

Catchment Management Division

Departmental Managers' Update
for period ending 25 January 2008

Biosecurity (Wayne O'Donnell)

1. Pest Animals:

1.1 New Pest Animals Staff

James Graham and Dave Halliday commenced duties as Biosecurity Officers on 7 January based at Upper Hutt. Both have relevant qualifications incorporating animal ecology and wildlife management.

1.2 Key Native Ecosystems and Reserves Programme

During February, two new control areas are being established -

The Hutt Western Hills operation is a possum and rat control programme that will focus in and around four Hutt City reserves along the western hills from Maungaraki through to Belmont. This operation complements the reserves programme already established in partnership with Hutt City Council. Possum and rat control is currently occurring in Korokoro Valley, Speedy's Reserve and Kelson. This new Hutt Western Hills operation will help keep possums to low levels and link these areas to form a wildlife corridor. This new link will form an almost unbroken corridor of possum control from Miramar Peninsula through Wellington City to the Silverstream Scenic Reserve in Upper Hutt.

The other area is centred on the Spicer Block and Forest of Tane near Tawa. Intensive possum control maintenance has been undertaken in Porirua Scenic Reserve, Pikarere Farm, Titahi Bay Peninsula (Whitireia Park) and Redwood Bush (Tawa) for several years. This work is conducted in partnership with Wellington and Porirua City Councils. The Department of Conservation also have a possum control maintenance programme in place for the Colonial Knob Scenic Reserve. The Spicer Block and Forest of Tane operations will almost link Redwood Bush and Colonial Knob Scenic Reserve and prevent possum migration between the existing control areas.

As part of the public relations exercise for both operations, information pamphlets will be distributed to residents in and around the control areas, warning signs will be posted and all vets, schools, medical centres and other relevant organisations will be notified.

Another new area is in the planning stages for possum control and will be funded in total by Wellington City Council. The area is part of the former farmed land of the Outer Green Belt below the Skyline Walkway behind the suburbs of Karori, Wilton and Crofton Downs. Possums living and breeding in this habitat are migrating from the Ohariu Valley and are a threat to the established Key Native Ecosystems of Karori Park, Otari-Wilsons Bush and Huntleigh Park.

1.3 Workshop on Regional Self-Help and Community Possum Control Programmes

A workshop was held in Wellington on 30 November 2007 to discuss initiatives for regional self-help and community based possum control. The meeting was called on the initiative of the Taranaki Regional Council and attended by representatives from Greater Wellington, Environment Waikato, Environment Bay of Plenty, and Hawkes Bay Regional Council. Taranaki Regional Council has a long established self-help programme but does not undertake Bovine Tb vector control. Hawkes Bay and Waikato have commenced large scale possum control programmes and are positioning themselves for the roll-back of the Animal Health Board funded operations.

The forum was mostly about information sharing and each council gave a presentation on what it is currently doing and objectives for the future. Key points discussed were funding, contracting, landowner groups, volunteers, expectations, required possum densities, data sharing and storage, supply of baits and equipment, approaches to compliance etc. Each Council had something unique to offer and the intention is to continue to share information, promote the use of staff visits (and possibly short term exchanges) and hold further workshops as required.

Four Hawkes Bay Regional Council Biosecurity staff are visiting our region on 18 and 19 February. Their main interest is in our monitoring and surveillance systems and how we conduct our metropolitan work programmes.

1.4 Communications

Biosecurity staff will be in attendance with a display at the forthcoming Masterton Agricultural and Pastoral Show held on 16 and 17 February.

Promotional banners are being printed to assist with advice and education for feral cats and for feral goats, pigs and deer. They are part of a series and have proved popular with public.

2. Pest Plants:

2.1 Regional Surveillance Programme

This programme monitors the presence / absence of potential pest plants. Over the past quarter three new sites of surveillance species were located. Two of these sites were identified by the public following an article in the GW Elements newsletter.

The biennial inspection of former Class A Noxious Weeds - Cape Tulip and Water Hyacinth – was completed and reported to MAF. All sites inspected were free of infestations.

2.2 National Pest Plant Accord Inspections

Over the past quarter, all Wairarapa plant retailers and a number of public markets in Kapiti, Hutt, Porirua, Tawa and Wellington central were inspected. Only one NPPA species was identified and removed.

All market stallholder contact details were collected. Information on the NPPA was then mailed to each contact.

All NPPA inspection details are now directly recorded by staff on the newly commissioned MAFBNZ database.

2.3 Total Control Plants

Management of these species is GW's responsibility. There are currently 13 species listed in the RPMS. Staff continue to focus on completing property surveys and then undertaking delimiting surveys around infested sites to determine the extent of spread, if any. Infestation levels remain at around 3.5% i.e. 3-4 properties out of every 100 inspected have a total control plant growing.

The Manchurian Wild Rice (MWR) contract with MAFBNZ has been finalised. MWR is one of the 11 National Interest Pest Programme species. MAFBNZ aim to eradicate MWR from this region and eventually contain it to the Northland region.

2.4 Boundary Control Plants

There are currently four active Notices of Direction (NOD) concerning Old Mans Beard in Wellington city. These are being actively pursued by staff.

One NOD is outstanding for Gorse. A further seven complaints are active.

A number of complaints have been received about Ragwort in Whiteman's Valley. Staff are attempting to establish the biocontrol agent Ragwort flea beetle in the area as a longer term solution.

2.5 Key Native Ecosystem & Reserves Programme

Staff and contractors are currently working in 24 sites. In many cases, staff are working closely with Care Groups, Colleges and Schools, Forest & Bird, DoC and TA staff to promote the management of target pest species. Sites include a range of ecosystems, e.g. riparian margins, lowland bush remnants, coastal escarpments, wetlands, dunes and estuarine areas.

2.6 Didymo Communications Campaign

GW successfully applied to MAF Biosecurity NZ for funding of a summer communications campaign. \$20K has been made available, together with a wide range of marketing / communication tools. Three fixed term contractors have been employed to implement the campaign for the months of January and February.

Didymo Response Plan – GW staff are working with their Horizons counterparts, DoC, Fish & Game and MAFBNZ staff to devise a plan outlining agency roles in the event of Didymo being detected in the Lower North Island. A new North Island detection will be treated as a new incursion, with MAFBNZ taking the lead role. A long term management plan will also need to be developed to clarify agency roles in the future.

3. Bovine Tb:

Progress on completing the 2007/08 vector control contracts continue to be slower than originally planned. The prime reason has been the lengthy process required to solve the allocation of the two 60,000ha preferred supplier contracts. Contracts have only recently (mid January) been granted to Professional Guiding Services (Vermeer) and BioWorks. Given these delays, it is likely that a considerable part of the agreed 2007/08 vector control programme will remain uncompleted at 30 June. However, a positive outcome is that both contractors will have ongoing work for the next 18 months, including through the normally slow winter periods.

Positive Tb results have occurred for feral pigs recently caught in the Moonshine, Akatarawa and Orongorongo areas. All three areas are yet to be included in a formal vector control programme. Feral pigs are being used as indicators for Tb in other wildlife, particularly possums. Of particular concern was that five of seven feral pigs from Orongorongo had Tb lesions. The VM team will seek to include all three areas when compiling the proposed Vector Control Plan for 2008-2011.

Flood Protection (Graeme Campbell)

1. Manager's comments

1.1 General

The works programme for the year is progressing well. The main achievements have been:

- Substantial completion of the Chrystalls Extended Stopbank
- Commencement of the LWVDS capital improvements
- Good progress on the Ava to Ewen Flood improvements
- Progress on the special consultative process for the LWVDS classification review
- Agreement for funding the Waiwhetu Stream clean-up
- Consideration of the Boulcott Golf Club's alternative stopbank alignment

The floods on 8 January 2008 were confined to the Kapiti Coast area and have caused some damage to the rivers and streams we maintain. A separate report (08.30) has been prepared which backgrounds the event and the required remediation works. The flood is likely to have an impact on the works programme budgets and ways of minimising this affect are discussed in the report. The floods have highlighted a number of issues related to the responsibilities for maintaining minor water courses and some work will be required to educate landowners on their responsibilities in these circumstances.

The main project behind schedule at this stage is the South Waitohu Stopbank. Progress was held up while we modelled the affects of the proposed stopbank on landowners upstream and downstream at the request of the potentially affected parties. This work shows that there are minimal negative impacts on adjacent land owners. A resource consent application is being prepared but it is unlikely that the works will be constructed in this financial year as programmed. Construction is now likely to commence later in the year.

2. Western FMP's [Daya Atapattu]

2.1 Ava to Ewen project

Stage 3 of the Ava to Ewen project, Ava Rail stopbank and waterway upgrade, is now about 80% complete and progressing well. By the end of December 2007, about 15,000 tonnes of rock, out of a total of 17,000 tonnes, have been placed as riprap. Construction of the stopbank below the rail bridge is substantially complete and the contractor is now progressing with the concrete steps and walkways under the bridge and earthworks upstream of the bridge.

Planning for establishing the Inanga spawning habitat in the Opahu Stream is progressing. Charles Mitchell, an Inanga spawning expert, visited the site in December 2007 and provided further details for re-contouring and planting the stream banks.

The tender documents are being prepared for the Strand Park stopbank upgrade, the last stage (Stage 4) of the Ava to Ewen project. Construction works on Stage 4 is scheduled to commence in September 2008.

2.2 Boulcott/Hutt stopbank project

The feasibility plans and cost estimates for the alignment option proposed by the Boulcott Golf Club are now complete. The estimated costs of the new option are significantly higher than the previously recommended Green option. The plans and estimated costs were presented to the relevant committees of the Boulcott and Hutt Golf Clubs on 23 January 2008. During the next two weeks, the Boulcott Golf Club will investigate any possible options for reducing the 'engineering' and 'land and compensation' costs. GW presentations to the full membership have been offered to keep them fully informed on the project.

Feedback from both clubs is expected by mid February 2008. This will be followed by a meeting with adjacent property owners before making a recommendation of a preferred alignment to the Hutt River Advisory Committee in March 2008.

2.3 Whirinaki Crescent stopbank

Stage 2 works, commenced in late December 07 are progressing well. The contractor is now working on a 200 metre section of the stopbank on the St Patrick's College land boundary. The 33 kva power line is now shifted outside the stopbank and located on the strip of land purchased from the St Patrick's College. The contractor has also commenced the installation of drainage pipes on the St Patrick's boundary.

The final component of Stage 1, site filling in Wine Glass land, is held up because of the requirement to gain resource consents to remove two trees. The planning process to obtain the required approvals has commenced and the works are expected to be completed prior to June 2008.

2.4 Maoribank investigations

The risk assessment (Stage 1) is expected to be completed by the end of February 2008.

2.5 Kapiti floodplain management

2.5.1 Waikanae River

- KCDC have commenced planning and design of the proposed footbridge at the Jim Cooke Park.
- The draft Waikanae River Environmental Strategy (WRES) is complete and has been sent to interested parties prior to Christmas. A public workshop will be held at EL Rancho on 20 February 2008 to discuss the draft WRES, which should be able to be finalised soon after the workshop.
- A new walkway has been formed to complete the link to the State Highway Bridge.

2.5.2 Otaki River

- Chrystalls Extended Stopbank

The outstanding works are mainly minor landscaping, seeding, planting and tidying up.

- Extension to the Otaki River Walkway

Work has commenced on the walkway from SH1 to Chrystalls bend following agreement with Friends of the Otaki River over the location and standard of the walkway. The route will mostly follow the rivers edge, away from the vehicular access routes.

- Friends of the Otaki River (FOOR)

FOOR have been successful in their application to the Transpower Community Care Fund for a new footbridge across the Waimanu Stream at Chrystalls bend. The new footbridge will form part of the new walkway from SH1 to Chrystalls bend. Transpower will contribute \$27,000, which will cover the cost of the purchase, transportation and installation of the footbridge.

- The Great Gravel Grab

The annual gravel grab is to be held on the Otaki River on 9 February. This is an opportunity for the local community to obtain some river stones and gain an understanding as to why we extract gravel from the river

3. Western Operations [Jeff Evans]

3.1 Hutt River

Channel realignment to reduce gravel build-up has been undertaken in the Kennedy Good Bridge area of the river, the excess gravel is being extracted by a local quarry. It is anticipated that it will be ongoing throughout the year.

Works completed include –

- Willow layering
- Annual weed spraying
- Rock rip rap deliveries
- Flood gate maintenance

3.2 Hutt River Ranging Services

The river trail has had steady use. The trail had several areas of maintenance attended to, with seasonal vegetation cut back and re-metalling of some areas. A group of homeless people, after threatening staff, were removed by the Police.

3.3 Watercourses

Stream runs have been completed or are in progress in the Mangapouri Stream, Te Mome Stream, Hulls Creek, Collins Creek, Pinehaven Stream, Wainuiomata River and the Waiwhetu Stream.

3.4 Gravel extraction

35% of the annual gravel extraction quantity had been extracted by the end of December 2007.

4. Wairarapa Operations [Mike Longworth]

4.1 Wairarapa River Schemes

4.1.1 General

The work programmes in the Wairarapa rivers are largely on track for this stage of the season. Rock and boulder protective works for bank erosion sites is underway and will continue over the next four to five months. Spraying for vegetation control in the rivers is being carried out over the summer months, including helicopter spraying of beaches in the Mt Bruce section of the Ruamahanga River in December. This is the first time helicopter spraying has been used in the northern rivers for some years. The operation ran smoothly without any problems. In the new Kopuaranga scheme to date, 50% of the mechanical willow clearing work for the year has been completed. Spraying of willow regrowth has been completed and aerial willow spraying is planned for February 2008.

4.1.2 Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme

(a) New Rating Classification

The special consultative procedure to adopt the proposed new rating classification for the LWVD Scheme is close to being completed. A hearing to consider submissions on the proposed new classification was held in December 2007. The Hearing Commissioners requested further information on a number of points raised and this information will be submitted by the end of January 2008. A recommendation on the new classification is expected to be available for Council in February 2008.

(b) Global Resource Consent

The global resource consent to carry out work for the LWVD Scheme has been granted for a period of 20 years.

4.1.3 Gravel Extraction

Following the completion of the 5 yearly river cross section surveys last summer an application to increase the gravel extraction limits in reaches where gravel is building up has been lodged with the consents department. Increased allocation has been proposed for three reaches totalling 23,000 cubic metres raising the total allocation from 431,000 cubic metres to 454,000 cubic metres.

4.1.4 Gravel Extraction Royalty

The gravel royalty fee of \$1 per cubic metre was last set in 2002 having been 50 cents per cubic metre for the previous 20 years. The fee is spent on river works but loses its value to fund works unless it is indexed to the level of construction cost increase. The construction cost index has increased by 30% since July 2002. Gravel licence holders will be advised later this month that the royalty fee will be increased by 30% in the new financial year.

4.2 Capital Development Work - LWVDS

The development work of boulder bank protection, stopbank upgrades and completing the Hikinui sill budgeted at \$870,000 for this year has commenced.

4.3 Investigations

4.3.1 Private Stopbanks around Lake Wairarapa Study

The study to investigate the state of private stopbanks and other private structures associated with preventing flooding around Lake Wairarapa has commenced. Once the structures have been assessed, options for Council's involvement, if any, will be developed and reported to Council.

4.3.2 Waingawa River Scheme Review

The scope of the review is expected to be finalised this month. Preliminary work on the review has been done such as developing a hydraulic model and carrying out some analysis of the river cross sections.

4.3.3 Wairarapa Combined District Plan

The Wairarapa Combined District Plan hearings committee heard submissions on the Designations associated with the stopbanks and flood ways in the Wairarapa on the 8 and 13 November 2007. Subsequent to the hearing the Hearings Committee requested further information concerning the Te Whiti stopbank particularly associated with its height and level of protection provided. This information has been provided to the Hearing Committee.

4.4 Drainage Schemes

The lower than normal rain fall over winter has meant lower power costs for the pumped drainage schemes than has been the case in recent years. Aside from a significant electrical repair to the Papatahi pump electrics the maintenance costs are on budget. All the budgets for the drainage schemes are on track to recover the reserve balances that had been depleted in the previous year. As part of the recovery of the reserves, the Onoke pump scheme has elected to increase rates by 78% in the new financial year and an increase in rates for the Pouawha scheme will be considered at its meeting in February.

5. Investigations and Assets [John Eyles]

5.1 Waiwhetu Stream floodplain management study

The scope of this project has changed. The completion of the floodplain management plan will be delayed by approximately 12 months while the clean up of contaminated sediments in the lower reaches of the Waiwhetu stream is advanced.

The offer of clean up funding from the Ministry for the Environment for \$2.92M over 3 years was formally accepted by GW and HCC on 30 November 2007. Project agreements are being negotiated with Hutt City and the MfE which will establish roles and responsibilities for the clean up.

An Extraordinary meeting of the Waiwhetu Stream Advisory Subcommittee was held on 10 December to authorise a trial of the remediation technique. A separate paper is included in this order paper the outcomes of the meeting.

In the short term, much work has been completed to design and secure the resource consent for the remediation trial, with the goal of completing the trial at the end of March 08.

5.2 Asset management

Students have been employed over the summer on a project to create an up to date and user friendly GIS layer incorporating all flood protection assets. This involves checking that each asset recorded on the asset register corresponds with an identifiable GIS feature that can be overlain on an aerial map for example. Other information about the asset can then be accessed from the aerial map. This project is seen as an important step in migrating asset information to any new AMIS adopted by Greater Wellington.

Planning is underway for the annual asset management inspections and peer review, possibly by Horizons Regional Council.

6. Strategy & Technical Support [Sharyn Westlake]

The following table summarises the number of formal, written requests attended to from 10 November 2007 – 18 January 2008. These include information requests from the public, local authorities and also Flood Protection comment on resource consent applications to Greater Wellington.

	June 2007	YTD
Requests brought forward	11	3
Additional requests received	30	112
Responses provided	40	114
Outstanding requests	1	1

Flood Protection is currently commenting on the Draft New Zealand Standard for Flood Risk Management and participating in the national River Managers Forum to discuss the Standard. The National Policy Statement on Flood Risk Management, is also due to be released for comment shortly.

In December, as part of our internal policy development process, Flood Protection held the last of four internal workshops on floodplain management planning. The outcomes of these workshops will feed through the Department's processes and into the LTCCP.

Flood Protection helped to prepare a submission and evidence on Wellington City Council's proposed Plan Change 60 – Churton Park Suburban Centre Rezoning. Comments related to the existing designations for Stebbings Dam and associated ponding areas which were impacted by the proposed Plan Change.

The objections to Plan Change 50 of the Kapiti Coast District Plan have now been resolved and the plan change process completed.

Land Management (Dave Cameron)

1. Manager's comments

1.1 Soil Moisture Concerns

Despite good rainfall across most of the Wairarapa in December the situation regarding soil moisture is still a major concern. Annual rainfall at Tanawa, north of Tinui has been 1,004mm. This is 77% of the long term average. Elsewhere in the Wairarapa annual percentages are similar however there are pockets where the annual rainfall is closer to 50% of the long term annual average. Longbush is a case in point.

The December rainfall varied from 40mm at Longbush to 117mm in the Whangaehu valley. This amount of rain has been very beneficial for the survival of seedlings and poles planted for erosion control purposes. Poles survival has certainly been boosted however January rainfall of at least 50mm is required for sustained growth. To date there has only been 6-7mm.

1.2 Hill Country Erosion Fund

The Hill Country Erosion Fund applications close on 7 February 2008. A total of \$10M is available over the next four years for new regional initiatives targeting hill country erosion. Horizons Regional Council has been successful in gaining \$5.79M in an early application for funds.

A draft Wellington Regional Erosion Control Initiative (WRECI) is being prepared and will be put before the Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee on 4 February 2008. The draft includes funding for the preparation of 75 new Sustainability Plans and contribution towards staff resources and a works programme aimed at increasing the uptake of erosion control programmes throughout the region.

The initiative, if successful, will have a zero impact on the 2008/09 Annual Plan. Contribution from Greater Wellington in the subsequent years will be considered in the upcoming LTCCP.

1.3 Afforestation Grant Scheme

The Afforestation Grant Scheme applications close on 28 February 2008. Following representation from a number of regional councils MAF have agreed for the fund to be divided in half. \$25M is now solely available for regional councils, the remaining \$25M is set aside for the public tender round. The funds are available over the next four years and will target up to 25,000 hectares of new forest. Depending on how the regional councils divide their pool this could result in 2,500 hectares of new forest within the region.

The regional council pool will be subject to a joint regional council bid for the entire \$25M. At this stage up to five lower North Island Councils under the leadership of Andrew

Newman, CEO Hawkes Bay Regional Council, are drafting a proposition to take to MAF in mid-February. The Regional CEO's group will receive the draft prior to the meeting with MAF.

The strength of the joint bid lies in a number of areas, namely:

- Existing networks and relationships with landowners
- Existing responsibility for regional land management programmes
- Sustainable land management approach to regional promotion
- Opportunity to provide additional co-benefit e.g water quality, erosion control
- Regional resources and information
- Administrative capability

The final outcome of the bid will be known by June 2008.

1.4 Catchment Schemes

Catchment Scheme expenditure for the first six months reflects completion of half of the overall works programme including a drop structure in the Awhea River and willow clearing in the Whareama River. The remainder of the construction and river management works e.g. willow spraying, should be completed by the end of the next quarter.

1.5 Consultation – Silviculture Programme

Silviculture is continuing in the reserves forests but is still really slow on the Conservation Plan properties due to cash flow constraints associated with the drought and poor stock prices

In reserves forests we have completed 58.1 ha of pruning, 4.3 ha of thinning and 35kms of track spraying.

2. Farm Plans (Don Bell)

2.1 Delegated Approvals - New Plans, Reviews and Annual Programmes

Approvals	New Plans, Reviews	Annual Plan Target	Total 10 Year Expenditure	
New Sustainability Plans	0	3	\$0	
New Conservation Plans	1	2	\$30,315	
Ten Year Reviews	4	20	\$109,500	
Programme delivery	Annual Programmes Undertaken	Annual Plan Target	Expenditure to date	Annual Plan Budget
Annual Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability plans • Conservation plans • Shelter plans 	132	130	\$501,500	\$550,000
Isolated works	10		\$9,800	\$10,000

2.2 Comment

Land use capability mapping has been completed on eight properties during December '07 as part of their 10-year review. The programme is being managed by Dr Doug Hicks on a consultancy basis, assisted by Land Management staff.

Katie Jones is now assisting with a review of the Wind Erosion Control Scheme. The scheme commenced in 1980 aimed at encouraging shelter belt planting to protect the assessed 76,300 hectares of erosion-prone soils in the Wairarapa Valley. Two focus group meetings are being planned with the objective of gaining feedback and ideas from scheme participants to assist in revamping our policy delivery in sustainable soil and water management on arable landforms.

Angela Stead will be joining the land services planning team on 4th February as a Land Management Officer. Angela is a recent B. Ag. Sc. graduate from Massey University with a farming and park ranger background. She will initially manage a portfolio of 63 hill country clients along with the Homewood and Kaiwhata catchment schemes.

Staff have assisted Ngati Kahungunu ki Wairarapa prepare a funding application to Greater Wellington's Ara Tahī Committee. The proposal, which involves the Papawai Marae and the adjacent reach of the Papawai Stream, is considered to be an integral part of the Papawai-Mangarara Stream restoration project.

"Take Care" funding for the Papawai Stream riparian pilot is in its last year and with this in mind, the Papawai Community Trust which includes Ngati Kahungunu ki Wairarapa representatives has appointed PA Handford & Associates to prepare a funding application to the Sustainable Management Fund in order to maintain progress.

3. Akura Conservation Centre (Stan Braaksma)

3.1 Nursery Operations

The lack of rainfall continues to affect soil moisture levels.

Only one month in 2007 (October) did Akura receive higher than the monthly average. Irrigation started 17th November and has been specific to new cuttings (3 ha) and to some areas of new growth on production stoolbeds.

3.2 Trading

The six monthly stocktake is almost completed and all winter stock issues have been processed. This should give us a very clear position of our financial status.

Meetings have been held with Biodiversity staff on our Eco-sourcing direction. Both Trees for Wairarapa and Norfolk Road Natives are being commissioned to collect locally sourced native seed and are trialling the production of native species in root trainers. Akura is required to supply only Eco sourced plants for all Council projects by the winter 2009.

Morgan's Road Nursery, Blenheim will remain our single largest supplier of containerised plants.

3.3 Budget

The Akura Business Unit is showing a good result for the first six months of the financial year. An operating surplus of this size is not uncommon for this time of the year as the majority of revenue has been received and costs especially those associated with nursery pruning are still to be accrued.

Additional revenue of \$22,300 is still owing from the sale of logs harvested at Mangapakeha nursery in August 2007.

Activity	Budget 07/08 – Operating Surplus	December Operating Surplus 07/08
Nurseries	21,100	(12,800)
Trading	(58,200)	(61,900)
Total	(37,100)	(74,700)

4. Biodiversity (Megan Banks)

Planting for the 2007 winter was completed in late September with 10,675 plants planted over 25 different properties. From September onwards release spray work has been done on 11 sites planted in 2006. The pre-emergent spray used prior to planting has carried the new sites through to the New Year with post spray work now being conducted on the 2007 sites.

Hutt Valley Contractors are to complete a barberry control job in the Mangaroa Valley by the end of January for site preparation for winter planting.

There are already 13 new properties to be planted this winter. Two are the first participants within the Ration Creek catchment, six are in Mangaroa, one in Wairarapa (same single landowner, different stream), three in Waitohu and one in Karori.

The Ohariu biodiversity research project is making good progress. It is now in its second delivery year where the intention is to increase the awareness of the condition of the streams within the community and encourage specific actions. Monthly newsletters are being sent out providing information on the issues, and practical options for improvements and solutions. A number of community events have been held with the next one an electric fishing day planned for Waitangi Day with Mike Joy from Massey.

5. Operations (Kevin Burdan)

Silviculture is continuing in the reserve forests but is still really slow on the Conservation plan properties (total 4 properties to date) due to cash flow constraints associated with the drought and poor stock prices. In total 40 hectares of silviculture (thinning and pruning) has been completed out of a target of 400 hectares.

Integrated Catchment Management (Ian Gunn)

Work has continued on an introductory paper. I'm awaiting the opportunity to put the draft paper to EMT.

A Hearings Committee chaired by Cr Ian Buchanan supported by Cr Rex Kirton and Mark Lovett (Chair of the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme) has heard the six submitters who wished to be heard regarding the proposed new rating proposal for the LWVDS. In total 26 submissions were received. Staff are currently working through the remaining issues with the Hearing Committee.

Both the Flood Risk and the Water reviews were reinvigorated late in the year. Shortly proposed National Policy Statements for both flood risk and water will be released by central government.