

FRIENDS OF NELSON HAVEN & TASMAN BAY (INC)

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

August 8, 2007, Wednesday, 8 pm at Fairfield House - top of Trafalgar Street,
Nelson

The AGM meeting will receive the Chair's and Treasurer's reports, with matters arising, and elect officers and committee members. We welcome nominations to the committee, please contact Pam at 545-9294, or come to the AGM. Refreshments will follow the meeting.

The **Book Launch** of "*The Story of Friends of Nelson Haven & Tasman Bay*" by Michael North was held on May 6, 2007. It was our first wine/juice and cheese event and was a gala celebration held at the Nelson Provincial Museum on Trafalgar Street in the foyer outside the exhibition of Protests in Nelson's history. Among the 70 guests were four founding members: Patrick McGrath, Roger Bray, Duncan Harris and Gwen Struik, plus David, the son of the first chair and then secretary, Peter Haig (1973-79). The author, Michael North spoke and was available to sign books. A photo sheet of the event is included with this report. The book retails at \$15 and a copy is free to all members. A copy should be included with this mailing unless you already have received a copy. Contact Pam, 545-9294 if you want more than one copy or if you have not received yours.

Volunteers needed for our **ECOFEST** stall to be shared with Forest & Bird and with focus on the Waimea Estuary. Saturday August 18 10am-5pm, Sunday August 19 10am-4pm. If you can help for an hour or more please contact Bill Sinclair 545-7270. It's fun.

CHAIR'S REPORT JUNE 2006 – JUNE 2007

Our committee continues to work in the three regions of the Top of the South since decisions in one area effects all, and the coastal waters don't recognise the boundaries.

Nelson City Council (NCC)

Friends is represented on the **Port Nelson Environmental Consultative Committee**.

1. **Methyl bromide** is used at Port Nelson (PNL) on timber and medium-density-fibreboard, while logs go to Picton's Shakespeare Bay for fumigation. PNL claims its fumigation system is superior to any other export port in New Zealand, but the number of deaths from motor neuron disease reported and suspected in the port area has led to widespread public unease. It is essential that a regional and national strategy be applied to this problem.
2. PNL is applying for a 35 year renewal of its resource consent to put 50,000 cu.m. of **dredging** from the Cut into Tasman Bay. Friends (Friends of Nelson Haven) wants a shorter consent period to enable public consultation and allow for changes in shipping needs, climate and biosecurity
3. **Noise** complaints from nearby residents are acknowledged by PNL and attempts are made to locate and mitigate noise sources. NCC has just advertised a port noise variation, if anyone wishes to make a submission.
4. PNL is working to get **ISO 14001** accreditation on environmental impacts such as dust, air quality, odours, noise, energy efficiency, water quality, biosecurity and reclamation.

- Friends initiated the need for measurable targets in the Port's Codes of Practice.
5. There is concern that **sea squirt** (*Didemnum*), which can smother shellfish, has become an issue in the Top of the South particularly in the Marlborough Sounds where the aquaculture industry has been eradicating this biosecurity threat, and have programs to avoid their further spreading the pest. The salmon farms contain the major infestations. It was suggested, at the Consultative Committee, that an inter-regional strategy with national leadership is needed.

Friends is also represented on the Nelson **Airport Noise** Environment Advisory Committee where noise complaints are reported, explained and mitigated when possible.

Friends has made a submission on the application by Cawthron Institute to make a road on the Boulder Bank and Friends supports an alternative road option.

Tasman District Council (TDC)

1. Reinstating **Landscapes Priority Areas (LPAs)** into the TDC Resource Management Plan, along with appropriate policies, objectives and rules, has been a major concern of Friends. Although required to be in the Plan, TDC removed all recognition of coastal landscape values in 2000 and 2001. Friends' Environment Court appeal to have the LPAs reinstated was adjourned in 2002 to allow TDC to undertake landscape investigation in preparation for a Plan variation to address the deficiencies. TDC commissioned Frank Boffa of Boffa Miskell Ltd to write a report, finally produced in August 2005, which was followed by extensive community consultation. Since then the process has been stalled by TDC, with still no coastal landscape recognition in the Plan, although Tasman has some of N.Z's most amazing coastal sites. Friends, supported by the Department of Conservation (DoC), has been in Court-assisted mediation up to recently and a settlement offer was put to the Council on 22 May, but no agreement was reached.

Friends has established a good working relationship with TDC staff based on many hundreds of hours of voluntary work to ensure resource management in the district, over the years, and despite the fact that we are sometimes, as in the present case, appealing Council decisions.

Rachel Reese has handled preparing reports, negotiating and seeking expert advice in a very complex and difficult area as a consultant for Friends. She has outlined the four following areas of concern.

- a. Significant Natural Areas need to be identified, and Friends has signed a Consent Memorandum, which resolves some appeals. The Council is acting on this.
 - b. Similarly, Water Bodies identification and management needs to be addressed.
 - c. A Waimea Estuary Management Plan needs to be established (see below).
 - d. Council has a statutory requirement to recognise and protect Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features in the coastal environment. Most people would be astounded that the district Plan does not record Abel Tasman National Park and Farewell Spit as outstanding. Friends agreed to adjournment of Court proceedings in good faith and mediation resulted in a settlement offer on 22 May 2007. The Council has chosen to waste further time and funds in expensive Court costs rather than put this money towards implementing the Boffa report, and consultation, of two years ago. Without the landscape issues in the Plan, all coastal decisions will be ad hoc, piecemeal with no policy framework and with no guidance from a meaningful plan. Inevitably, precious coastal habitat will be further degraded.
2. A **Waimea Estuary Management Plan** is urgently needed so that decision making is made with an overall view. Ad hoc decisions can result in such disasters as the \$8

million clean-up of NZs most polluted site at Mapua. Forest & Bird, supported by FONH, National Council of Women and the NZ Ornithological Society lobbied TDC to create an estuary plan. The current TDC annual plan has no funds earmarked for such planning, nor any landscape protection work. Friends is making a submission on this void. In the meantime, there is a proposal for a \$4 million Aquatic Multisport Development for the estuary which includes removing 500,000 cubic metres of substrate (see enclosed cutting). A management plan with proper guidelines would put this concept in a context which could save valuable time and money.

3. Consent orders for **ten marine farms offshore from Collingwood** were signed off in late 2006, with conditions which included bonds to cover clean-ups if the farms are abandoned.
4. Ministry of Fisheries is considering TDC's Interim Aquaculture Management Area (AMA) application. NIWA and Cawthron will do a joint scientific study of the proposed AMAs in Golden and Tasman Bays and it is hoped that the data will be publicly available. Commercial fishers are very concerned that 4000 hectares could be made off-bounds to fishing.

Marlborough District Council (MDC)

1. The **Admiralty Bay** marine farms saga continues. It is described in "*The story of Friends of Nelson Haven*" p 26-30. Prof. Bernd Wursig, who heads a Texas university dolphin research team, testified in the Environment Court on the dusky dolphin use of Admiralty Bay. Wursig went on to organise a discussion day for all people involved. The areas are still under appeal as shown in Map 4 (p 29) of the book. Friends have been granted Ministry for the Environment funds for legal aid, but the cases have moved so slowly we need to request a time extension. Court assisted mediation will be held 25 July.
2. The **Wakatu Inc 770 ha marine farm** application for eastern Tasman Bay was granted by MDC, and Friends then negotiated terms whereby significant environmental data would be collated while Wakatu trialled two 200 metre lines. After 12 months monitoring and data collation made publicly available, an appeal by Friends would follow. Commercial fishers realised their livelihood are effected by large farms, and in July 2006 the Ministry of Fisheries refused this marine farm development. Wakatu are challenging the Fisheries decision in the High Court. If Wakatu's challenge is unsuccessful, Friends appeal will not be necessary.
3. The **shipwake debacle of Toll's ships** in Queen Charlotte Sounds continues. Friends and Guardians of the Sounds, wanted a 15 knot maximum speed, although the Environment Court agreed with the MDC that ship design can make faster speeds allowable. Since the EC decision, Strait Shipping, has introduced a ship which is able to travel at 18 knots, causing minimum damage to the foreshore and meeting wave height restrictions. Toll appealed the Environment Court's Interim Decision to the High Court, then withdrew, and Court mediation has followed with continuing negotiations.
4. A **Salmon farm** application for Tory Channel has been approved, but the request to allow 6000 tonnes per year of feed was thought excessive especially since an abandoned salmon farm marine environment has not recovered after 5 years. Baseline monitoring is required starting with 2000 t/year feed under an adaptive management regime.

5. NIWA **Blue Cod** research shows a 24% recovery rate of tagged fish in Marlborough, which indicates very intensive fishing.
6. **The Port Gore marine farms** are up for renewal and Friends supported the residents' submission to have the existing farms designated as "empty Aquaculture Management Areas". The decision has not been released yet. This is a critical decision as granting of a renewal could be precedent for the lifting of the Prohibited Zoning in that area.
7. The **Wairau-Awatere Plan** has had all coastal issues negotiated and signed off. Agreement was reached to change the original MDC mooted 20 metres, on the coastal forestry distance from mean high water, to 200 metres. Forestry applications in areas of outstanding coastal landscape values are now discretionary.
8. **MDC Sounds Plan** has an outstanding issue of Port noise, which is under negotiation, as is the ship wake issue.

General

Friends made submissions on:

- Abel Tasman National Park management plan.
- N.Z. Coastal Policy Statement 1994 review.
- Ministry of Fisheries- Shared Fisheries between commercial, recreational and customary fishers.
- TDC Annual Plan, which has no funds earmarked for Significant Landscape Areas and related Environment Court requirements.
- A road on the Boulder Bank from the Glen.
- Nelson-Tasman Sustainable Tourism Plan

Questionnaires completed

- ECO SeaNet Services to inventory resources
- University of Otago, Dept of Political Studies survey on environment groups and the media.

Thanks and Acknowledgments go to -

- The committee members whose volunteer efforts make all our work possible,
- The Ministry for the Environment legal aid fund, which makes it possible to appeal decisions effectively, both in support of local body decisions and in challenging them,
- Lottery Environment & Heritage which granted funds to help inventory our files, research and then publish the history,
- Nimbus Software, New Zealand Nature Company at 107 Bolt Road, Nelson, Canterbury Community Trust, and Konica-Minolta for photocopy access.
- Legal counsels and expert witnesses who work on a volunteer or reduced fee basis.
- The continuing support of many in the community along with our members and associated organisations that enable us to achieve our positive outcomes.

Respectfully submitted,

(Dr.) Gwen Struik (co-chair)