

Waitakere Winners at E Awards

06-Jun-03

The Waitakere Rivercare group and environmentalist John Staniland have both won awards at this year's Auckland Regional Council's Environmental Awards (E Awards). The 12 winners were announced this evening, on World Environment Day, at a ceremony in the Council Chamber.

Waitakere Rivercare group won the Caring for our Water award while John Staniland received a special award for his long-serving commitment to environmental issues.

The Waitakere Rivercare group is working toward the revegetation of the riparian margins of the Waitakere river, in order to improve water quality. The group has a strong community focus and operates initiatives such as a native plant nursery and regular "working bees".

John Staniland has been active in the conservation movement for over 20 years, both in a hands-on capacity and in a political and advocacy role. His considerable achievements are the result of his versatile and collaborative approach to environmental issues.

Councillor Brian Smith, Chair of the ARC's Environmental Management Committee, is delighted with the range and calibre of entries. "We were delighted with the scope of entries from Waitakere. The work undertaken by groups such as Waitakere Rivercare and dedicated individuals like John Staniland are invaluable in preserving our natural environment and fostering wider environmental awareness."

"We had a large number of entries this year and the ARC is proud to recognise and celebrate the considerable achievements of all the volunteers and groups who put such a huge effort into so many wonderful environmental projects."

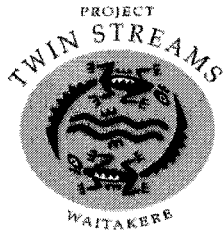
The categories of entry within the E Awards were changed this year to reflect the responsibilities of the ARC and the environmental issues faced by the region. The categories were: Caring for our Air; Caring for our Water; Caring for our Land and Biodiversity; Caring for our Coast; and Caring for our Culture and Historical Heritage.

Entries were attracted across all categories, with Caring for our Land and Biodiversity attracting a record 26 entries.

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For more information please call

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19 June 2003

PRESS RELEASE

Waitakere stormwater project gets financial boost

Waitakere City Council's endeavour to restore its waterways has received support from Infrastructure Auckland in the form of two grants totalling almost \$9.4 million dollars.

Waitakere City Council's Environmental Management Committee Chair, Councillor Penny Hulse, says the Council are very grateful for the funding, which is for the Lower Oratia and Pixie Streams.

The grants will be made to Waitakere City Council in stages upon completion of various phases of Project Twin Streams - a long-term project to restore the natural environment alongside some of the city's major streams.

The project focuses on "soft" engineering, whereby the many kilometres of streamside restoration will work together with the community and modern stormwater management, to ensure Waitakere's stormwater is appropriately managed as the city grows.

"The money is a vital component of the project. The other vital component is the development of a partnership with the community," says Councillor Hulse.

The grant is the first-ever of that size to be awarded to stormwater quality by Infrastructure Auckland, which awards grants to projects that will make an innovative and positive contribution to the wellbeing of the region.

The Council would like to hear from residents and community groups who are keen to participate in stream-planing and restoration projects. For more information, please phone 835 0290.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Stormwater management

When rain lands on soft natural surface (plants and soil) it creates fewer problems than if it lands on hard surfaces – rock, concrete, roofs and roads.

In the natural environment, in all but extreme storms, much of the water eventually soaks into the ground. This spreads its impact out, slows the process by which it returns to streams and other waterways and filters it.

Every hard surface – such as a driveway, car park, road or roof, and stormwater drain – however, concentrates and accelerates the water. Streams form readily and flow across the hard surfaces quickly creating surface flooding and sweeping pollutants along with it. These polluted torrents overwhelm drains and streams and generate floods.

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With Project Twin Streams, Waitakere is endeavouring to approach future stormwater management holistically using the most effective balance possible between “soft” engineering (using nature methods) and “hard” engineering.

Community participation in Project Twin Streams

The Council is encouraging local residents to get involved in *Project Twin Streams* by:

- preventing litter, organic waste (glass clippings, etc) vehicle pollution, herbicides, detergents and garden fertilisers from entering the City's waterways
- reducing the amount of concrete and asphalt (which increases rain run-off) on their property
- installing raingardens or rainwater tanks to catch run-off from hard surfaces
- cleaning cars at carwash outlets or on a grassy area to reduce contamination of stormwater
- preventing paint and oil getting into stormwater drains
- clearing weeds, and planting trees and shrubs along the extensive stream banks
- participating in Operation Spring Clean, WaiCare or other community programmes that benefit the environment
- caring for a small section of a stream and streambank
- entering partnerships to allow riparian margins to be established alongside streams
- getting involved in community-based decision making for the project
- supporting *Project Twin Streams'* funding applications to Infrastructure Auckland

The Council would like to hear from residents and community groups who are keen to participate in the project. For more information, please phone 835 0290.

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For further information:

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