

Flood Protection

Manager : Geoff Dick

Report for Period Ending 27 September 2002

1. Manager's Comments

Recruitment of further engineers to fill vacancies following the Divisional review and the resignation of Robbin Britton is underway. We got a reasonable response to our advertisement, and I am presently short-listing and booking interviews.

Otherwise its all go with the work programme and preparation of material for the current LTFS round!

2. Waikanae River Floodplain Management [Graeme Campbell]

2.1 Gravel Extraction Consent

The consent for gravel extraction was granted following a hearing on 14 August 2002. No appeals were lodged by the end of the appeal period and we can now proceed with the extraction.

2.2 Friends of the Waikanae River

No substantive issues have arisen since last report. The second year Care Group budget of \$10,000 was spent on continuing the revegetation work along the river banks, as well as further planting done on the Care Group's own initiative.

2.3 Otaihanga Domain Stopbank

A draft stopbank design was prepared and sent to Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC) for approval. Following their review of the stopbank design KCDC now want the WRC to go back and consider other options as they consider that a stopbank may impact on the Domain. A report is now being prepared. The report will weigh up the costs and benefits of three options:

- raising the road
- raising the footpath adjacent to the road, or
- constructing a stopbank in the Domain.

Construction of the works is now not likely to begin until February 2003. A meeting will be held with the wider Otaihanga community once KCDC and the immediately adjacent residents have confirmed their preferred option.

3. Otaki River Floodplain Management [Graeme Campbell]

3.1 Otaki River Mouth Lagoon Enhancement Works

A community planting day was held on 21 September 2002 to start work on the project. An interpretation sign was unveiled and 150 flax, toe toe and cabbage trees planted. Approximately 50 members of the public attended.

3.2 Friends of the Otaki River

A meeting of the Friends Executive Committee was held on 11 September 2002. Three main issues were considered:

- Planning for the community planting day at the Otaki River mouth.
- An update on progress of the review of the flood hazard information for Otaki.
- Formalising an appropriate “sign off” arrangement from the group in relation the WRC works activities. This “sign off” process is part of the Friends Terms of Reference and will need to be finalised by the walkover on 23 October 2002.

4. Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (HRFMP) [Daya Atapattu]

4.1 Ava to Ewen Project

Contractors were invited to register their interest in the Ava to Ewen channel realignment contract. The Registrations of Interest closed on 27 September 2002. From this Registration of Interest, we will pre-qualify a short list of contractors who will be asked to tender for the works. The information pack issued to contractors also included the estimated Hutt River rock requirements for the next eight years.

Opus International Consultants have completed the draft final design for the Ava to Ewen reach realignment and Alicetown stopbank upgrade. We will review this design before giving approval for Opus to proceed with preparing the tender documents. The tender documents are expected to be complete by late October 2002.

Our property consultant and MOE solicitors are currently exploring options to expedite transfer of Strand Park. We expect to agree on an option by the end of September 2002. The land transfer may take three or four months to complete.

In the interim we are exploring options for interim access to the site. However, current indications are that the MOE will not grant ‘access for work’ until all uncertainties of the land transfer process are removed. We need at least the ‘access for work’ approval from the Ministry of Education (MOE) before starting the tendering process. Our best guess is that there could be up to four months delay in appointing the contractor. Our programme was to appoint a contractor before Christmas 2002.

4.2 Non-structural Measures

Hutt City Council's Strategy and Policy Committee endorsed the draft scope for non-structural measures on 21 August 2002. This Committee also resolved to consider the objectives and policies templates through their District Plan review process and if deemed necessary, to promulgate a District Plan change to give effect to the HRFMP.

Workshops are planned for October 2002 to go through flood hazard information with HCC and UHCC officers. An implementation programme and responsibilities will be agreed after these workshops.

Emergency Management officers from HCC, UHCC and WRC have agreed on implementing six emergency management projects during the 2002/03 financial year.

4.3 Belmont Edge Protections

We have appointed Truebridge Callendar Beach Ltd to carry out the topographical and boundary definition survey in Belmont. The survey is progressing well and is due to be completed by the end of November 2002. Consultant river engineering specialist, Gary Williams, was appointed to assist Susan Borrer, our graduate engineer, in edge protections design.

The project scope and programme will be reported to the Advisory Committee on 24 October 2002.

5. Porirua Stream

Consultation over the options at Findlay Street is complete, apart from final consideration by Wellington City Council.

Both Iwi and the Department of Conservation prefer Option 2 (floodway option – retains the existing bend in the stream). Both consider Option 2 to have reduced construction and long term impacts on the streams inherent values, including its ecology.

A consultation summary document is being prepared. This, and view of the of the Tawa Community Board, will be considered by a joint WCC Built and Natural Environment/Transport and Infrastructure Committee this month (October).

6. Planning and Development Services [Phillip Purves]

The following summarises the formal, written requests for information or advice attended to during August 2002:

	<u>August</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Requests brought forward	11	13
Additional requests received	18	34
Responses provided	16	34
Outstanding requests	13	13

A significant effort was made during this period to complete the flood hazard maps for the Otaki and Waikanae Rivers. The draft flood hazard maps are presented in Report 02.604 to this Committee meeting.

7. Operations

7.1 Wellington [Jeff Evans]

Hutt River

The willow and native planting programmes on the Hutt River are now complete. There has been some theft of native plants already in both Lower and Upper Hutt. We will continue to monitor these areas.

The Botanical Society front edge trial native planting is also complete, with three areas being planted up. These areas will now be monitored over a five-year period to accurately assess the results.

Six tonnes of demolition steel was removed from the river channel over the last month. It is thought that this material is washing out from old edge protection works at Te Marua Golf Club and from fill sites on the Mangaroa River.

Waiwhetu Stream

The draft resource consent application to apply diquat to the stream to control weed growth is currently in the consultation phase. Approximately 40 copies of the draft document have been sent out. No responses have been received to date.

Following a telephone discussion with Mr Murray Willocks, the NZ Manager of Monsanto, a site meeting was held to look at the possibility of using 'Roundup' to eradicate Cape Pondweed. Also present at that meeting was Teri Puketapu representing local Iwi. Murray Willocks was confident that with the right approach the cape pondweed could be greatly reduced, if not eliminated with the judicious use of Roundup. The possibility of spraying a trial section of the stream is being discussed with the Consents Management Department.

We previously advised (18 March meeting) of a proposal to clear the section of the stream behind nos. 142 – 150 Riverside Drive. These properties extend right to the stream edge, with large trees, undergrowth and fences being an obvious impediment to flood flows. This restriction is believed to have contributed to the flooding of several properties at the lower end of Hayward Terrace, on 22 November 2001. A letter has now been sent to each property owner advising of them of our proposal to improve the streams flood capacity by removing the restrictions, and asking them to provide access for future maintenance.

Hutt River Trail

Hutt Rotary have raised funding to provide a walkway under the eastern side of the Estuary Bridge. Present users of the river trail must cross the very busy road leading from the bridge to the Gracefield roundabout. The proposed walkway will provide a safe link under the bridge. We have agreed to construct the walkway, with Rotary meeting the cost. Plans are currently being prepared.

Watercourses

A clearing run was completed in the Pinehaven Stream and in Collins Creek. Two large fallen willow trees completely blocking the stream were removed with the help of a large digger.

7.2 **Kapiti [Garry Baker]**

Otaki River

Kapiti staff have substantially completed planting along both banks and preferred channel alignment edges on the Otaki River. In total 8000 rooted stock and 1350 cut poles, comprising of willows, poplars and acacias were planted.

The river mouth was opened up after becoming “perched” due to strong on-shore winds and heavy seas. Some low-lying grazing land at the end of Atkinson Avenue went under water while the Rangiuru floodgates remained closed, and the Rangiuru Stream backed-up towards Tasman Road. Once the cut was made and the gates became operational, paddocks drained quickly and stock returned to their pastures.

Waikanae River

Willow layering has commenced along both banks of the Waikanae River.

A number of willows were removed from the small lagoons in Pukekawa Reserve in preparation for the eradication of Eel Grass (*Vallisneria gigantea*).

Waikanae Friends continued with their plantings around Jim Cooke Memorial Park, Nimmo Avenue East, Pukekawa Reserve, and at the end of Walnut Grove.

Watercourses

Waimeha Stream

A stream-clearing run was carried out at the request of the residents, as water and bed levels were considered too high. This is one of the watercourses due for “review”, as our operational maintenance standards appear to not meet the residents’ expectations.

A debris arrestor, consisting of 250mm diameter poles, was constructed in the Waimeha Stream immediately downstream of the Fieldway Bridge. This arrestor is designed to prevent logs and stumps entering the stream from the sea and causing blockages adjacent to private homes upstream of the Fieldway Bridge.

Waitohu Stream

A large blockage of tree cuttings and stumps was removed from the lower Waitohu Stream.

Otaki Depot

The Otaki depot renovations are nearing completion. Work completed or underway includes:

- All external painting complete.
- The entry porch and original offices have been painted, awaiting final light fittings and vinyl floor coverings.
- New entry ramp and covered porchway are complete.
- The garage / workshop area is currently being wired out for power and lighting.

GEOFF DICK
Manager, Flood Protection

Parks and Forests

Manager : Murray Waititi

Report for Period Ending 27 September 2002

1. Manager's Comments [Murray Waititi]

The past month has had its highs and lows.

Gold Certification for our Environmental Management System

We have gained Gold certification for our Environmental Management System. Landcare Research, who manage EnviroMark® (the certification system) wish to hold a ceremony to award the Gold certificates to both Parks and Forests and Flood Protection. We are the first organisation in New Zealand to have achieved this certification.

Hutt River Ranger Appointed

Thane Walls was recently appointed as the inaugural Hutt River Ranger. Thane has been with Parks and Forests for a number of years. He started with the work gangs in 1984, and for the last couple of years has been Team Leader of the Horticulture Team for the Eastern Sector. Thane brings strong 'hands-on' experience to the new position, and as he has lived near the river most of his life, an intimate knowledge of the area.

Thane is a multi-talented individual. As well as his trade and environmental qualification, he holds a degree in musical composition from Victoria University. Thane will begin his new role on 14 October 2002.

Kereru found shot dead at Kaitoke Regional Park

Fourteen Kereru were found shot dead in the campground area. Three were found on 16 September with another eleven found on 17 September. The event is being taken very seriously, as it not only involves the killing of protected birds but also the use of a firearm in a public place. The nature of the shooting suggests it was someone using the birds as target practice rather than for harvesting. The birds have been autopsied. The cause of death was by .22 rifle shots. We are currently investigating the possibility of offering a reward for information leading to the conviction of the person(s) responsible for this incident with the police and Department of Conservation, who are the other parties involved.

1.1 Answers to questions raised at the last Meeting

At the last meeting I was asked to report back on a number of issues. They are set out below.

Proposal to Reinstate the Rimutaka Railway

Following the presentation at the last Landcare Committee meeting, officers were requested to prepare a paper on the proposal. We are well into the task. Discussions have been held with a number of specialists about the proposal, and the report will be presented at the next Landcare Committee meeting.

Takapu Block

At the last Committee meeting, I reported that the process for transferring management and control of the Takapu Block from the Department of Conservation to Wellington Regional Council was progressing well, and that I hoped to present a report to this Committee Meeting outlining official points of detail for your approval. Unfortunately, the process has been slowed due to the unavailability of senior Department of Conservation staff. I hope to be able to finalise this project in time for the November Landcare meeting.

2. Planning and Policy [Dr Philippa Crisp]

2.1 Heritage Conference

Policy staff members attended an inspiring heritage conference on September 10-12 at Turnbull House. There are many cultural heritage sites on WRC managed lands and the conference provided a wide range of ideas as to how best to manage these sites. Heritage management is an area where we need to increase our knowledge.

2.2 Network Parks Plan and Forest Lands Management Plan Review

A Draft Network Plan for the Regional Parks has been peer reviewed internally and circulated to Councillors and Ara Tahi.

A Draft Management Plan for the Water Collection Areas and Regional Forests, which includes both generic and area specific policies for the water collection areas and regional forests, has been circulated internally within the Council. The draft will be distributed to Councillors and Ara Tahi shortly.

Both draft management plans are to be discussed at the Councillor Workshop, entitled *Sustainable Parks*. The Councillor Workshop was originally planned to be held on 7 October 2002 but has been rescheduled to 25 October 2002 to allow another LTCCP workshop to take place on 7 October. We hope to have the draft plans approved by the end of the year, for release for public consultation early in the New Year.

We have endeavoured to address concerns and issues raised by Councillors in response to the papers submitted to the Landcare Committee in August this year on *Regional Parks, Forests and Water Collection Areas: Contributing to a Sustainable Region and Quality for Life* (Report 02.526) and *Vision and Guiding Principles for Regional Parks, Forests and Water Collection Areas* (Report 02.519), which were intended to guide drafting of the management plans.

2.3 Capital Works Projects

Work is continuing on the 2002/03 capital works programme. Architects are preparing working drawings for Whareroa Beach toilets at Queen Elizabeth Park. Engineers are developing options for stabilising the Muniton Siding bridge abutments and streambed on the Rimutaka railway route.

2.4 SH2 Kaitoke Realignment Progressing

Transit has called tenders for the highway realignment and expects work to start in October 2002. Graham Laws attended a meeting with Opus Consultants and Transit officers to discuss the design and location of the proposed pedestrian underpass to link the Hutt River Trail via Kaitoke Regional Park to the Rimutaka Rail Trail.

The underpass is estimated to cost approximately \$135,000 + GST depending on final design. Transit has agreed to share the cost of constructing the underpass 50:50 with the Regional Council. WRC will be responsible for the cost of building tracks to the ends of the underpass. The Policy and Finance committee approved the Wellington Regional Council contribution at its meeting in July 2001.

Final design and construction drawings will be prepared after the contractor has cleared the site for further investigations and survey.

3. Marketing and Design [Ross Jackson]

3.1 Environmental Enhancement and Community Projects

Community Meetings in July

Ross Jackson did a presentation – “Overview of Our Regional Parks and the Hutt River Trail,” to the Rotary Club of Port Nicholson. He, and Ranger Chris Wootton, also attended the monthly meeting of the Friends of Belmont Regional Park. The Friends continue to focus on threats to the Park and are planning an “Open Day” in the Park on 2 February 2003.

New Mountain bike Track in Belmont Regional Park

The Hutt Valley Mountain Bike Club recently opened a 2km track through the pine forest at Stratton Street. Named the “Danzig Track” after a dog belonging to one of the members, this is an excellent example of a community project in our Parks. With assistance and guidance from Ranger Chris Wootton, club members spent a total of 1600 person hours to construct the track, which will also be popular with walkers and runners.

3.2 Pencarrow Lighthouse Sunset Trip planned for ‘Push Play Day’

Jo Stanbury and Graham Laws are working with Sport Wellington Region and the City Councils planning this year’s ‘Push Play Day’ on 8 November 2002. “Push Play” is a national campaign to get people to exercise for 30 minutes a day.

We will again run a Pencarrow Lighthouse Sunset Trip at East Harbour Regional Park – providing the opportunity to learn about our rich maritime history and enjoy dramatic views on the eastern coastline of Wellington Harbour.

The City Councils will also be organising activities during the day. We will jointly promote the events in news releases, our web sites and newspaper advertising.

4. **Environmental Asset Management [Dr Philippa Crisp]**

4.1 **Control Operations**

Pest Animals

A pig control operation using professional operators with dogs was carried out in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Water Catchment Area for ten selected days during July/August. Twenty pigs were destroyed, of which nine were boars, the largest being 140 pounds. Wild pigs cause severe damage to the structure of the ground layer vegetation by rooting up extensive areas of earth. Stomach contents generally consisted of native berries, particularly hinau. Pig dietary intake and foraging habits would probably have a major adverse impact on forest health in the catchment if numbers are kept unchecked.

Professional goat hunters have completed the main part of their contract for goat control in Wainuiomata catchment during September. Only 20 goats were culled, which is an excellent result as it indicates that goat numbers have fallen in the catchment. Twelve Judas goats have now been released into the catchment and the use of this technology will enable us to keep the goat numbers down in a more cost-effective manner. Two Judas goats have been released into Belmont Regional Park as preparation for the goat control operation planned there later this year.

Two possum control operations in Belmont Regional Park are continuing; Cannon's Creek bait station operation and the Dry Creek trapping operation.

Pest Plants

Intensive weed control work is underway in Queen Elizabeth Park as part of Year 1 of the five-year control plan for the park. Boneseed, karo and Italian buckthorn has been controlled over around 40 ha. Preparation for old man's beard control in the Akatarawas and in Belmont Regional Park has begun.

4.2 **Monitoring**

Owen Spearpoint has completed the Hutt catchment rata photography and has begun setting up bird monitoring lines and training staff for this year's bird monitoring programme. New bird transects are to be started in Queen Elizabeth Park and the Hutt Catchment. Owen has also completed the mapping of *Rhabdothamnus solandri* (NZ gloxinia), the regionally rare plant in Battle Hill.

Rare Plant Exclosure

Robin Blake has been working on a rare plant exclosure for Kaitoke Regional Park. The site already contains swamp maire and is suitable for the rare plants; *Brachyglottis kirkii* and *Raukawa edgerleyi*. Specimens of the *Raukawa* were collected from Percy's Reserve where they had been grown on from cuttings taken from the Akatarawas. Some of these were given to the Karori sanctuary while the rest are to be planted at Kaitoke Regional Park in the exclosure.

5. Western Sector [Matt Ballantine]

5.1 Battle Hill Farm Forest Park

The Conservation Corps continues to work in Battle Hill carrying out tree planting and releasing.

Spring visits have started with a number of school groups visiting the park to participate in farm activities. A mob of sheep purchased over the last few months provides an opportunity for the students to observe a number of different breeds of sheep found in New Zealand.

5.2 Belmont Regional Park

Contractors have been working on repairing flood damage on the lower section of the Korokoro track to Cornish Street. The section between Cornish Street and the lower dam has been completed this period. Contractors will now move onto the track between the Oakleigh Street car park and the main Korokoro Dam.

An engineer is currently designing a new footbridge to replace an old farm bridge at Cannons Creek. It is necessary to replace this structure to allow a foot track link between Takapu Road and Cannons Creek. The track development and structure upgrade is part of the commitment by Wellington Regional Council to Friends of Maara Roa revegetation of the Cannons Creek catchment.

Waitangirua Farm is currently closed for lambing and will reopen on 30 October 2002. Closure for lambing is set by Landcorp. Not all parts of the Park are affected by the closure. This allows most people to continue using the Park during lambing.

There is a good level of interest by various independent groups to use the woolshed education facility at Stratton Street, as well as the Take Action Programme. Over the past month the following groups have used the facility:

- The Victoria University conservation studies group (2 days)
- The Normandale Residents Association
- The Hutt Valley Mountain Bike Club
- An organic weed control lecture

St Marks Church school attended the Take Action Programme for three days during August.

It is unfortunate to note that beehives at Dry Creek, Belmont Regional Park have the first recorded appearance of the Varoa mite in the Wellington Region. The mites are very destructive to bee larvae and affect hive and honey production. It is thought that the mites travelled to the Wellington area in a wild beehive carried in a saw log. The mites then dispersed from the log while it was held at a sawmill near Judgeford. MAF have been carrying out control work for the Varoa mites on hives in the area but it appears certain that the mite is now established in the Wellington Region.

5.3 Queen Elizabeth Park

A fence was erected around the sand dunes between the Whareroa picnic areas and the beach. This guides park users to the beach via the new access way structure.

Onehunga weed, Prickle weed and Cape Daisy were sprayed in both the MacKays Crossing and Paekakariki picnic areas to allow park visitors to use the areas without getting prickles in their feet! These areas will be fertilised and over seeded during spring.

Staff met with the Parks and Recreation Department, Kapiti Coast District Council about fencing the Road Reserve adjacent to the wetlands in the Northern Block. Both parties agreed to work with the adjoining property owner and erect a "No Dumping" sign.

5.4 Whitireia Park

Biosecurity staff are continuing to fill bait stations on the north-western coastal escarpment of the Park to eradicate the last few remaining possums left after initial possum control operations were conducted

Weed control on the coastal area will start soon. Contractors using abseiling equipment will be cutting and treating boneseed and boxthorn on steep cliff areas.

6 Eastern Sector [Fraser Oliver]

6.1 Akatarawa / Pakuratahi Forest

There have been seven motorised events organised by ARAC member clubs this period:

- Two 4WD training exercises for new club members.
- Five club events.

There were three separate Search and Rescue incidents in the forests. Two of these incidents involved Rangers and all three had successful conclusions.

Due to continuing logging operations, access gates into the Akatarawas must remain open during working hours. Unfortunately, this provides an opportunity for public access to the forest by unauthorised vehicles, i.e. motorcycles. Several opportunists have become aware of this situation and the patrolling Ranger has had to warn a number of motorists.

6.2 Kaitoke Regional Park

The ‘Rivendell’ site has been further landscaped and tidied up. Remaining debris and weeds around the old house sites have been removed. New plants, bark mulch and topsoil have been added to further enhance the area.

A Rimutaka Prison work gang has removed much of the gorse surrounding the campground area.

6.3 Wainuiomata

Assistant Rangers Bryan Leeney and Jeremy Collins have built and installed a new footbridge near the confluence of Telephone Creek in the Orongorongo Valley. The original structure was in a dangerous condition and was removed from the site. The bridge is located on an old section of track leading to the base of the Pack track and will therefore be a valued asset during public tours to the Orongorongo Valley.

Planting has continued this winter in the former ‘dust bowl’ site in the recreation area. Over 100 Kanuka, Flax and Toetoe have been added to the site and will over time, further enhance the area. Strategic planting, together with the new electronic gate has greatly reduced inappropriate activity in this area.

A new repeater has been installed on the main Wainui/Orongorongo ridge site. Coverage for radio use in both the Wainuiomata and Orongorongo catchments has been greatly improved. Although radio compatibility still needs to be rationalised, the bulk of the task is now complete. The new repeater will improve safety systems for both Landcare and Water Group divisions. Further testing will continue over the next few months.

MURRAY WAITITI
Manager, Parks and Forests

Kereru Found in Kaitoke Regional Park

Parks and Forests Activities



Landcare Support

Divisional Accountant : Tina Walker

Report for Period Ending 27 September 2002

Financial Summary

With two months gone in the new financial year Landcare is currently running \$115k ahead of its targeted surplus.

The key reasons behind this are a saving of around \$50k in depreciation and finance costs due to the delaying of some Flood Protection capital works last financial year, and savings in personnel due to the division not yet having a full contingent of staff on board.

Capital projects this financial year have taken off with a hiss and a roar with \$141k worth of work already undertaken. The majority of this has been spent in the Hutt River Flood Management Plan jobs as this area progresses.

**Landcare Division
Financial Summary Statement
For the 2 months ending 31 August 2002**

\$000

	Year to Date			Full Year	Full Year
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget
External Revenue	2,075	2,091	(16) F	12,566	12,566
Internal Revenue	152	181	(30) U	1,088	1,088
TOTAL REVENUE	2,227	2,273	(46) U	13,653	13,653
Direct Expenditure	1,039	1,149	111 F	8,052	8,052
Indirect Expenditure	635	686	51 F	4,044	4,044
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	1,674	1,835	161 F	12,095	12,095
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	553	438	115 F	1,558	1,558
Asset Acquisitions	-	35	35 F	696	696
Capital Projects	141	76	(66) F	2,706	2,706
NET FUNDS MOVEMENT (DEFICIT)	438	676	238 U	-	-

Project Updates

Online Resource Costing

This has now been rolled out to everyone within the Division who has access to SAP. After some initial hiccups, the system is now running smoothly, with staff entering their own resource allocation on a fortnightly basis.

Triple Bottom Line Reporting

Our efforts to report in a triple bottom line fashion are making some progress. I am investigating how we can revise our monthly reporting to incorporate areas of environmental and social activities including health and safety.

TINA WALKER

Divisional Accountant, Landcare