

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE USE

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Public meetings on wastewater strategy

Two public meetings are being held in Manapouri and Te Anau on May 6 to explain the wastewater strategy for the Te Anau basin.

Southland District Council Water and Waste Manager Justin Reid said the meetings, at 5pm in the Manapouri Community Hall and at 7.30pm at the Distinction Te Anau Hotel and Villas, would explain the process so far, why something had to be done and what is proposed in the future.

Council has agreed to implement a strategy for the proposed sewerage treatment and disposal on to land near the Te Anau Airport, with the strategy based on a staged development with the treated waste water being irrigated to land within 10 years, Mr Reid said.

Council had formed an Infrastructure Working Group to develop a strategy, as Council was only granted a 10-year consent for the present treatment plant by the Upukerora River by Environment Southland with the condition a new strategy be developed.

Under the Environment Southland Regional Plans, getting rid of wastewater on to land is the “holy grail,” he said.

The working group looked at several options for the wastewater considered, including improved discharge to the lake. However there was a feeling within the group that the discharge should be removed from the lake and put on to land. The preferred option has a current cost estimated at \$12.2 million.

Once it had decided on the irrigation of wastewater on to land, it then looked at several sites from Dale Farm to the north through to Manapouri and beyond to the south. During those investigations, it considered the pros and cons of irrigating to land, the soil types and hydrology and the area needed based on future long term population projections.

For Te Anau all the present reticulation will remain to get the wastewater to oxidation ponds at the Upukerora site. At that site it will be aerated, and will then be pumped to maturation ponds before being discharged to the land through irrigators on rotating centre pivot systems, Mr Reid said.

The initial step was to buy land in the Kepler Block, which has already been approved by both the Te Anau Community Board and Council.

A subdivision consent is currently being processed, and then a land use consent from Council, which a commissioner will hear, and a discharge consent, from Environment Southland, will be applied for, he said.

Further consultation will continue as Council goes through the consents process.

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