

A 24 page booklet provided information about the project and the shortlist options with a feedback form at the end.

NATURE CALLS

The biggest environmental and financial decision our city needs to make in the coming years.



Have your say NOW!

Shortlist Options Feedback

8199 | Private Bag 11034, The Square, Palmerston North, 4442



24 engagement events were held for the wastewater BPO (best practicable option) feedback during June and July 2020 and over 1,100 responses were received. Palmerston North City Council's feedback programme engaged wastewater stakeholders, the community and iwi to learn about the five shortlist options and the opportunities and challenges presented by each one. This factsheet outlines the engagement activities, who participated and what they told us, including the most preferred and least preferred options, and the issues most important to our stakeholders and community.

Every time you flush, remove a plug or turn off a tap the water travels through pipes to our wastewater treatment plant where it goes through a four-day treatment process before it is discharged into the Manawātū River.

Our current system is insufficient to meet expected future growth. We need improved technology and extra capacity in our wastewater system to restore the health of the river and meet new environmental standards.

The Nature Calls project takes a fresh look at our wastewater system and considers new options and their potential effects on the natural, social, cultural and economic environments.

We started with 36 possible options and narrowed them down to a shortlist of six through:

- Fatal flaw analysis – we removed options that had clear and significant defects.
- Traffic light assessment – options were assessed red, orange or green depending on how well they achieve targets for public health, environment, cultural and community outcomes, and costs.

During the shortlist feedback period, option 5 was also removed due to cost and environmental impacts, leaving five shortlist options.

The five short list options are:



Option 1
River discharge at the existing point (2 variants)



Option 2
River discharge at two points (2 variants)



Option 3
Land discharge, 97% and river discharge, 3% (2 variants)



Option 4
Land discharge, 45-55% and river discharge, 45-55% (4 variants)



Option 6
Ocean discharge, 97% and land or river, 3% (2 variants)

What we did

Helped people understand the issues and give feedback

To create widespread awareness and understanding of the project and options we developed presentations, booklets, videos and digital materials. We created an online information hub at www.naturecalls.co.nz and we encouraged people to visit the site and have their say through social media posts, digital advertising, radio advertising, bus backs, a billboard and posters. We sent letters to households in Palmerston North and neighbouring towns and placed advertisements in local papers. We held 24 public meetings, forums and information drop in sessions in Palmerston North and surrounding communities. The feedback period was extended from 30 June to 10 July to meet community requests for a wider postage campaign and more public meetings.

Consulted with wastewater stakeholders

Industry and businesses who create wastewater contribute funding for the system and their operations will be affected by the shortlist option chosen. We've involved agricultural, trade waste and commercial stakeholders through workshops, forums

and meetings. We've also held workshops with environmental agencies and advocates who have an interest in this project.

We've been meeting with Manawatū District Council and Horowhenua District Council regularly to share information and invite their communities to participate in the feedback process.

Engaged Iwi

We're working with iwi at key stages of the development process to ensure the options progressed are underpinned by te Ao Māori cultural values. Rangitāne o Manawatū have provided leadership since the inception of the project and iwi from the wider region are also now engaged in order to better understand the wider implications and effects of the various options. The project's Iwi Engagement Plan aims for effective and meaningful participation in the project by Māori key stakeholders to enable ongoing feedback on the development of technical and cultural assessments of options and mitigation measures.

Who submitted and how?

Of those who provided feedback:

94% live in Palmerston North



83% are home owners



1109 completed feedback forms



90% are urban dwellers



10% are business owners



17 written submissions



46% are regular users of the river and coast



The Nature Calls project team ran a series of public engagement events to provide information and answer questions.



An information drop in session was held at Palmerston North library.



The public meeting held on 17 June 2020 was live streamed on Facebook.

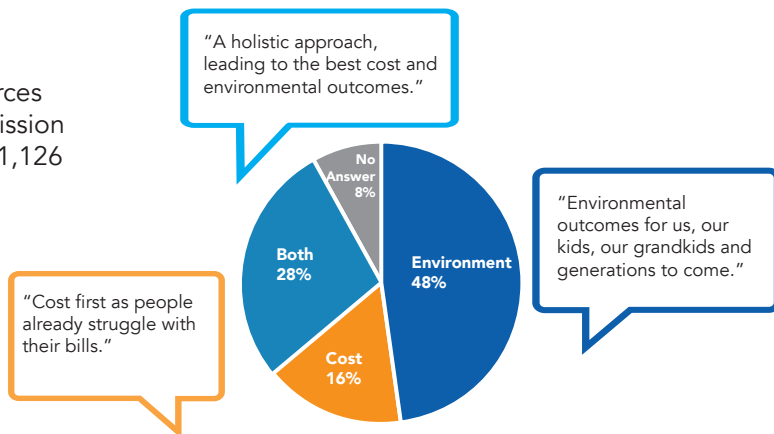
What you told us

The shortlist feedback programme activities, resources and promotions resulted in 1,109 completed submission forms, plus 17 individual submissions for a total of 1,126 written submissions.

Environment or cost - what matters most?

Of our 1,126 submitters:

- 48% said the environment matters most.
- 16% said cost is most important.
- 28% said both are equally important!



Hot topics

Public meetings generated hundreds of questions and conversations. The most common themes that arose were:

- Approach to funding – district, regional and national as well as public and private.
- The cost and what has been considered in the costings.
- Process and engagement, especially with directly affected neighbouring regions.
- Technical issues, international and NZ successful examples.
- Concern about lack of consultation with neighbouring iwi.
- The environmental objectives we are working towards.

Questions and answers



River discharge

"I'm concerned about the current state of the river."

"People do have concerns about what is in the water. The better the form of treatment, the higher the removal of chemicals. We do annual screens of typical contaminants. We don't find any signs of those being above level. There is already significant treatment in the wastewater system, but it will not eliminate everything."



Land discharge

Where will the land for discharge be and how will it be purchased?

"We are conceptually looking at land at this stage. Cost effectively contiguous land is more efficient. However, it may need to be several locations. The more distributed, the more potential to impact neighbouring property. Purchase will be by negotiation. The public works act may be used if necessary."



Ocean discharge

What previous research and examples exist for ocean discharge? Would it affect shellfish?

"The option is conceptual at this point. Effects haven't been determined yet. We need to establish what level of treatment, location, diffusion etc. would be needed. Aware of existing info around ocean discharge and there is a lot of information available. There would still need to be a lot of investigation done around the ecosystem and shellfish environment, if the ocean discharge was the selected option."

What was the most preferred option and why?

Two options tied for most preferred:

1 Option 1: River (27%)

Supporters feel this option:

- Is cost effective
- Meets standards
- Is safe and effective
- Is simple
- Has the least impact on rural communities

2 Option 3: Land (27%)

Supporters feel this option:

- Has least impact on river health and water quality
- Uses land productively
- Keeps waste out of the river and/or the sea.

What was the least preferred option and why?

The least preferred option with 6.76% was:

Option 6: Ocean

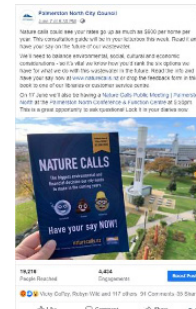
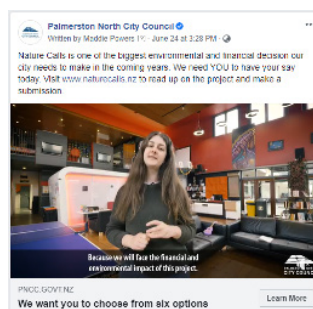
Concerns about this option were:

- The cost
- Don't like the idea of pumping wastewater to the sea
- Effect on sea life
- Concerns about life of the infrastructure

Supporters felt this option:

- Will minimise impact on the land and sea
- Gives the best chance to improve the health of the Manawatū River

Of our social media activity, three facebook posts generated the highest engagement, over 500 comments. The top three comment themes were concerns about the cost, the feedback process and requests for further information.



37 Information posts and videos were promoted on social media resulting 110,653 engagements.

Key outcomes for the Best Practicable Option (BPO).

The preferred shortlist option will:



Protect public health and minimise public health risks.



Minimise environmental effects on air, land and water, minimise whole-of-life carbon emissions and optimise resource recovery.



Contribute to improving the health and mauri of the Manawatū River.



Be developed with the active engagement of the community and key stakeholders.



Be affordable and cost effective.



Be innovative and evidence based.



Be sustainable, enduring, and resilient. Take an integrated approach to the management and cumulative effects on the Manawatū River catchment.



Facilitate long term growth and economic development.



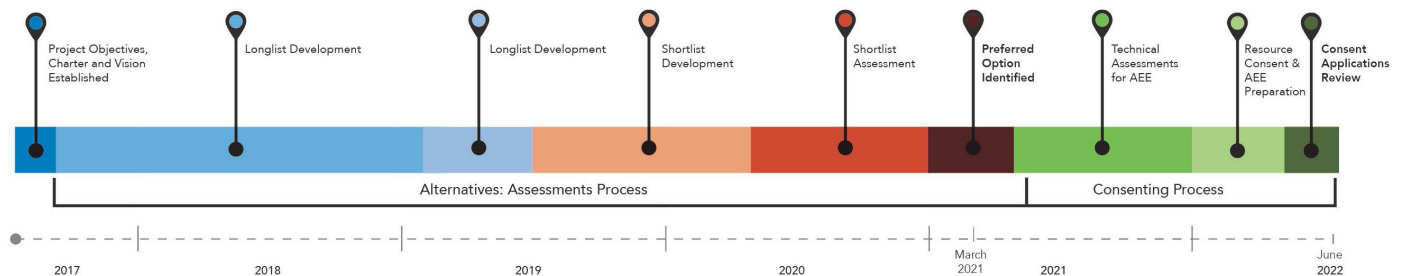
Enhance people's use and enjoyment of the Manawatū River.

About this project

The Nature Calls project takes a fresh look at how we manage wastewater in Palmerston North and what we need to achieve before 2022 to future-proof our wastewater management and infrastructure. The process involves engagement with iwi, the community and stakeholders as well as technical investigations, including this one. The timeline below shows expected project progress through to June 2022 when the consent applications for the preferred option will be lodged.



Project timeline



Contact us.

For more information about wastewater, the Nature Calls project and the shortlist options:

Visit www.pncc.govt.nz/naturecalls

Call us on 06 356 8199

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HE TIROHANGA HOU KI TE WAI PARA