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Report to the Landcare Committee
from Trecia Smith, Environmental Planner, Flood Protection Group

Friends of the River Groups : Otaki and Waikanae

1. Purpose

To advise the Landcare Committee of progress made by the Friends of the Waikanae and Otaki Rivers.

2. Background

The formation of Friends groups was proposed in the Waikanae and Otaki Floodplain Management Plans in order to ensure a future role for local communities in monitoring Floodplain Management Plans. The Friends groups were established with members drawn from the local communities, regional and district councillors, and environmental and recreation groups.

Each group developed and adopted their own Terms of Reference, reflecting their unique requirements and aspirations. The groups' aspirations are wide-ranging, comprehensive and ambitious, and beyond the scope needed to satisfy input to Flood Protection Group interests and activities. Each group's executive committee first met in October 2000 under their Terms of Reference.

3. Friends of the Waikanae River

The Friends of the Waikanae River Chairman's report, presented to their AGM on 13 June 2001, is contained in **Attachment 1**. The meeting (attended by 35 people) marked the end of a very successful year with a three year strategic plan completed, two newsletters published, a web site established and the group registered as an incorporated society. Chris Maclean, a local author and member of the Friends, gave a very interesting presentation at the AGM on the writing and content of his book *Kapiti*.

The Friends have also had a busy year on the river with members beginning to plant riparian margins. The group received funding from the Council under the Environment Division's Care Group programme. The group also provided input to preparation of the Waikanae Gravel Extraction consent application.

4. **Friends of the Otaki River**

The Friends of the Otaki River have held regular meetings to discuss what they would like to achieve in the Otaki River environment. The Friends have been very active and involved in several processes affecting the river. These have included:

- a submission to the Kapiti Coast District Council's (KCDC) 10 year "Action Plan" for the river;
- assisting the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's investigation of the Otaki River pipeline proposal;
- a submission to the Council on the consent application from KCDC for the Otaki River pipeline; and
- input into the Flood Protection Group's draft resource consent application to undertake works in the lower reaches of the Otaki River.

The Friends have also made several site visits to Chrystalls Bend and the lagoon near the Otaki River mouth to determine their level of involvement and role in upcoming projects. Representatives of the Friends have also attended conservation awareness workshops run by the Department of Conservation. The Friends of the Otaki River are not programmed to receive Care Group funding until the 2007 financial year.

The annual walkover of the river is planned for September 2001 and the Friends' AGM is programmed for October 2001.

5. **Communication**

Both Friends groups provide an invaluable link between the Otaki and Waikanae communities and the Council. In addition, they have developed their own special identities that are recognised within the Kapiti Coast community.

Every opportunity will be taken to continue to involve the Friends groups in other Council activities, projects and initiatives such as resource consent applications, riparian planting, care group activities, and Environment Division programmes.

6. **Recommendation**

That the Committee receive the report and note the contents.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission:

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Attachment 1 : Report from the Chairman of the Friends of the Waikanae River