

# **Flood Protection Manager's report for period ending 23 July 2004**

## **1. Manager's comments**

### **1.1 Year completed**

The Department has just completed another very good year including coping with the disruption and additional work caused by the February flood events. Thankfully we weren't hit as hard by the February storm as in the Manawatu or more recently in the Bay of Plenty.

The February floods impacted in many ways including major disruptions to planned maintenance programmes, delays to construction of capital works (Belmont and Strand Park), delays to the Hutt River bed level survey, and slowing of rock supplies to the Otaki River (caused by the Manawatu demand).

Overall while a number of projects are not fully completed, or as far advanced as anticipated, we are in a sound position going into the new financial year. Thanks to a huge effort by the operations team the flood damage repairs are all but completed and routine maintenance is not far behind schedule. Provided the rock keeps coming in, the major realignment work at Strand Park is ready to proceed this summer. The Waitohu investigation is also progressing nicely and the design of the Jim Cooke Park realignment work, Waikanae, is also progressing well.

### **1.2 Mabey Road development**

The Mabey Road subdivision and redevelopment project is proceeding exceedingly well. In particular, the \$3.2million achieved for the 2.1 Ha of surplus land at auction on 22 July was a stunning result. We still have the house to sell which has a valuation of \$245,000.

The creation of the new depot site, and entrance driveway from Mabey Road is largely complete. The new site is now fenced (as part of the subdivision), new driveway and entrance formed. In the yard we have painted the depot buildings, reorganised storage areas and landscaped the boundaries and entrance. Jeff Evans and his team have worked really hard to create a depot which is a great place to work from and they are proud of.

### **1.3 Flood damage claim**

The Council has lodged a claim for Government assistance for the costs of flood repairs following the February 2004 storm. Advice from the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management, who are processing the claim, is that the claim is worth pursuing. The Ministry is however, after some additional information to ensure the claim meets the criteria for assistance. I will be working with Ian Gunn, Manager Land and River Operations (Wairarapa) over the next week or so to put together this additional information.

## **2. Waikanae River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]**

### **2.1 Friends of the Waikanae River Inc.**

The Friends held their AGM on 23 June 2004. Thirty people attended the meeting which was followed by a presentation from Nga Uruora Kapiti Project Inc who are dedicated to the restoration of native forest habitat along the Paekakariki escarpment coastal. Overall the Friends is functioning well with good support from the local community.

## **2.2 Jim Cooke Park realignment**

Three options for river training have been prepared for the reach and these are now being used to begin the consultation process. Meetings have been held with local Iwi and DOC as well as the Friends of the River. Once this first round of consultation has been completed GW staff will work with the design team to finalise a preferred river training approach. The current programme for construction is for work to begin in January 2005 although potential difficulties with the supply of rock may affect the proposed start date.

## **3. Otaki River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]**

### **3.1 Friends of the Otaki River**

There are no matters to report at present.

### **3.2 Flood hazard mapping**

KCDC has approved the new flood hazard plans for the Kapiti Coast District Plan and officers are preparing to formally notify the plan change. We have yet to be advised of the actual date for notification.

### **3.3 Winstones Walkway**

The construction of the walkway past Winstones Aggregates processing plant is well underway. A three metre wide track has been cut into the existing bank and concrete blocks placed to create a safety barrier between the track and the plant. GW staff will sow the area in grass in September 2004.

Restoration of the disturbed area with native planting is being considered. We envisage that the Friends Group and others will assist with these initiatives over the coming years. Construction of the track was delayed as a result of the additional work caused by the February floods. However it is hoped that an official opening will be able to be held at about the time of the next Otaki Friends walkover later this year.

### **3.4 Chrystals Extended Stopbank**

The likelihood of these works being brought forward has generated a great deal of interest within the community, particularly from the landowners likely to be directly affected. Preliminary meetings have been held with two affected landowners, about the proposed stopbank alignment. We will also discuss the matter with Tranzrail. The design work is not programmed to start until the 2005/06 financial year but we are taking the initiative and discussing the project with these landowners so that they can factor the proposed stopbank into their planning.

## **4. Hutt River floodplain management [Daya Atapattu]**

### **4.1 Ava to Ewen project**

Strand Park river realignment

Cashmore Contracting Ltd (CCL) made a solid start with the river realignment contract during the 2003/04 financial year. However, rock delivery to site was slower than planned.

Construction of the Strand Park viewing platform was completed in June 2004. The sign was installed and the platform is now open to the public.

CCL has fenced off the rock stockpile area in Ava Park. About 1300 tonnes of rock riprap was delivered to stockpile by 30 June 2004. Approximately 30,000 tonnes of rock is required to complete the river realignment. The contractor is planning to deliver 550 tonnes of rock per week until earth works commence in September 2004 and then continue to supply at an enhanced rate during construction.

However, the Linton Quarry in Palmerston North, CCL's rock supply sub-contractor, is currently struggling to meet the weekly delivery targets. We will want to be satisfied that a reliable rock supply is in place by September 2004 before allowing the river realignment work to commence. We will closely monitor rock delivery during the next couple of months and take any remedial measures necessary.

### Opahu Stream pump station

A concept design for the Opahu Stream pump station was completed on target. GWRC has granted resource consents for the pump station. Detailed design of the pump station and associated culvert extension and outlet channel works has commenced.

We plan to engage an engineering consultant to undertake the detailed design of the eastern stopbank from Ewen Bridge to Ava Bridge, the Ava Bridge edge straightening works and then supervise the construction. We are currently preparing a Request for Tender document for these professional services.

## **4.2 Belmont improvements**

All planned structural and environmental works were completed by June 2004. However, following further investigations additional minor works are planned for the 2004/05 financial year to address issues raised during consultation over the proposed district plan changes.

About 3,800 native plants were planted as part of the environmental planting programme at Belmont. Two successful communities planting days were held on 12 June 2004 and 26 June 2004. The community planted about 900 plants and Excell Corporation Limited the rest.

## **4.3 Whirinaki Crescent stopbank upgrade**

The preliminary design is essentially complete. At this stage initial indications are that the cost of the upgrade will exceed the available budget of \$544,000 by up to \$200,000.

One of the major issues remaining to be resolved is the stopbank alignment along the Wellington Golf Club boundary. The Golf Club prefers an alignment that encompasses their proposed residential development. We are currently working with the Golf Club and their surveyors to develop the new alignment, and expect to report a preferred alignment and a refined cost estimate to the September 2004 Hutt River Advisory Committee.

## **4.4 Hutt River bed level survey**

Connell Wagner Ltd have now completed the Hutt River Cross Section survey, within the approved contract sum. The February floods delayed the field work by about six weeks.

Susan Borrer, Flood Protection Engineer, is now analysing the survey data from the cross section survey. We expect to report the outcomes of the survey to the September 2004 Hutt River Advisory Committee.

#### 4.5 Implementing non-structural measures

We are making progress in implementing the HRFMP non-structural measures.

Pre-notification consultation over the proposed HCC plan changes is well advanced. The Belmont community has significant concerns over the remaining hazards following completion of the works. We are currently investigating the issues raised by the community. Gary Williams, River Engineering consultant, and Civil Design Services are engaged to assist with this work.

A public meeting was held on 22 July 2004 to discuss preliminary findings and a way forward. We also plan to meet with residents again in early September 2004 to present what GWRC/HCC officers intend to recommend to the September 2004 Advisory Committee regarding the proposed District Plan changes.

Emergency Management officers of the three councils have completed five out of six projects programmed for the 2003/04 financial year. One of the projects completed was a study, by Opus International Consultants, which identifies potential landslide sites along the Hutt River.

### 5. Planning and development services [Phillip Purves]

The following summarises the formal, written requests for information or advice attended to during June 2004, and gives the 2003/04 totals.

	June 2004	YTD
Requests brought forward	18	29
Additional requests received	19	135
Responses provided	21	148
Outstanding requests	16	16

The revised flood hazard information for the Kapiti Coast is now being used as the basis for flood level recommendations in that area.

### 6. Investigations [Phillip Purves]

#### 6.1 Waiwhetu Stream floodplain management study

Scoping of the proposed Waiwhetu Stream flood hazard investigation is nearing completion and it is planned to report to the Committee in September 2004. In the meantime the opportunity has been taken to commission an aerial laser survey, while the equipment is available in New Zealand. This will ensure that the necessary ground data will be available for the study to commence this financial year.

## **6.2 Waitohu flood hazard assessment**

The technical investigation reports have been completed to the final draft stage ready for publishing once the consultation programme has been completed. A separate progress report on the project is included as an item on this agenda.

## **7. Operations**

### **7.1 Wellington [Jeff Evans]**

#### **Hutt River**

With the construction season behind us and the winter months now here, we are preparing ourselves for a busy planting season. Staff are in the process of cutting willow poles and wands from river side willow stands. We plan to plant 3,500 willows along the river edge and 3,400 natives up on the berms.

Landscaping of the old Whakatiki shingle plant site continues. Planting and constructing a new car parking area is still to be completed.

Constructing the Norfolk Street stopbank and assisting with the Belmont edge protection works also kept operations staff busy over the last period.

#### **Hutt River Trail**

The trail has been resurfaced through the old nursery site at Silverstream. The new section of trail at Belmont will now be added to the maintenance programme.

We are mindful that the addition of new areas of trail, and its continued increase in popularity, is increasing maintenance costs. Maintenance and resurfacing of these new areas will stretch existing budgets.

#### **Hutt River ranging services**

There has been some vehicle damage to grass berms but it is not as bad as last winter. Some areas have been blocked off and planted to counter this. It has also been quiet for rubbish dumpings. Only one abandoned car in June down from five the previous month.

Sadly, a fatal car accident occurred late in the month at Taita Gorge. A car lost control, hit a lamppost, smashed through the nursery fence and ended up on the river trail in pieces.

#### **Watercourses**

Willow planting in the Wainuiomata River is underway as part of restoring eroded bank edges resulting from the February floods. Many of the edges are still very vulnerable to erosion and it will take several years for the willows to become established.

Over the period fallen trees have been removed from the Mangaroa River, Wainuiomata River, Pinehaven Stream, Hulls Creek, Kenepuru Stream, Speedys Stream, Porirua Stream and Waiwhetu Stream. Trees to note included a huge macrocarpa tree which fell into the Porirua Stream at Glenside and took two days to cut and remove using a large digger. A large willow tree in the Pinehaven Stream required specialised tree felling equipment to have it removed.

## Work for other departments

Work has been undertaken for NIWA at the Pauatahanui water level site, and for Resource Investigations at the Waikanae recorder and the IBM bore sites.

## 7.2 Kapiti [Garry Baker]

### Otaki River

June saw the delivery of most of the remaining maintenance rock enabling top ups and repairs to be completed at Upper Taylors, and to the Lethbridge rock lining.

The Lutz debris fences, damaged in the February floods have been repaired and re-planted.

The annual willow planting programme is underway with the crew working their way up the river through the scheduled areas.

### Waitohu Stream

The annual stream clearing run between Askews' and Julls' was completed. The work included stream channel realignment, clearing of flood debris and planting willow and poplar poles along the bank edges.

The Pritchard Group extracted 2,500 cubic metres of gravel from the "deposition area" on the Katihiku Trust land below the Rail Bridge.

### Watercourses

The annual machine-clearing run of all minor watercourses has been completed.

## 7.3 Operations Support [Steve Murphy]

### Asset Management

Asset Management tasks set for the 2003/04 year were largely achieved including a formal inspection of all assets on the five schemes.

A report summarising progress with the implementation of the plans and the current state of the assets will be presented to the September 2004 Landcare Committee meeting.

### Health and Safety

Several health and safety meetings were held with operational staff during the period. In particular we are encouraging staff to report any incidents which perhaps could have caused an injury if the timing or positioning was slightly different. These 'near misses' are often a warning sign that something is wrong and that procedures and work methods should be reviewed.

### Makara Stream Mouth

Flood Protection staff have identified the Makara beach houses which are first affected if the mouth closes or restricts the outflow. We propose shortly to fix a marker gauge to the rock face adjacent to the mouth. This marker board, will indicate a green zone where estuary levels are of no concern, an orange area which will alert to a possible clearance, and a red zone where a decision on clearing the mouth will need to be made.

## 7.4 Gravel extraction

Gravel extraction figures to the end of June 2004 are set out below.

River	Area	Contractor	Period Year 2003/2004 (cubic metres)		Year 2002/2003 (cubic metres)
			Period	Year	Full Year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	5,880	40,968	40,362
	River	Horokiwi	954	10,380	13,364
Otaki	River	Winstones	2,904	28,088	54,004
Waikanae	Above Greenaway Road	Various	0	0	7,472
	Below Greenaway Road	Gary Holland Earthmoving	2,010	7,310	2,617
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>11,748</b>	<b>86,746</b>	<b>117,819</b>

**Geoff Dick**  
Manager, Flood Protection

# **Parks and Forests Manager's report for period ending 23 July 2004**

## **1. Manager's comments [Murray Waititi]**

The 2003/04 financial year is now complete. The only thing left to do is to finish all the formal reporting that is required under the Annual Plan (and this order paper is filled with information to help do that). I hope you find it interesting and informative.

I would like to update you on the proposed Music Festival to be held at Queen Elizabeth Park. The organisers recently advised us that they would now not be holding the event in March 2005 as planned, as the sponsorship they were wanting wasn't available. They are however still committed to running the event and would be looking to have it in 2006.

### **1.1 Answers to questions raised at the last Committee meeting**

#### **1.1.1 Professional Hunting in Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Water Collection Area**

Councillors asked if the mix of professional and amateur hunters in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water catchment area was appropriate.

I have looked into the issue and have concluded that the mix is appropriate. Essentially, the two groups target different species. Professional hunters are employed by Parks and Forests to hunt goats and pigs. Deer are not the main target animal for any of these operations, however professional hunters do shoot any pest animals they encounter.

Our data shows that the professional hunters are very efficient. In the past two years professional hunters have removed 237 animals from the catchment in 135 hunter days. By comparison, the balloted hunt has removed 35 animals in 400 hunter days.

Recreational hunters usually target deer or pigs rather than goats. Data from the past 2 years shows that deer make up 48% of the amateur cull compared with 10% of the professional cull. The recreational preference for pigs and deer can mean that goat numbers rise well above the ideal. Recently, high goat numbers forced us to bring in professional goat hunters to the recreation hunting area in the Akatarawa Forest. The professional hunter shot 214 goats in that area.

Goat numbers have fallen dramatically since professional hunting began in 2001 with over 400 goats being culled in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Water Collection Area alone. Professional hunters combined with our "Judas Goat" programme has been a very successful tool in keeping goat numbers low (goats are culled using transmitters to re-locate the Judas goats and this method does not lend itself to use by recreational hunters).

Somewhat surprisingly, when measured on a cost per animal basis, professional hunters are less expensive in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area than amateurs. This is primarily due to the small number of animals shot by recreational hunters combined with the costs of administering the ballot and managing access into the catchment.

### **1.1.2. Update on the Auckland Regional Council request to amend the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA)**

Officers were asked to provide an update on the Auckland Regional Council's (ARC) request to amend the LGA 2002. ARC wished to have the power to protect a regional park in its entirety, in perpetuity under section 139 of the LGA. This process allows a regional council, by an Order in Council, to apply to the Governor General to make a declaration to that effect.

The Order in Council process excludes any reserves administered under the Reserves Act (per LGA s139(4)). Effectively this means that where a park is a mixture of lands subject to the Reserves Act and the LGA, the park, *as an entity* cannot be protected in perpetuity by this arrangement.

Currently the land tenure arrangements of Auckland Regional Council's parks are similar to that of Greater Wellington. That is, land was acquired in a variety of ways, with some lands held in fee simple, while other lands are classified as Reserves. A park can therefore be an assemblage of land parcels subject to both the LGA and Reserve Act requirements. The East Harbour and Belmont Regional Parks are both examples of these land arrangements. In the 1974 Act each park is identified and Greater Wellington's five regional parks are named in section 619C of the 1974 Act. The provisions of the 1974 Act are still in effect for Greater Wellington until July 2008.

ARC representatives presented their submission to the Select Committee and received a favourable hearing. However, the Select Committee stated in the commentary report that the LGA 2002 provisions were stronger than the previous 1974 provisions. The Select Committee was reluctant to remove the stronger Reserves Act protection from lands within the regional parks. In effect, ARC's request was declined. Fiona Illingworth from the Department of Internal Affairs was approached to clarify the reasoning behind the decision. It seems that the Government's legal advice indicated that there was no need for legislative change and that there may be administrative consequences for the Department of Conservation (DoC). That advice is legally privileged and is not available.

The Department of Internal Affairs has indicated to the Minister that administrative simplicity is an issue that should be looked at. The issue would however require liaison with DoC to ensure that there were no unintended administrative consequences and it was not high on the current work programme. Fiona Illingworth indicated that the issue could be re-looked at as part of a later amendment bill or as part of the Auckland bill before parliament.

The issue is not an urgent one for Greater Wellington at this time. We will continue to put our resources into resolving our more urgent land administration matters, such as the transfer of the Takapu Block and completion of management plans.

### **1.1.3. Iwi liaison**

Councillor Thomas asked what costs were associated in working with Iwi to develop signage and interpretation at Battle Hill and Queen Elizabeth Parks. No money was spent directly on signage and interpretation in those two parks. The only costs we have incurred with Iwi over the last two years have been those associated with asking Iwi to comment on our Parks Network Management Plan (a statutory requirement). This has cost \$1,125.00 per Iwi.

## **2. Planning and policy [Dr Philippa Crisp]**

### **2.1 Pest Animal Control**

A number of hunting operations have been underway in the last month. Hunters worked in a number of areas, resulting in the following tallies:

- Belmont Regional Park (21 goats)
- East Harbour Lakes Block (4 goats and 4 pigs)
- Kaitoke Regional Park (12 goats and 1 pig)
- Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area (5 goats, 6 deer and 3 pigs).

Pig hunters culled nine pigs in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area.

Bait stations have been installed in Speedy's Bush in Belmont Regional Park. Possums will be controlled on an ongoing basis in the area as from July 2004. Bait stations will be filled at regular intervals throughout the year to keep possum numbers down.

### **2.2 Pest Plant Control**

This month has seen the final check-up of many pest plant control sites in the parks and forests. A contractor completed the removal of wilding pines from Whakatikei wetland in Akatarawa Forest. Holly seedlings have been sprayed in Battle Hill Farm Forest Park and in the bush remnants at Te Marua in Kaitoke Regional Park, while seedlings of boneseed, evergreen buckthorn and karo have been controlled in Queen Elizabeth Park.

### **2.3 Monitoring**

Ungulate browse plots in Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area have been re-measured. Three teams of two people each have been involved in this work. Each transect line of ten plots has taken a day for a team to complete, as the lines are randomly located and may be in difficult terrain. At each plot, the workers have to measure the numbers of seedlings within a 0.49m radius in three height classes: 0-30cm, 30cm-1m and 1-2m. This information can be compared with the data gathered two years ago to determine whether the intensive goat hunting has improved seedling regeneration. If it has been successful, the data should show an increase in the number of palatable seedlings moving up past browse level. The continuing presence of deer may hamper this recovery however, as these animals are very good at seeking out their preferred food supplies, even when those plants are no longer plentiful.

These plots were installed two years ago to provide a measure of any improvement in seedling growth that may be seen because of the intensive goat control operations that have been completed in the area. An initial analysis of the results indicates that an increasing number of palatable seedlings are growing beyond the browse layer. The hinau fruit-fall plots in Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area have also been re-measured. High numbers of possum damaged fruit were recorded.

Owen Spearpoint and MIRO members completed a monitor of rodents and mustelids in the northern block of East Harbour forest. The rat numbers were much lower than those found in last year's autumn monitor in Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area (40% as opposed to 61%). No mustelid prints were found in the tracking tunnels, though a number of weta prints were seen.

Vegetation plots have been installed at the Lakes Block at East Harbour Regional Park. These plots will show which vegetation types re-colonise the farmland first and will also provide information about weed species that may be entering the area.

### **3. Planning and policy**

#### **3.1 Pencarrow Lakes Health Assessment**

The removal of stock from the lands surrounding the Pencarrow Lakes provides an uncommon opportunity to study any changes in lake health that may occur as a result of this change in land use. After obtaining approval from the Department of Conservation, NIWA scientists were contracted to complete an assessment of the health of the lakes at the time of the removal of the stock. Their report emphasises that the lakes are presently "outstanding examples of healthy lakes". This is because most other lakes in New Zealand have been degraded as a result of the introduction of aquatic pests, such as oxygen weeds, hornwort or pest fish. The isolation and inaccessibility of the Pencarrow Lakes has limited the introduction of these pest species. Nutrient enrichment does not appear to have caused problems in the lakes, because of the non-intensive nature of recent farming practices. We expect the most noticeable initial change that will be seen will be in the growth of previously browsed vegetation on the edges of the lake.

#### **3.2 Capital works projects [Graham Laws]**

Progress on the 2003/04 Capital works programme is covered in report 04.396 in this Order Paper.

##### **2004/05 Capital works projects**

The architect has started design work on the new Ranger's office at MacKays Crossing, Queen Elizabeth Park. Construction is planned for November 2004/05.

#### **3.3 Asset Management**

##### **Consultants inspected bridges**

Duffill Watts Tse have completed structural inspections and analysis of vehicle bridges at Kaitoke and Tunnel Gully to meet Transit NZ standards.

##### **Asset survey completed**

During May and June we completed the annual inspection and survey of parks assets and updated the database.

##### **Yardstick survey completed**

Earlier in the year we joined the "Yardstick" project, which is a system for comparing parks management data. We completed their annual survey questionnaire and submitted data to the project in June 2004. Results will be available by the end of 2004.

#### **3.4 Environmental Management System**

The targets due for completion by the end of the financial year have been substantially completed. Once again everybody has contributed well and a good body of information has also been compiled on good environmental work practices. Highlights include a workshop on fish passage for operations staff, ensuring that Park brochures include details of how to get there using Public Transport and completing the planting targets of nearly 10,000 plants in the ground on Greater Wellington managed lands.

## **4. Marketing and design [Amanda Cox]**

### **4.1 Information boards**

We are very pleased to report that the 26 map and information boards for East Harbour Regional Park and Queen Elizabeth Park have been delivered as required.

The six information boards for Queen Elizabeth Park will be erected over the next few weeks, however the East Harbour project will take a while longer to install. In East Harbour there are numerous routed signs as well as twenty free standing information boards, some of which will need to be carried in by foot and located at junctions within the park. All the signage within the northern end of the Park will be complete well before the summer season.

The signage projects undertaken were reasonably complex with many maps, photos and text information. Both staff and suppliers learnt a lot about signage production through the process. We are really pleased with the final results, which are high quality, durable and well priced with interesting and clear information. They compare very well with any other signs in similar situations and will reflect extremely well on Greater Wellington.

### **4.2 New park brochures**

Also completed and distributed are new brochures on the parks and forests network, mountain biking and on Queen Elizabeth Park. Feedback remains very positive, with people enthusiastically reading them to find out more about where to go and what to do. We were also able to complete a large reprint of the Hutt River Trail brochure that included various tweaks, mainly as a result of the recent trail extension.

The work on new brochures continues in this new financial year, starting with Battle Hill Farm Forest Park. We will also develop new brochures for Belmont and East Harbour Regional Parks, and the Akatarawa and Pakuratahi Forests.

### **4.3 Parks research framework**

Three companies have presented us with their recommendations of how we should go about developing the visitor-monitoring framework. The next step is to compare how the various approaches meet our requirements and determine the research partner. We expect to complete this process by the end of July and get under way soon afterwards.

### **4.4 Marketing plan**

The marketing and design plan for 2004-05 has been completed and forwarded for the approval of the Manager of Parks & Forests. While the main work streams include those detailed here, we will also contribute to the new GW website, further improve relationships with visitor information offices, libraries, community interest groups etc and aim to be more pro-active with current and potential concessionaires.

#### **4.5 Arbor Day**

Early June saw two very successful Arbor Day events held at Queen Elizabeth Park and Battle Hill Farm Forest Park. We could not have had better weather, so had a great turnout from all the schools, parents and volunteers involved.

This is the fourth year of Arbor Day planting at the same site at Queen Elizabeth Park, and it is quite startling to see the growth that has taken place over a relatively short time. Most of the schools involved have been coming along for all of that time, with the pupils becoming quite attached to this annual event.

This year we moved upstream to Swampy Gully at Battle Hill. Here around 500 plants went in, just in time for the recent rain. Now that the area has been fenced off we expect that these trees too will make good progress over the next few years and ultimately transform a formerly bare paddock.

Following Arbor Day the parks and forests staff put together a laminated photo montage and sent this together with a letter of thanks and other materials to the schools and sponsors. This drew a very positive response with several recipients ringing to thank us and express their enthusiasm to be involved in the future.

#### **4.6 Native tree giveaway**

Early in June, TV One asked Greater Wellington if we would like to work with them to publicise the importance of planting native trees through handing out free trees in Wellington City. The idea was that TV One would pay for the trees and cloth bags and GW would source the trees, bag them up, plan and implement local communications and hand them out on the day. All trees would be eco-sourced for the Wellington region and hardy species likely to survive most urban garden situations. They included kowhai, cabbage trees, flax, manuka, and lemonwood.

While sourcing 1000 trees in the peak planting season took some time, this project proved a fun opportunity for many GW staff to work together on something a little “out of left field”. Our horticultural, communication, print management and organisational skills all came in handy as we aimed for a target date of Wednesday 7 July. Crowds of people gathered from noon in Civic Square, half an hour before the scheduled giveaway. We had many staff and councillors on hand, all of whom helped to ensure a relatively calm event with all the trees finding new owners within 15 minutes! Several people have since thanked us for their trees; and we in turn have written to thank TVNZ, highlighting the public enthusiasm for this event.

#### **4.7 The Big Coast 2005**

February 2005 will see the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Big Coast, an overnight mountain bike ride which includes the Rimutaka Rail Trail and the coastal part of East Harbour Regional Park. Attracting around 1000 riders in 2004, the event has since been sold to Stephen Hart who is planning numerous improvements.

Given that this event covers land in two of our regional parks and has the potential to attract many visitors to the region, we have been assisting with its promotion. 20,000 brochures will be distributed to all Mongoose outlets throughout New Zealand, with more concentrated promotions planned in the Wellington region.

## **4.8 Volunteer Co-ordination**

### Environmental enhancement projects

Progress on these projects for 2003/04 is covered in a separate report (04.420) as part of this Order Paper).

### Friends of Belmont Regional Park

The Friends held their AGM on June the 14<sup>th</sup> and 40 people attended the meeting including Councillors Rosemary Thomas and Dick Werry. Chairman Richard Sadleir was re-elected chairperson but he did announce he will only continue in this role for one more year as he feels strongly these positions must be moved around to keep organisations “fresh and energetic”. Major Richard Taylor (formerly director Army museum Waiouru) gave a very interesting presentation on military history in the Hutt Valley and routes across the Western Hills. The Friends are actively pursuing a number of projects in the Park including an education walk and the restoration of a bunker. On Sunday July 25 they are doing a restoration-planting project at the end of Stratton Street commencing at 10am.

### Friends Of Maara Roa

The Friends of Maara Roa are carrying out plantings every second Saturday morning during July and August. This group has shown remarkable tenacity and commitment and put in many hours of volunteer work in the Park. Their AGM is being held on Wednesday 21 July at 7.30 pm in the Order of St. John Hall, Porirua Park, Mungavin Ave. The guest speaker is Kevin Hackwell, Conservation Manager for Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.

### Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park

The Friends hosted a public meeting on 15 June where coastal specialist John Lumsden and Parks and Forest ecologist Philippa Crisp did a presentation on coastal erosion and management of the Park's dunes. The Friends are keen to promote items about the park and this presentation provided some interesting discussion although the attendance was lower than expected.

## **4.9 Kaitoke Regional Park - Rangers office redevelopment**

The redevelopment of the new rangers office, carparking area, tracks and planting was completed in late June. The area links with the existing information kiosk through the use of rock filled gabion baskets and use of alpine plants. A track also links the camping areas by the river with the higher terrace camping areas. In time this track will feature an interpretative alpine walkway.

## **5. Western sector [Matt Ballantine]**

### **5.1 Battle Hill Farm Forest Park**

The cattle yards next to the Woolshed have been significantly upgraded so that they are now more user friendly and practical. After consulting the Leaseholder and looking at other local designs, plans were drawn up and work carried out on the new yards.

Weed control is continuing with gorse spraying along the northern boundary of the Park and the poisoning of willow trees and hawthorns in the Bush Reserve and around the wetland areas. An area of the streamside in the Bush Reserve has been heavily planted in Flax as a trial. If this proves to be successful, other larger areas of the streamside planting will be undertaken.

Aerial topdressing was undertaken in June to Battle Hill's pastureland. This was carried out over two days due to weather constraints and involved a combination of aerial topdressing and spreading by truck. This job always proves popular with Park visitors as they get a great view of the topdressing aircraft using the Parks airstrip.

Rangers have hosted several school groups through the Park over the last two months.

Both St. Patrick's, Silverstream and Mana College school groups visited with an interest in farm management, history and general park information. We have also had a group from Whitby College visit with a focus on wetlands. They combined looking at the Battle Hill wetland developments with their 'Wetland Workshop' held up in the Ken Gray centre.

The Park ranger also attended the Pauatahanui Pony Club committee meeting, which was held at Battle Hill Homestead and gave a talk to the Plimmerton Rotary club.

Battle Hill has had two significant planting events in June and July, the first been the Arbor day planting (as mentioned earlier) and the second planting day resulted in the planting of further 500 plants in the riparian area adjacent to the historical gravestones in the front paddocks. This site was originally planted as an Arbor day celebration several years ago and has been due for further plantings for some time. There are now just a few spaces left for next year.

Lastly the Battle Hill Eventing Management Committee held a rally during June. Although the weather was a little dubious the event managed to take place with all riders and horses getting through unscathed.

## **5.2 Belmont Regional Park**

Staff and contractors have been working at Cannons Creek assisting Friends of Mara Roa with pre-planting maintenance of the area. The Friends group are carrying out more plantings in the area of last years fire.

Staff have worked on opening up the old Woollen Mill workers track from Rahui Grove, Korokoro to Cornish Street in Petone. This track was the original workers track that led from cottages in Korokoro to the Wellington Woollen Mills Factory. We have followed the original bench line of the track and will be carrying out further surfacing work over the next month. The track will provide access for Korokoro residents who currently have to use either the Cornish Street entrance off SH2 or Oakleigh Street, Maungaraki entrances to access Belmont Regional Park.

Contractors are currently working on surface upgrades on the Belmont Trig Track, a popular walking and mountain bike track that links Belmont Trig with Baked Beans Bend. Improvements include new wooden watertables and repaired ruts on steeper parts of the track.

The Ranger met with representatives of Friends of Belmont and Hutt City Council officers to look at Speedys Reserve between Major Drive in Kelson and Hill Road in Belmont. The Friends are keen to promote this area. No formal access leads into the park here, but a future access way through Speedys Reserve could potentially link the Kilmister Block and the Hutt River Trail. Greater Wellington as part of the Park Management Plan review process, may formally consider the idea for access through Speedys Reserve later this year.

## **5.3 Queen Elizabeth Park**

Our major focus currently is on planting. Apart from planting itself, we have been preparing sites, mulching, weed-eating and spraying. The maintenance of previous years' plantings is continuous, particularly with the ongoing weed growth.

We have also removed 10 large *Macrocarpa* trees from the Remnant Bush so that we can continue to restore this key ecosystem. The felling of these trees has opened up a large clearing within the bush that we are replanting with the appropriate native species.

Taskforce Green are now approximately two thirds of the way through the 26 weeks that they are spending in the park. Their contributions have been of great help, particularly with tree planting and weed control.

Rangers have also been in discussions with a group interested in setting up a permanent orienteering course throughout the park. There are still several issues to work through but it seems as though a positive result for both parties will be achieved.

The Rangers have now completed the first two months of working with the new Farm Leaseholders. The transition from the old leasee to the new has been smooth and a good working relationship is developing.

We have had the second *Spinifex* planting in our Raumati Dune restoration site that was established last year. After a 50/50 survival rate from last year we added extra wind protection and replanted the exposed areas of the dune. The extra protection is a temporary measure until the plantings can establish themselves.

Other events held include a boneseed pulling morning and two 'Adopt a Dune' plantings – one each at the Raumati South and Paekakariki ends of the Park. These events were well received by the public who volunteered their time and has helped contribute to the overall wellbeing of the park.

## **6. Eastern sector [Fraser Oliver]**

### **6.1 Akatarawa/Pakuratahi Forest**

#### **Pakuratahi Forest**

As the majority of the damage caused in the February floods has now been addressed, maintenance in the forest now centres on routine clearance of watertables, culverts and runoffs. However, wind throw trees continue to be a problem and are being addressed periodically.

We now have one gang of prison inmates back working in the forest and are hopeful of a second over the next few weeks. The first priority for the crews will be vegetation control on the Cannon Point walkway.

We are also repairing areas that continually form potholes and reinstating the running surface on both the Rimutaka Incline and the Tunnel Gully reserve.

#### **Akatarawa Forest**

We continue to liaise with and assist the ARAC recreational committee with repairs to the Orange Hut that suffered damage as a result of the vandalism earlier in the year.

ARAC continue to be very proactive working with Greater Wellington on several issues within the Akatarawa Forest. GWRC and ARAC are currently discussing potential solutions for:

1. The identification and protection of environmentally significant wetland areas. We are discussing ways of ensuring vehicles and motorcycles do not access these areas and damage ecologically sensitive sites.
2. The identification and protection of several historic logging trams that are currently unaffected by motorised access.

During this period we have had two vehicle driver training exercises, one army exercise and six recreational four wheel drive club events.

## **6.2 Kaitoke Regional Park**

Culvert monitoring and maintenance continues to be a high priority during autumn/winter as debris and high rain levels are experienced at this time of year.

Groups from Sacred Heart and Corrina Schools were given guided walks in the park and a plant-potting event was held at Plateau School.

## **6.3 Wainuiomata**

Work has been completed on the Orongorongo River access road. A grader was used but caused blocked culverts and water runoffs. Subsequently a small digger was brought in to clear the drains. During this time the road was very muddy and slippery. Rangers assisted with repairs and access over the road in four wheel drive vehicles.

The Northern section of boundary deer fence has been completed. The 9km of fence is an important farm animal, pest control and security asset to the Catchment. Contractors have completed the fence to a very high standard, reducing future maintenance requirements. Preparation of the next section of fence on the western boundary will commence shortly.

Ongoing weed eradication is continuing around the Morton Dam/George's Creek area. Staff are being methodical in their approach to prevent re-invasion of treated areas. Preparation is also underway for a group from a local school to plant 150 native tree seedlings in the recreation area.

An information kiosk has been installed in the front car park. This is to include a map board and information on the walking tracks available and history of the area. New track signs are being installed on newly opened tracks.

The monthly Sunday walking tours into the Wainuiomata valley continue to produce a good turnout. Compliments continue to be received about the tours. Advertising for bookings of tours from August 2004 – July 2005 has been published in local newspapers and Elements.

## **6.4 East Harbour Regional Park**

The tracks maintenance team is continuing vegetation cutbacks on main routes throughout the park. The cutback programme will be completed before any track surface work begins. During this period work has been carried out on the Kereru track, Korimako track, Ridge track, Kaitawa track and Dillon Street track.

The construction team has completed a public information kiosk at Williams Park, Days Bay. This will be a shared asset and hold information from Greater Wellington, Hutt City Council and MIRO (the community conservation organisation). The team has also completed the construction of 29, 3-meter sections of boardwalk, which have been flown in to convenient sites along the Butterfly Creek valley. These will be fixed in place over the coming months.

A number of picnic tables are currently under construction. These will be flown into the Butterfly Creek picnic area prior to summer.

The Lakes Block farming lease has been terminated and ranger staff have been assessing the boundary fence lines for future maintenance. Staff have also started some initial planning for a convenient track system at the Lakes Block.

The Ranger has continued liaison with community based interest groups, Hutt City Council staff and park neighbours. Two talks were given recently to the Eastbourne KEA scout group and Lower Hutt Forest and Bird. Talks were based on introductions to the park and the work carried out by Greater Wellington.

Where possible the Ranger has been helping out with environmental monitoring work and pest management.

A decent size shed has now been attained at a convenient site in Eastbourne. This will be ideal for storing the park quad bike and materials.

A new bridge for the Butterfly Creek picnic area has been measured and ordered. This will replace the existing bridge, which does not meet current safety standards.

**Murray Waititi**  
Manager, Parks and Forests

## Landcare Support, Divisional Accountant's report for period ending 23 July 2004

The following financials are the interim year end accounts only, and may still change before they are finalised as we are still working through the final reserve transfers at the time of this report.

Overall, it has been an excellent year financially, with the Division able to come in with a funding surplus despite having to cope with extraordinary circumstances during the year, namely flooding, live ammunition finds and other less significant things that appeared out of left field. This surplus is very much down to the staff rising to these financial challenges and maintaining very tight control on their spending. Extensive reprioritisation exercises were needed and these were efficiently and very effectively managed, and directly contribute to the favourable result.

<b>Landcare Division</b>						
<b>Financial Summary Statement</b>						
<b>For the 12 months ending 30 June 2004</b>						
<b>\$000</b>						
	<b>Year to Date</b>			<b>Full Year</b>	<b>Full Year</b>	
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	
External Revenue	14,074	13,863	211 F	13,862	14,004	
Internal Revenue	995	1,075	(79) U	1,075	1,025	
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>15,069</b>	<b>14,937</b>	<b>132 F</b>	<b>14,937</b>	<b>15,028</b>	
Direct Expenditure	9,172	9,087	(86) U	9,087	9,353	
Indirect Expenditure	3,832	3,877	45 F	3,877	3,691	
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE</b>	<b>13,005</b>	<b>12,964</b>	<b>(41) U</b>	<b>12,964</b>	<b>13,044</b>	
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>2,064</b>	<b>1,973</b>	<b>91 F</b>	<b>1,973</b>	<b>1,985</b>	
Net Asset Acquisitions	507	612	105 F	612	529	
Capital Projects	1,932	2,335	403 F	2,335	2,159	

Direct expenditure has an unfavourable variance of \$86,000 or 0.9% against budget. The costs include over \$400,000 of flood damage repairs resulting from the October 2003 and February 2004 floods, although this is partially offset by deferred maintenance.

Also offsetting this is around \$129,000 of approved rebudgets to 2004/05 for work that we could not complete during the year.

In general, our capital expenditure programme is behind where we forecast we would be by year end. Although the flood events did have an impact on the programme, one of the major drivers was issues with rock supply for some of the bigger Flood Protection capital jobs.

Parks & Forests capital expenditure was also behind schedule, predominantly due to the delays in the East Harbour Regional Park transfer from HCC.

Tina Walker Divisional Accountant, Landcare