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**Committee** Rural Services and Wairarapa  
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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 9 December 2004.

### 2. Divisional Matters

#### 2.1 Air Quality Campaign

The latest Greater Wellington “Be the Difference” campaign which was launched this week focuses on air quality matters.

There will be a special promotion in the Wairarapa to raise awareness of the problem of air pollution from open fires. With support from the Ministry for the Environment, the Energy Efficiency Conservation Authority, and Panasonic, we are offering a prize of a warm house package which includes a home energy audit, a heat pump, and home insulation. This warm home prize package is being promoted in advertising features in the local media and in a leaflet to all Wairarapa households.

This Wairarapa only promotion is because the problem is more significant here as firewood is readily available and electricity is more expensive than in most other parts of the country.

#### 2.2 Councillors Tour

Councillors and Committee members will be undertaking a two day tour in the Wairarapa on 11 and 12 April. An interesting programme is being developed to cover most of the significant activities undertaken by Greater Wellington in the area.

### **2.3 Wairarapa Irrigation Investigation**

This investigation being led by Go Wairarapa is focusing on two aspects at present. Firstly, an agreement is being drawn up with Meridian Energy to provide the basis for any joint investigations. Meridian Energy are a partner in a new irrigation scheme being built near Oamaru.

Secondly, there are proposals being developed with the Ministry of Economic Development and the Opuha Dam Irrigation Scheme in South Canterbury to carry out economic and social studies on the costs and benefits of large scale irrigation.

A meeting of the steering group for this irrigation investigation project was held in mid-December to update all parties on the current situation.

### **2.4 Staffing Issues**

Mike Longworth, previously with the Masterton District Council, has joined the River Management team as the Engineer (Northern). Mike will manage the Waingawa, Waipoua and Upper Ruamahanga-Mt Bruce, and Upper Ruamahanga-Te Ore Ore River Schemes.

Murray MacKenzie, River Supervisor (Northern), has resigned. Murray has been with the Council just over 20 years. He has made a significant contribution to the Northern rivers over this time. Murray has regularly gone the extra mile especially during flood events. He is leaving to join Oldfields Ltd.

Rob Harrison, a Land Management Officer since 1990, has resigned and will return to the West Coast in April. Rob's replacement will be advertised over the coming weeks.

Harvey Collerton resigned from Consents and Compliance in January to go teaching. Advertising did not draw a strong response and the position remains vacant.

In contrast an Environmental Monitoring Officers position drew 78 applications. Brent King, a recent graduate has been appointed to the position.

Sam McColl, Sophie Taptiklis, and Tessa Bunny have been employed to assist the summer monitoring programme.

### **3. Land & River Operations Department: (Ian Gunn)**

#### **3.1 Flood Damage Repairs**

Scheme meetings have been held with all those Schemes affected by the floods late last year. All the flood damage schedules previously approved by Council in early December were endorsed.

Good progress is being made on flood damage repairs. Jobs such as the reinstatement of the river edge at the Guscott's and Shelton's properties have been completed. Rock groynes have been placed to protect areas where slumping has occurred, e.g. Barton's, Osborne's and the Hikinui Sill. Trees have been removed in the Pukio area (Davenport and Tobin) so that rocks can be placed shortly.

Work on upgrading the stopbank at Ashton Herrick's property is underway. Trees have been removed and the berm is being lowered. This stopbank failed in February 2004 and was overtopped in August.

Reject boulders have been placed in the lower end of the Oporua Floodway. The boulders will strengthen the berm and prevent the migration of erosion upstream.

Good progress is being made on improving the alignment of the Wairongomai Stream. This is a western tributary which flows into Lake Wairarapa. The stream suffered the most damage during last year's floods. Like many western tributary streams, the stream is in a phase of degradation.

#### **3.2 Barrage Gates Painting**

The remaining two Barrage Gates have now been painted. Some touch up painting is required on the remaining gates which were painted this time last year. Lake Wairarapa levels are very low as a result of the required paint work and drier than normal conditions.

#### **3.3 Protection Works**

Tinui rock has been ordered for the proposed works to protect Henley Lake. Bulldozer work has been delayed in this section of the river as the Masterton District Council is currently co-ordinating low flow tests. Rock groynes have been placed on Wardell's property opposite the Masterton District Council's oxidation ponds.

River channel works have been completed in the northern section of the Ruamahanga River following further flood damage in January 2005. The works at Wyeth's and Trimble Trust are completed on a cost share basis.

#### **3.4 Pump Stations**

Changes to the cost of operating the pump drainage schemes were signalled prior to Christmas by the various electricity providers, i.e. power and line

costs. A combined meeting was held with all the schemes, the electricity providers, and staff. All the pump drainage schemes have accepted the changes. Each scheme will consider the ramifications of the changes and make operational changes as they see fit.

### **3.5 Tauanui Roding**

The focus has been on forming the next section of road and two hauler landings within Tauanui. Dry conditions for the latter part of January allowed the formation phase to proceed smoothly. Drainage was required through two wet slumps and regular culverts were installed to disperse water table flow.

Metalling was completed by the end of February. A combination of shingle from the Tauanui river bed with an overlay of old erosion debris taken from a borrow pit alongside the road on the flats has been used. This material is very angular and locks into the surface when traffic rolls it into place.

### **3.6 Boundary Maintenance**

Ongoing problems with gates being pulled off their hinges is indicative of determined access by individuals cultivating marijuana through a very dry period. Plants have been found in one area of Stoney Creek and evidence of activity in another area is evident.

Flood gates are currently being repaired where necessary to restrict stock movement from neighbouring properties.

### **3.7 Rural Fire**

The new Wairarapa Rural Fire District has not yet been able to appoint a suitable Principal Rural Fire Officer. This role is currently being filled by DoC in the interim. Fortunately many of the personalities from the Rural Fire Industry have been able to continue to work together on a co-operative basis to manage Rural Fire in an appropriate manner.

Extreme fire hazard conditions have created some potentially serious situations (for example a grass fire in the middle of three forest blocks on Tinui saddle caused by a car running off the road).

Liaison through the varying levels of Rural Fire Management is evolving steadily.

### **3.8 Akura Conservation Centre**

Soil moisture recordings began at the beginning of November. After three weeks it was deemed necessary to begin irrigating new plantings and one year old plantings. The watering began on 25 November. Watering has continued through to the present.

Visual assessments of the blocks receiving applications suggest a more even strike in new beds, and an increase in height of growth from 1.5 metres to 2

metres. The one year blocks have also exhibited better growth. With another good growing season next year these blocks should achieve the goal of producing a 3 metre pole in two years. Prior to the installation of an irrigation system this process was generally taking three years.

### **3.9 Farm Environment Awards**

The Awards are approaching completion. Finalist judging was completed by the end of February and winners in each of the six categories have been determined. The Awards ceremony is scheduled for Thursday 7 April at the Copthorne Resort in Masterton. Winners will not be notified until the Awards ceremony itself.

A field day is scheduled to be held on the winning property on Wednesday 27 April.

### **3.10 Catchment Scheme Reviews**

Two five year reviews have been presented to their respective Advisory Committees. At both meetings there was unanimous support for a continuation of the respective Catchment Schemes.

The Awhea Catchment Scheme is located to the east of Martinborough and is focused on the control of severe gully erosion, the control of flooding and the protection of the road network. A review of the rating classification is underway with options to be presented to the ratepayers in the near future.

The Kaiwhata Catchment Scheme is a coastal catchment to the east of Masterton. It has been in operation since 1983, and is focussed on flood protection, channel maintenance and catchment management. The rating classification is also to be reviewed, with any alterations to be agreed to prior to the beginning of the 2006/07 year.

At the recent Mataikona-Whakatiki Catchment Scheme meeting it was agreed that staff would review the rating scheme. Areas requiring further analysis include curtilage for dwellings within the scheme, reassigning ratings for alluvial flats and coastal dunes, and the land use (forestry) in the right place. This scheme is situated north of Castlepoint.

### **3.11 Technical Services Activities**

The Technical Services workload over the last quarter has been:

Completed application to Consents Section for variation to Ruamahanga Gravel Consent WAR 990026, to increase gravel extraction volumes on various rivers. Currently waiting for variation to be processed.

Re-survey of the Upper Ruamahanga River five yearly cross sections from Mt Bruce to Double Bridges. Resurvey involved surveying of 27 sections, and made use of new Ipaq computer to assist in locating survey lines and

control points. Results show that overall there has been a slight degrade in the 5 years.

Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme review work progressing slowly. Technical Services draft classification produced using LIDAR data combined with flood depths to give first cut of different rating classes. This has been shown to Dave Bulman and will be the starting point for classification work.

Aerial photography has been completed for Waiohine, Waipoua, Mangatarere, Upper Ruamahanga-Mt Bruce to Waiohine junction, Turanganui and Taunui Rivers and Enaki Stream.

Most photography has been processed for GIS use.

Coastal surveys of beach profiles at Riversdale and Castlepoint.

A number of private farm and soil conservation mapping requests have been completed.

## **4. Biosecurity Department: (Wayne O'Donnell)**

### **Pest Plants**

#### **4.1 Evergreen Buckthorn Survey**

A fixed term contractor has been employed to undertake surveys for pest plants in Wellington City. The focus is predominantly on Evergreen Buckthorn, a containment pest species in the Western part of the region.

This survey began in early December with Trelissick Park being the first area surveyed. Eighty-seven plants / trees were recorded. Streets adjacent to the park were then surveyed, followed by properties in Wadestown, moving progressively away from the park. So far over 300 trees have been located and recorded.

At this stage tentative prices have been obtained from an arborist for the removal of the trees. Prices for individual trees range from \$150 (plus GST) up to \$360 (plus GST).

The survey has also turned up infestations of other pest plants including vigilance (new to the region) species.

#### **4.2 Bathurst Bur**

On 7 and 8 February Pest Plants staff completed control of Bathurst Bur at Gladstone and Ponatahi covering three properties. New sites were located on one of the properties.

#### **4.3 Saffron Thistle**

A new infestation of this Eradication species was located on a property in the Masterton district.

#### **4.4 African Feathergrass**

All sites throughout the region have been controlled. The sites at Homewood and 'Ngaiana' were larger than first thought. Survey work may be required at Ngaiana and surrounding properties to determine the full extent of this Eradication species.

Greater Wellington have taken over management (from WCC) of the Feathergrass infestation in the Karori Cemetery. Total control has been achieved.

#### **4.5 Perennial Nettle**

Maintenance work for this Eradication species on Somes/Matui Island was completed on 21 February in conjunction with DoC. Minimal work was required as excellent results were achieved on initial control.

#### **4.6 Eelgrass**

Most small sites of eelgrass have been controlled throughout the region, with the exception of those in the Makoura Stream where contractual issues have arisen.

In conjunction with DoC, Council staff are currently in the process of seeking resource consents to enable control work in four large ornamental ponds in Kapiti. The consent will also allow for the control of introduced Koi Carp.

#### **4.7 Blue Passionflower**

Maintenance inspections have revealed high levels of seedling plants at a large number of sites. Currently two inspections a year are being carried out but this may need to be increased to at least three site inspections per annum.

New sites of maderia vine, woolly nightshade, climbing spindle berry and sweet pea shrub have been located in various areas of the region. The new infestation of maderia vine in Otaki was of a considerable size with vines reaching up to 20 metres high.

#### **4.8 Manchurian Wild Rice**

In mid-January the water table dropped enough to allow this year's initial control to be undertaken. The maintenance work is due to be undertaken before the end of March. This site near Waikanae did not receive any work last year due to the persistent wet conditions.

#### **4.9 Containment Species**

##### **(1) Mistflower**

A new site of this species was located at Glenmore Street, Wellington. As the site was on a vertical embankment directly above a footpath, the Wellington City Council weed team with their expertise and equipment were asked to undertake the work which they completed at no charge.

A further small site was also identified in Wellington City.

##### **(2) Nodding Thistle**

Due to staff shortages there have been difficulties in getting to the sites of nodding thistle. The site at Pauatahanui Inlet has been controlled by staff with 58 flowering plants being treated.

Inspections in the Masterton District Council area are progressing slowly.



### **(3) Darwin's Barberry**

A survey has been undertaken throughout the Wairarapa in known areas to determine the full extent. The contract was undertaken by BioWorks and covered areas at Mauriceville, Stronvar, Featherston and Western Lake.

## **4.10 Suppression/Site Led Species**

### **(1) Gorse**

Two complaints relating to gorse on boundaries have been received. One required a Notice of Direction (NOD) to be served. The other is currently ongoing.

### **(2) Banana Passionfruit**

Several sites have been located on Wellington City Council land. All of these sites have been referred to them for control.

A number of new sites have also been located during this period.

### **(3) Old Man's Beard**

Several complaints have been received in respect of old man's beard.

A handful of Notice of Directions have been served during this period. Most occupiers have complied.

### **(4) Ragwort**

Numerous complaints were received relating to a paddock on the corner of Manor Park Road and State Highway 2 (across from Haywards Hill Road). The owners of the property (Transit) have agreed to have the paddock mowed.

## **4.11 Vigilance Species**

Inspections are still being undertaken of these species as time permits.

The most prevalent species being recorded are monkey apple and mile-a-minute.

## **4.12 Contracts**

The initial control at Tauherenikau for wandering jew and sycamore has been completed. Further contracts have also been let for this area.

The service delivery contracts are now reaching the end of their two-year term. This system will be reviewed in May to determine if amendments are required.

## Bovine Tb

### 4.13 2004/05 Programme

(1) The Animal Health Board (AHB) approved the following programme for the 2004/05 year:

	<b>AHB Approved Hectares</b>
Possum control	359,421
Ferret control	35,467
Surveys	87,376
	482,264

(2) In November funds were made available to commence initial control in the Wainuiomata South operation. This area includes 3,327 ha and adjoins two KNE projects which have been treated during 2004. The operational area includes four infected herds.

The contract was tendered and subsequently let to BioWorks for two years. The initial control includes an aerial 1080 operation on a number of private properties.

### 4.14 2004/05 Control Hectares

To date the 2004/05 workload has been spread amongst the following contractors.

	<b>Possum (ha)</b>	<b>Ferret (ha)</b>	<b>Survey (ha)</b>	<b>Total</b>
GWRC BioWorks	143,363	22,094	24,091	189,548
Professional Guiding	40,527	2,874	14,171	57,572
J McCaslin	35,271		8,376	43,647
Target Pest Control	2,519		11,174	13,693
Horizons Regional Council	10,912	5,068	4,114	20,094
Central Trappers				
Trappersnz	4,654			4,654
Others			6,483	6,483
To Determine**	34,555			34,555
<b>Sub Totals</b>	<b>271,801</b>	<b>30,036</b>	<b>68,409</b>	<b>370,246</b>
Remove Control***	87,620	5,431	18,967	112,018
<b>Totals</b>	<b>359,421</b>	<b>35,467</b>	<b>87,376</b>	<b>482,264</b>

\*\* includes delayed S E Wai Stage 3 operation

\*\*\* area removed from programme following pre-monitoring and reassessment

**4.15** Areas which are still required to be let include:

- **1,375 ha of Stronvar MR 1 Pines**

Juken Nissho Ltd refused access to treat the area with 1080 methods.

- **South East Wairarapa – Stage 3**

The Animal Health Board have been notified that this operation is highly unlikely to be completed this financial year.

**4.16 2004/05 Control Hectares Completed**

Approved contractors have completed the following workloads from their 2004/05 programme. These completed hectares have been successfully monitored or audited. Many other contract areas are currently receiving vector control.

	<b>Possum (ha)</b>	<b>Ferret (ha)</b>	<b>Survey (ha)</b>	<b>Total</b>
GWRC BioWorks	41,628	6,109	10,087	57,824
Professional Guiding	10,237		3,010	13,247
J McCaslin	25,139		3,847	28,986
Target Pest Control	2,519			2,519
Horizons Regional Council	4,984			4,984
Central Trappers				
Trappersnz	4,654			4,654
Others			3,000	3,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>89,161</b>	<b>6,109</b>	<b>19,944</b>	<b>115,214</b>

**(1) Progress**

To date only 31% of the annual programme has been completed. While concerning, this is a standard trend, with the vast majority of vector related tasks generally completed within the last third of most years.

Reports received recently from all contractors indicate that their programmes will be completed by 30 June. We will be seeking monthly confirmation of progress from all contractors.

#### 4.17 2003/04 Programme Progress

The following contract was not completed during the 2003/04 year.

- South East Wairarapa - Stage 2 965 ha

BioWorks had this 965 ha strata in the South East Wairarapa - Stage 2 operation still to complete. No control had been possible due to the lack of co-operation by the owner. The owner and manager did not support the methods preferred by BioWorks.

This strata has subsequently been re-tendered and let to Professional Guiding Services for a two year contract. Control is scheduled for March to May 2005.

#### 4.18 2005/06 – 2007/08 Programme

The next three year programme has been submitted to the AHB for consideration. This programme has emphasis on “proof of freedom” surveys which will highlight areas where the vector risk boundaries can be reduced.

This programme includes a potential 3-4 fold increase in survey areas compared to the 2004/05 year. Possum control hectares remain at a similar level, subject to pre monitoring results.

	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>
Possum control (ha)	394,055	297,340	348,492
Ferret control (ha)	-	2,936	2,936
Surveys (ha)	175,738	267,881	333,034
<b>Total Hectares</b>	<b>569,793</b>	<b>568,157</b>	<b>684,462</b>

The AHB will be deciding on the size of the 2005/06 programmes in March. Any changes will obviously impact the 2006/07 and 2007/08 years. We anticipate some reduction in our proposal due to affordability and national priority issues.

### Pest Animals

#### 4.19 Magpies

A long-term population trend monitoring programme has been established for magpies. The monitoring programme consists of counting magpies on an annual basis at 20 sites established throughout the Wairarapa. The programme will be carried out by Biosecurity Department staff to recognised national standards.

For many years now there has a general opinion that the magpie population has been steadily increasing, particularly in the Wairarapa. Flocks of approximately 300 have been reported when 30 to 40 would be more usual.

However, this perceived trend has not been proven in a formal scientific manner. The increased abundance of native birds such as tui and kereru has received publicity with the increase being credited to the on-going possum and predator control for Bovine Tb and conservation purposes. These on-going control operations are also thought to be a major influence in the increase in magpies given that they must also benefit from the reduced presence of predators such as possums, rats and mustelids.

A four year (1999-2003) Landcare Research programme to test the hypothesis that other birds are more conspicuous in the absence of magpies resulted in a recommendation that regional councils should not attempt to recover native bird populations by controlling magpies across all pastoral land because such control is expensive. The report also considered that the benefits to native birds and other indigenous biodiversity were likely to be less compared to the control of mammals in native vegetation remnants. The report went on to say that magpies should still be controlled at particular sites of high ecological value because magpies may block access to key, perhaps seasonal resources for native birds such as tui and kereru.

The population trend data gathered from the monitoring programme will help to decide what future level of control, if any, is appropriate for magpies.

#### **4.20 Vertebrate Toxic Agents – Conditions of Registration**

Vertebrate Toxic Agents (VTA's) is the term now used to refer to what was previously known as vertebrate pesticides or toxic substances. The change was made by the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) and the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) to better describe the end use for this group of substances which have been going through a prolonged transfer process to enable registration under the Animal Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act 1997 and the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1997. The Biosecurity Department has been involved with manufacturers and other end users in the submission process to ensure as far as possible that the controls or rules governing the use of VTA's remain practicable for national vertebrate pest management.

Notification has recently been received from the NZFSA that the conditions of registration have now been finalised for all VTA products except for 1080-based products which are subject to a reassessment by ERMA. This is welcome news and will allow pest managers to plan ahead without the threat of being restricted or impeded by inflexible controls.

#### **4.21 Biodiversity Survey of the Top 100 Native Bush Sites**

A contract for the survey of the top 100 native bush sites on private land has finally been arranged and is due to start on 14 March this year. It should be completed in this financial year.

The ecological survey requires each site to be 'ground-truthed' to determine if the values correspond with those on the data-base generated through the forest prioritisation model. The model relies on satellite imagery and land-

use data to derive a regional ranking. The outcome of the survey will direct where future resources should be allocated for the Key Native Ecosystem (KNE) programme or other biodiversity programmes. There is already confidence that the majority of the sites currently in the KNE programme will fall within the top 100. There are, however, many privately owned lowland native bush areas that have not been previously considered because they have been within the intensively worked Bovine Tb control areas. It is important to know which of these should get future priority as the Animal Health Board programme reduces in intensity over the next five years.

#### **4.22 National Possum Control Agencies (NPCA)**

The NPCA agreed at the February 2005 meeting to extend its role to include vertebrate pests other than just possums. This was in response to strong regional council support for this to occur.

The NPCA provides a co-ordinating forum for the principal agencies involved with possum control for both farming and conservation purposes. The NPCA's key roles are in quality assurance, technology transfer, training, operational strategy, advocacy and information.

Concern has been expressed for some time that the NPCA has been focused too much on possum control. This is understandable given that the Animal Health Board (AHB) are providing a considerable proportion of the base funding and possums are the undisputed number one national pest.

However, the future of Bovine Tb possum control beyond 2013 may see this funding steadily decline. There are already parts of NZ where the AHB programme is being wound down. The focus is now on how to maintain the conservation / biodiversity gains made to date through the Bovine Tb NPMS. A wider audience and membership will help position the NPCA positively before major changes take place.

The decision to broaden the NPCA will also provide an opportunity to take into account the establishment of Biosecurity NZ, the implementation of output based investment research and the changes in roles and functions of leading stakeholder organisations such as DoC. Improved communication, information sharing, tech transfer, and willingness to cooperate and participate are becoming noticeable. The NPCA is in a unique position in its history to make these adjustments and take a more participatory approach in the wider biosecurity/biodiversity community. The degree of the widening of the NPCA's current core functions will however be dependant on available funding and other resources.

#### **4.23 Native Birds Returning to the Greater Wellington Metropolitan Area**

During January this year there were several newspaper articles concerning the recolonising of native bird species in Wellington, Hutt Valley and Kapiti Coast. Many of these reports were picked up by other regional newspapers. Some of the headline captions read 'Rare Birds Sighted at Porirua Reserve', 'Native Finds its way back to Porirua After 100 Years', 'Tui Returns to Miramar' and 'Return of Tui to Peninsula Exciting News'. Certainly

observations of tui and kereru have been to the fore but now there are other native birds in the limelight.

There is no doubt that a spill-over effect from the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary as well as some translocations by DoC has been part of the reason for the bird comeback but as important has been the ongoing possum and predator control undertaken by Greater Wellington and the Department of Conservation. This is acknowledged in a soon to be released science publication co-authored by three staff from DoC, the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary Trust and the Biosecurity Department. The reports focus is on five native bird species; kaka, red-crowned parakeet, whitehead, tomtit and bellbird. Whiteheads, bellbirds and red-crowned parakeets are considered to have established resident populations independent of the translocations. This is continuing exciting news and just what is needed to keep up enthusiasm for biodiversity projects.

#### **4.24 Communications**

Combined Pest Plants and Animal displays have been held at the Featherston, Carterton and Masterton libraries. It is planned to take the display to Martinborough once the library renovations have been completed.

An additional range of ‘mounted’ pest birds and mammals will soon be available for publicity purposes.

A Biosecurity team will be visiting Masterton Primary School on two occasions to talk to the pupils on the theme ‘Endangered and Extinct Species. About 250 pupils will be involved.

Staff will shortly be giving a presentation to Greater Wellington’s ‘Take Care’ Group about pest animal control methods.

Topical articles on Pest Animals and Plants are being published on a fortnightly basis in the Wairarapa ‘Midweek’ newspaper.

The updating of information brochures is continuing. The latest brochure currently being published concerns rabbits and hares.

## 5. Planning & Resources Department: (Steve Blakemore)

### 5.1 Environmental Incidents

<b>Date</b>	<b>Incident</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
25.11.04	Culvert installed across waterway in flood prone area, with potential to restrict flows, rural Masterton.	Still under investigation by Engineering department.
2.12.04	Complaint of dust from industrial site, Masterton	Inspected. The company was found to be suppressing the dust to the best of their ability. This is an ongoing problem site, with an industrial complex beside a residential zone.
3.12.04	Complaint of dust from industrial site, Masterton	Inspected, comment as above. Gale force winds at the time.
3.12.04	Complaint of damage to vineyard from spray drift, rural Carterton	Still under investigation. Appears likely to have been caused by aerial spraying of thistles on farm next door.
9.12.04	Complaint of damage to trees on organic orchard, alleged to have been caused by spray drift, rural South Wairarapa.	Still under investigation.
10.12.04	Sewage from septic tank overflowing directly to water, rural Masterton	Owner to modify system. Still to be completed. Further work required by Council staff.
10.12.04	Wood shavings from timber processing industry blowing into neighbouring property, Masterton.	Owner has agreed to build enclosure for his waste area. Still to be completed. Further work required by Council staff.
20.1.05	Dairy effluent overflowing into stream, rural Masterton	Owner has made immediate modifications to the effluent system to prevent recurrence.
20.1.05	Gravel extracted from Waingawa River without license.	Contractor had been given verbal approval to extract gravel by staff prior to it being taken. Licence has subsequently been applied for and granted.
21.1.05	Car abandoned in Huangarua River, Martinborough.	Removed and disposed of by GW staff.
27.1.05	Dozens of dead fish (Ocean species) dumped in Waiohine River, Greytown	Removed and buried by GW staff.
28.1.05	Fleet St stream in urban Masterton running extremely low	Investigated, suspected to be caused by A&P Showgrounds irrigation. Their allocated amount was restricted by GW, but problems persisted, and by late January the spring had dried up completely. Staff have been unable to find specific cause. Flow back to normal now.
1.2.05	Illegal irrigation suspected on vineyard, Masterton.	Checked by staff. Found to be taking within the permitted activity limit of 20,000 litres per day.
1.2.05	Abandoned car in Waingawa River.	Removed and disposed of by GW staff.



1.2.05	Waterway in rural South Wairarapa blocked, causing flooding of paddocks.	Investigated and found to be water race administered by District Council. Blockage was removed.
7.2.05	Foul odour caused by dumping of pāua guts, rural Masterton.	Person responsible has since buried the pāua remains.
7.2.05	Dozens of empty bottles left on Waingawa riverbed.	Removed and disposed of by GW staff.
8.2.05	Tree felling contractor had dropped a large quantity of trees from under power lines, and left them in river bed, rural Masterton.	Trees have now been removed from river bed.
9.2.05	Large scale centre pivot irrigator operating on South Wairarapa dairy farm without consent.	Farmer had been trialling the system. He has subsequently stopped the trial. Consent about to be issued.
15.2.05	Pump failure with rural water supply scheme. Concerns expressed about other irrigation takes, rural Masterton.	GW believes pump problems are not being affected by neighbouring irrigation takes. Nevertheless, ongoing additional monitoring of groundwater levels is being undertaken by GW.
15.2.05	Complaint of dust and noise being caused by permanent sandblasting operation, rural Masterton.	An abatement notice has been served requiring the discharge of dust to stop at the site.
15.2.05	Dozens of dead eels reported in Ruamahanga river system, between Masterton and Martinborough. This problem also reported in Hawkes Bay and Manawatu.	Water samples taken and analysed for chemistry and toxic algae. Cause unable to be determined, but national experts suspect eel deaths caused by high water temperatures.
16.2.05	Report of oil leaking into stream, urban Masterton.	Found not to be oil, but a natural sheen caused by stagnant water. No further action required.
17.2.05	Dust from industrial site, Masterton.	Company found to be using wet suppression. Dust not considered by staff to be offensive or objectionable at the time.
22.2.05	Dairy effluent suspected to have been flowing in stream, South Wairarapa.	Likely dairy farm inspected. No evidence found, although problem not reported until some days after occurrence.
24.2.05	Complaint of excessive volume of water being taken to fill ornamental lake, rural Masterton.	This is a consented activity, and was found to be non-complying. Remedial work to the intake being organised.
1.3.05	Complaint of dam across Mangatarere stream, built to keep water up to dairy farmer's irrigation take.	Dam has subsequently been removed by fresh in stream. Farmer has been written to. This practice to be scrutinised when consent renewed this year.
1.3.05	Pig intestines and offal dumped in stream on outskirts of Carterton.	Person responsible has been asked to remove offending matter.

1.3.05	Complaint of excessive discharge to Ruamahanga River from Masterton District Council treatment ponds.	River inspected, showing discharge was colouring the whole river. Inspection of ponds showed they were full to a very high level with a much larger than normal discharge occurring. 27 large dead eels had lodged around the plunge pool below the outlet. MDC requested to restrict their discharge to the average summer rate stated in their consent application. Under investigation.
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## 5.2 Notified Consents

<i>Consent Application</i>	<i>Status</i>
Water Races - Carterton District (2)	Working group formed with CDC to identify and confirm scheme layout, take and discharge points. Carrington consent will be processed first, once Mangatarere Water Allocation Plan in place.
Water Races - South Wairarapa District (2)	Conditions agreed with SWDC and submitters. Hearing not necessary. Before this Committee for decision.
Featherston Sewage – discharge	Activity now to be changed to incorporate a summer discharge to land trial. New application awaited from SWDC.
East Leigh Ltd – Riversdale. 140 lot subdivision. Land Use Consents (3), Water Permit, Discharge Permits (3)	Hearing completed. Decision awaited.
Coastal protection works - Castlepoint - Masterton District (5)	Hearing commenced on 14 March 2005.
Sewage discharge. – Lake Ferry settlement – South Wairarapa District (3)	Pre hearing meeting held on 8 March. Hearing to be set.
Resited stopbank – Land and River Operations Department - Greater Wellington	A limited notified hearing to be held on 23 March. Difficulties experienced in setting a date to suit the Commissioner, the applicant and the submitter.
Underground Water Take – AE & SW Benton Partnership	Pre hearing to be held 17 March. Hearing anticipated.

### **5.3 Enforcement**

#### *Abatement Notices*

- A notice has been issued to Wairarapa Sandblasting Ltd requiring all discharges to air from the site to cease from 16 March 2005. The activities require resource consent. This issue has received newspaper publicity.

#### *Infringement Notices*

- Notices issued to a landowner and contractor for unlawful gravel extraction and bed disturbance in the Ruakokopatuna River. It was decided to withdraw two notices following submissions and the fines have been subsequently paid.

### **5.4 Appeals**

#### *I Alexander*

The Environment Court decision on the appeal by Ian Alexander against an abatement notice was made in the Council's favour on 25 May 2004. The Court's decision in relation to costs is still awaited. Although consent has been issued, the property sold and the consent transferred to the new owners, Mr Alexander is continuing with his appeal of the Environment Courts decision to the High Court.

#### *J Barton*

Mr Barton's application to the Environment Court for \$31,000 costs against the Council has been declined. The Court accepted that it would be inappropriate to make an award of costs in this instance. Mr Barton was seeking costs from the Council in relation to his earlier Environment Court action. This concerned the level of Council charges made in relation to his withdrawn consent application for dairy tanker stopbank access.

### **5.5 Review of Municipal Wastewater Monitoring Conditions**

At its meeting on 22 July 2004, the Committee endorsed the proposal to apply the NZ Municipal Wastewater Monitoring Guidelines to municipal discharges within the Ruamahanga catchment. Although submissions from District Councils closed on 10 December 2004, an extension of time was given to enable Masterton District to further consider the issue. Their submission was received on 14 February and they remain strongly opposed to the proposed review of the condition on the basis that it will increase their risk of non compliance in the future. The other two District Councils have agreed to the change.

Staff are now considering the matter further before a decision is taken.

## **5.6 Clean Streams Accord**

Progress with dairy farm compliance inspections and the assessment of stream crossings/bridges/culverts has been set back by a staff resignation and staff involvement with a number of incidents that have accompanied the dry summer. Wellington Consents staff have kindly agreed to assist us with this work and this is underway. The farmers visited to date have been most cooperative and well aware of the intentions of the accord.

## **5.7 Wairarapa District Plan**

A draft of the plan was publicly advertised for informal comment. Comments have been received and collated in relation to the range of activities undertaken by Greater Wellington and forwarded as a submission. The next step will be discussion with the report writers, followed by informal presentations to the District Plan Committee.

## **5.8 Monitoring**

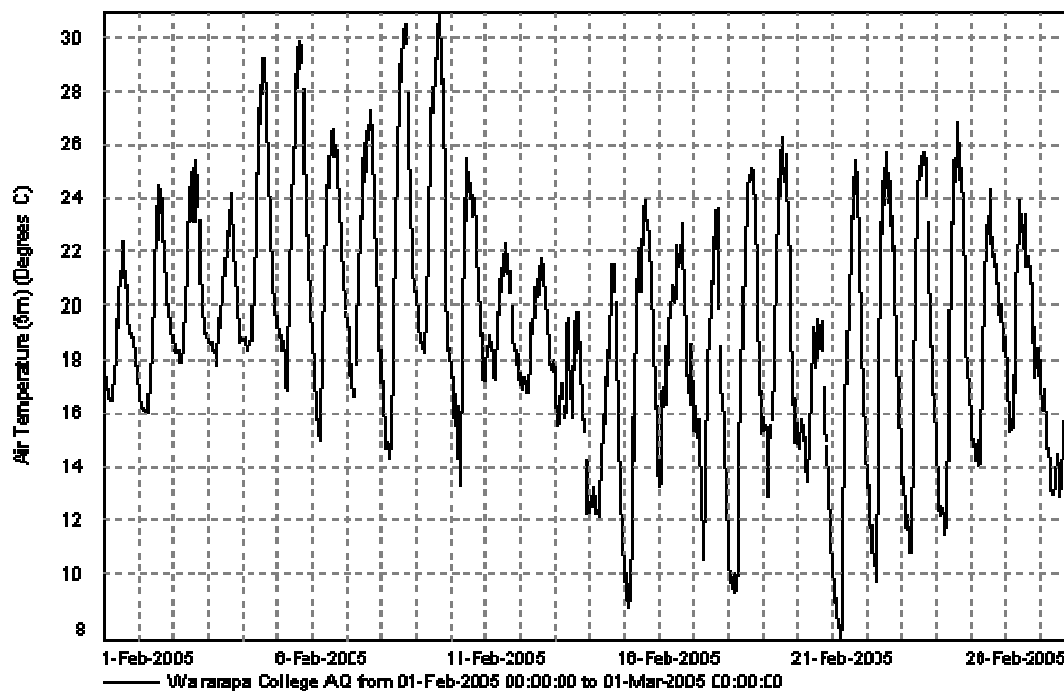
Staff have been very busy undertaking a range of monitoring tasks including low flow gaugings needed to develop water allocation plans, low flow gaugings in relation to restricting consented takes, the weekly summer bathing surveys, annual water quality assessment, plus routine monitoring. Assistance has also been given where there have been bore/pump problems and investigating the problems with the Showground's stream.

## **5.9 Hydrology**

### *Temperature*

Temperatures in February were quite high, a big difference from last year and reflective of a much more typical Wairarapa summer.

The figure below is the temperature plot taken at the Council's Air monitoring site at Wairarapa College.



### *Rainfall*

The weather in the Wairarapa in February 2005 was dry with rainfall totals all below average.

Rainfall events in the Tararuas occurred at the beginning of the month, followed by three small events in the middle of the month and one at the end. The highest hourly intensity was only 17mm/hr on the evening of the 27 February. The rainfall patterns were similar in the valley at Alloa. In the eastern hills at Tanawa Hut over 30mm fell on the 1<sup>st</sup> but it was dry right through to 27 February.

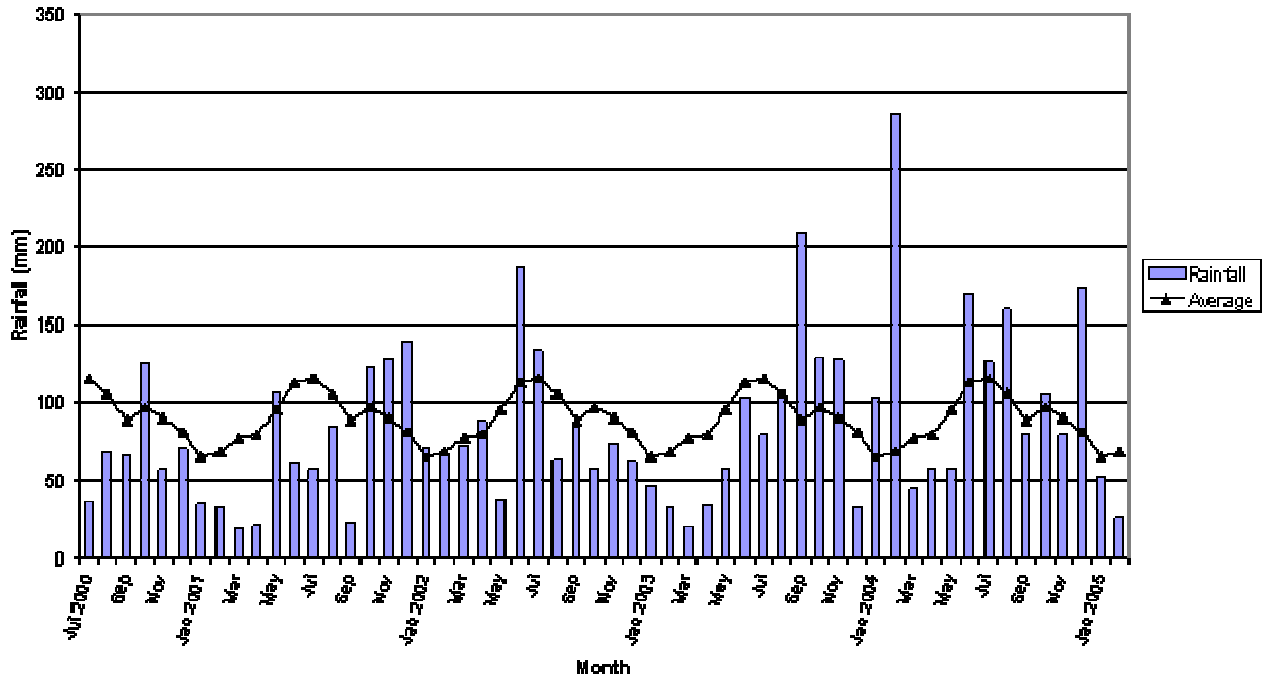
Table 1 below is for the 3 representative rainfall sites showing rainfall figures for January and February 2005 with their respective previous month's figure for comparison.

**Table 1 - February 2005 Rainfall Totals**

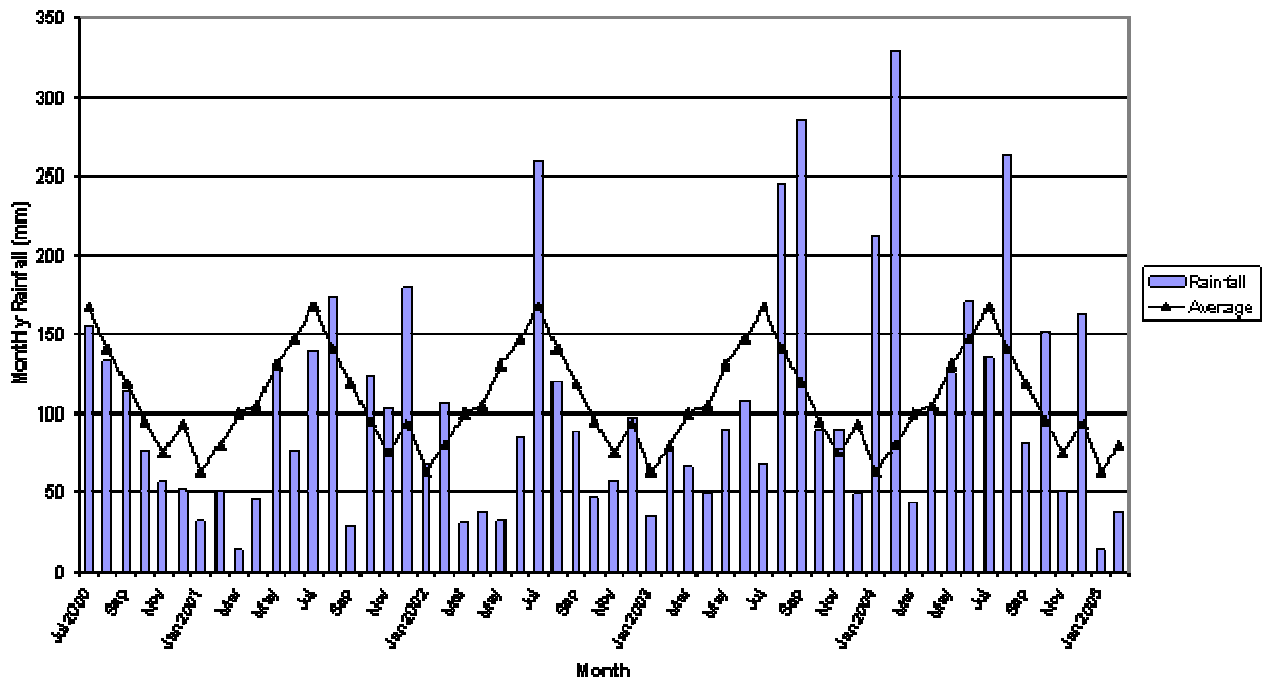
Site	Location	February		January		February	January
		mm	Average	mm	Average	% of average	
Angle Knob	Tararua Ranges	368	399	528	456	92	116
Alloa	Middle Valley	26	68	53	65	39	82
Tanawa Hut	Eastern Hills	38	79	13	63	48	21

The figures below show the monthly rainfall totals at Alloa and Tanawa Hut since July 2000 against the long-term average for each month.

**Aloa Rainfall**



**Tanawa Hut Rainfall**



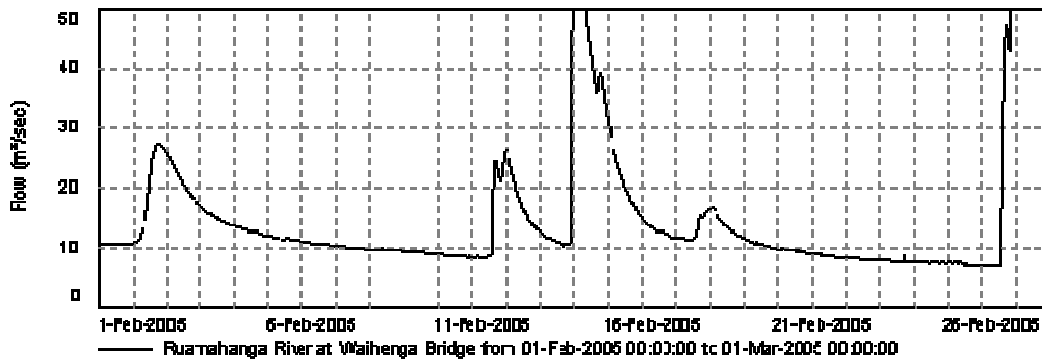
**Rivers**

River flows were in recession for most of February at 50% of average flow. There was a slight respite in the Tararua catchment rivers with some small

freshes around the middle of the month. On 27 February a reasonable rainfall event in the ranges gave a significant lift in flows.

Flows became low enough for restrictions to be placed on water takes in both small streams and the Ruamahanga River. However these levels were not particularly significant, reaching only annual or two year return period low flow levels.

The flow hydrograph for Waihenga (Martinborough Bridge) shows the low flows and small freshes experienced during the month. The maximum flow was on 28 February, reaching 340 cusecs.



### *Floodwarning*

### *Groundwater Model*

Consultants have been provided with all available information (rainfall, bore logs, surface flows, and underground water information) and are working on better defining the geology and hydrogeology of the Wairarapa valley. At the same time, water from a number of key bores is being characterised and dated. This information will provide the basis for a conceptual model of the underground water resources. A report on this project will be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

**6. Recommendation**

*That the report be received and its contents noted.*

**Colin Wright**  
Divisional Manager, Wairarapa