to manage the infestation of aquatic pest plants, especially "hornwort". This weed is present in Lake Rotoiti, because of its poor water quality. The control of "hornwort" is not undertaken by LINZ or Landward Management who manage the spraying of weed in the Rotorua Lakes. The problems associated with nuisance aquatic weeds are almost certainly going to get worse as the clarity of Lake Rotoiti improves. We would like to see other methods of weed control such as harvesting investigated.

We request that EBOP and RDC to develop a programme for the eradication of Willows on our Lake and Stream margins. Willows over take our native plants and change the natural habitat of our region.

Plan Reference – Page 91

We acknowledge and commend ENVBOP'S support of Community based environmental projects, in the form of the Environmental Enhancement Fund and the Care Group programme. A number of these projects are in progress in the Lake Rotoiti environs. The Community appreciates ENVBOP'S ongoing support in this area.

In Conclusion

While we commend Environment Bay of Plenty's commitment and progress over the last 3 years, which has been monumental, we cannot afford to sit back and say how well we have done so far.

For in fact the hardest decisions and choices are yet to be made. Intensification is still occurring in our catchments faster than the effects of that land use on the environment can be mitigated.

Land use in its present form cannot be sustained.

We ask ENVBOP to recognise this and move quickly on plans to remedy it.

We would like to be heard in support of this submission.

Yours Faithfully,
Sally Brock
Chairperson.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Fire, Police, Ambulance, Search & Rescue	111
Accident / Medical Centre (8am-10pm)	348-1000
Urgent Pharmacy (8.30am - 9.30pm, 24/7)	348-4385
Rotorua Hospital	348-1199
St John Ambulance	348-6286
Poisons Information Centre	03-474-7000
Rotorua Police Station	348-0099
TrustPower Emergency	0800-878-787
Energy Online Faults	0800-083-285
Environment Pollution Hotline	0800-738-393
S.P.C.A	349-2955
Dog Control (RDC)	348-4199
Harbour Master - Andrew Lang	348-4199
- After Hours 348-4195 - AH Pager	08-650-374-645
Coastguard - Richard Packham	348-9490
Marine Radio - Dave Hutchings	348-7429
Dept. of Conservation	346-1155
M.A.F.	07-578-2069
Fish and Game Eastern	357-5501
Fish and Game Licences	0800-542-362
Poaching	0800-762-244
Environment Bay of Plenty	0800-368-267
Rotorua District Council	348-4199
Lake Maintenance	362-4814
Pumps	-Hi Flo Pumps 348-7516
	- A/Hrs 025-274-6881
Septic Tanks	- Allens United 332-3694
	- Rotorua Waste Disposal 357-4534
Emerys Store	362-7866
Happy Angler Store	362-4709
Okere Falls Store	362-4944
Rotoma Trading Post	362-0722

2006 Lake Rotoiti Community Association Committee

Chair:	Sally Brock	Okere Falls	ph (07) 362-4764	te-pohutukawa@paradise.net.nz
Secretary:	Vacant			
Treasurer	Brentleigh Bond	Mourea ph	ph (07) 362-4700	grahamb@clear.net.nz
Committee:	Nigel Brock	Okere Falls	ph (07) 362-4764	
	Willie Emery	Gisborne pt	ph (07) 362-7737	winnie.emery@clear.net.nz
	John Green	Okere Falls	ph (07) 362-4204	green.boys@xtra.co.nz
	Steve Howard	Okere Falls	ph (07) 362-4449	s.howard@clear.net.nz
	Bill Kingi	Parcliff	ph (07) 345-7186	wakingi@xtra.co.nz
	Phill Thomass	Hinehopu	ph (07) 362-7777	lrca@thomass.net
	Geoff Turner	Waiiti	ph (07) 362-7611	gjt@pimlaw.co.nz
			Ph (09) 578-3773	

REFUSE DISPOSAL

Weekly Household Refuse Collection

Only RDC Official Bags will be collected
Place at kerbside by 8am on collection day
Tie bags securely

No changes to collection days on Public Holidays.

Refuse & Recycling Okere Transfer Station

Located at Okere Rd (just south of SH33)

Hours: 1.00pm - 4.00pm Wednesday

10.00am - 4.30pm Sundays

1.00pm - 4.30pm Last afternoon of Public Holiday

Landfill Fees apply. Recycling Free of Charge

Domestic Waste only

No Trucks

No Hazardous Waste

For further information call RCC (07) 348-4199

Rotorua Landfill

Located off Atiamuri Highway SH30

1.6km from Waipa Junction

Hours:

Monday - Saturday 7.30am - 4.30pm

Sunday and Public Holidays 9.30am - 4.30pm

CLOSED Christmas Day

Landfill Fees Apply

Ngati Pikiao Health Services 07-362-7888

Hinehopu

Mon 9 - 1pm, 2 - 5pm

Thur 9 - 1pm, 3 - 4.30pm

Fri 9 - 1pm

LAKE MAINTENANCE

NOEL & SUZANNE RUEBE

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