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Committee **Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee**
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Divisional Manager's Report

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of current activities and provide information of interest since the previous meeting held on 29 April 2004.

2. Divisional Matters

2.1 Dairying and Clean Streams Accord

The first step in implementing the Dairying and Clean Streams Accord was preparation of a Regional Action Plan for the Wellington region. This plan has now been finalised and will be launched at a short function at 12.45pm after the Committee meeting.

Representatives of the Fonterra Co-operative Group, the Shareholders Council, Federated Farmers, Fish & Game, as well as regional councillors, have been invited to attend.

2.2 Wairarapa Coastal Strategy – A Case Study

The Office of the Auditor-General has recently completed a report entitled "Local Authorities Working Together". The recently completed Wairarapa Coastal Strategy was one of the 12 case studies selected for this report.

The report examines the different aspects and features of the various case studies to help identify those factors that can help or hinder a successful joint project. The detailed report is available on the Auditor-General's website.

2.3 Manawatu Floods

Several councillors and staff were able to take part in a recent tour of some of the areas in the Manawatu that were severely affected by the February 2004 storm. My main impressions from this trip were:

- The sheer size of the flood flows overwhelmed the channels and flood defences in a number of areas. This was the kind of event that shapes our physical landscape.
- Large areas of the lower Manawatu are protected by stopbanks, often very large ones and usually designed for 100 year events, but even these can fail. When they do the water has to go somewhere and the effects weren't always predictable.
- Physical protection from floods and district planning requirements have to go hand in hand.
- Land use change is necessary in some of their upper catchments. There appears to have been a lot less tree planting over the years in their vulnerable catchments than has occurred in similar situations in the Wairarapa.
- A huge amount of restoration work has been completed in the few months since the event.
- The Manawatu-Wanganui region went early with their emergency management plan and arrangements under the new civil defence legislation and they state that this really paid off for all councils when this event arrived.

2.4 Review of Flood Event Arrangements

The Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management has commissioned an independent review of the arrangements during the February 2004 flood event. The intention is to identify the lessons learnt around the overall management of the event through the response and initial recovery phases.

A four person review team has been set up and is scheduled to report by mid-July. I was interviewed by two members of this team last month as part of their fact finding in relation to this region.

2.5 Communications

There has been a significant overall improvement in the Division's communications with our numerous ratepayers and stakeholders during the past few months as a result of having a dedicated Communications Advisor.

Two recent initiatives are the commencement of a monthly column about Greater Wellington activities in the Wairarapa Times Age, and the production of a quarterly rural services newsletter to all rural properties. The first of these newsletters will be delivered in mid-July.

2.6 Staffing Matters

Ted Taylor has commenced as Section Leader, Resource Investigations. Ted is an environmental chemist with wide experience in environmental matters, working for the Auckland Regional Council, as a consultant, and with ERMA.

Summer Warr has resigned her Environmental Scientist position after three years with the Council, to head overseas. Her knowledge and quality work will be missed. Alton Perrie has been appointed as her replacement and commences duties towards the end of the month. Alton has recently completed his MSc thesis on mudfish in the Waikato wetlands.

Sam Barrow has resigned as Hazards and Emergency Management Officer to undertake PhD study at Waikato University. Sam was in the position for over three years and put together the WELA Report and the Coastal Hazards Technical Report as part of the Coastal Strategy. A replacement will be sought shortly.

3. Biosecurity Department: (Wayne O'Donnell)

Bovine Tb

3.1 2002/03 Programme

The Mangaroa-Kaitoke operational area, which was carried over from the 2002/03 year, plus the 2003/04 control areas of this operation, are almost complete. This area is expected to be completed late July 2004 by Professional Guiding Services.

3.2 2003/04 Programme

Approved Programme

The approved programme for the 2003/04 year includes the following:

	AHB Approved Hectares
Possum control	333,783
Ferret control	31,770
Surveys	44,942
	410,495

Control Operations

To date the following contractors have been issued control contracts for the 2003/04 year:

	Possum (ha)	Ferret ha)	Survey (ha)	Total
GWRC BioWorks	173,418	23,828	22,349	219,595
Professional Guiding	45,509	2,874	3,102	51,485
J McCaslin	44,939	-	14,444	59,383

Target Pest Control	6,620	-	-	6,620
Horizons Regional Council	19,311	5,068	-	24,379
Central Trappers	4,700	-	-	4,700
Remove Control	39,286	-	5,047	44,333
Totals	333,783	31,770	44,942	410,495

3.3 2003/04 Programme Progress

All ferret control and survey operations for the 2003/04 year have been completed.

Approximately 77,500 hectares of possum control has not been completed and monitored as at 30 June 2004. However, approximately 36,000 hectares has received control and is awaiting performance monitors.

The following contractors have control work outstanding as at 30 June 2004:

Professional Guiding Services	8,665 hectares
Horizons Regional Council (Animal Pest Unit)	4,374 hectares
J G McCaslin	4,583 hectares
BioWorks	59,928 hectares

Professional Guiding Services, Horizons Regional Council and J G McCaslin are all expected to be completed in July. Horizons should have been completed by 30 June except that they have failed the Masterton Flats HR 1 strata twice.

It is disappointing that BioWorks have not completed their programme. They have 26,410 hectares waiting to be monitored and 33,518 hectares to be carried forward into the New Year. Staff resignations is the main reason BioWorks have not been able to complete their programme.

A 4,583 hectare strata in Whangaehu was removed from the BioWorks programme and contracted to J G McCaslin, when it became evident that BioWorks would not achieve their programme.

Two pig surveys have been progressing in the Otaki and Tinui areas over the last two years. These surveys will continue into the 2004/05 year.

Results: Otaki	-	22 samples	-	2 samples cultured (no BvTb identified)
Tinui	-	3 samples	-	all No Visible Lesions

Areas Completed

	Possum (ha)	Ferret (ha)	Survey (ha)	Total
GWRC BioWorks	11,3490	23,828	22,349	159,667
Professional Guiding	36,844	2,874	3,102	42,820
J McCaslin	40,356	-	14,444	54,800
Target Pest Control	6,620	-	-	6,620
Horizons Regional Council	14,937	5,068	-	20,005
Central Trappers	4,700	-	-	4,700
Remove Control	39,286	-	5,047	44,333
Totals	256,233	31,770	44,942	332,945

3.4 Monitoring Results

The following recent monitoring results have been recorded.

Operation	Strata	RTC	Contractor
Bideford	MR 2	0.2	Trend
Homewood-Riversdale	HR 3	0.2	BioWorks
Martinborough	MR 1	3.0	Trend
Mt Bruce-Waipoua	HR 1	0.2	BioWorks
Mt Bruce-Waipoua	HR 2	0.2	BioWorks
SE Wairarapa – Stage 2	MR 1	0.6	BioWorks
Stronvar	MR 1	3.9	Trend
Te Wharau	HR 2	0.4	BioWorks
Bideford	MR 7	2.3	Trend
East Alfredton	HR 1	1.7	BioWorks (failure)
Featherston	HR 2	0.4	BioWorks
Featherston Crown	HR 1	0.4	BioWorks
Kahutara-Pirinoa	HR 3	0.5	
Kahutara-Pirinoa	MR 5	0.0	Trend
Masterton Flats	HR 1	2.9	Horizons APU (failure)
Mataikona	HR 2	0.2	Professional Guiding Serv
Mataikona	HR 3	0.3	Professional Guiding Serv
Mt Bruce-Waipoua	MR 2	0.3	Trend
Otaki Buffer	MR 1	1.7	Trend
Ponatahi-Longbush	MR 1	1.2	Trend
Taueru-Maungaraki Ext	MR 1	2.3	Trend
Waiorongomai	MR 1	0.6	Horizons APU
Waiorongomai	MR 2	0.7	Horizons APU
Woodside	MR 1	0.3	BioWorks

3.5 2004/05 Vector Control

The Animal Health Board have approved the following programme for the 2004/05 year:

	AHB Approved Hectares
Possum control	349,767
Ferret control	35,461
Surveys	<u>89,668</u>
	474,896

Some of the possum control strata will only be undertaken once the outcome of trend monitors indicates that control is actually required.

The actual survey hectares will vary as specific survey areas within stratas need to be identified in conjunction with the Regional Disease Control Manager (Agri-Quality). Possums, ferrets and pigs will all be targeted within survey areas.

3.6 Areas Tendered for 2004/05

The following areas have been tendered and will be let early July:

SE Wairarapa – Stage 1	29,083 hectares	(9 stratas)
Martinborough	9,498 hectares	(1 strata)

3.7 Existing 2004/05 Commitments

The following areas were let during 2003/04 year for two-year contracts:

	Hectares
Pakowhai	6,867 (3 stratas – Professional Guiding Serv)
Castlehill	2,486 (2 stratas – J G McCaslin)
Tinui	3,847 (1 strata – J G McCaslin)
Bideford	1,830 (2 stratas – J G McCaslin)
Homewood-Riversdale	18,781 (4 stratas – BioWorks)
Te Wharau	4,804 (2 stratas – Professional Guiding Serv)
Taueru-Maungaraki	4,308 (1 strata – Professional Guiding Serv)
SE Wairarapa – Stage 1	5,542 (1 strata – J G McCaslin)

Summary

J G McCaslin	13,705
Professional Guiding Serv	15,983
BioWorks	<u>18,781</u>
	48,469

Pest Animals

3.8 Canada Geese Management – Update

The Manager, Biosecurity recently organised a meeting between Fish & Game and Federated Farmers representatives to discuss future options for management of Canada Geese in the Wairarapa. The meeting was well attended, with over 25 farmers present representing both valley and hill country interests.

One of the major contentious issues concerned the actual Canada Geese population resident in the Wairarapa. Fish & Game counts are completed during the moult period and are predominantly focused around Lake Wairarapa. Farmer representatives argued, however, that actual numbers were much higher with large numbers of birds now moulting in and around hill country lakes, dams and watercourses. Farmers were able to give first hand accounts of bird numbers in the hill country and the economic impacts they were having on new pasture. Lower Valley farmers explained the difficulties they were having getting new pasture sown following the recent February floods as hundreds of Canada Geese were causing significant damage in a single night. One farmer pointed out the environmental damage to wetlands and other watercourses caused by effluent pollution from large numbers of geese.

There was considerable discussion on the issue of future control options. Affected farmers wanted more flexibility to undertake control outside the recently extended hunting season. There was general agreement that professional hunters were required if shooting alone was to be successful in reducing the numbers. However, very few professionals currently exist. Options raised included introducing a year long hunting season, undertaking ‘harvesting’ during the moult period, aerial shooting, and egg pricking. Fish & Game also sought farmer support to allow groups of professional hunters onto their land when seasonal problems arose.

It was agreed that a smaller group containing representatives of both parties would meet again in late July/early August to discuss management options. The aim of this meeting would be to reach agreement on a number of objectives focussing principally on maintaining geese numbers to an agreed level. Greater Wellington staff will continue to act as facilitators.

3.9 Mosquitoes

In May 2004 an incursion of Southern Salt Marsh mosquitoes occurred in Marlborough and resulted in a significant amount of enhanced surveillance at identified high-risk sites within the Wairarapa. Samples of mosquito larvae and also adults from mosquito traps were sent to New Zealand Biosecure for identification. The Wairarapa mosquitoes were found to be common in New Zealand and presented no biosecurity threat. The Public Health Service is responsible for the surveillance and monitoring of mosquitoes and for responding to enquiries from the public.

3.10 New Brochure – Protecting Native Bush Habitats

A new brochure is being prepared to help herald the new qualifying process that allows private landowners with native habitat to get assistance with pest management. An outline of the three programmes (Advisory, Covenant and Key Native Ecosystem) was provided at the April 2004 meeting of the Committee.

The Biosecurity Department is committed to working with owners of native habitat whenever and wherever resources allow. The amount of assistance possible will hinge on the priority process, available funding and owner involvement. The brochure will focus on the theme that ecosystems need protection to enable forest regeneration, provide wildlife habitat, reduce flooding and erosion risks, improve water quality and to beautify the landscape.

The offer of a helping hand to protect native bush on private land is also a theme of the first quarterly Rural Services Newsletter due out this month.

3.11 Radio Interview

Two Biosecurity staff were involved in an interview for the National Radio programme 'Country Life' with host Alistair McAlpine. The subject matter was magpies and focussed on opinions following the outcome of the three-year research programme conducted by Landcare Research Ltd in association with several regional councils. The programme has not yet been aired.

3.12 Possum and Predator Control Contracts

Input contracts will be let for tender in six operational areas. Four of these are in Wellington City where Biosecurity staff or proven service providers have traditionally carried out the works primarily because of the emphasis that must be placed on risk management. It is now considered that there are sufficient competent contractors that can undertake these complex operations.

Performance based contracts will also be let for four areas within Hutt City District and one other within Wellington City.

The current complement of Biosecurity staff were unable to complete the Western Zone KNE and Reserves programmes for the last financial year. The 2004-05 programme is slightly larger mainly through increased funding from Wellington City Council. There is an expectation of further use of resources to meet the demands of advisory visits and some works generated as part of the QEII Trust covenanting process. There is an increasing demand to manage the upward trend of supporting biodiversity. The utilisation of external contractors will assist with this.

3.13 Communications

Biosecurity staff provided a display at the Lifestyle Farmers Field day at Otaki on 15 May. This was the thirteenth consecutive year that Greater Wellington (and the Biosecurity Department in particular) has supported this event. The organiser, Peter Burke, reported that there was a record 80 exhibitors and that about 5,000 people attended the event. He also congratulated GW staff on

putting together an excellent display that was imaginative and attractive. A decision has been made to stage the event again next year and some site bookings have been confirmed.

Staff were also present to give presentations at the Volunteers Day of the NZ Ecological Restoration Network at Wallaceville on 8 May and at the local branch of the Small Farmers Association at Upper Hutt on 26 June.

3.14 Wrights Hill Feral Pigs

Following the release of an article in the Dominion Post newspaper on 3 May staff were inundated with calls from the media, hunters and people concerned about animal welfare. The seemingly small issue of wild pigs turning up in a Karori suburb captivated the media with some 25 articles reported in 15 provincial newspapers. Staff have destroyed five of the pigs and there have been reports that others are still in the vicinity. It is thought that the pigs were bred elsewhere and then released on the south coast.

Pest Plants

3.15 Eradication species

Unfortunately, sites of various eradication species continue to be located on a fairly regular basis. In several cases the infestations are considered large enough for a contractor to be engaged to undertake the work.

New infestations:

African feathergrass:

One site in Lower Hutt. Contractor is to undertake control.

Blue passionflower

One site in Upper Hutt. Service delivery work

One site in Featherston. Service delivery work

Moth plant:

One site in Wellington City. Contractor is to undertake control.

One site at Featherston Service delivery work.

Madeira vine:

Two sites in Wellington City. Contractor is to undertake control.

3.16 Vigilant Species

Several new sites of mile-a-minute have been located throughout various areas of the region. Large infestations have been recorded on railway embankments along the Old Hutt Road.

Several new infestations of monkey apple have been recorded throughout the region. These two species appear to be more prevalent than other vigilant species.

3.17 Nursery Inspections

After the discovery of lagarosiphon being sold at an outlet in Kapiti, a letter is to be sent to all outlets outlining their responsibilities.

3.18 Class A

After the discovery of water hyacinth in ponds at Upper Hutt and Otaki, MAF were contacted. MAF inspections were completed and the infestations cleared.

The Department of Conservation has secured records from the person responsible for the distribution of various aquatic species around the region. We have been working in conjunction with DoC to undertake inspections of known sites.

3.19 Eelgrass

Inspections have been undertaken of nineteen suspected sites in Wellington and the Hutt City area.

Thirteen sites contained eelgrass. The largest site of eelgrass is about 25m². A contractor will be used to control the larger sites and GW staff will control the remainder. One site also contained egeria.

3.20 Publicity

Staff have been involved in the development of the “Plant Me Instead” booklet being produced by DoC. This should be available in the near future.

On 3 June a meeting was held at the Upper Hutt office in relation to the spread of aquatic pests. Greater Wellington, DoC, and Fish and Game were invited to the meeting. Unfortunately, the latter could not attend. The meeting involved Biosecurity staff as well as Corporate Communications staff from both GW and DoC. It is intended to publicise and highlight concerns through media releases, joint information pamphlets and letters. MAF will be invited to attend future meetings.

Biosecurity staff gave a talk to a small farmers group at the Hutt depot on plant and animal problems. The organisers would like to keep this as an annual event so new members can benefit.

A static display was organised at Berhampore nursery over the weekend of their annual sales. Particular interest was shown in the “Pest Plants” and “Bad Berries” pamphlets.

Kapiti Issues

3.21 Eradication Species

Sweet pea shrub:

The sweet pea sites in Porirua have been controlled as part of a two stage contract for this eradication species. A further site discovered has been earmarked for control.

Madeira vine:

Two extra sites of madeira vine were located and have now been controlled as part of the contract. The sifting of soil was required at both sites to remove the corms.

3.22 Containment Species

Evergreen buckthorn:

The basal control of buckthorn at Kenepuru Hospital has thrown up mixed results. Some trees are showing signs of demise while others are only yellowing while others are showing little effect. As the control was done late in the season the true effects may not be apparent for some months.

3.23 Suppression Species

Banana passionfruit:

When the initial programme to remove banana passionfruit from the Otaki Gorge was introduced, a survey area was determined that supposedly captured all the infested properties. However, as the survey has progressed the net has had to be cast wider. There is now a realisation that the removal of this species from the Gorge is going to take much longer than originally anticipated.

3.24 Contracts

Initial work on the Otaki and Waikanae Rivers has been completed.

3.25 Aquatic Incursions

There has been a vast number of aquatic weed incursions (and several fish), mainly in the Kapiti area. In Kapiti forty-seven ponds/waterbodies have been inspected. Twenty were found to contain eelgrass. Two contained hornwort. Eight were found to have egeria, once thought absent in the Wellington Region. In one waterbody of the Reikorangi catchment this weed has shown evidence of making its way into a tributary of the Waikanae River, threatening the entire catchment.

Fourteen contained lagarosiphon major. A pet shop was also found to be selling it. The plants were confiscated and the owner officially warned about the consequences of such actions. (This incident initiated the letter to plant outlets).

Two ponds contained water hyacinth. This is a MAF class A plant. MAF controlled the larger site and staff of GW the smaller site, as there were only six plants present.

4. Land & River Operations Department: (Ian Gunn)

4.1 Biodiversity Update

A key part of the Biodiversity strategy is the selection of a suite of diverse and significant catchments where riparian management initiatives will add value to catchments. Twelve catchments have been selected on a region-wide basis and the ground-truthing of each catchment is currently underway.

Upon final selection each of the “at risk” sections of waterway within the catchment will receive assistance with planting programmes. Landowners will be expected to complete the fencing, but the balance of the work will be established and maintained through the first two years with grants from Greater Wellington.

4.2 Land Management Planting Programmes

A total of 28 conservation woodlots have been approved for planting this coming winter. A total of 156 hectares will be planted with a range of species under this initiative. Fencing is underway at many of the sites.

Planning for the poplar and willow pole-planting programme is also in full swing. A total of 15,000 poles are to be planted at a range of sites throughout the region. Soil moisture conditions are currently very good and the first poles were planted in mid-June.

4.3 Sustainability Showcase

The winners of the Wellington Farm Environment Awards for 2004, Richard and Karen Kershaw, attended the inaugural Sustainability Showcase in Hamilton on 9/10 June. The Awards organisers accompanied them. This event included all the regional winners, and a wide range of additional participants, including sponsors, organisers and members of the National Trust. The two-day event included a visit to the winning Waikato farm, workshops, keynote address, and an official dinner.

4.4 Stopbank Damage – Akura Conservation Centre

The most recent flood event in the Waipoua River, which occurred over 20 and 21 June has removed protective willow planting and eroded some 60 metres of stopbank. This part of the nursery is now highly vulnerable to extensive flooding and further erosion of Council land.

Site meetings have been held to view possible repair options. Funding from the Waipoua River Scheme is under extreme pressure from this recent event, however the threat of further encroachment of the river into the nursery is high and a suitable funding package needs urgent attention.

4.5 Conservation Forestry – Tauanui Soil Conservation Reserve

Logging has been progressing steadily in Tauanui throughout May and June. Roadline timber is of a high quality by comparison to Hiwinui. While progress has been slow due to the steep terrain, the combination of equipment available has seen some very large trees felled with machine assistance so that the logs can be processed safely and loaded out to the landings already established.

Windthrown logs from the February flood events have been salvaged. Some enterprising marketing by our agent has seen even the sap stained logs marketed at a good price. Fallen trees and standing trees with severely damaged bark suffer a cosmetic degrade that colours the wood a bluish grey and would normally see the timber rejected at the sawmill. A market that will accept the timber sees it sawn for decking and then tanalised. The dye in the treatment process is darker than the discolouration from sap stain.

Road formation has followed the roadline harvesting with metalling being completed between rain periods. Local metal including old erosion deposits has enabled quick and relatively cheap metalling.

Netting fences to aggregate small flood debris have been built alongside three sections of the access road that were damaged in the February flood event. Fine debris builds up in the netting slowing the flow and allowing more fine material to settle and build up on the outside of the curve. Willow plantings are planned for late winter to further protect these areas.

4.6 Flood Damage Repair Work

Good progress has been made with flood repair work following the February flood events. The ongoing high river levels are causing problems in some rivers, e.g. Waipoua River. The wet conditions are also producing surface flooding issues, typically due to a lack of maintenance. Staff are approaching the landowners to convince them to clean out their waterways.

All river schemes have held their annual advisory scheme committee meetings and have adopted their flood damage schedule. Repair work will continue in this new financial year, although currently there are restrictions due to the trout spawning season.

4.7 Te Whiti Stopbank Upgrade

Work commenced in late June on upgrading the old Te Whiti stopbank to the 1940 levels. A consent has been granted to move the stopbank inland, opposite “The Cliffs” area. Considerable ongoing consultation has been required with the upstream neighbours.

4.8 Barrage Gates Painting

Four of the six gates have been painted to specifications. Due to the February flood events the remaining two gates will now be painted during spring/summer.

4.9 Lake Opening Tender

At the present time the contract to open the mouth of the Ruamahanga River at Lake Ferry is being advertised. Peter Warren is the current contractor. The achievement of a timely and efficient opening at times of river mouth closure is a key component to the success of the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme.

4.10 Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme Review

Progress with the review of the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme continues. At the present time hydraulic models are being developed for a number of scenarios, e.g. current situation, stopbanks down. This information will greatly assist the preparation of the new rating classification.

Shortly there will be a meeting to discuss river management options with landowners on the Tauherenikau River upstream of the SH2 bridge. Considerable cross-subsidisation has occurred in recent years to manage this section of the river.

There will be a meeting later with the landowners downstream of SH2.

4.11 Rule 49A of the Freshwater Plan – Vehicle Access along Stopbanks

Greater Wellington Regional Council proposes to introduce a rule to control the movement along stopbanks of vehicles greater than 9 tonnes. Mr John Barton appealed this rule seeking that either the rule be removed or that his property be exempted from the rule.

The Environment Court heard the appeal early in July and a decision is awaited.

4.12 Application to Modify and Use an Existing Stopbank for Heavy Vehicle Access within a Designated Area

Following a recent decision by the Environment Court it has been necessary to consider an application, as in 4.11, from Mr John Barton under Section 176(1)[b] of the Resource Management Act. Members will be aware that John Barton wishes to use the stopbank, south of his property and situated on an unformed paper road, as an accessway to his dairyshed, for 44 tonne dairy tankers.

On the basis of technical input from the consulting engineers, ABUILD and Gary Williams, the application was declined. Key reasons for the decision are as follows:

- The proposed use will prevent or hinder the stopbank fulfilling its role as a flood prevention structure and is inconsistent with the designated purpose of the land.

- The application is inconsistent with the Resource Management Act 1991 which promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.
- The proposed use will adversely change the integrity and scale of the use of the stopbank, and insufficient measures are proposed to address actual and potential adverse effects on the stopbank.
- The stopbank has already been identified as vulnerable and the Council intends to rebuild it further inland in the near future, meaning that this application is potentially unnecessary (the applicant has however elected to proceed despite being advised of this).
- Given the circumstances, there is no evidence that declining the application will cause, or is likely to cause, serious hardship to the applicant.
- The proposal is not a reasonable use for a stopbank that is vulnerable, and does not adequately address the Council's concerns.
- Any modification of the proposed application will not allow the stopbank to operate effectively and modifications to allow the proposal to proceed would most likely prevent or hinder the planned relocation of the present stopbank.

Barry Harris, as Chief Executive Officer, has signed off the report. Copies of the decision are available on request.

4.13 River Works Programme

Pole planting and the placement of willow clumps is under way, dependent on river levels.

4.14 Gravel Seminar

Gary Williams, consulting engineer, recently held a seminar on gravel processes for scheme advisory committee chairmen, Department of Conservation, Fish & Game, and GWRC staff. There was an excellent attendance.

Gary presented information on how gravel is produced, moved (by the multi spiralling motion of the water), aggradation, degradation, local effects and the impact of time (this is an ongoing process and changes often after decades). One interesting point made was that at the time of the last Ice Age New Zealand was larger with predominantly tundra vegetation, i.e. nothing is static, there are always changes especially in vegetation.

4.15 Kopuaranga River – Willows

For some years local landowners have been concerned about the impact of large 'old man' willows on flooding in the Kopuaranga River. The February flood events have highlighted that some sections of the river are choked with willows.

Murray MacKenzie, Field Supervisor, has been mapping the willow densities since Christmas.

By the end of July staff hope to have held a public meeting to assess the level of interest for the development of a willow clearing scheme. At this time it is not considered that there will be wholesale willow clearing, rather strategic removal of willows and probably replanting with appropriate natives. Staff expect involvement from the Department of Conservation and Fish & Game.

4.16 Technical Services Activities

The Technical Services workload over the last quarter has largely focused on work for the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme Review.

The Lower Valley review project continues with LIDAR data being used in flood modelling development and results being supplied to Phillip Wallace, as well as further survey work in the Tauherenikau area to check road levels against extreme flood levels.

The Waiohine River five yearly survey has been completed. The resurvey involved the surveying of 42 cross sections of the river from the upper gorge to the Ruamahanga River confluence. Results show that there has been a continued degrade trend through the Waiohine River system.

The new digital aerial photo process has seen most major rivers and streams in the Wairarapa flown and photographed and the images stored in the Council's GIS system.

Photo booklets have been produced for all river schemes.

A large number of private farm mapping requests have been processed and more are expected with the article in the recent rural services newsletter on the Technical Services farm mapping.

5. Planning & Resources Department: (Steve Blakemore)

5.1 Environmental Incidents

Date	Complaint	Outcome
30 April	Smoke pollution from burning at industrial site, Masterton	Letter written to company detailing what is allowed to be burned.
4 May	Odour from industrial site, Masterton	Air monitoring station has been set up next to this site, which has a long history of complaints.
5 May	Dead goose reported on Henley Lake, Masterton	Considered to be natural occurrence, not investigated further.
5 May	Water pollution from dairy farm, Carterton	Found to be caused by drainage work. No further action taken.
12 May	Water pollution from piggery, Carterton	Confirmed to be piggery effluent. Council currently working with owner to improve practices.
13 May	Complaint about sewage system on lifestyle block, Carterton	Investigated jointly with District Council. Follow up action being taken by District Council.
13 May	Stream dried up in Masterton	Found to be due to subdivision developer diverting entire stream. Enforcement action currently being considered.
17 May	Sewage overflow in Greytown	On-going problem sewer. District Council advise that it is to be replaced this year.
17 May	Concern over use of dynamite on coast, South Wairarapa	A consented activity, which was fully complying
24 May	Thinnings from pine forest falling into river, Masterton.	Investigated. Thinnings have subsequently been removed.
23 June	Flooding caused by debris accumulation, Carterton.	Landowner removed debris.
29 June	Approximately 100 kg of dog faeces dumped in the Waingawa riverbed, Carterton.	Cleaned up by staff.

5.2 Notified Consents

<i>Consent Application</i>	<i>Status</i>
Sewage discharge. Application for variation – Carterton District	Application withdrawn.
Water Races - Carterton District (2)	Further information to be provided by applicant now that definitive judgement has been given on the Alexander case.
Water Races - South Wairarapa District (2)	Final proposed conditions with the applicant. Hearing to be scheduled.
Featherston Sewage – discharge	Hearing to be scheduled.
Hammond and Co. Ground Water Take – Papawai	Unable to get affected party sign off under limited notification. Hearing scheduled.
East Leigh Ltd – Riversdale. 140 lot subdivision. Land Use Consents (3), Water Permit, Discharge Permits (3)	Application to be jointly determined with Masterton District Council as the lead agency. On hold until further information provided by applicant.

Coastal protection Works - Castlepoint - Masterton District (5)	Notified on 12 June 2004. Submissions closed on 9 July 2004.
Sewage discharge. – Lake Ferry settlement – South Wairarapa District (3)	Application received 17 June 2004. Additional information requested from applicant. Likely to require a joint hearing.

5.3 Enforcement

Abatement Notices

Nil issued

Infringement Notices

An infringement notice was issued to a contractor for illegal diversion of a stream at Solway, Masterton.

An appeal of an Infringement Fee was received from C J Engel. After meeting with the appellant and considering the relevant information, the appeal was declined under the Manager's delegated authority.

5.4 Appeals

<i>Appellant</i>	Nature of Appeal	Status
I Alexander	Appeal of abatement notice requiring irrigation to cease	Favourable decision received. Since advised of appeal to High Court. This has not been properly served and strike out may be sought. <i>(Refer separate report)</i> .

5.5 Freshwater Plan Change

Four submissions were received in relation to the Mangatarere River Water Allocation Plan proposals, and these were subsequently advertised for cross submission. Cross submissions closed on 9 July 2004 with two cross submissions received from Federated Farmers and Department of Conservation. As these take opposing views a hearing is proposed.

5.6 Water Meters

The deadline for some 100 water meters to be installed by consent holders is 31 July 2004. This has engendered some problems in terms of installation and the availability of meters.

Staff have rung each consent holder and have met with installers to discuss progress. Whilst many installations have been contracted out, most are awaiting supply of their required meter. The situation will be reassessed after the deadline, with the intention to have all meters in place before the irrigation season commences in late spring.

5.7 Wairarapa Engineering Lifelines Association

A well attended annual general meeting was held on 6 July. Updates were given on work undertaken to increase the resilience of infrastructure to hazardous events and presentations were given on the February flood, Masterton fault line investigations and the study of soil liquefaction potential in the lower Ruamahanga basin.

5.8 Wardells Rating Curves

Good gaugings of the large 15 February flood was achieved with the accuracy of the equipment subsequently checked and confirmed by NIWA.

Since purchase of new equipment in 1997 it has been possible to gauge three large floods at this site. In the 33 years prior to this date, gauging of floods above four metres was not achieved. These additional recent statistics at the top end of the scale have a marked effect on rating curves, which provide, flood return periods and design standards for structures such as bridges and stopbanks.

Because of the importance of this data, NIWA were engaged to peer review the new rating curves. This confirmed the approach and calculations made by staff. As a result, the largest gauged flood of 21 October 1998 has had its return period reduced from 60 years to 36 years.

This information has been formally advised to Masterton District Council who are preparing a report on the location of the Homebush sewage ponds, and to the Council's Engineers who are designing stopbanks downstream at Te Whiti.

5.9 Wairarapa District Plan

Information has been supplied for inclusion in the draft plan, covering flood hazards, river erosion zones, fault lines, and significant native ecosystems in the coastal environment. It is intended that the draft plan will be publicly available in around two months time.

5.10 Waitangi Tribunal

The Tribunal has commenced hearing Wairarapa claims and met recently at Papawai to receive submissions. Some submissions included criticism of the Council's role and performance in resource management matters. This included the Ruamahanga gravel consent which was determined by the Environment Court. Crown counsel will appear before the Tribunal in December, and staff have provided relevant information to them on the issues raised.

5.11 Hydrology

Rainfall

Wairarapa rainfall totals for June were all above average for the three representative sites. In the Tararua Ranges, the Angle Knob site had a June total of 1164mm, 177%

of the June average. This was the second highest on record going back to 1975 (highest 1269mm June 2002).

The Wairarapa Valley site at Alloa, just north of Featherston, had 170mm - 152% of the average for June. This site has not been above average since the wet summer months of January and February.

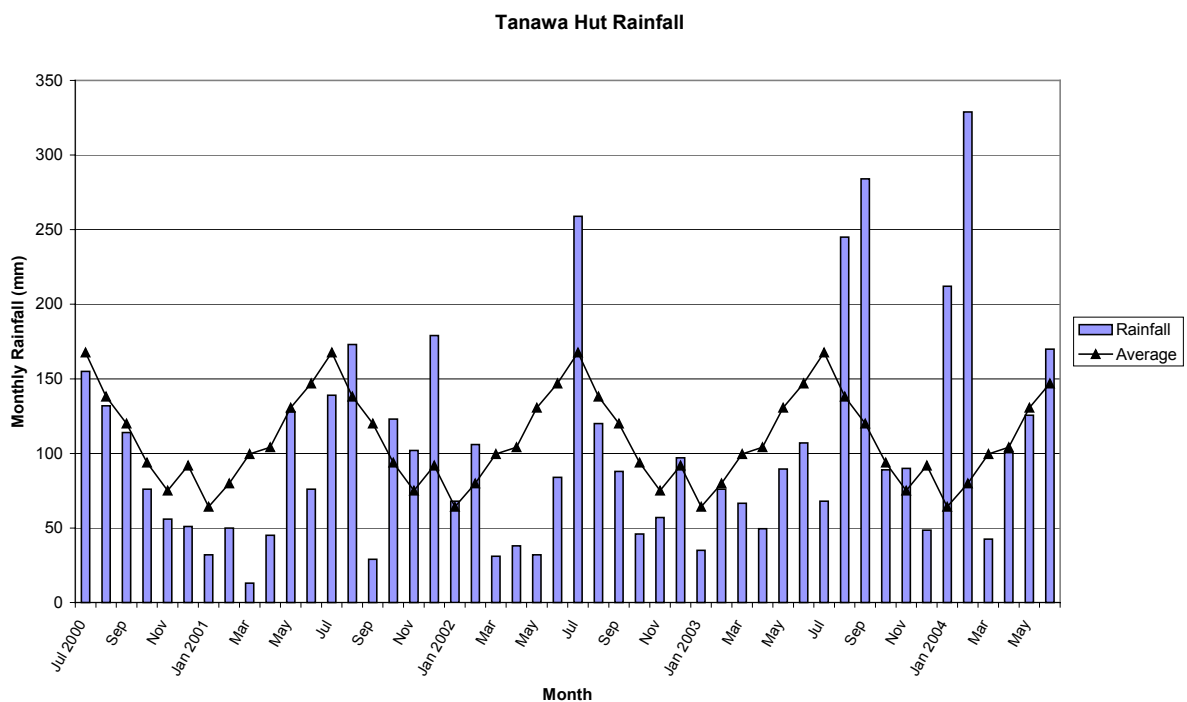
The eastern hill country site at Tanawa Hut, at the head of the Tinui valley also had 170mm, 116% of June's normal. This has been one of the wettest summer/autumn periods at this site for a number of years with only March's total being noticeably below average.

These wetter conditions will result in good lambing percentages and have enabled the Council's tree and pole planting programmes to get away to a good early start.

The rainfall for May and June for the three representative sites is given in the following table:

Site	Location	June		May		June	May
		mm	Average	mm	Average	% of average	
Angle Knob	Tararua Ranges	1164	656	775	604	177	128
Alloa	Middle Valley	170	112	58	95	152	60
Tanawa Hut	Eastern Hills	170	144	126	131	118	96

Monthly rainfall for Tanawa Hutt since July 2000 is given in the following graph.



Rivers

River flows for June were well above average for both the Tararua and valley catchments based on the two representative sites covered in this report.

The high rainfall in the valley, the higher Tararua Ranges and eastern hill country all contributed to the higher flows.

Site	June		May		June	May
	Flow	Average	Flow	Average	% of average	
Waiohine	47	28	20.7	23.2	171	89
Waihenga	179	112	64.8	79.7	160	81

NB: Flows recorded as m³/s

Floodwarning

There have been significantly more flood events for the recent year ended 30 June than in the previous year. The month of June was no exception with 22 lists issued warning in 6 separate events. Lake Onoke remained open to the sea throughout June.

These statistics are summarised in the following table

	June	Full Year to 30 June 2004	Previous Year Ending 30 June 2003
No. of events	6	27	10
No of Lists Issued	22	129	47

The Huangarua River has experienced several floods this year with the 15 February 2004 flood being the largest. Flood alarms on this river were triggered five times in the past six months.

6. Recommendation

That the report be received and its contents noted.

Colin Wright
Divisional Manager, Wairarapa