



**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE USE**

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## **Land being bought for wastewater disposal**

The Southland District Council is buying land near the Manapouri Airport for wastewater disposal.

Council's Asset Manager for Waste Water Justin Reid said 375 hectares of land is being bought from Landcorp's Kepler Farm on the Te Anau-Manapouri road.

That land, if all consents are granted, will then be irrigated with treated wastewater from the Te Anau township, Mr Reid said.

Council staff are talking with neighbours and explaining the plans at present, he said.

"The sale process for any former Crown land requires it to be first offered to Ngai Tahu, who have been supportive in facilitating the opportunity for the Southland District Council to purchase the land from LandCorp Farming for this purpose."

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.

It is proposed that Landcorp will continue to graze the property until the irrigating begins, which is not likely to happen until the present consent ends in seven years.

A working group made up of representatives from the Department of Conservation, Guardians of the Lake, Fish and Game Southland, Ngai Tahu, Environment Southland, Te Anau Community Board and the District Council has been investigating wastewater disposal in the area for the past two years.

At present wastewater is pumped to ponds near the Upukerora River, treated and then put into the river. Council has a 10-year consent allowing this, but under the conditions that a new strategy is worked out and put in place by the end of the 10 years.

Under the Environment Southland Regional Plans, getting rid of wastewater on to land is the "holy grail," Mr Reid said.

The working group, however, looked at many options, including treating wastewater to drinking standard and then putting it in the lake, but that was not acceptable to several groups.

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.

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.

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