

## **Catchment Management Division**

Departmental Managers' Update  
for period ending 31 May 2008

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### **Biosecurity (Wayne O'Donnell)**

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#### **1. Pest Animals: (Ray Clarey)**

##### **1.1 KNE Programme Update**

Satisfactory progress continues to be made with the KNE programme. Early autumn weather conditions have been helpful but vehicular access and under foot conditions have deteriorated in the past few weeks.

In the Western Zone maintenance has been undertaken recently at Kelson, Kelson Extension (HCC) and Speedy's Reserve (GW).

Hutt Valley Contracting Services have serviced Trelissick Park, Huntleigh Park and Seton Nossiter (all WCC). Their next contracts are Parkway (HCC), Wainuiomata Hill West (HCC), Tinakori Hill and Carey's Gully (both WCC). They are also clearing service lines at Khandallah Park, Wrights Hill and Johnsonville Park (all WCC) and at Ranui Heights Forest (P F Olsen Ltd). Ranui Heights contains areas of native forest and all pest management costs are met by P F Olsen Ltd.

The new Hutt Western Hills operation (HCC) has made steady progress with attention now being given to the suburb of Belmont.

The Spicer Block (WCC & PCC) cyanide baiting was completed before the school holidays and all permanent bait stations installed. No new baiting regimes can be commenced during school holidays.

Bait stations at Amesbury Reserve (WCC) Cannon Point (PCC), Pikarere Farm and Whitireia Park (GW) were also serviced recently. All servicing is ideally carried out on a 3-monthly basis.

At Porirua Scenic Reserve new DOC 200 rat/mustelid traps have been installed.

A new operation is due to commence in early June at Bothamley Park which includes the bushed areas along the Kenepuru Stream at Cannons Creek, Porirua City. This adds another link to the mosaic of indigenous habitat receiving ongoing restoration in this area. It is situated between the Porirua Park and Papakowhai-Whitby KNE sites.

In the Eastern (Wairarapa) Zone, routine servicing of KNE sites has occurred during May at Taumata Oxbow (CD), Waihora, Pounui, Morisons Bush, Tauherenikau Bush, Tora Coastal Bush, Linkwood Bush (all SWD) and Sulphur Wells, Rewanui Reserve and the Mt Bruce/Pukaha Buffer (all MD).

Most Wairarapa KNE sites have now had the outdated public warning signage replaced with the new signage that is regulatory compliant and GW corporately approved.

Staff are assisting the Featherston Walkways and Reserves Trust with a pest animal control plan for the Barr Brown Reserve on Underhill Road, Featherston.

## **1.2 Kiwi Deaths at Pukaha Mt Bruce Wildlife Reserve**

A meeting between practitioners of the Department of Conservation, Horizons Regional Council and Greater Wellington was held at the Mt Bruce Wildlife Centre, 15 May 2008. The meeting was held to consider the predation of four released kiwis during April. This was the first such instance of predation since the launch of the Pukaha kiwi recovery programme in 2002.

The evidence strongly suggested that ferrets were the culprits and two were trapped by DoC staff on 24 and 25 April. There was concern about the kiwis being predated in spite of ongoing predator control within and surrounding the Reserve. DoC have a predator control programme inside the Reserve whilst Horizons and Greater Wellington have taken responsibility to maintain predator buffers outside of the Reserve.

The predator control regimes were discussed and opportunities for enhancement were agreed to. In essence, the current regimes were considered to be close to best practice. One trap to every 5 to 7 hectares is considered best practice and that is the ratio for the GW buffer. Only a few minor changes are required to the GW buffer programme.

The DoC national predator control advisory officer and senior staff from the DoC Boundary Stream Mainland Island in Hawkes Bay were present to offer advice and details of their experience.

The kiwi release programme at Mt Bruce is still considered a resounding success in spite of the loss. It was disclosed that 90% of all kiwis are threatened in some way every night.

## **1.3 Cats Desexing Campaign – 2008**

The cat desexing campaign this year was once again limited to the Wairarapa. In spite of having some funding available to target areas within Wellington City not one of the veterinary businesses approached were interested in a collaborative effort to tackle a societal problem. Wellington City Council had also put aside some funding for subsidisation. This situation is very disappointing and suggests that either more aggressive marketing or a novel approach is needed.

The Wairarapa campaigns were conducted during April and May with Greater Wellington providing financial support to subsidise the cost to cat owners and to share some responsibility for advertising and promotion. One programme was organised by Vetcare Ltd and the other by the Wairarapa SPCA with the support of local veterinarians.

A total of 354 cats were treated at an average cost to GW of \$34.24 (\$37.23 for 2007). This is a far better outcome to the campaigns of the past two years. In addition more than 40% of the cats were female which generally cost more to treat. This will likely create an interim shortage of kittens and hopefully a marked decline in the amount of cats being abandoned in

the countryside. Abandoned cats are a threat to our native birds and lizards and left uncontrolled impact adversely on GW's biodiversity enhancement programmes.

#### **1.4 Ant Management and Control Workshop**

An ant management and control workshop organised by MAF Biosecurity NZ was held in Wellington 19 May 2008. The agenda included;

- Container management and system audits in the Pacific
- Offshore Red Imported Fire Ant (RIFA) management
- The increasing risk of invasion of exotic ants due to global warming
- Invasive ant science at Landcare Research

Seven regional councils had representatives attending and they provided an update about managing invasive ants in their regions. The day concluded with a panel discussion about discerning the research needs for the detection, control and management of invasive ant species in NZ.

#### **1.5 Rabbits**

The annual rabbit proneness surveys have been concluded in the Wairarapa and are underway in the Western Zone. Except for the Mt Bruce rabbit issues reported to the May Committee meeting no other areas of concern have been identified. Proneness surveys are carried out by daytime inspection where rabbit presence and sign is scored against the Modified McLean Scale.

The survey to sample wild rabbits in the Wairarapa for calicivirus immunity levels has been completed. Rabbits were sampled from ten geographically spread properties with a rabbit prone history in the Wairarapa. Only 134 samples were obtained which reflects the scarcity of rabbits. The range of immunity was as low as 7% for Owahanga Station (Mataikona) through to 76% for Western Lake Wairarapa. Fifty seven (57) of the serum samples were negative which translates to an average RCD immunity of 42.50%. The last Wairarapa sample was in 2006 and disclosed immunity levels of 48%.

The results to date confirm that the calicivirus continues to cycle and will possibly cull rabbits to low levels for some time yet.

#### **1.6 Otaki Field Day - 2008**

Four Biosecurity staff attended the Otaki Smallfarmers Field day held on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2008. GW has supported this event since its inception over ten years ago. It is well supported by landowners in the lower North Island, providing a unique opportunity to inform and assist a large number of people at one venue.

## **2. Pest Plants: (Richard Grimmett)**

### **2.1 Plant Assessment Model**

Staff are working on the development of a plant assessment model that will categorise surveillance species, set instructions for the management of new regional incursions, and provide for ongoing assessment of existing pest plants. The system will be populated with real time data to review future plant status. From this increase in understanding of the plant status, staff will be able rank a wide selection of species and improve decision making for future RPMS reviews. The model and database development is likely to be a two year project.

### **2.2 Regional Surveillance Species**

Staff have continued property inspections with a total of 740 property surveys completed for the April / May period. New high risk species identified are listed below.

**Name of species found:** Chocolate vine

**Number of sites:** Four in Carterton District Council urban and one Upper Hutt City Council lifestyle area

**Name of species found:** Purple Loosestrife

**Number of sites:** One site in Kapiti Coast District Council at Te Horo

**Comments:** Owner controlled infestation and DoC have visited neighbouring properties

**Name of species found:** Asiatic knotweed

**Number of sites:** One

**Comments:** Reported by the landowner. Already on GW database.

A large site exists in South Wairarapa District Council area. The owner has agreed to allow the establishment of a control trial. Treatment is targeted for spring flush period.

**Name of species found:** Water hyacinth

**Number of sites:** Two

**Comments:** Inspections of the sites completed as part of MAF BNZ contract controlling National Interest Pest Programmes. No plants found and report forwarded to MAF.

**Name of species found:** Polypodium vulgare (weed fern)

**Number of sites:** One in Horoeke Bay

**Comments:** Identified by Wellington Botanical Society members. Staff visited with the intent of designing a control trial to clear this site

and gain knowledge for future identification and weed effects, control practice and costs.

### 2.3 National Pest Plants Accord Inspections

Number of retail outlets: 22                      Number of markets: 0  
 Name of species found: 0

No banned species were found at any of the 22 outlets visited.

One Waikanae nursery was included which was identified in MAF BNZ documents as having had received coco peat mix in the past. Coco peat imports have recently been associated with the accidental importation of nearly 30 new to New Zealand plants. The owner advised that he had been in regular contact with MAF BNZ in relation to the issue.

As a result of his discussions with MAF BNZ all coco peat product at the site had been chemically treated with a pre emergence herbicide prior to use in the nursery and as a result no weed issues have arisen at this outlet as yet.

### 2.4 Total Control Species (11 species)

Final inspections for the financial year have been completed across all 11 species. It is pleasing to note that the number of new infestations being found is reducing. This is a direct result of an increased number of inspections throughout the year, more intensive and regular control, and better reporting by more informed landowners and the general public.

The single Manchurian Wild Rice infestation in the region at Waikanae has now been reduced to a total area of 30m<sup>2</sup>. The infestation was historically spread over a number of hectares. Control of this plant is now funded by MAFBNZ under the National Interest Pest Programmes.

### 2.5 Key Native Ecosystems and Territorial Authority Programmes

All works across the KNE and TA Reserves have been organised for the current financial year. A total of 16 sites are currently being worked on by a combination of GW staff, contractors and care/community groups

The pest plant control programme is having a positive impact this year. Ground control has resulted in a significant reduction of pest plant threats in our best KNE and TA Reserves. Positive relationships now extend to all Territorial Authorities, QEII Natural Trust, and various area offices of the Department of Conservation. Additionally, over ten care or community groups have received GW support in the form of weed control in assisting their restoration efforts.

Staff have worked in removing the threats of pest plants across various ecosystems, including lowland forest and scrub, dunelands, wetlands, estuaries and coastal escarpments across the region. Sites include:

Keith George Memorial	Khandallah / Johnsonville Park
O`te-Pua Swamp	Pigeon Bush

Pukeroa Bay / Raroa Reserve	Porirua Scenic Reserve
Raumati Escarpment	Riversdale Beach and southern wetlands
Tarakena Bay / Ringitahu Reserve	Waimeha Lagoon
Tauherenikau Bush	Te Hapua Swamp
Flat Point	Waikanae Reserves
Waitohu Dunes	Nga Manu

## 2.6 Biological control

Work on biocontrol agents continued with a range of releases and investigation occurring during the April–May period. Releases included Green thistle beetle on Californian thistle and Scotch thistle gall fly. Investigations to determine future sites for agent capture were completed for nodding thistle gall fly, nodding thistle crown weevil, gorse thrip and boneseed leaf roller. Some sites had healthy populations of agents which bodes well for future distribution around the region.

## 2.7 Communications

Staff have been focused on updating all publication material with Greater Wellington's Communications staff and supply contractors. The intent is to have all material reviewed ready for distribution when the new RPMS is approved.

Staff attended the following events over the April / May period:

- The annual Restoration Day, held at Victoria University, giving two talks and hosting a Biosecurity display.
- Provided a presentation to a Weltec Horticulture class.
- Provided a presentation to Third Age Education group at Miramar.
- Attended a Weed Swap at the Kapiti Coast District Council Sustainable Living Show. Biosecurity contributed to supplying seedlings in conjunction with DoC.
- The Lower North Island branch of the Biosecurity Institute held its annual meeting in the Wellington Region. Biosecurity staff organised a very interesting programme which covered both pest plant and animal issues and biodiversity actions in the Wairarapa. Attendees included Hawkes Bay and Horizons RC staff, MAFBNZ, and DoC. Speakers from a variety of organisations were utilised. Field trips were organised to Tauherenikau bush KNE and the Waihora KNE.

### 3. Bovine Tb: (Graeme Butcher and Grant Crawford)

#### 3.1 Vector Control Programme - 2007/08

The programme for the 2007/08 year was revised in December 2007. It includes:

- 207,916 ha possum control
- 2,116 ha ferret control
- 24,767 ha of possum and ferret surveys
- 152,806 ha of pig surveys
- trend and performance monitoring.

3.1.1 The table below summarises the areas contracted for the 2007/08 year.

	Possum Control (ha)	Ferret Control (ha)	Ferret & Possum Surveys (ha)	Pig Survey (ha)	Total
GWRC BioWorks	77,353	0	23,907	0	101,260
J G McCaslin	24,294	0	860	0	25,154
Professional Guiding	97,138	2,116	0	0	99,254
T Oakly	0	0	0	152,806	152,806
Stratford Pest Control	9,131	0	0	0	9,131
<b>Totals</b>	<b>207,916</b>	<b>2,116</b>	<b>24,767</b>	<b>152,806</b>	<b>387,605</b>

3.1.2 The following table details areas of the 2007/08 control programme which have been completed by early June 2008. A total of 129,752 ha (61.7%) (excluding surveys) has been completed and assessed by either performance monitor or audit. Contractors have estimated an additional 20,500 hectares has been completed but the stratum are not yet ready for post monitoring, indicating that approximately 71.5% of the programme is complete. Some 26,806 hectares (12.8%) has been agreed by contract for completion in the 2008/09 year.

The remaining 15.7% (33,000 ha) of the 2007/08 control programme is, therefore, scheduled to be completed by 30 June. This is more than the 27,800 ha completed in the June 2007 month. Contractors' progress will be monitored closely.

All pig surveys have a completion date of 30 June.

	Possum Control (ha)	Ferret Control (ha)	Ferret & Possum Surveys (ha)	Pig Survey (ha)	Total
GWRC BioWorks	30,891		23,907		54,798
J G McCaslin	17,967		806		18,773
Professional Guiding	73,670	2,116			75,786
T Oakly				59,651	59,651
Stratford Pest Control	3,312				3,312
<b>Totals</b>	<b>127,636</b>	<b>2,116</b>	<b>24,713</b>	<b>59,651</b>	<b>212,312</b>

### 3.1.3 Monitoring

During the 2007/08 year, 97 trend monitors and 67 performance monitors are required. Twelve performance monitors and eleven trend monitors will be carried forward into the 2008/09 year.

To date, 85 trend monitors and 33 performance monitors have been completed.

The following projects have failed performance monitors.

Operation	Strata	Area (ha)	Contractor	RTC target	Failed RTC result	Passed RTC result
Wairongomai	HMR 1	3,585	Professional Guiding	2.0%	2.1%	0.9%
South East Wairarapa Stg 1	HR 1	5,542	J McCaslin	1.0%	1.46%	Re-monitor underway
South East Wairarapa Stg 1	HMR 1	6,699	Professional Guiding	1.5%	1.7%	0.3%
South East Wairarapa Stg 3	HR 3	553	Stratford Pest Control	2.0%	2.75%	1.33%

### 3.2 2007/08 Carry Forward

The following operations are not due to be completed in the 2007/08 year. These operations are to be carried forward for completion early in the 2008/09 year.

- Mangaroa Kaitoke HR 1 1,770 ha BioWorks
- Masterton Flats HR 1 1,482 ha BioWorks
- Mt Bruce Waipoua HR 3 1,799 ha BioWorks
- Taueru Maungaraki Ext HR 1 & MR 1 8,288 ha BioWorks
- Te Wharau HR 3, 6 & HMR 1, 4, 7 7,140 ha BioWorks
- Te Wharau HR 4 1,610 ha J McCaslin
- Wairongomai HR 2 4,717 ha J McCaslin  
(may be completed in 2007/08)

BioWorks had advised through the 2007/08 tendering process that they did not have capacity to complete all projects won by 30 June 2008.

J McCaslin has requested and been granted approval to extend the interim completion dates of his project which were originally to be completed before 30 June 2008.



### **3.3 2008/09 Programme**

The 2008/09 programme has been submitted to the AHB for approval. Proposed contractors have also been identified for the two year preferred supplier projects (2008/09 will be the second year of these projects).

The AHB held a contractor information meeting at Masterton on 15<sup>th</sup> April to explain changes to vector control and monitoring processes for the 2008/09 year. There were a number of questions raised by monitoring contractors regarding the significant changes to their operational procedures (i.e. use of PDA in the field and connection with the AHB VectorNet database). Unfortunately, a number of their concerns could not be adequately addressed at the time. Contractor training in the use of PDA is scheduled for the near future.

Contractors were advised that the following programme will be released for tender:

- 9 projects (approximately 24,500 ha) for vector control.
- 38 performance monitors.
- 110 trend monitors.

Subject to their 2007/08 performance, BioWorks, Professional Guiding and Stratford contractors will be offered preferred supplier work under their existing two year contracts.

The AHB has completed the 2008/09 “Registration of Interest” process for all vector control contractors nationwide.

## **Flood Protection (Graeme Campbell)**

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

The major capital works and the maintenance programme for the year is completed, within time and budget. This plus the completion of the scheme meetings and catching up on our advisory work is considered a major success for the year.

The celebration at Chrystalls Bend marking the completion of the Stopbank, opening of the walkway and the construction of a foot bridge was held on 24 May 2008. Approximately 170 members of the public plus invited guest and staff attended the day which finished with the planting of 1000 native trees all propagated in the Friends nursery at the Otaki Depot.

Progressing the investigations work is now seen as the major priority for the department. The investigations work includes the 10 year review of some of our FMP's, flood hazard investigations on the tributaries to the main rivers and a strengthening of our advisory service by working more closely with the TA's in the region.

The resourcing of these investigations is a major challenge. The resourcing and programming of these investigations will be considered as part of the current LTCCP round.

### **2. Western FMP's [Daya Atapattu]**

#### **2.1 Ava to Ewen project**

Re-construction of the Strand Park stopbank, the last Stage of the Ava to Ewen project, is scheduled for completion in the 2008/09 financial year. Staff are now reviewing the tender documents and consulting with Hutt City Council, Hutt Valley High School and United Networks before finalising the construction contract. HCC is yet to confirm whether to include the car park works in the same contract. Staff are also discussing with HCC about the options for lighting the new walkway on top of the stopbank. The existing stopbank currently encroaching on HVHS land and will be moved on to the legal boundary. Construction tenders will be issued to pre-qualified contractors by the end of June 2008.

Opahu Stream planting plan is currently being developed in consultation with the Department of Conservation and GWRC Environment Division. Staff expect to organise a public planting day in late June/early July 2008. A newsletter updating the community on progress and upcoming events will be distributed to the adjacent residents and other stakeholders before the planting day.

#### **2.2 Boulcott/Hutt stopbank project**

The Boulcott/Hutt stopbank project is now reaching a major milestone. GWRC has to make a choice between the \$12.8 million Boulcott Alternative and the \$10.4 million Green alignment. Report 08.394 provides a summary of further investigations completed since the Hutt River Advisory Scheme recommended the Boulcott Alternative tabled to the Catchment Committee.

## **2.3 Whirinaki Crescent stopbank**

Stage 2 of the stopbank works is now essentially complete. Earthworks, top soiling, grassing and environmental planting of the 700 metre stopbank are complete and the contractor is currently reinstating the walkway from Kiwi Street to the footbridge.

A resource consent application to remove five trees from the Stage 1 fill area was lodged with UHCC on 6 May 2008. This consent application will go through a limited notification and hearing process and a decision is likely in late June 2008.

## **2.4 Maoribank investigations**

The completed risk assessment shows that the remedial works upstream of the bend has high priority and should preferably be completed within the next 5 years. Staff are now in the process of developing remedial measures and priorities. These works will be considered as part of the next LTCCP.

## **2.5 Kapiti floodplain management**

### **2.5.1 Waikanae River**

A number of sites have been cleared along the south bank in preparation for planting by Friends of the Waikanae River (FOWR). This includes the removal of poplars downstream of Jim Cooke Park as agreed at the Environmental Strategy Workshop. We have also commenced the 5 year programme clearing poplars and noxious weeds upstream of Kebbels Bend as requested by FOWR. The works are being undertaken with assistance from Biosecurity.

The raising of the Harrison's house at 17 Makora Road, Otaihanga is well underway. The agreement between GW and the Harrison's states that GW will contribute up to \$45,000 for the raising the house to the 1in100 year flood level once a Code of Compliance Certificate has been issued by KCDC and an Encumbrance Instrument has been placed on the property title.

### **2.5.2 Friends of the Waikanae River (FOWR)**

The FOWR have been nominated for a Green Ribbon award for their efforts to enhance and restore the ecosystems of the Waikanae River. As a volunteer community group, FOWR have worked closely with GW, KCDC, DOC and Iwi in the management and care of the river. In particular the group has achieved a phenomenal degree of re-vegetation along a considerable length of the river. GW have also provided input into the FOWR Planting Plan, which will be finalised shortly.

### **2.5.3 Chrystalls Extended Stopbank**

The new walkway surface, carpark, signage and stone pedestrian stile were completed as part of the environmental enhancement improvements for the Chrystalls Extended Stopbank.

The grass seeding was carried out and despite the cold and dry weather; germination of the seed has been successful. Fencing and the survey of easements is the next stage of the works to be undertaken.

#### 2.5.4 Chrystall's Walkway

The new Chrystalls walkway and stopbank was officially opened by the Chair, and KCDC Mayor, on 24 May 2008.

A resource consent and a building consent were obtained for the Waimanu Stream footbridge and the footbridge erected. The footbridge was largely funded by Transpower under their Community Grant Fund. This now provides direct public access from the new walkway to the Chrystall's lagoon area.

#### 2.5.5 South Waitohu Stopbank

The preliminary design for the stopbank is now complete with a preferred design to take through to the detailed design phase. Staff have also met with the Otaki and Porirua Trusts Board on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2008 to discuss this preliminary design and address any concerns they may have with the proposed stopbank. Staff are now currently negotiating an easement agreement with the Board, a draft of which is to be tabled at the Board's next meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June.

### **3. Western Operations [Jeff Evans]**

#### **3.1 Hutt River**

Berm maintenance has been carried out in the Taita berm area of the river, with extensions to the vehicle bollards, to control vehicle damage to the grass berms. The overflow dish drain at Masefield Street has been now been completed with only top soiling still to be done. The excess excavated material has been used to fill behind the groynes at Whakatiki. Vegetation has been removed from the gravel beaches in the Upper Hutt reach to prevent the building of Islands with the floodway. Gravel extraction continues below the Kennedy Good Bridge.

#### **3.2 Hutt River Ranging Services**

Maintenance work has continued along the river corridor in preparation for the winter. Trail surfaces have been repaired in places and overhanging trees and branches have been cut back. Patrols have continued in all areas in an effort to stop rubbish dumping and vehicle damage to the berms and stop banks. Assistance was provided to Kapiti staff for the Chrystalls Extended ceremony and walkway opening.

#### **3.3 Otaki River**

Gravel extraction continues below the state highway bridge and cross blading is also underway in the same area to stop further erosion to the left bank. Vegetation and noxious plant control is being undertaken and the spraying and releasing of native trees is in progress at Chrystalls bend in preparation for the open day on 24<sup>th</sup> May. Ramsbottem's fence has been surveyed and the old fence has been replaced and put back onto the correct boundary alignment.

### 3.4 Waikanae River

A number of large poplars have been removed from beside the river trail on the left bank and wilding poplars have also been cut back from Dricon. Kebbles Track has been rebuilt and re-metalled after it was washed out during a recent flood event.

### 3.5 Watercourses

A number of large windblown trees have been removed from Porirua Stream and Collins Creek, and stream clearing runs have been undertaken in the Pinehaven Stream, Waitohu Stream, and the Rangiuru Stream.

Gravel extraction figures to the end of April 2008 are set out below.

River	Area	Contractor	2007/08 (cubic metres)		2006/07 (cubic metres)
			Period	Year to date	Full Year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	4116	35574	46,100
	River	Horokiwi	6183	42360	46,890
Otaki	River	Winstones	1426	31370	40,929
Waikanae	Above Greenaway Road	Various	0	0	3,330
	Below Greenaway Road	Gary Holland Earthmoving	2740	2740	5,360
Waitohu	River	Mills Albert	0	2,502	2,500
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>14,465</b>	<b>114,546</b>	<b>145,109</b>

## 4. Wairarapa Operations [Mike Longworth]

### 4.1 Wairarapa River Schemes

#### 4.1.1 General

The work programmes in the Wairarapa Rivers have now been completed for this financial year. The fine weather over the construction season enabled good progress to be achieved on the works.

Nine of 12 the river schemes held their annual advisory committee meetings from the 21 April to the 12 May. The meetings went well with the various advisory committees expressing satisfaction with the work to date. The advisory committees endorsed the proposed work programmes for the new 2008/09 year for each of the river schemes. The new years work budget has been increased in line with the increase in construction costs so as to maintain the status quo of work undertaken.

From the meetings some common points raised were:

- The need to maintain and in some instances increase the number of trees planted to provide river bank protection.
- Encourage land retirement on the Waingawa for buffer zone planting.
- Old Mans Beard spread through the rivers and the cost of adequate control being beyond the schemes current budgets.

While there has been satisfaction from the scheme member at the work undertaken Fish and Game have expressed concern about the amount of cross blading being undertaken and staff are meeting them to discuss this issue.

## **4.2 Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme**

### **4.2.1 New Rating Classification**

The adoption of the new rating classification by Council for the financial year 2008/09 is a very significant mile stone, as it is the culmination of 4 years work to review all aspects of the LWVD scheme. The work was led by Ian Gunn supported by Council staff, Ranjan Cyril and Tim Watson, Councillor Ian Buchanan, ex Councillor Rick Long, consultants Gary Williams, David Bulman and Phil Wallace in close consultation with the LWVD review committee.

### **4.2.2 Development Work LWVDS**

The development work budgeted at \$870,000 for this year has been completed. The main work was, shifting the Mahaki stopbank back from the river, extending the Butchers rock berm protection, placing stone rip rap wave erosion protection at Macklands farm, constructing boulder groynes at Devenports, clearing trees and vegetation back from the stopbanks in the lower Tauherenikau River, removal of gravel and upgrade of stopbanks in the lower Tauherenikau. Planning is now underway for next years work programme with a budget of \$540,000.

### **4.2.3 Gravel Extraction**

Gravel extraction figures to the end of March 2008 are set out below.

River	Extraction 2007/08	Extraction 2006/07
	To March	Full Year
	( cubic metres )	( cubic metres )
Dry	736	500
Huangaaru	1501	6603
Mangatarere	310	1800
Pounui	90	0
Ruamahanga : Upstream of Double Bridges	10146	13999
Ruamahanga : Double Bridges to Wardells	33777	44726
Ruamahanga : Wardells to Waiohine	7999	49599
Ruamahanga : Waiohine to Lake Onoke	10935	20340
Tauanui	154	260
Tauherenikau	44797	64137
Turanganui	72	626
Waingawa	5278	12840
Waiohine	74702	69765
Waipoua	0	5450
<b>Totals</b>	<b>190497</b>	<b>290645</b>

### 4.3 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 been completed. Options for Council's involvement, if any, are now being developed for reporting to Council.

### 4.4 Technical Advice

Staff have responded to three significant requests for advice over this reporting period. These include information requests from the public, local authorities and also flood protection comment on resource consent applications to Greater Wellington.

### 4.5 Drainage Schemes

The drainage schemes are being closely monitored by staff and are close to budget. There have recently been some extra costs associated with the Pouawha pump station electrics which required new starters and probes. The Te Hopai scheme also required a section of drain clearing which could not be deferred into the new financial year.

## 5. Investigations and Assets [John Eyles]

### 5.1 Waiwhetu Stream floodplain management study

A report has been completed following the successful \$500,000 trial to test the clean up methodology for the lower reaches of the Waiwhetu Stream. The report summarises what was learned during the trial. This will benefit the full clean up work, and stream widening and deepening. A photo library and 6 hours of video footage was also taken which will help the contractors who will bid for the construction work in late 2008.

A full report of the outcomes of the trial will be given at the next Waiwhetu Stream Advisory Subcommittee meeting on 24 June.

On 23 April, Greater Wellington invited expressions of interest from nine selected local consultants to provide professional services to complete the detailed design, consenting and implementation of the clean-up, widening and deepening of the Waiwhetu Stream. A short

list of three consultants was prepared and presentations received by the Waiwhetu Steering Group on 23 May.

The services required are broadly:

1. Detailed stream channel design from Bell Road to the mouth
2. Finalising clean up design following a trial completed in March 2008.
3. Resource consenting for channel excavation and remediation
4. Implementation (contracting) arrangements and
5. Other services required to complete the project.

An update will be provided at the meeting.

## 5.2 Asset management

Work is progressing in three key areas.

- Planning is underway for annual asset management inspections to be undertaken in June 08.
- A peer review by Horizons Regional Council staff. A two day visit is scheduled during 19 and 20 June to visit flood protection assets on the Western and Wairarapa rivers. It is intended that GW staff will undertake a reciprocal visit and review of HRC flood protection assets in 2009.
- A student, employed to finalise the changes made to the asset registers as a result of the work undertaken during the summer to compile a GIS layer incorporating the location of all flood protection assets.

## 6. Strategy & Technical Support [Sharyn Westlake]

The following table summarises the number of formal, written requests for advice responded to over the period from 12 April – 23 May 2008. These include information requests from the public, local authorities and also Flood Protection comment on resource consent applications to Greater Wellington.

	12 April – 23 May 2008	YTD
Requests brought forward	19	3
Additional requests received	35	203
Responses provided	54	206
Outstanding requests	0	0

Over this period Flood Protection has submitted comment on the following:

- The draft Regional Policy Statement
- The Porirua City Council Code of Land Development and Subdivision Engineering
- Proposed (Private) Plan Change 20 to the Upper Hutt City Council District Plan – 410 Eastern Hutt Road

Flood Protection Officers have met with Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC) Officers to discuss Councils' approach to flood risk especially regarding building in areas subject to



residual flood risk. Meetings have also been held with KCDC regarding Greater Wellington's input to the Kapiti Recreational Strategy as part of the Waikanae River Environmental Strategy Action Plan.

Recommendations from the Wairarapa District Councils have been accepted by Greater Wellington, for Designations over land for our existing and proposed flood protection works in the Wairarapa. The individual landowners still have the ability to appeal these decisions, which is the final part of the Designation process.

This is the first time a period has finished with no outstanding request. This is due in part to the appointment of James Flanagan but also because of a slow down in requests. Staff will now be able to concentrate on working with the key city and district councils on the non-structural planning elements.

## **Land Management (Dave Cameron)**

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

#### **1.1 Akura Conservation Centre**

The Centre opened for trading on 3<sup>rd</sup> June. A number of operational changes have been made at the Centre as a result of a Health and Safety audit. These changes have markedly improved the safety of workers and the public during the trading season.

The new catalogue reflects the need to cover the costs of compliance and also the significant increase in the cost of freight. This is especially so for plastic sleeves which are freighted from Auckland. The cost of returning sleeves for recycling is also a significant cost and other options are currently being considered. Prices in the new catalogue have generally risen by 5-10%.

#### **1.2 Hill Country Erosion Fund**

The Hill Country Erosion Fund Stage II application will be considered by MAF's panel on 5<sup>th</sup> June. Council is to consider their support for the project on 10<sup>th</sup> June. An update on outcomes on both these fronts will be given at the Committee meeting.

#### **1.3 Catchment Schemes**

Land Management staff have facilitated meetings of the six Catchment Scheme Advisory Committees during the March – May period. Their main area of focus is now firmly on the preparation and implementation of annual programmes for this coming winter. The Maungaraki meeting approved a draft rating classification review which will now be subject to a full consultation process. It is hoped that any new rating system will be in place for 2009/10.

Catchment Scheme expenditure for the first eleven months totals \$101,600. This represents expenditure of 111% of the \$91,000 annual budget. Final works have been completed on all Schemes.

#### **1.4 Issues for the next period**

- Completion of annual programmes for individual landowners
- Winter planting programme
- Promotion of the Afforestation Grant Scheme to landowners
- Completion and adoption of the Streams Alive review

## 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	3	2	\$102,212	
Ten Year Reviews	14	20	\$458,354	
Programme delivery	Annual Programmes Undertaken	Annual Plan Target	Expenditure to date	Annual Plan Budget
Annual Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability plans</li> <li>• Conservation plans</li> <li>• Shelter plans</li> </ul>	133	130	\$546,900	\$550,000
Isolated works	10		\$9,800	\$10,000

### 2.2 Planning Comment

The Land Use Capability (LUC) mapping programme for this year, on eleven properties, has been completed by Dr Doug Hicks on a consultancy basis. Land Management staff also received LUC training from Doug whilst assisting him with his programme. Tony Faulkner and Doug Hicks have enhanced LUC to a level enabling the parallel evaluation of livestock carrying capacity, erosion susceptibility and preferred treatment.

The review of the Wairarapa Valley Wind Erosion Control Scheme has been completed. The facilitators, Margaret Brown (Social Scientist, Ag Research) and Katie Jones (Post-graduate student, Victoria University) are currently preparing the final draft of their report. Recommendations will be made regarding GW policy delivery of sustainable soil and water management on arable landforms.

### 2.3 Planting Initiatives

The Papawai Stream Restoration Group carried out a working bee in their most recently planted area in preparation for blanking and further planting with Greytown Primary School on 25<sup>th</sup> June. Peter Handford has taken up the role of Project Manager and commenced preparation of a plan, work programme and milestones as required by the Sustainable Management Fund.

The main Honda Tree Fund event this year will be at a wetland site on the Shields property west of Carterton. This wetland has been modified to detain nutrients and sediments prior to water entering Fensham Reserve. A planting day for the various groups and stakeholders is planned for the morning of Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August.

Staff from GW Land Management and Parks combined with the Wairio Wetland committee to run a planting day at their Stage II site. Over five hundred seedlings were planted by children from Kahutara and Pirinoa schools, helped by parents, teachers, members of Ducks Unlimited and Rotary. The Parks team also organised a sausage sizzle to round off a very successful event.

The inaugural planting to mark the start of the Makoura Stream Restoration project will take place on 4<sup>th</sup> June on the Makakaweka Stream on Webstar Print land at Ngaumutawa Road, Masterton. The Restoration Group has received \$7,500 from the World Environment Day fund to put towards this event and others involving the pre-schools primary schools and colleges in the Makoura Stream catchment.

Land Management has assisted the Flood Protection Team with their Kopuaranga project, by preparing a demonstration site in readiness for an open day on 7<sup>th</sup> June. Scheme participants will be given guidelines and demonstrations in dealing with erosion or slumping that may result from degrade due to the crack willow removal. Mountain flax, shrub willow, native shrubs and grasses will form the basis of the erosion protection and biodiversity plantings.

### **3. Akura Conservation Centre (Stan Braaksma)**

#### **3.1 Nursery Operations**

- Soil moistures are now fully reinstated, the irrigator was turned off mid April. What has become evident at Akura, is that the extended drought has affected stool health, the weaker stools are showing signs of silver leaf. These stools are currently being rogued from the Nursery and burnt.
- All stump pruning is completed. All row spray, mulching and mowing has been completed at Akura, with a day to complete operations at Mangapakeha.
- Pole production counts have been completed and the Land Management order confirmed at 27,000 three metre poles. This includes some 9,000 from Aokautere. A spreadsheet of plant material available has been supplied to River Management, an order from them will be confirmed shortly
- A new pole cutting contractor has been chosen by tender process with pole cutting starting Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June. The full pole production process has been explained and the weekly production requirements agreed for the season.

#### **3.2 Trading**

- Yard signage has been completed to comply with a Health and Safety audit held recently. A new yard layout will separate retail traffic from the commercial activity.
- Akura opens for winter business Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June. In stock already are 2,000 native and 1,200 exotic plants in root trainers.
- The Nursery Catalogue has been completed for 2008.

- New plant tables have been constructed to trial plant presentation at a more workable height.
- Eco sourced seed collection and cleaning is almost completed. Our sole supplier has been Wairarapa Stars Trust. Many new seed sources were required to be found with seed costs to date around \$8,000. At 30,000 seedlings this equates to 27 cents/plant.

### 3.3 Staffing

- Raewyn Hullena will be employed as Nursery Assistant this winter. She comes with some 15 years of experience working both at Akura and as a private gardening contractor.
- Bill Hey is available to assist with sales and other hourly work on an ‘as required’ basis. He also is experienced in the Nursery operations and systems at Akura.
- Paul Henderson has been busy tidying the Akura compound and retail area, with considerable time spent on OSH compliance.
- All Land Management staff have completed a tour of the Akura compound to familiarise themselves with new systems and where plant and equipment will be located.

### 3.4 Budget

The Akura Business Unit operating surplus has dropped since the last report. Purchases of rail iron (\$26,400) and a deposit on pine trees (\$7,100) are the main factors. In addition some \$6,000 has been spent on making the retail and storage areas compliant for the forthcoming ACC audit.

The overall position will be monitored closely through June. Trading begins on 3<sup>rd</sup> June and it is envisaged that up to 3,000 poles will be sold through to the Land Management programme during the remainder of the month.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Budget 2007/08 – Operating Surplus</b>	<b>May Operating Surplus 2007/08</b>
Nurseries	21,100	11,700
Trading	(58,200)	(29,300)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(37,100)</b>	<b>(17,600)</b>

## 4. Biodiversity (Jacki Byrd and Michelle Bird)

Planning for the winter planting programme is in full swing. Site visits are been scheduled, contractors organised for pre-spraying contracts and new clients are being encouraged to erect fences.

The review of the Streams Alive programme is nearing completion. Recommendations are due to be forwarded by the end of June.

## **5. Operations (Kevin Burdan)**

Silviculture in the reserve forests is slowing as the end of the financial year approaches. To date 120.4 hectares of pruning and 30.8 hectares of thinning has been completed.

Three crews are currently operating on Farm Plan properties. To date this year 101.6 hectares have been pruned and 61 hectares thinned on 14 properties. Cash flow constraints associated with the drought and poor stock prices have impacted significantly on this activity.

The Rough Hill fence is underway, the line has been dozed and fence material lifted onto the site by helicopter. This fence has involved considerable staff time.

Planning for the winter planting season is well underway with the letting of planting tenders, organisation of the first helicopter pole lifting schedule and training days for contractors and staff.

## **Integrated Catchment Management (Ian Gunn)**

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### **1. TCM Concept**

Report on a TCM proposal is presented earlier in the report.

### **2. Drought Committee**

May has been wet. Availability of feed is still an issue. The committee has not met recently.

### **3. Lake Wairarapa**

Staff have met with Murray Waititi (Department Manager, Parks and Reserves) to assist in the formulation of a way forward with this project. An establishment board has been created.