

**Flood Protection  
Strategy and Assets  
Manager : Brendan Paul**

**Report for Period Ending 3 November 2000**

**1. Waikanae River Floodplain Management [Graeme Campbell]**

**1.1 Waikanae - Friends of the River**

Three 'Friends of the River' meetings have been held since the last report. The first, on 30 August 2000, formally constituted the group under their Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding, and elected 12 community representatives to the working group. The WRC, KCDC and Iwi representatives had already been advised. The second meeting, on 4 October, was for the working group to elect a chairperson, set up the framework within which the Friends will operate and to consider the activities they wish to pursue this year. The third meeting, on 31 October, considered the programme for the achievement of their activities over the coming year.

**1.2 Waikanae - Gravel Extraction Policy Review**

Work is progressing on the gravel extraction review. Report 00.785, on this order paper, describes progress to date on the review.

**1.3 Otaihanga Meeting**

A local meeting was held on 7 September in the Otaihanga Boating Club Hall, primarily to respond to submissions made to the Annual Plan about the Waikanae River. About 40 people attended, with one very vocal group expressing their desire for the Council to undertake major extraction of gravel from the Waikanae River, and generally for more work to be done in the river to stop erosion. Officers went through the current gravel extraction review process as well as the proposed capital and maintenance works programmes for the next three years. Geoff Skene, from the Environment Division, gave a summary of the Council's findings from the water quality monitoring undertaken in the river over the last few years.

**1.4 State Highway 1 to Maple Lane Opening and Public Day**

Planning for the open day on 11 November 2000 is well in hand. The focus for the day will be the Flood Damage Repair works and the walkway on the south bank of the river.

## **2. Otaki River Floodplain Management Plan [Graeme Campbell]**

### **2.1 Chrystalls Stopbank Upgrade**

All physical work is now complete along with the purchase of a portion of land from the Williams Family Farm. All that remains is the finalisation of the land purchase from E N Ramsbottom which is progressing and is expected to be completed by mid November 2000.

### **2.2 Otaki - Friends of the River**

Three 'Friends of the River' meetings have been held since last report. A meeting to formally set up this group was held on 31 August 2000 and representatives for the working group elected. The second meeting, on 25 September, elected Don Hunn as chairperson and set up the framework within which the Friends will operate. The third meeting, on 1 November, considered the activities they wish to pursue this year and a programme for achieving them. The meeting also agreed to apply for Care Group funding.

### **2.3 Otaki River Opening and Public Day**

An Open Day was held at Chrystalls Bend on 28 October 2000. Approximately 100 people including Councillors, staff and members of the public attended and indications are that they all enjoyed the day.

### **2.4 Local Area Meetings**

Following the flood of 1 October 2000, two local meetings were held with residents concerned about the flooding of property. The first meeting was with residents from the Rangiuri Road/Atkinson Avenue area. The residents were concerned about flooding that had occurred since 1986 and their observation that the flooding appeared to be becoming more frequent. Council officers were able to advise residents that the duplication of the Rangiuru floodgates, proposed to be constructed this financial year and the South Waitohu Stopbank proposed for construction in 2006/07, would significantly improve the flooding problem. Kapiti Coast District Council officers also advised residents of what they were doing in relation to local stormwater issues.

The second meeting was held with residents in the Convent Road area. Residents were again concerned about the frequency of flooding, particularly as a result of overflows from the Waitohu Stream. Residents were advised that the Council would be clearing the tree growth in the stream within the next two months and that this may make some difference. In the longer term, the Otaki Floodplain Management Plan proposed increasing the capacity of the Old Coach Road Bridge and raising four houses in the area but that this work was not in the current 10 year business plan. Council officers gave an undertaking to investigate the possibility of constructing a small deflector bank in the interim and that they would report back to residents in February 2001 with results of that investigation. Residents were aware they might well have to pay for a portion of the costs of any interim works.

One thread common to both meetings was that while many of the new houses had been constructed above the 100 year flood level, garages, ancillary buildings and access ways were

not, and many of the residents' concerns about flooding was in relation to these issues. Council officers will take this issue up with Kapiti Coast District Council officers and consider ways in which this matter could be addressed. One way may be to ensure that garages and access ways are also constructed to the 100 year flood level or owners, and prospective owners, are made more aware of the risk.

### **3. Flood Damage Repair Project [Graeme Campbell]**

#### **3.1 Project Completion Report**

Report 00.787, on this order paper, outlines the current position of this project. The major construction projects are largely complete and most expenditure committed. It is considered that separate reporting of the project is no longer required. All future reporting on this project will be through the Divisional Manager's report.

### **4. Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (HRFMP) [Daya Atapattu]**

#### **4.1 Drafting the Plan**

Work is on track to complete a "working draft" of the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan by December 2000. The aim is for the Regional Council to adopt the Plan in August 2001. Report 00.671 to the Advisory Committee contains details of the programme for plan preparation. The key milestones of the programme are:

- "Working draft" – complete by end of December 2000.
- "Consultation draft" incorporating Hutt City and Upper Hutt City Councils and Iwi comments – complete by March 2001.
- Public consultation and hearing submissions – March to May 2001.
- Plan endorsement and adoption process – June to August 2001.
- Publish newsletter and information pack on Plan – August 2001.
- Launch – second week of October 2001.

#### **4.2 Design Standard Implementation**

##### ***Ava Railway Crossing Investigations***

At a meeting with the Divisional Manager Landcare, Tranz Rail agreed to support the Ava railway crossing investigations proposed by the Regional Council. A draft scoping report prepared by Flood Protection was sent to Tranz Rail for their comments.

A consultant will be appointed in November 2000 to carry out the feasibility study of the selected upgrade options for the railway crossing. The target date for completing the feasibility study is June 2001.

### *Ava to Ewen Designs and Resource Consent*

Scoping for the Ava to Ewen Resource Consent investigations and detailed river channel realignment design will start in November 2000.

Report 00.681 to the Advisory Committee shows the proposed 2000/01 programme for Design Standard implementation.

#### 4.3 **Environmental Strategy**

At the 24 August 2000 meeting the Landcare Committee received a presentation on the Draft Hutt River Environmental Strategy. Hutt City and Upper Hutt City Councils endorsed the Hutt River Environmental Strategy on 5 and 6 September 2000 respectively. Report 00.780, prepared by the new Environmental Planner, Trecia Smith, seeks Landcare Committee adoption of the Strategy. The target date for publishing the Hutt River Environmental Strategy is December 2000.

## 5. **Planning and Development Services [Phillip Purves]**

The following summarises the formal, written requests for information or advice attended to during the first quarter of 2000/01:

	<u>Jul/Aug/Sep</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Requests brought forward	13	13
Additional requests received	55	55
Responses provided	29	29
Outstanding requests	39	39

The parties involved in the Valley Plaza (ProMall) appeal (the Developer, UHCC and WRC) have agreed the terms of a Consent Memorandum to the Environment Court. This is a positive outcome, following many weeks of negotiation, and should see the development protected to the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan design standard (2300 cumecs). This has been an important issue for Flood Protection and it is satisfying to have now reached this positive situation.

Transpower Ltd has applied for a resource consent to build a new switchroom for the Melling Substation which is in the Hutt River floodway. Flood Protection has recognised that it is not viable for Transpower to relocate the substation out of the floodway (the current site is designated as an electricity substation). However, discussions with Transpower have resulted in a change to their original proposal. The proposed building is now located further from the river to provide for the eventual relocation of all key components of the substation beyond the 80 metre erosion hazard zone that has been identified as part of the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan process.

Transpower has also developed a long term strategy for improving the flood and erosion risk to this critical utility installation, which is a very positive outcome from the discussions that have taken place.

## 8. **Manager's Comment**

I am pleased to advise that Andrew Jenner commenced work on 11 September in the Engineering/Technical Officer position within Flood Protection. Until 1997 Andrew spent approximately nine years with the Utility Services Division of the Council. Andrew will manage the large volumes of computer based and other information Flood Protection processes, as well as the river surveys, aerial photography, and the production of GIS and CAD plans.

Trecia Smith was appointed to fill the Environmental Planner position, following Alison Newell's resignation in June. She commenced work on 16 October. As well as her environmental training and experience, Trecia will bring to Flood Protection a wide range of skills, including a considerable time in the financial world. Her main focus will be to attend to the wide range of environmental contacts and projects we manage.

In the last two months Malcolm Abernethy and Paul Ollett have left us – we will miss their services. My focus will now be to review our resourcing strategy and report to the Divisional Manager. Following this I will move to fill the four vacant engineering positions.

This year's work programme is coming together with some projects making good progress, as indicated by the Hutt programmes attached to this report. It is very pleasing to note the excellent progress made to date on the Valley Plaza (ProMall) Environment Court appeal, Transpower's Melling Substation upgrade strategy, and a good start on the options for extracting gravel from the Waikanae River.

**BRENDAN PAUL**

Manager, Flood Protection (Strategy and Assets)

**Flood Protection  
Operations  
Manager : Geoff Dick**

**Report for Period Ending 3 November 2000**

**Flood Protection Operations and Maintenance [Geoff Dick]**

**1. Flood Event 2 October 2000**

The weekend of 29 September to 2 October saw significant floods in most western watercourses. The Hutt, Otaki, and Waikanae Rivers and the Waitohu Stream all suffered system damage. Damage assessments have been carried out and routine maintenance programmes rearranged where appropriate.

A separate report details the flood event, and the resultant damage.

**2. Hutt River**

***Flood Clean-up***

The recent flood was notable for the amount of debris brought down. Clearing of this material from berms is substantially complete. A start has been made on the re-metalling and grading of damaged access tracks. Topping up damaged rocklines, using stockpile rock, has been completed at Manor Park and commenced at Pomare and Belmont. Cross-blading of vulnerable sites has been completed at Melling and Avalon.

***Rock Supply***

The Wharfe Quarry, Pauatahanui remains closed following a decision from the Environment Court. An appeal was lodged with the Court over the quarry continuing to operate while the new resource consent application was being heard.

The Environment Court ruling is having an impact on completion of the two remaining flood damage repair jobs, Owen Street and Avalon berms. We have obtained some of the outstanding rock for Owen Street from the Tararua Roding Company quarry in Palmerston North. In the meantime other potential rock supply sources are being actively pursued.

### ***Maintenance Work***

Work has continued on cutting and rejuvenating old willow stands along the River Road reach. The cut material has been chipped using the new chipper, then used as mulch around native plantings.

Landscaping and general cleaning up of the Block Road area is complete. The work has been well received. The Belmont Residents Association has asked for similar work to be undertaken further north adjacent to Belmont School.

A leaflet drop was carried out in the Marsden Street area to advise residents of upcoming tree clearance work on the stopbank. This approach has been very successful in dealing with locals' concerns before work actually starts.

### ***Totara Park Stopbank***

We have reached agreement with two property owners over the clearing of significant plantings and encroachments from the Totara Park stopbank. The historical problem was not an easy one to solve but in the end a practical solution was found. The stopbank proper has now been cleared, re-shaped and sown.

### ***Hutt River Stormwater Outlet Survey***

Staff recently completed a condition audit of Hutt City Council stormwater outlets. There are numerous outlets taking local stormwater through the stopbank system to the river, all having a potential back flow risk during flood events if not correctly maintained.

The survey revealed numerous outlets in poor condition, many with flapgates missing or inoperative. This information was passed to Hutt City Council for urgent action, who have completed the necessary maintenance work.

## **3. Kapiti Rivers**

Maintenance plans for the Otaki and Waikanae Rivers needed a major re-work as a result of the recent floods. The new plans for the two major rivers are complete, with the Waitohu Stream plan to follow.

### ***Otaki River***

Flood damage repairs have commenced at several sites. Repairs completed included rebuilding an eroded berm behind the Chrystalls rockline, cross-blading protected a length of erosion on the left bank below the bridges, and relocation of the main haul road at upper Hughes.

The upgrade of Otaki River survey marks is nearly complete, in preparation for the bed survey later in the year. All survey marks were located, had new brass plaques fitted where necessary, and now have marker posts for easy future location.

A successful open day was recently held to celebrate the completion of the new Chrystalls Stopbank. The new stopbank looks a picture with an excellent grass cover established.

### ***Waikanae River***

The Waikanae River left bank access track was cleared of overhead trees and side growth from Kebbells Corner to the Otaihanga Domain, much to the delight of many local residents who walk along this reach of the river.

## **4. Water Courses**

Wellington watercourses fared reasonably well in the recent flood, with only a few instances of damage reported. The accompanying windy weather, however, has meant considerable time spent in removing fallen trees, particularly in the Porirua and Waiwhetu Streams. The narrow confined nature of the Porirua Stream and the limited access points make this type of work time consuming and costly.

The Waitohu Stream again caused problems at Whakapua farm on 2 October, when over land flood flows surrounded the Philips' property and restricted access. We carried out urgent repairs to protect eroded bank edges and reduce the risk of a recurrence. Prior to the flood, a comprehensive walkover of the Waitohu Stream was undertaken to prepare the annual work programme. Unfortunately this will now need to be redone. In the meantime, an urgent hand clearance of blockages in the lower reach of the stream is underway.

In the Waiwhetu Stream, Periodic Detention workers have commenced the spring clearance of weed.

## **5. Otaki River Mouth**

The Otaki River mouth is a long way south of the preferred mouth position shown in the Otaki Floodplain Management Plan. The gradual drift to the south has caused extensive erosion into the Ferry Reserve land, and the recent flood has eroded away a 75 metre long section of the south stopbank, where it joins the foredune.

It is proposed to cut the mouth to its preferred location to the north as part of this year's work programme. Cutting will be a major task because the river will need to be realigned over approximately 450 metres, and then the mouth spit breached in the new location. Some of the gravel extracted from the new channel will be used to rebuild the lost berm and stopbank.

We will be seeking the approval of the southbank landowners, the Katihiku X Trust and the Logan Whanau and Ngati Raukawa prior to work commencing.



## 6. **Kapiti District Supplementary Water Supply Project**

The Kapiti Coast District Council proposes to supplement the Waikanae River water intake by taking Otaki River water from bores adjacent to the lower Otaki River. It is proposed to locate a series of shallow bores in the public Soil Conservation Reserve land immediately adjacent to Lethbridge Road.

The Kapiti Coast District Council has asked for approval in principal from the Flood Protection Group to locate the borefield in the Soil Conservation Reserve, prior to the necessary resource consents being notified.

The key issue has been whether the bores can be constructed without compromising the security of the stopbanks or the proposed future upgrade of the stopbank. After a considerable amount of work we now consider that the borefield can be located in the reserve without unacceptably compromising the adjacent stopbank or its future upgrade.

## 7. **Work for Others**

We completed repairs to the cableway cage at the NIWA gauging site on the Otaki River and construction of a new cableway tower at the WRC gauging station on the Waikanae River.

Staff sealed an artesian bore discovered at the Mainfreight depot in Gracefield.

Flood Protection staff have also given advice to Parks and Forest staff on repair of erosions in Kaitoke Regional Park and the Rimutaka Incline walkway.

## 8. **Resource Consents**

Steady progress is being made with the long term operational consent application for the Wainuiomata River. The majority of sign-offs necessary for a non-notified application have been received. We held a meeting with Fish & Game NZ to discuss the issues raised in their response. The amount of cross-blading proposed still remains a sticking point but should be resolved at the next meeting.

A very useful meeting was held with Environment Division officers to provide clarification of the Regional Freshwater Plan. This Plan has many rules that relate directly to work in riverbeds. It is important that Flood Protection staff have a clear understanding of what work is permitted by the plan, and what work requires a resource consent.

## 9. **Hutt River Mouth Extraction License**

Some further progress towards finalising this license during the period. A meeting was held with Council solicitors Oakley Moran as part of preparing a final draft document for forwarding to Winstone Aggregates Ltd.

#### 10. Gravel Extraction

Gravel extraction figures for the period ending 31 September 2000 are set out below.

River	Area	Contractor	Period Year 2000/2001 (cubic metres)		Year 1999/2000 (cubic metres)
			Period	Year	Full Year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	3,738	10,255	46,966
	River		0	0	927
Otaki	River	Winstones & G Holland (99/00)	0	350	71,492
	Upper Rahui	Winstones	5400	19,150	46,350
Waikanae	River		Nil	Nil	1,484
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>9,138</b>	<b>29,755</b>	<b>167,219</b>

#### 11. General Comment

The floods have once again added to staff workloads. This year will be the fourth year in a row with additional repair works required due to flood damage. October seems to be the critical month for floods.

I am also covering for Brendan Paul while he is away on an emergency trip to Ireland to look after a son with serious leg injuries following a building site accident. Brendan is due back to work on 20 November. Oh for a quiet year!

GEOFF DICK  
Manager, Flood Protection (Operations)

**Regional Parks (Strategy & Marketing)**  
**Manager : Susan Edwards**  
**Report for Period Ending 3 November 2000**

**1. Manager's Comments (Susan Edwards)**

**Acting Divisional Manager**

While Andrew Annakin was away on a well-deserved three-week holiday in Bali, I filled in as Acting Divisional Manager. I appreciated the opportunity. Most things went smoothly, although I faced a few challenges in the Flood Protection area, which was largely new to me.

Brendan Paul had to make an emergency trip to Ireland due to an injury to a family member, which depleted the Flood Protection team further at a time when they were busy dealing with recent flood damage. Geoff Dick looked after Brendan's area wonderfully during this period. The extra work created by the floods has put pressure on both the Flood Protection and the Parks and Forests operations teams dealing with emergency clean up and restoration work. The response was excellent in both areas. However, the flood work has put pressure on the normal work programme.

**People, Places and Partnerships Conference**

I attended a four-day conference entitled People, Places and Partnerships at the end of October. It was very relevant to the Community Connections focus of the Council covering areas like:

- Partnerships in conservation
- Confronting the challenge of trail bikes and 4x4's
- Promoting physical activity among mothers with young children
- Potential for partnerships in recreation and parks
- Public risk in parks, balancing opportunities for adventure and risk management
- Friendraising
- Rehabilitating parkland areas in partnership with community.

The conference was extremely worthwhile and I came back with a lot of ideas and information that we can apply in our work. I also made many new contacts and hope to

have got Wellington Regional Council's Parks and Forests included in an Australasian parks benchmarking group involving agencies like Parks Victoria, Auckland Regional Council and the Department of Conservation.

### **Presentation to Environment B O P**

Environment BOP is facing pressure from its community to establish and manage regional parks. I was asked to attend a Council workshop in September where the issue was debated and to do a presentation to them on:

- how the Wellington Regional Council became involved in regional parks;
- our mandate for that involvement;
- the benefits of having regional parks;
- our organisational structure;
- likely costs.

It was interesting to think about what we do and why we do it. I tried to put myself in their position and think of the sort of information I would want to know if I had to make that decision, and ask the ratepayers in the community to pay for investment in regional parks. I found the exercise interesting and believe it is beneficial to rethink what we do from a first principles approach.

Auckland Regional Council officers and a councillor also attended the workshop and delivered a presentation.

### **Presentations to Rimutaka Forest Park Trust and Tararua Tramping Club**

During the period, Scott Farrell and I spoke to the Rimutaka Forest Park Trust, and Robert Shaw and I spoke to the Tararua Tramping Club. Both talks were on the values and experiences offered by the Council's Parks and Forests. There were extensive questions following both presentations, particularly on the issue of access to the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Water Collection Area.

## **2. Resource Management and Planning Issues (Anne Manley, Graham Laws, Ross Jackson & Philippa Crisp)**

### **Queen Elizabeth Park - State Highway 1 Upgrade**

Council officers and DoC representatives have continued to meet with Transit's consultants on the proposed overbridge at MacKays Crossing. The preferred option will have a relatively minor impact on Queen Elizabeth Park. However, it will have an impact on a significant portion of the DoC wetland between State Highway 1 and the Park immediately south of MacKays Crossing. Transit is considering contributing to wetland restoration in the Park to ensure wetlands are retained in the area.

### **Staff Met With Wellington Tramway Museum Representatives**

Trams have been a part of Queen Elizabeth Park since 1964. During the 36 years, Tramway enthusiasts have quietly created a significant tram collection and infrastructure, which attracts many visitors. At a recent meeting between Tramway Museum representatives and Council staff, both groups discussed short-term issues and long-term plans.

Some positive ideas and suggestions for development were put forward. These include modifications to the track alignment and entry area and also a joint visitor building with toilets. Changes to the MacKays entrance area with the road upgrade will provide an opportunity to take a fresh look at the entry zone design. The Long-term Financial Strategy includes funding for a new toilet block at MacKays in three years. This toilet could potentially be incorporated in a new joint facility. Discussions will continue with the Tramways representatives. We will report back to the Committee in due course.

### **Kaitoke Planting Plans**

Rose Armstrong has completed a planting plan for the Top Terrace, adjacent to the main entrance at Kaitoke Regional Park. The plan is designed to guide future development of the area over the next 20 years. The plan provides for additional secluded camping areas (the existing camping area on the lower terrace reaches capacity over summer), the siting of future facility buildings, toilets and a rangers office, a base site for an environmental education trail, and proposed new tracks.

We are also starting work on a plan to guide development of wetland and revegetation areas on Benge Flat, at the Te Marua end of the Park. The plan will provide for additional picnic areas and some new walking tracks. We will present this plan and the Top Terrace Plan to the Committee when completed.

### **Implementation Programme : Wainuiomata-Orongorongo Water Collection Area Access, 2000**

A timetable for monthly guided walking tours through the Wainuiomata Catchment (for Phase 1, through to 30 June 2001) has been prepared. The first tour is scheduled to take place on 26 November 2000 followed by a second in December.

Letters have been sent to all organisations invited to visit the area when the first Access Plan was developed in 1998 and to those people who made submissions on the 2000/01 Annual Plan on the access issue. Groups applying for a tour have been asked to specify preferences for the designated dates and to express interest in nominating people to undertake the guide-training programme to be introduced next year. Once trained the guides will be able to take tours through the Wainuiomata and Orongorongo Catchments (which may be opened for monthly tours during Phase 2 of the Access Plan, after 30 June 2001). A ballot will be held to determine which groups will be permitted entry and when. (The tours are limited to *bona fide* clubs/organisations during Phase 1.)

We will deal with applications for other activities, e.g., to undertake scientific or heritage research, as and when received. Planning for the guide programme, which will be similar to those at Otari Bush and the Karori Sanctuary, is progressing well.

We hope to have an official ceremony marking the introduction of the guided tours in February, which will involve Councillors, local iwi and community groups.

### ***Consultation on the Draft Policy for Recreation and Tourism Services in Wellington Regional Council Parks and Forests***

Ten formal submissions have been received. We have also received a number of informal comments on the Policy, which included revised charges.

On the whole, submissions were supportive of the policy document. There was also acknowledgement of our reasons for the charges, although the level was questioned by some.

Although many policy documents were circulated (following advertisements in the *Dominion*, *Evening Post*, *Wairarapa Times*, *Contact*, as well as *Elements* and a press release, picked up by the *Upper Hutt Leader*), the number of submissions received was low. However, a number of key stakeholders affected by the Policy in our Parks and Forests were asked for comments during the development of the Policy and we are confident we have received feedback from a representative sample.

The Akatarawa Recreation Action Committee (ARAC) is one of the key affected groups, with proposed increases to non-commercial motorised events. At our next quarterly meeting with the group (14 November) representatives from ARAC and the Cross Country Vehicle Club will present their submissions and hold further discussions with us.

We are intending to present final recommendations on the Policy and charges at the next Committee meeting in February 2001. It is envisaged that the new charges will come into effect at the beginning of the next financial year to give adequate lead-in time for affected parties.

Guidelines for staff who manage the concession process are also progressing well and are expected to be finalised by the end of the year.

### **Motorised Recreation at Belmont Regional Park**

Earlier this year a working group was established by Hutt City Council to look at the issue of motorised recreation. Following the 'closure' of the firebreaks on the Eastern Hills, Hutt City has been looking for alternative areas for a calendar of motorised recreation events, including Belmont Regional Park. In response to a letter from Hutt City officers, we advised that the Belmont Regional Park Management Plan provides for vehicular access in two instances:

- for members of the community unable to access the Park other than by vehicle, (e.g., the elderly or those with limited mobility); and
- for support vehicles related to non-motorised activities, (e.g., orienteering, running, mountain biking events or some other special event, like environmental education, heritage study, etc).

We do not consider that the Management Plan provides for access by large numbers of four-wheel drives for purely recreational purposes. Hutt City officers are now proposing to report back to the Western Ward and Operations Compliance Committees that there is no workable solution to allowing motorised recreational activity within Belmont Regional Park. We will continue to work with Hutt City Council officers as needed and to seek the closure of the legal roads within the Park.

### **Pest Plant Strategy**

Philippa Crisp has started work on the Pest Plant Strategy for the WRC Parks and Forests. The initial stages will involve information gathering and Rangers will be mapping the extent of pest plant infestations throughout the parks and forests. This information will be collated and new service levels developed for incorporation in the Asset Management Plan. Assessments of priorities and practicalities for weed control can then be made and a strategy for pest plant control developed. We will work with the Council's Biosecurity staff as they have valuable knowledge and experience that we can tap in to.

### **Marketing Strategy**

Work is progressing on implementing the marketing strategy adopted in July. Events have been held at Queen Elizabeth, Battle Hill, Belmont and Kaitoke Regional Parks. Several other events are planned over the coming months. Our advertising is more targeted at special interest groups and officers worked with Forest and Bird magazine writers on an article for their magazine (copies will be distributed at the meeting).

## **3. Capital Works Projects (Graham Laws & Anne Manley)**

We have a number of capital works projects programmed for this financial year.

### **Restoration of Rimutaka Incline Walkway Bridges**

Restoration of the Pakuratahi Bridge and three, three-metre bridges on the Rimutaka Incline Walkway were planned for this financial year. The remaining bridges (Ladle Bend and four, three-metre bridges), being restored over the subsequent two years. Following advice from the project engineers, we are planning to vary the programme, buying all the timber this year and restoring only the Pakuratahi Bridge with the three, three-metre bridges being deferred for one year. We can achieve savings through buying the timber (Australian hardwoods) in one bulk order and shipping them to New Zealand. I will be seeking formal approval to vary the work programme through the six month financial review.

### **Replacing Paekakariki Beach Toilet**

The existing toilet near the eroding coast at Paekakariki Beach is to be replaced. The new toilet will be located further inland and built to the same design as the one at Whareroa Beach. Consultants have been engaged to investigate the site, modify the design and gain resource consents. The chosen site has been agreed with iwi and a Historic Places Trust authority is being sought in case any archaeological features are disturbed during

construction. Construction on-site is planned to commence in February or March, after peak summer visitation.

### **Replacing Whareroa Stream Bridge**

Site investigations are being undertaken for replacing the footbridge over Whareroa Stream. The existing bridge is not suitable for horses and we have chosen a new location, further upstream, to keep the track away from the pa site and associated archaeological features. We are considering alternative structures such as a concrete box culvert for long-term durability and reduced maintenance costs.

### **Battle Hill Workshop**

Design work and documentation for the Battle Hill Workshop are almost complete. The Workshop will replace old facilities (previously demolished due to safety concerns) provided for the Battle Hill Ranger, maintenance teams and the farmer who holds a grazing licence at the Park. A heritage architect has produced the designs to ensure that the workshop is in keeping with the heritage structures in the Park. The project is due to be tendered soon. We hope to progress this project reasonably quickly for completion early next year.

## **4. Environmental Enhancement and Volunteer Projects (Ross Jackson)**

### **Biodiversity Projects Underway**

Ross Jackson was recently appointed Landcare Planner - Volunteers Co-ordinator. Ross brings extensive skills and experience to the position; dealing with community groups, landscape and ecological knowledge and excellent networks. We are very pleased that Ross decided to apply for the position. In his new position he will be responsible for:

- Setting up, running and servicing environmental education “Care Groups” on Council lands.
- Working with environmental education co-ordinators and rangers to deliver “Learnwell” programmes on Council lands.
- Project managing RPS and ecosystems projects on Council lands, utilising volunteers.
- Develop partnerships with iwi and running joint projects on Council lands.
- Managing consultants and contractors.

Projects underway include:



- (1) ***Cannons Creek Forest Restoration:*** work is underway in the preparation of a restoration and development plan for the Cannons Creek Valley. The plan will be the joint effort of the Friends of Maara Roa (formerly Cannons Creek Valley Protection Group) and the Regional Council. A draft version of the plan will be completed by mid December.
- (2) ***Queen Elizabeth Park - Forest Remnant Restoration:*** a brief has been completed for the preparation of a Revegetation Plan for the existing forest remnant. This is being prepared jointly by KEA (Kapiti Environmental Action) Kapiti Branch of Forest and Bird, local iwi, the Regional Council and Boffa Miskell. KEA and Forest and Bird have done a lot of work in the remnant with Council officers over several years. The plan will provide greater direction and will be the guiding document for the years to come.
- (3) ***Queen Elizabeth Park Wetland Restoration:*** a workshop has been organised for 17 November with various interest groups plus DoC and WRC staff. This workshop will consider the wetlands both inside and outside the park as well as the MacKays entrance area to tie in with State Highway 1 upgrading proposals. Boffa Miskell will also be involved in this project as they have several specialists experienced in this type of work and have a good understanding of Queen Elizabeth Park from previous projects.

SUSAN EDWARDS  
Manager, Parks and Forests (Strategy & Marketing)

**Parks and Forests (Operations) Department**  
**Manager: Bruce Andrell**  
**Report for Period Ending 3 November 2000**

**1. Manager's Comments**

**New Ranger Inducted to Kaitoke**

Steve Edwards started as the new Kaitoke Ranger on 4 September. Steve brings considerable experience in guiding and interpretation to the role. Previous employment includes: glacial guiding in both New Zealand and Canada; and rainforest interpretation on the West Coast of the South Island. He also has a degree in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management.

**Staff Featured in Wilderness Magazine**

Two staff - Nola Urquhart and Owen Spearpoint featured in separate articles in the September edition of the *Wilderness* magazine. Nola featured in an article outdoor dream jobs. Owen was mentioned in a off the beaten track article "Ocean to Olivines".

**2. Akatarawa Forest (Dean Hearfield)**

**Orange Hut Opens on 3 December 2000**

Volunteers completed some of the finishing touches to the Orange Hut this period. Insulation and wall linings have been installed; grass seeded; a concrete base for an outdoor barbecue pad poured and railway iron vehicle barrier installed around the Hut and grass areas. This has been achieved using donated materials. The Hut will be officially opened on Sunday, 3 December.

**Recreational Misadventure**

On 7 October a female quad rider sustained fatal injuries while riding her four-wheel motorbike in the Akatarawa block. The 43-year-old from Raumati was one of a group of four using the trail-riding route. At this stage the Police are treating it as a freak accident.

### **3. Battle Hill Farm Forest Park (John Bissell)**

#### **Farm Re-opened**

The farm land on Battle Hill re-opened to the public at Labour Weekend after being closed for lambing for 10 weeks. Fine weather and the chance to revisit favourite tracks led to a large turnout of horse riders and mountain bikers while the picnic areas were busy with family groups.

#### **Educational Woodlot**

The Regional Council/St Bernard's educational woodlot was officially opened with a small ceremony in September. Councillor Werry, Howard Stone, Andrew Annakin and school officials donned gumboots alongside horticulture students to plant the first 500 seedlings. The remainder of the seedlings have been planted since the launch with the recent wet weather giving them a good start.

#### **Holiday Programme**

John recently joined forces with Recreation Porirua staff to run a joint holiday programme on the Park. The day's activities focussed on introducing the children to farming. Highlights included learning how to draft sheep and a treasure hunt through the front paddocks.

### **4. Belmont Regional Park (Chris Wootton)**

#### **Farm Open Day**

An estimated 400 people attended the Belmont Regional Park farm open day on Sunday, 29 October 2000. The event introduced new visitors to the Stratton Street entrance and valley area, and provided a "hands on" farming experience for family groups. Shearing displays, pony rides, pet lambs and a display on the Council were very popular on the day. Chris has subsequently received positive feedback from people who attended the day.

#### **Belmont Tour of Roding Proposals**

Councillors Werry and Thomas, and officers, toured areas of Belmont Regional Park affected by the proposed State Highway 58 upgrade and Belmont link road to Porirua. The party discussed the impacts on the Park and orientated everyone on the geography and values of the area.

#### **Possum Control Operation - Korokoro**

Final results from the Korokoro Valley possum operation indicate possums have been reduced to 4.7 percent RTC (residual trap catch). The operation target was 5 percent RTC. This is a good result considering the difficult terrain and having to use a ground based operation - due to the public accessing the area. Permanent bait stations will help slow re-invasion from surrounding areas.

### **Proposed Walks on the Kilmister Block**

In response to a request from a member of the public, Chris is investigating installing track markers to improve public access through the Kilmister block. Hutt City Council and Landcorp officers have given approval in principle to establish a walkway through the block.

### **Field Visit with Friends of Maara Roa**

Chris Wootton, Ross Jackson, Rose Armstrong, Boyden Evans (Boffa Miskell) and the Friends of Maara Roa viewed proposed tracks in the upper Cannons Creek catchment. Their ideas will be incorporated into a wider development strategy for Cannons Creek. The area in question belongs to Landcorp and any development of the area, such as for walking tracks, will require their permission.

“Friends of Maara Roa” have been busy planting trees behind Cannons Creek Lakes Reserve with trees supplied by the Regional Council. The trees are planted in retired farmland, with thick gorse providing shelter for the new plantings.

### **Trainee Teachers Visit Stratton Street**

Trainee teachers visited the Stratton Street area in September, as part of an Environment Division initiative. The Environment Division are very enthusiastic about the possibilities offered by the Stratton Street site for environmental education. We are discussing potential site development, as part of the environmental trails education programme.

### **Injured Trumper attended to by Wellington Free Ambulance**

A female trumper broke her leg in the Dry Creek area of Belmont Regional Park on the 12 October. The trumper had fallen awkwardly on a section of track. Wellington Free Ambulance attended the incident and used their 4WD ambulance to recover the trumper.

### **Lambing**

This year lambing has gone well, helped along by generally mild conditions through spring. The farm reopens this year on 1 November.

### **Migratory Cuckoos Arrive from Solomon Islands and Bismark Archipelago**

It is great to welcome back to the Park a regular visitor, the Shining Cuckoo. These birds are more often heard than seen, and their coo-ee in the bush is a very distinctive one. Shining Cuckoos are not permanent residents of New Zealand. They spend winters northwards in the Solomon Island area of the Pacific. Shining Cuckoos arrive back in New Zealand every year from late September onwards. These birds are cunning, in that they lay

their eggs in the nests of grey warblers. All the hard work of raising the young is left entirely to the Grey Warblers. The cuckoo chick often kicks out of the nest or squashes any competing Grey Warbler chicks. Shining Cuckoos can be heard in most areas of the Park where bush abounds.

Another cuckoo that is a seasonal visitor to the Park is the Long-tailed Cuckoo, whose voice is more of a raucous screech. Cuckoos are birds with interesting habits that have to be admired if only for the distance they cover in migration each year.

## 5. **Kaitoke Regional Park (Steve Edwards)**

### **Possum Control Operation Went Well**

A possum control programme treated approximately 2,000 hectares of Kaitoke Regional Park in August; a joint operation involving Biosecurity and Parks and Forests (Operations). Biosecurity managed the 1080 aerial operation, pre and post monitoring, and evaluation. Tracks within the treated area were closed during the operation. Leaflets distributed by the Ranger at Pakuratahi Forks described reasons for the operation, alternative dog walks and safety issues. The operation ran smoothly and turned out to be a good public relations exercise.

### **Interesting Film Shoot**

Park visitors may have been surprised to witness a house fall off a moving truck at Te Marua during September. The event was staged as part of a film advertisement shoot for a British television commercial for a large British department store. The advertisement replicates a video clip of an actual event in the USA where a house falls off a house-moving truck while the house owners are videoing it. Producers could not buy the video for a reasonable price so decided to re-produce the clip themselves.

### **Offender Caught**

One offender was caught by Mobile Ranger, Gareth Cooper, for wilful damage in a motor vehicle and will appear in court. Police are following up another incident where a member of the public noted the registration of a vehicle, driving recklessly.

### **Article on New Park Ranger in Local Paper**

An article introducing Steve to the Upper Hutt community was featured in the *Upper Hutt Leader*.

### **Storm Keeps New Ranger Busy**

The Park was closed for safety reasons during the October storm and a tree that fell across Waterworks Road cutting access to the Park was cleared. A kereru, badly weakened by the storm, was found on the terrace walk and was taken to the local veterinary hospital where it made a full recovery.

## 6. **Queen Elizabeth Park (Nola Urquhart)**

### **Second Edition of Ranger News**

A second edition of the Ranger News was distributed to local residents and park users during August (attached).

### **Park Happenings**

- Thirty members from Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club and Parawai Tramping Club, planted 1,000 native trees including mahoe, flax, ngaio and karaka in various sites throughout the Park.
- An article was featured in the *Kapiti Observer* on boneseed informing the public of our environmentally friendly control method that involves cutting the plant rather than using chemicals.
- The Wellington Botanical Society undertook a field trip to the remnant bush and wetlands. The purpose of the trip was to update the 20 year old plant species list. This new list will form the basis of our planting programme for the area.
- Fires continue to be a problem. Recently we have had two fires; one near the Raumati entrance and one next to Whareroa Bridge. An article in *Ranger News* outlines the danger of fire to the fragile coastal vegetation. A fire unit is based at the Park and Nola plans further publicity on the dangers of fires as summer approaches.
- A successful Police search and rescue training day was held at Whareroa on 19 October. Training focused on grid search techniques.
- Fifteen people enjoyed a wetland interpretative walk at MacKays Crossing during Conservation Week.

## 7. **Wainuiomata Water Collection Area (Scott Farrell)**

### **Wainuiomata Track Maintenance, Wainuiomata Recreation Area**

Our track maintenance crew have been catching up on three years of deferred maintenance in the Wainuiomata Recreation Area. Service levels in third priority recreation areas, like the Wainuiomata Recreation Area, were consciously reduced during 1997-1999 due to limited funding. The track upgrading includes re-benching, realignments and the removal of old structures. A dangerous route (made by users) to a popular swimming hole has been replaced with a properly graded track.

### **Rimutaka Forest Park Trust**

Susan Edwards and Scott were the guest speakers at the AGM of the Rimutaka Forest Park Trust in October. The meeting coincided with a storm which blacked out the power, so a small generator provided light. The atmosphere was similar to one of the many huts in the park. The power thankfully returned on time for the talks and a cup of tea for supper.

### **Public Access to Wainuiomata**

Preparation is well under way for the opening of the Wainuiomata catchment area. Groups of 20 people from clubs and organisations will be given a guided walk (led by the Rangers) through beautiful native forest. A ballot will be held to select the successful groups. The first trip will be held on 26 November. Trips will run once a month except during the hunting roar period in April 2001.

### **Environmental Education**

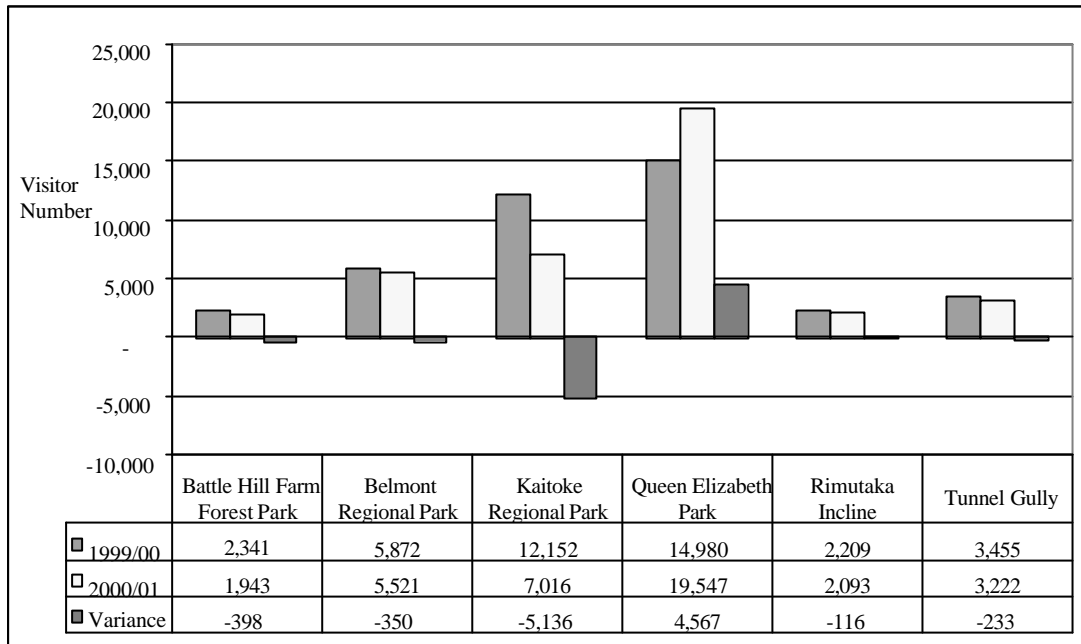
The Environmental Education Team have identified a number of sites to educate school pupils in the area outside the catchment. The Water Group have made the old site office available as a field centre for their visits. Ranging staff will assist in each visit with a talk introducing students to the Park. Planning is underway to open up a simple loop walk which will provide safe access to the study sites.

## **8. Visitor Numbers**

*See visitor information attached.*

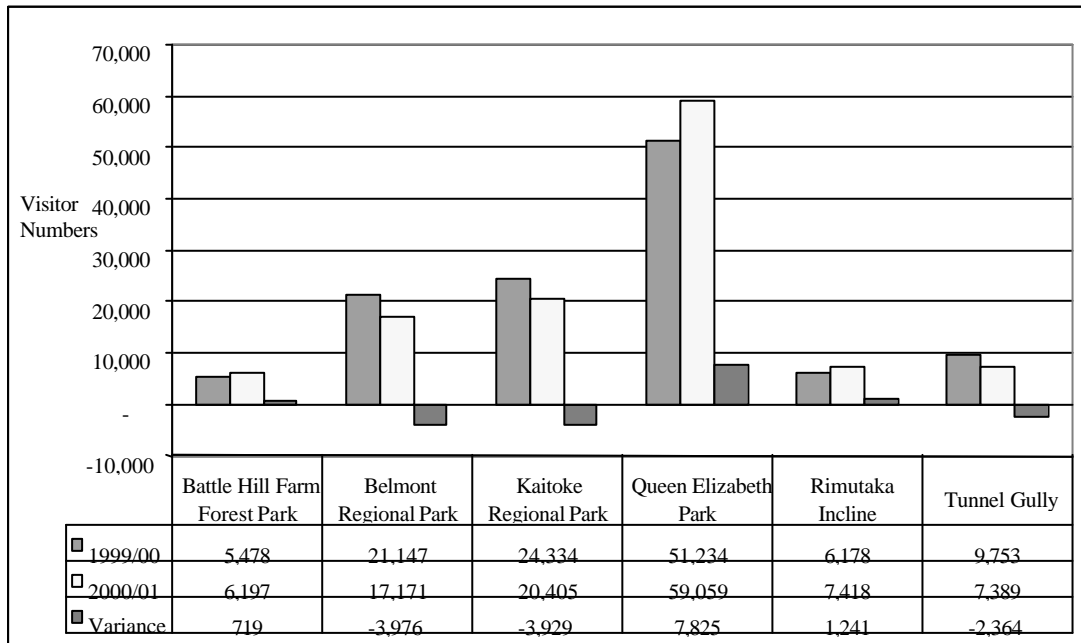
BRUCE ANDRELL  
Manager, Parks and Forests (Operations)

**REGIONAL PARKS**  
**Visitors Information Data**  
**For the Month of September 2000/01**



Visitor counts in Queen Elizabeth Park are higher due to warm weather increasing usage. Kaitoke Regional Park visitor numbers are lower due to the counter at Keith Spry Lookout being removed due to vandalism concerns.

**REGIONAL PARKS**  
**Visitors Information Data**  
**Year-to-Date : September 2000/01**



Visitor statistics are consistent with last years figures. Lower visitor numbers at Belmont and Kaitoke Regional Parks are offset by increased numbers at Queen Elizabeth Park.





# RANGERS News



caring about you & your environment



## Results of 2000 Visitor Survey

**O**ne hundred and forty **five** questionnaires were filled in at four booths (one located at Paekakariki and Raumati South, two at MacKays Crossing) during the visitor survey at Queen Elizabeth Park. This number was down on last year, possibly due to bad weather over the survey period leading to fewer people visiting the **park**

### MacKays Crossing

Comments about facilities, services and the environment were positive. People particularly liked the new toilets, e.g. "excellent, clean toilets". Thanks to the person who pointed out that one of the locks was broken, this has subsequently been repaired. The comment on the heavy doors has been noted. We have six new toilet blocks planned for the park over the next seven years.

### Paekakariki

Several people commented on the picnic tables requesting that they be repaired and replaced. Last summer four picnic tables were removed due to vandalism. We hope to begin a programme of replacement this year.

It was great to see comments such as "Queen Elizabeth is brilliant for picnicking, swimming, walking" and "a wonderful place to walk".

Dog control was a particular issue in this area. Please refer to the article on dogs in Queen Elizabeth Park on the next page. There were also several remarks regarding the beach. This area is not part of the Park and is administered by KCDC.

### Raumati

The main feedback from Raumati users are concerns about dogs (see over), weeds and rubbish. The Park operates a take home rubbish policy. Thank you to the residents who pick up rubbish within the Park. Your efforts are appreciated! We ask people to respect the Park environment by carrying bags for all rubbish and dog poop.

Weed control work has begun in the Park. You can help reduce the spread of weeds by keeping to the tracks and not dumping garden rubbish at the Park.

### Remarks on the Park's Environment

Common themes on this subject were: more trees, wonderful environment and like the wide-open spaces.

Planting of trees increased at the Park last year with 6,000 trees planted. This year we will be doing further plantings at the MacKays wetlands with help from schools and community groups.

Later next year, we will begin a project to gradually restore the coastal dunes.

Thank you to the people who participated in our visitor survey. Until recently the survey was undertaken annually, in the future it will be conducted biennially.

Park users are still welcome to make comments or follow up on comments made by contacting the Ranger team at the Park.



# SPCA Dog Walk

Despite bad weather, dog owners and their dogs turned out for the SPCA dog walk on Saturday, 3 June.

There were several routes, but most people set off down the Coastal track to Raumati and returned via the beach. Over \$1,000 was raised for the SPCA. At the end of the walk each dog received a toy and several packets of treats. A good walk enjoyed by everyone who took part. Thanks to Cheryl Banks for organising the event.



## Dogs at Queen Elizabeth Park



Walking a dog is a popular activity in the Park. However, other Park users can feel intimidated by dogs, particularly when they don't know how they are going to behave. Other users also don't like recreating in areas where there is dog poop.

For these reasons, and to protect wildlife, we ask that dogs are kept on a leash on the walking tracks, in the dunes and in picnic areas, and under your control at all times when in the Park. You are also responsible for removing any dog poop.

Dogs can also cause problems for the stock on the Park.

Therefore dogs are not allowed in the farmed areas of the Park.

Over the last couple of months the Rangers have received several comments on bad dog behaviour in the Park. Remarks on dog poop are also common. With growing pressures on the Park removal of dog poop is essential. At car parks the problem is particularly bad. All dog owners need to ensure that when visiting the Park they carry bags to remove dog poop.

The Park is a great place to walk our dogs. Please ensure you meet your responsibilities as a dog owner, future dogs and other users will thank you for caring for the Park.



## Take Home Rubbish Policy

Queen Elizabeth Park operates a 'Take Home Rubbish Policy'. This means we request Park users to take away all your rubbish with you when you leave the Park. Before summer we hope to remove all rubbish bins present in the Park.

We are doing this because:

- rubbish attracts pests, such as wasps and cats.
- rubbish bins encourage dumping of household refuse.
- the high cost of operating a rubbish collection in the Park.
- introduces and spreads weeds species.

We currently inform all groups who book picnic areas in the Park that we operate a take home rubbish policy. They bring

rubbish bags for their rubbish and take it with them when they leave the Park. We have also provided a cage for recycling aluminium cans.

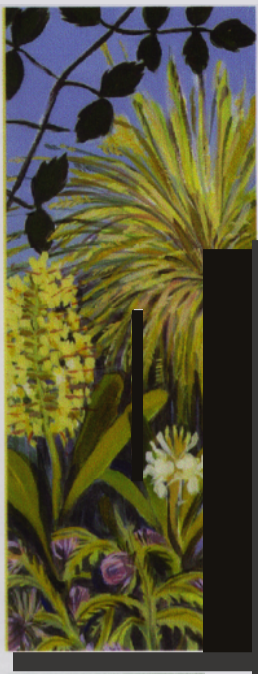
Caring and looking after the environment are important values for the majority of park users. Being responsible for your rubbish is part of being a good and caring park user. Please remember to carry a bag from both your rubbish and dog poop. The Park looks great when it is rubbish free.

Thank you for your efforts.

### Contact Details:

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Blair **Ewington, Western** Mobile **Ranger**: 025 223 7115

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## Brush Wattle Control Question

**W**eed control at Queen Elizabeth Park is complex. For each job, a lot of factors are looked at to ensure the best method control. Our aim is not to control all weeds present, but to work on species that we can do something about.

Why have we poisoned the Brush Wattle and, left the dead trees lying on the coastal dunes?

This plant is very competitive, quickly blocking out light, leading to dense areas of shrubs which prevent the regeneration of native species.

The control of this plant has been by cutting and treating the stumps. This plant readily suckers so care is needed to ensure that it doesn't regrow. A characteristic is that once the adult plant has been treated, numerous seedlings germinate and

dominate the area where the plant was. To aid future control, treated plants are not removed enabling us to monitor seedling growth for removal.

On the coastal dunes we rarely take away treated plants as removal is likely to increase trampling and damage to the dunes. We would require trucks and machinery which are difficult to get to each site of Brush Wattle. This also applies to equipment such as wood chippers. This would also be expensive when the cuttings can be left to compost naturally.

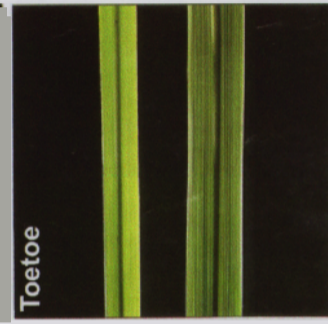
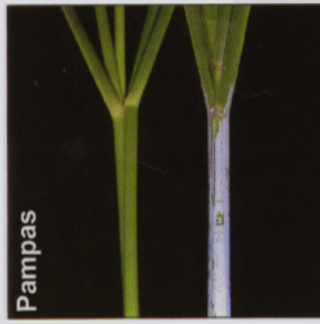
Many of these species do pose a considerable threat to the park (and the Kapiti Coast). Your support in keeping **off the** coastal dunes so weeds are not spread, and plants are not trampled, allowing weeds to invade, is appreciated.

## Control Work on Pampas Grass

**W**ork on controlling this invasive species began in Queen Elizabeth Park in 1998. In the Park, we have both species of pampas grass - Common Pampas (*Cortaderia selloana*) and Purple Pampas (*Cortaderia jubata*). Both of these species originated in South America. Common Pampas was introduced in the 1930s and Purple Pampas in 1960.

Pampas grass was planted along roadsides, railways and as an ornamental garden plant. As can be seen around the Park it forms dense, impenetrable stands, which prevent native plants from establishing. Pampas poses a fire risk and provides habitat for animal pests.

Common Pampas has white fluffy flowers; around **mid-March**. Purple Pampas can begin flowering in January. It has purple flower heads, which turn brown later in the season. The flower heads of both the Common and Purple Pampas stand straight upright. This is distinct from the native **toetoe**, which we want to preserve. It has fewer flower heads than the introduced species, and they are less fluffy. **Toetoe** begins to flower in November and continues through January.



**Toetoe** has a white substance at the base and multiple ribs on the leaves. Both pampas grasses have one central rib on the leaf.

Once plants have been sprayed, it takes a number of years for the plant to break down. On the coastal dunes this will allow other species to move into the space created. Plants in high use areas, such as picnic areas, will be mechanically removed. The hole created will be tilled with soil, and grass sown or trees planted.

More of these events and the control of weeds over the next few years will ensure the protection of the wetlands and provide another attraction for the Park.

## QEP Wetlands

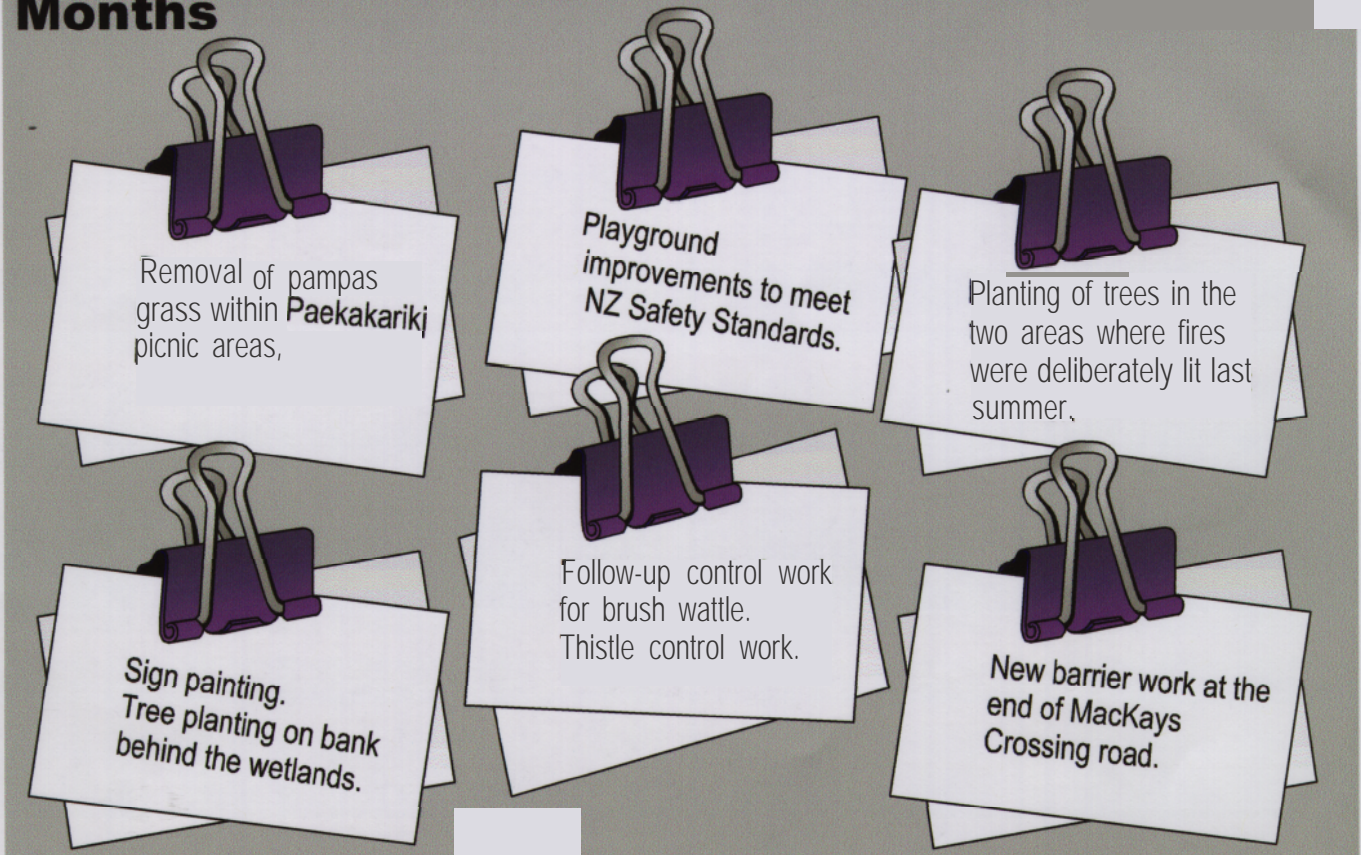
**T**he importance of wetland ecosystems is often forgotten in favour of higher profile habitats such as native forests. In the last three years, Queen Elizabeth Park Rangers have involved the local community in protecting two major wetland areas at **MacKays** Crossing.

Land that was struggling to revert to its natural wetland state was excluded from grazing in 1998/1999 by the construction of stock proof boundary fences. Following a major planting programme by staff in 1999, the first Arbor Day of the new millennium was celebrated with the planting of **carex** and **toetoe** by students from Raumatī South Primary School.



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# Proposed Work in the Park Over the Next Three Months



## Great Progress in the Remnant Bush!



Major boundary fence repairs in 1998/99 from recreation events and grazing protected the remnant bush at MacKays Crossing. Since then we have noticed a remarkable recovery of the native flora especially regenerating seedlings. A major weed eradication programme focussing on blackberry, the removal of several mature macrocarpa trees and the planting of nearly 2000 native trees by Regional Council staff, Forest and Bird Society and Kapiti Environmental Action (KEA) members, has assisted this regeneration. They also ensured the newly planted trees were not smothered by faster growing weed species.

More recently, rabbit damage to young trees has been minimised through a short-term poison operation by Queen Elizabeth Park Rangers. A stile, constructed near the main gate, will allow safer access for people wanting to see the progress of the remnant bush.

KEA received a conservation award from the Minister of Conservation during Conservation Week for their work in the remnant bush. June Rowlands received it on behalf of KEA.



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