



**Report**                    **06.588**

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**Committee**            **Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee**  
**Authors**               **Geoff Dick, Divisional Manager, Catchment Management**  
                              **Nigel Corry, Divisional Manager, Environment Management**  
                              **Murray Kennedy, Divisional Manager, Water Supply, Parks & Forests**

## **Divisional Managers' Report**

### **1. Purpose**

To inform the Committee about the activities and progress and any matters that have arisen since the Committee's previous meeting held on 19 September 2006.

### **2. Significance of the decision**

The matters for decision in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

### **3. Background**

The Departmental Managers' reports are attached.

### **4. Divisional matters**

#### **4.1 Geoff Dick – Catchment Management**

##### **Staff**

A number of staff appointments were made over the period. Graeme Campbell was appointed as the new Manager, Flood Protection with responsibility for flood protection matters over the whole region (east and west). Graeme has an extensive engineering background with a focus on flood protection and natural hazard management. Graeme began his career with the former East Coast Catchment Board and more latterly has been extensively involved with the development and implementation of the two Kapiti Coast floodplain management plans, and other flood related work, through his consultancy business. Graeme started on 1 November 2006.

I will introduce Graeme at the Committee meeting on 14 November. A big thank you goes to Ian Gunn and Sharyn Westlake who both did a great job as acting Managers during the transition period from 1 July.

We have also been very successful in replacing two engineer vacancies in Flood Protection. Graeme Burnett starts in the Masterton office on 20 November, and Kees Nauta starts in the Wellington office on 4 December. Graeme will be responsible for the northern Wairarapa schemes and Kees takes over the Kapiti river schemes.

In Land Management, Nick Pratt has been appointed to the permanent position of Works Supervisor. This was previously a fixed term position. Faith Barber's secondment has ended and applications for her replacement are currently being short-listed. It is hoped that a new appointment can be in place before the end of the year.

The first of a number of meetings have been held to consider options for replacing Peter Cameron as the Akura Nursery Officer. Peter has been with Greater Wellington and its predecessor the Wairarapa Catchment Board since November 1962 and has signalled May 2007 for retirement. Peter has also signalled a desire to be involved in the training of new staff over the winter period. With this in mind a replacement will be advertised early in 2007 with March 2007 as the preferred start time.

I took a couple of weeks leave in the latter half of October to recharge the batteries. On return it has been a frantic case of catching up on e-mails, meetings, staff issues and then getting a final round of Committee reports ready.

### **Annual Plan update**

We are currently underway with the 2007/08 annual plan update. A big part of the work will be aligning the budgets to the new Divisional structure, in particular the new Flood Protection and Land Management Departments. We also need to consider the ICM project, changes to the Flood Protection capital programme and any interim steps we may recommend in the Land Management area.

The update will be presented to the Committee for review at a special meeting on 9 February 2007.

### **Quarterly Review**

I have attached the executive summary from the divisional quarterly management report to 30 September. The summary highlights most of the issues covered in the report. If any Committee members would like a copy of the full report which includes the Departmental and staff reports just give Lesley Race or I a call.

### **BioWorks Management Group**

The BioWorks management group has now met twice. The most recent meeting focussed on financial/work progress year to date, internal work and reporting including appropriate KPI's (key performance indicators) for the unit.

BioWorks is off to a solid start for the year. The unit has had a full programme from July (includes work carried over from last year), has so far successfully won a good share of the tendered work and is putting a number of quality

procedures in place. The big challenges of completing contracts within budget and achieving first time monitoring passes however remains.

### **Field visit**

In early October I had a half day out, with Stan Braaksma as guide, to look at a number of hill country properties in the Admiral Hill area. We saw some examples of the damage caused by the July storm event, recent and not so recent planting work, and had a trip up in the mudstone country in the Maungaraki Catchment scheme area. An enjoyable and informative morning.

### **Integrated Catchment Management (ICM)**

I am about to start looking at how an ICM approach can help Greater Wellington to undertake its many and varied activities. A number of tasks need to be completed to get this underway including scoping out the project, appointing a project manager, and setting up a cross Council working group.

The first task will be to research out examples of ICM both nationally and internationally and then working out how we will apply the principles here in the Wellington region. This “journey” will need to involve staff, Councillors/appointed members, and possibly some outside expertise.

The ICM project has some obvious links to a number of existing activities including the RPS review, biodiversity initiatives and the review of land management funding levels including the setting up of a farmer liaison committee.

### **Communications – Catriona Robertson**

An eight page edition of Rural Services Newsletter was distributed to all rural addresses in the region mid-October (approx 7000 copies). Copies were also available at the Biosecurity stand at the Wairarapa A & P Show at the end of October. There was a good mix of articles from all departments - biosecurity, flood protection, environment and land management.

The Lower Wairarapa Valley Scheme Review newsletter was also distributed mid-October to around 1800 addresses in the scheme area.

There has been extensive region-wide media coverage on rooks over the past few weeks, coinciding with our annual rook survey, resulting in increased public awareness of the pest. There was also region-wide media coverage, both print and radio, calling for entries for the 2007 Ballance Farm Environment Awards.

I've been working on forward-planning for Catchment Management communications to June 2007.

In conjunction with the wider communications team, I've also been involved in streamlining media systems for emergency management. These will be put into practice during the nationwide scenario Exercise Capital Quake 06 on 14 and 15 November.

## **4.2 Nigel Corry – Environment Management**

### **Dangerous Dams Policy**

In my last report to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee I made comment on the requirements of the Building Act 2004 in relation to dangerous dams. Since then, the hearing has been held and a policy developed. This policy was approved by the Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee (PF&S) at its meeting of 16 October 2006.

### **Review of the Navigation and Safety Bylaws**

Similarly, the PF&S Committee also agreed to amend the Navigation and Safety Bylaws to remove the Lyall Bay jet ski lane.

### **Regional Policy Statement (RPS) Review - revised timetable**

We have revised the timetable for the review of the RPS, and will no longer be producing a Draft RPS in February 2007. Key factors in this decision include the acceleration of the WRS and associated consultation process, our commitment to workshop effectively with Ara Tahi, and also recognising the high degree of involvement that our stakeholders have said they wish to have in the review process.

Given these issues, it is considered that there is more benefit in engagement 'up front' in the review process, as opposed to preparing a Draft Policy when we may not have sufficient time to get the best results from our engagement with key parties.

A workshop will be held on 8th November to provide an update on the review process, and to discuss significant issues in relation to our relationship with Iwi in the Region. This workshop will provide direction for a joint workshop with Ara Tahi to be held on 22 November 2006. Detailed Councillor workshops around provisions in the RPS will now be held early next year.

### **Hydrological Monitoring Network Review**

A recent review of GW's monitoring network identified a lack of rainfall monitoring in the eastern hills of the Wairarapa. This issue was highlighted during the July and August floods of this year. A paper was presented to the Environment Committee in its October meeting outlining the findings from the review. It is proposed to purchase additional equipment over a two year period to enhance the flood warning network in identified parts of the Wairarapa plains and Eastern Wairarapa hills.

### **New Structure**

The Rural Services Newsletter, October/November 2006 issue, featured an article on the new structure of the Environment Management Division. The review is now finalised with the appointment of Howard Markland, Special Projects Coordinator being the last of the vacant positions filled.

## 4.3 Murray Kennedy – Water Supply, Parks & Forests

### Reserve Forests

#### Tauanui Logging

The logging contractor is now committed to working on rates that reflect variation in fuel prices since that contract was agreed. As a result a further 1,300 tonnes were harvested during October for a year to date total of 5,200 tonnes.

Despite wet conditions we are on target for the year's production and are netting in excess of \$30.00 per tonne.

A second logging contractor is now on site with a small hauler (Ecologger) and will be harvesting some of the steeper settings and boosting production over the next few months.

#### Silviculture

Steady progress with pruning and thinning of the second rotation stands in Hiwinui is being achieved. The rate of completion is anticipated to accelerate now that winter is over and new contractors are in the process of being engaged.

A very successful trial of thinning heavy regeneration in Tauanui with scrub saws showed positive results at a reasonable cost.

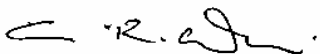
Good form of the second rotation stands along with high stocking is limiting branch size, so that as long as timing of treatment is managed carefully, high quality timber will be produced.

## 5. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:



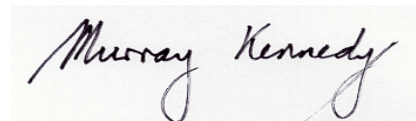
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**Attachments 1, 2, 3:**