



When will the tipping stop? Even though it is Whangarei Harbour Board policy to stop reclaiming mangroves, they continue to lease out the harbour bed for this reclamation, and so the vandalism continues.

Even though the tide of public opinion has switched against further mangrove destruction, and the Northland Harbour Board has accepted this, the fact still remains that permission was given to destroy these magnificent mature mangroves. We have been making every effort to stall the Harbour Board while at the same time looking for a

legal loophole to prevent the mangroves from disappearing. At one stage I (Gerry Brackenbury) visited the area every day, and every day I saw a little more disappear.

Our branch even offered to lease the site from the Harbour Board and were quoted \$3000, which was a far greater annual sum than we could afford. A "friend at court"

who deserves the highest praise is Wally Redwood, a Whangarei City Councillor and member of the Northland Harbour Board. Wally has helped us and fought our cause in the boardroom and council chamber, often single handed.

At the time of writing the situation is precariously balanced. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment is sympathetic but seemingly powerless, the City Council is not prepared to condone the reclamation (thanks to Wally Redwood) and the Conservation Department has been asked to take an active interest in the issue.

In the meantime the Harbour Board has now offered to reserve the four hectares, but wants to reclaim the river in front of the mangroves to accommodate a boat builder who is desperate for water access to his business. Further down the harbour are hundreds of businesses right next to the water, such as spray painters, panel beaters and carpet factories, none of them in the slightest bit bothered by the water lapping their feet and their businesses! We are convinced any reclamation of this unusual design will spell disaster for the mangroves in the long term.

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