



**Recipient: Wendy Saunders**

**For: A PhD on “Innovative Land-Use Planning for natural hazard risk reduction in NZ.”**

The aim of Wendy’s research was to develop a risk-based framework for innovative land-use planning that allows risks from natural hazards in New Zealand to be reduced, and encourages better decision making for natural hazard risk reduction. To achieve this aim, Wendy researched the concept of innovation, which is traditionally used in a business context and then related the types of innovation found to land use planning.

The Awards Panel acknowledged how Wendy’s research bridged the gap between current natural hazards guidance and the actual quantification and qualification of the hazard risk. This was achieved by an approach to risk governance that is framed around three key steps:

- 1) articulating and addressing consequences of events;
- 2) assessing the likelihood of these consequences; and
- 3) taking a risk-based approach to planning based on Steps 1 and 2.

The result is a planning framework that becomes more restrictive as risk increases. With a focus on risk management principles and processes, the framework assists planners by providing policy and resource consent activity status criteria that enable hazard risks to be categorised via risk-based land-use planning. This risk-based framework provides a new approach where consequences are the primary concern, rather than likelihood; and allows for levels of risk to be defined.

The Awards Panel commended Wendy’s research which has resulted in a framework that can assist decision makers to reduce risks to people and property from natural hazards, and encourages sustainable development.

The New Zealand Planning Institute Wallace Ross Graduate Research Award shall be made from time to time to any member (s) of the Institute undertaking research that advances planning practice, process and theory. The award will recognise excellence in research. The criteria are:

- research which adds to the canon of scholarship on planning in New Zealand; and/or
- demonstrates or investigates improvements and enhancements in the practice of planning.

Wallace Ross - was a planner who worked at Wanganui City Council and the Wellington Regional Council. He has been an NZPI President and councillor but his greatest contribution was as the author of the first planning history of New Zealand.

