Voting for Your Future

Three national conservation and environmental organisations are urging voters to consider the country’s long term future at this election.

ECO, the Forest and Bird Protection Society (Forest and Bird) and Greenpeace New Zealand in late August launched the Vote for the Environment’s rating of political parties’ environment and conservation policies ahead of the elections.

“People are starting to get sick of the tax cut bidding war. We want the political parties to take a more expansive view of New Zealand’s future; one that reflects our role as caretakers of a unique set of islands - and a special way of life that celebrates the beaches, the bush and the mountains,” said Kevin Hackwell, Forest & Bird campaign manager.

The groups released a wallet-sized card that rates the political parties across 12 environment and conservation issues that are important to New Zealanders. They asked the parties a total of 59 questions. The parties scored the following:

Act: 10% Green: 97% Labour: 61% Maori: 83% National: 43% NZ First: 50% Progressive: 81% United Future: 48%

The result shows a fairly clear difference between the two major parties on environmental issues for this election. These differences are reflected in the smaller parties, roughly falling into the same camps as their likely choice of coalition partners.

“That only a few of our political parties actually believe in the science of climate change is pretty scary,” said Cindy Baxter, Greenpeace campaign manager. “This is one of the most critical environmental issues facing us, yet many parties, led by National’s ‘Donosaur’, appear to be hell bent on making us international pariahs by denying the science and pulling out of Kyoto.”

“There’s a major shift in National’s policy away from the strong protection of Antarctica that it previously expounded,” said Cath Wallace of ECO. “National used to be a leader in Antarctic Protection but this is a surprising rollback.”

“We can see a very high level of consensus for the Ministry of Fisheries better implementing its legal environmental responsibilities, and to see MPA’s properly defined. However, when it comes to more specific measures such as a global moratorium on high seas bottom trawling, the major parties are not trustworthy,” she said.

The two major parties both score very poorly on GE and Toxics. Both also support changes to the RMA to fast-track major projects.

For detailed information of the questions and the answers to those questions go to http://www.environmentvote.org.nz

- Continued over page
## Final Score for Parties

### Will the Parties....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>GREEN</th>
<th>LABOUR</th>
<th>MAORI</th>
<th>NATIONAL</th>
<th>NZ FIRST</th>
<th>PROGRESSIVE</th>
<th>UNITED FUTURE</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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### Overall Score

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### Scoring Guide

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<td>&lt;30%</td>
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### Analysis of Party Positions on Vote for the Environment Main Policies

The questionnaire was sent to the top eight political parties asking for a yes, no or undecided response. Apart from ACT all parties scored over 40 percent.

Two of the parties did not fill in the questionnaire – NZ First said they were too busy with the election campaign and that we should assess the party on its released policies. ACT and NZ First were scored on their published policies, media releases and speeches by Party spokespeople. Were there was no information we marked them as undecided.

**Greens**

While the Greens answered yes to all questions there response included a caveat on funding so the specific questions on funding were down weighted to give the 97 percent result.

**Maori Party**

The Maori Party ranked second with 83 percent result. The Maori Party agreed to a wide range of environmental manage-
ment policies, action on toxic pollution and keeping GMOs in the lab but were undecided or opposed to policies which involved greater protection in the high country, marine reserves, and greater funding for DoC.

**Progressive Party**

The Progressive Party ranked just after the Maori Party at 81 percent. The Progressive Party agreed to less policies in environmental management, including the improving the Resource Management Act and phasing out coal fired power stations, and protection of freshwater. The Progressive agreed to all policies in education and public access.

**Labour**

Labour ranked fourth with 61 percent. While they agreed to all policies in improving public access, they agreed to few policies on restricting GMOs and the clean-up of toxic pollution. Labour also scored highly in climate change and in protection of the High Country.

**NZ First**

NZ First ranked fifth with just 50 percent. NZ First are ranked on their policies and speeches. NZ First scored highest on cleaning up toxic pollution and protecting rivers and freshwater. They scored worst in improving environmental management and creating high country parks.

**United Future**

United ranked just after NZ First at 48 percent. United opposed the strengthening of the Department of Conservation, more marine reserves, and improving environmental management. United supported all policies on improving access to public land.

**National**

National ranked after United at 43 percent. National supported all measure to protect rivers and freshwater but agreed to few policies in preventing toxic pollution and advancing international action.

**ACT**

ACT ranked last with just 10 percent support. ACT was ranked on their policies and speeches and failed on all policies but ranked highest in biosecurity issues.
Parliament's Last Act Sabotages Resource Management Act

Changes to the Resource Management Act passed by Parliament in July put the interests of industry and state owned enterprises above the environmental concerns of mainstream New Zealanders.

There is little in the Resource Management Act (RMA) changes passed by Parliament to help mainstream New Zealanders like the residents and business people of Petone who are having to cope with excessive lead pollution from the Exide factory.

The vote in Parliament showed that most politicians are more interested in fast tracking major development than the environmental and community concerns of mainstream New Zealand. It’s disappointing that the last major Act of this Parliament was to undermine New Zealand’s main environmental law.

The Bill was passed with support from Labour, Progressives and United Future and opposed by the Greens, National, NZ First, Maori Party, and ACT. ACT and National voted against the Bill because it didn’t go far enough in changing the legislation. NZ First had a mixed position and while concerned over national policies and standards amendment, they propose to include definition of sustainable development in Part II of the legislation.

Under changes agreed to under National Environmental Standards central government will have the power to declare activities “controlled” meaning that no local authority would be allowed to decline an application for resource consent.

A future government could use national environmental standards to ensure that power stations, transmission lines, coal mines and polluting factories all get the go-ahead, with local authorities being restricted to placing a few conditions on the schemes.

The changes to National Environmental Standards introduce ‘absolute’ national environmental standards. As a consequence of this change, local authorities will generally not be allowed to set a higher level of environmental protection than the government. This is a major change as previously environmental standards were ‘bottom lines’ allowing local authorities to set a higher level of environmental protection than the government. There is a limited capacity for government to create exceptions to absolute standards.

Parliament also passed provisions to enable fast-track national policy statement rather than going through a board of inquiry process. These provisions, if used, can only result in flip-flops in policy as new Governments seek to quickly change policy. This will create problems for councils and other parties as the new law requires council to give effect to these national policies.

ECO is pleased to see that accreditation of local authority decision makers and appeals on notification did get through Parliament last night. These will make a difference.

ECO was surprised by the National Party’s vehement opposition to appeals on non-notification as it was their idea in the first place. This proposal was introduced by Simon Upton in the 1999 Amendment Bill but was deleted from the Bill by Labour before it was passed in 2003.

Over 95% of resource consent applications are not publicly notified although many have significant environmental impacts and affect neighbours. Under the Resource Management Act, proposals that have significant environmental effects and which affect others must be notified, but previously there has been no right of appeal when local authorities unlawfully fail to notify resource consent applications.

ECO calls on the Government immediately to take the steps needed to bring appeals on non-notification into effect. It would be a good sign of commitment to public participation.


DOES NATIONAL WANT TO RESTART NATIVE FOREST LOGGING?

It unclear whether National want to go back to logging West Coast Native Forest. In late August National’s Forestry spokesperson, Brian Connell, was promoting native forest logging and claiming this was National’s policy.

Later Connell stated that the policy endorsing logging on conservation land outside national parks was “an early draft” of National’s policy. In contrast National’s leader Don Brash said “there will not be any logging of native forests on the West Coast while I’m leader of the National Party”.

ECO will be watching closely to see what the details of National Party’s forestry policy is and will strongly resist policies that propose logging on conservation land.

Disclaimer: While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information contained in this publication, ECO, its Executive and Editorial Staff accept no liability for any errors or omissions. Views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policy options of ECO or its Member Organisations.
STRATEGY FOR MANAGING THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF FISHING WELCOMED

Damaging effects of fishing should come into focus at last if the long-awaited Strategy for Managing the Environmental Effects of Fishing is implemented. The strategy was released in August by the Minister of Fisheries, Hon David Benson-Pope.

The Strategy suggests that at last the Ministry of Fisheries may begin to think how to implement the environmental requirements of the Fisheries Act. ECO has waited nearly nine years since the Act was passed in 1996. The process to develop the strategy started in 2001. The Strategy also reflects international commitments under various marine agreements including the Law of the Sea Convention to protect the marine environment.

In contrast National’s fisheries spokesperson, Phil Heatley, has complained that the Ministry of Fisheries has been “too obsessed with environmentalism”.

The Strategy promises the development of standards — so a key issue will be the quality of those standards. It remains to be seen how good they are. There are principles for Environmental Standards in the document but not the standards themselves. It will be critical that these standards are strong and strongly enforced.

ECO will be watching closely to see that there is not a failure of political and official will to ensure that standards are implemented and enforced. The Ministry has not enforced the legal minimum for fish stocks, but has allowed a continued decline in many stocks while fishing continues. Some orange roughy stocks have dropped way below the agreed limit (30% of the original biomass) and lower still to well below the risky benchmark of 20% of the original biomass. Some have dived to below 10%, even as low as 3% and 7% of the original biomass.

The Strategy provides for consideration of combined effects of different fisheries: ECO wants to see highly destructive fishing methods such as bottom trawling subject to environmental assessment and control. In several fisheries, the gross over-fishing is being compounded by the destructive fishing methods.

The Strategy acknowledges the need to manage the environmental effects of fishing at various ecological scales — that too is very welcome.

There is a welcome hint that the government envisages that fisheries management and research will not be devoted to the fishing industry: we call on all political parties to state where they stand on this issue. The statement says: “It is envisaged that, over time, the process of managing fisheries to achieve environmental standards will occur primarily through fisheries plans prepared by the Ministry of Fisheries in consultation with tangata whenua and stakeholders” (section 2.3.2, p8).

ECO calls on all political parties to state whether they will require the Ministry to maintain fish stocks, as required by the Fisheries Act, “at or above” the stock that gives the maximum sustainable yield”.

CONSERVATIONISTS KEVIN SMITH DIES

ECO was extremely sorry to hear in mid-August of the death of our environment colleague Kevin Smith. Kevin was Conservation Director for Forest and Bird Protection Society from 1989 till 2000. In the last 5 years he worked in Parliament as an adviser to two Ministers of Conservation, Sandra Lee and Chris Carter.

Kevin was a redoubtable, tenacious and well informed conservationist who has done a huge amount for New Zealand.

ECO has always appreciated his knowledge of the places, science and issues and his determination to see New Zealand protected from alien species, from logging and from all kinds of assaults.

Kevin was on the forefront of making New Zealander aware of the problem with biosecurity threats at our borders. The creation of a Minister of Biosecurity and the Biosecurity is directly linked to his work while Conservation Director.

Kevin got results by determination, close and detailed research. His often dour exterior was leavened by a dry sense of humour and his unwavering commitment to New Zealand and its environment.

Not an internationalist, Kevin commitment was to New Zealand’s environment. He has also understood the affected rural communities. He grew up in the King Country where his dad ran a saw mill cutting up the trees Kevin was to spend so much time protecting.

Kevin was happiest in the country, in the bush. He had organised a new life in the King Country, back with his roots, with the purchase of a house and land, was determined to do more there.

ECO’s thoughts are with his partner Tania and Kevin’s children, Rachel, Darica, and Carl and with Barbara and the rest of his family. We, the conservation and environmental movement mourn his passage and celebrate his achievements.

ECOlink September 2005 * PAGE 5
Successful ECO Conference in Wellington

The 2005 ECO Conference was successfully held in Wellington in June. There was a wide range of issues covered including a discussion of key concerns to be included in Vote for the Environment.

A further report will be included in the next ECOlink.

The Conference opened with a presentation from Penny Figgis who is the newly appointed Vice-Chair for Australia and New Zealand for the World Commission on Protected Areas of the World Conservation Union – IUCN. Ms Figgis was a former member of the Australian Conservation Foundation national executive.

Penny described the work of the Commission in Australia and its priorities for protected areas. The WCPA is one of six IUCN commissions which are made up of voluntary members.

The international direction for WCPA was established by a strategic plan agreed at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Bangkok last year and the decisions of the World Parks Congress in Durban 2003.

A key focus of WCPA was on boosting coastal and marine conservation. She presented the work of IUCN on marine conservation. The international marine priority includes protected areas and response to invasive species.

Ms Figgis said she was keen to see trans-Tasman co-operation on protected areas and considered that Australia and New Zealand WCPA members could work on ideas like the mid-Tasman sea high sea marine protected area.

She was keen to see New Zealand and Australian expertise being used to assist our Pacific Island neighbours. Other potential areas of co-operation include Antarctica and invasive species. She said much of the work of the commission would be through email.

Science at the cross-roads

A key debate during the conference was on the role of science and the challenges faced by scientists.

Morgan Williams, the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, opened the debate with a presentation on the work of his office. He was concerned that Crown Research Institutes were focusing on “science you can sell rather than science that underpins a nation.”

He was concerned at the loss of long running environmental programmes. He noted that soil science has been gutted in New Zealand which has involved a large loss of human capital.

Dr Williams contrasted the New Zealand situation with what occurs in Australia where the Australian Federal research organisation CSIRO does a range of big picture strategic research which is missing in New Zealand.

He noted that current funding of science is well below OECD average and that greater institutional memory was needed.

Janet Bradford-Grieve noted that there has been a long-term disinvestment in environmental science. Dr Grieve who recently retired from NIWA was concerned at the trend towards short-term research which churns over old information.
She said it was important for environmental information to be in the public domain and not captured by commercial institutions.

She noted that the Growth and Innovation Strategy had driven science towards the “productive sector” and away from the underpinnings of environmental science.

Steve O’Shea from AUT noted that it was often impossible for researchers of Crown Research Institutes to speak out on environmental issues, for example the impacts of fisheries, because of contractual requirements. He said Universities were the only place where big picture issues could be debated openly.

Dr Williams said that there was a need to increase non-specific funding of CRIs. He noted that it was only 10 percent which Simon Upton, the Minister who set up the current research funding arrangements, agreed was too low.

Trade and Environment discussion

Vangelis Vitalis, Senior Negotiator and Deputy Director, Trade Negotiations Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade discussed New Zealand’s position on trade and the environment and the upcoming meetings of the WTO. He noted that the Doha agenda on trade and the environment covers:

- Environmental goods;
- WTO and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs); and
- Fish subsidies.

He said there was no agreement on what is an environmental good at the WTO. New Zealand is currently producing about $1.3 billion in environmental goods and this is growing faster than the OECD average.

He said the discussion on the relationship between WTOs and MEAs was going nowhere. For example, MEAs like the Antarctic fisheries agreement CCAMLR had introduced trade measures and the question for WTO was what measures should be illegal under WTO. He said only 5 or 6 countries including New Zealand think there is a problem.

In fish subsidies he noted that globally they amounted to nearly $22 billion and that according to the FAO 47 percent of the world’s fisheries were fully exploited and 27 percent had been over-exploited.

He also talked about the recent bilateral trade negotiations with Thailand; Malaysia; and China.

He said the negotiators had a clear direction from Government to ensure that the agreements are not used to lower environmental standards to gain a trade advantage. He said the Government had established 10 principles to guide the negotiations. He said he welcomed wider civil society involvement but in answer to a question he noted there was no funding to assist NGOs.

In answer to a question on the potential use of countervailing duties by members of the Kyoto Protocol against countries who are not members, he said that such a move was likely to be illegal. He said WTO and MEAs should be mutually supportive and that is why this relationship needs to be resolved.

- Continued over page
Politicians questioned on the environment

Friday Night saw a debate amount the main political parties on the environment. ACT was represented by Gerry Eckhoff, Greens by Jeanette Fitzsimons, Labour, Marion Hobbs, National by Nick Smith, NZ First by Jim Peters, and United by Larry Baldock. The Maori Party was invited but could not send a representative.

Each party representative was given 5 minutes to introduce their parties policies on the environment. Then all parties were invited to answer questions on policies.

Larry Baldock started the debate by raising United’s concern over the Department of Conservation and it use of 1080. He said United wanted a moratorium on applications for Marine Reserves until there was further consultation and “made no apologies for stopping the Marine Reserves Bill being reported back prior to the election.”

Jim Peters said that NZ First was committed to protecting and nurturing the environment. He said NZ First questioned the commitment to the Kyoto Protocol. He was committed to better water management and NZ First was a strong supporter of the Waitaki legislation. NZ First was committed to a coherent framework for management of the oceans. He said he supported the marine park approach in places like Fiordland rather than marine reserves.

Gerry Eckhoff for ACT questioned the tenure review process on the high country and giving more land to DoC. He questioned why we were so anti-mining and questioned why future generations were more important than the present.

Nick Smith for National said he was disappointed at the lack of progress on oceans policy and marine reserves. He said it was important to have a strong biosecurity policy with special emergency funds so that pest incursions could be dealt with quickly. Dr Smith said dealing the decline in streams and rivers was crucial and said current action was not good enough. On waste National proposed to expand the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) brief to include waste. He said he was committed to a national park in Northland and said the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park had been a flop and needed beefing up. He said Government should commit to clear goals for 5, 10, 15 and 25 years in the future.

Marian Hobbs, for Labour said she wanted growth that protected the environment. She was committed to local management that motivates and empowers like the local management in Fiordland. She said was cleaning up Mapua toxic waste site and was committed to clearing up the Tui mine near Te Aroha. Ms Hobbs said agriculture was a big user of water and she was looking forward to the outcome of consultation on the water strategy. She said cities was an important element environmental issue for Labour. There needed to be strategic alliances with business on a range of issues including oil and gas, used tyres and agricultural chemicals.

Jeanette Fitzsimons, for the Greens, said that currently 95 percent of streams have water below swimming quality and New Zealand was only 5 percent pure. She said there needed to be national standards for water with a mandatory water plan which included $50 million to clean up waters. She said the Green’s proposed that this would be funded 50 percent through a levy on nitrogen and phosphate fertiliser and 50 percent by the Crown. The Greens supported vehicle emission testing and prohibit the import of cars over 7 years old. On the Resource Management Act it was important to retain public and environmental participation. She said the Greens remain opposed to the release of GE live material into the environment. She said the Greens were committed to sustainable energy and marine protection.

There was a wide range of questions asked. In response to a question on whether sustainable economic growth was ecologically possible, representative from Labour, United, ACT, National and NZ First said it was possible. Nick Smith (National) said that he and Marian Hobbs (Labour) had similar views of marrying economic growth with environmental protection. Jeanette Fitzsimons (Greens) said people needed to recognise that we have a finite world which is not getting bigger and people must ask questions of how much is enough.

A question was asked on the effect of Peak Oil in New Zealand and whether it was consistent with increase funding on road, Marian Hobbs (Labour) agreed that oil was finite but considered Labour’s transport policies were part of the answers. Jeanette Fitzsimons (Greens) argued that there needed a clearer strategy and investment in alternatives and that more roads would eventually lead to more vehicles. Larry Balock (United) said he supported the greater funding on roads. Nick Smith (National) supported better pricing mechanisms but thought as oil prices rise increase efficiency and technology would eliminate peak oil.

In response to a question on Kyoto and climate change, Larry Balock (United) said he did not accept human induced climate change and did not see Kyoto surviving, and United was opposed to the carbon charge. Nick Smith said National was opposed to the carbon charge and would review the commitments to Kyoto, and would only support further development of Kyoto at the same time as our major trading partners. Gerry Eckhoff (ACT) said that Kyoto was based on pseudo-science and ACT would withdraw from Kyoto.

In answer to a question of whether parties were committed to the Biodiversity Strategy and Solid Energy’s mines threatening species, Jim Peter (NZ First) said as he had not read the detail he could not give a commitment. Nick Smith (National) said he supported net conservation gain as an approach to deal with conservation conflict. Marian Hobbs (Labour) agreed that SOEs should face rules and conditions are any other miners. Jeanette Fitzsimons (Greens) said the Resource Management Act is an important part of the controls with a national policy statement on biodiversity should be a key mechanism.
ECO AGM 2005 New Policies

At the ECO’s Annual General Meeting in June, the following resolutions were passed unanimously by the meeting:

**Existing Policy:**
Motion: To reaffirm existing ECO policies, including Vote for the Environment subject to the changes foreshadowed in motions below and to the Vote for the Environment Negotiations with other groups.

**Bottom trawling:**
Motion: ECO notes the destruction of biodiversity through bottom trawling and calls on the Government to push for a moratorium on high seas bottom trawling at the UN General Assembly, effective immediately.

**Marine Environment & Fishing:**
Motion: That ECO applauds recent moves to implement the environmental provisions of the 1996 Fisheries Act after a delay of nine years and requests that resources and provisions be put in place to ensure adequate participation by all stakeholders and the public in these processes.

**RMA**
Motion: That ECO condemns the proposed amendment to the Resource Management Act via the Resource Management and Electricity Legislation Amendment Bill to provide “fast tracking” of roading, power projects and other infrastructure activities or limit and weaken effective public participation or environmental protection. Proposals by any political party to further weaken or replace the RMA or to insert new social or economic objectives into purposes or principles of the RMA will be vigorously opposed.

**Transport**
Motion: That ECO calls for the development and implementation by June 2006 of National Vehicle Emission and efficiency Standards.

**Climate Change**
Motion: ECO notes that climate change is the critical environmental threat to the planet, and that scientists tell us that we have just ten years to act in order to avoid dangerous changes in the climate. ECO calls on the government to put in place a sustainable energy strategy to drive renewable energy development together with the adoption of demand side measures and to phase out coal use for energy and in order to respond to peak oil.

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**NEW EXEC MEMBERS**

ECO welcomes six new Members of the Executive Committee: Cindy Baxter, Karine Weiss, Kimberley Cleland, Aaron Packard, Mike Ennis, and Bonnie Shaab.

In this issue you will meet three of them:

**Mike Ennis** - has been involved in the environment/conservation movement since the late 1970s. He was a coordinator of the Greenpeace Wellington support group 1988-94. He was also on the ECO’s Executive Committee from 1994 until 1997, and the Chairperson for 2 years.

Currently, he is on the Executive Committee of Friends of The Earth NZ.

A member of the Wellington Group Action for Environment. Trustee of the Sustainability Trust, which is running the Warm Homes programme in Porirua to retrofit low income houses with insulation. The Trust also runs an Environment Centre at the PCC Trash Palace recycling station.

Finally, he is a Trustee of Wellington Regional 2020 Communications Trust. Project Champion for the Wellington Community Net community webhosting project and the Whananui Link project which provides Internet access and Email facilities to patients in the Mary Potter Hospice.

**Karine Weiss** - originally from Israel, has been in NZ for 4 years. 3rd year Ecology Student at University of Otago. A member of the Students for Environmental Action (SEA) for over two years. Currently involved in: The Save Happy Valley Campaign; Anti Bottom Trawling Campaign (with Greenpeace); Anti Battery Farming Campaign (with SAFE); Sustainable Energy Network.

Promoting recycling and composting in the student community.

**Aaron Packard** - is studying Ecology & Biodiversity and Development Studies at the Victoria University Wellington. Aaron is the President of Gecko, the environmental action group at Victoria. Gecko is currently working to create a sustainable university, and the development of an environmental policy.

Aaron is also the chairperson of Te Whanganui-a-tara Youth Development Trust, which governs Evolve, the Wellington Youth Service. He is an excellent representative for the environmental concerns of young people.
Stopping Climate Change in its Tracks

The Save Happy Valley Coalition has taken the fight against Solid Energy to a new level. In a carefully planned protest on August 13th, three activists 'locked on' to the train tracks of the main trunk line, preventing Solid Energy’s coal trains from reaching the Lyttelton port in Christchurch. Two were locked onto the tracks directly and a third was hanging from a tree 30m high with his support rope connected to the tracks below. In all, the protesters held up the trains for almost five hours. Three trains were forced to stop and Solid Energy had to cancel another.

The Happy Valley mine will destroy threatened native species’ habitat, pollute rivers and cause acid mine damage. Furthermore, the potential price that we will all pay for the destruction wrought by climate change associated with coal mining is massive. Despite this, Solid Energy has consistently shown that their only consideration is the purist of profit.

All three protesters were arrested. Two face charges of Trespass and Trespass under the Railways Act, while the other has been charged with Willful Trespass. They have vowed to fight the charges as well as Solid Energy’s threats to sue them for costs of two hundred thousand dollars. It is ludicrous that everyday Solid Energy can get away without charge for the environmental destruction they cause because the state sands to profit from their activities; yet when three young people make a stand against their destructive activities, they are threatened with reparations of such huge amounts.

The Save Happy Valley Coalition has been busy working to stop climate change - and environmental destruction - by other means as well as blockading coal trains. Recent events have included a demonstration outside DOC’s head office asking them to take a stronger stance in protecting the endangered species in Happy Valley, the inclusion of some Happy Valley footage in an Environmental Film Festival held in Palmerston North and a presentation at the recent ECO conference in Wellington. The groups have continued to hold stalls, distribute leaflets and encourage people to put pressure on the government to stop the mine. Presently, it is urgent that people write to Government MPs, urging them to step in and stop Solid Energy from mining the last of Powellitephanta augustus’ habitat at the nearby Stockton mine, as well as detailing their concerns about the Happy Valley mine and why it shouldn’t proceed. See http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/mediarelease/2005/0816_solidenergyisemergency.asp.

Write to Helen Clark (pm@ministers.govt.nz), Chris Carter (ecarter@ministers.govt.nz), Minister of Conservation, and Paul Swain (pswain@ministers.govt.nz), Minister of State Owned Enterprises and party leaders.

At our recent national hui we also decided to establish a part-time paid coordinator position so that we can more effectively work together to oppose the Happy Valley mine. Their role will be basically administrative and we are calling for people to provide regular automatic payments to support a person in this position for two days a week. Any contribution would be greatly appreciated. AP forms can be downloaded from the website; money can be paid directly into the Save

Happy Valley Campaign account at 38-9003-0334146-00; or email us on contact@savehappyvalley.org.nz.

For further information check out the new, improved website at www.savehappyvalley.org.nz. If you would like to be on the SHVC Campaign Update mailing list, please email contact@savehappyvalley.org.nz
WOMEN IN CONSERVATION FUND

The Women in Conservation Fund was set up in 1994 to build on the success of the Department of Conservation’s 1993 Suffrage Centennial Year projects. Projects supported by the Fund contribute to:

- increasing understanding of conservation and conservation issues by women
- developing relationship with women in the community, including tanga whenua
- empowering women to take more active role in conservation in their communities
- personal and professional development of women in the Department

Example of the project supported by the Fund:

⇒ Native Garden at Totaranui Ngarata Homestead: 18 women arrived from Department of Conservation Golden Bay, Nelson, St. Arnaud, Motueka; two from West Coast; Iwi from the Onetehua Marae; and four teachers from Broadgreen Intermediate; and one Motupipi School teacher to upgrade the native garden and to install interpretation signs, weeding, learning about our native plants and their medicinal traditional uses, and sharing ideas and knowledge. The project was a success - women achieved a great deal in upgrading educational resources for the Ngarata Homestead and they worked well as a team.

Application forms for the 2005/2006 financial year are available from Kaupapa Wahine, the Department’s national women’s group, or from Human Resources staff in the regional, conservancy offices and Head Office. For further information contact a Kaupapa Wahine member or Human Resources, Head Office.

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HELP ECO GO AAROUND!

PUBLISHED BY ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION ORGANISATION OF NEW ZEALAND

Editor: Elizabeth Lee
Layout: Kate Lower
ECO, PO Box 11-057, Wellington
Phone/fax 04 385-7545; e-mail: eco@reddfish.co.nz
2nd floor, 126 Vivian Street, Wellington
Website: www.eco.org.nz
ISSN: 1174-0671
Printed on 100% Recycled Paper

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ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION
ORGANISATIONS OF NEW ZEALAND

ECO * PO Box 11-057 * Wellington

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