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Report 02.392

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Report to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee
from Ian Gunn, Acting Divisional Manager, Wairarapa

Acting Divisional Manager's Report

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of current activities and provide information of interest since the previous meeting held on 28 May 2002.

2. Divisional Matters

2.1 Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)

This process has now commenced. To date there have been two workshops, one on Branding and the second on the Funding Policy. Additional work is required in both these areas. The current policy of funding river works 50% from the General Rate and 50% from the Scheme is undergoing close scrutiny.

2.2 Shingle Royalties

Crs Long and Buchanan, Ian Gunn, and Graham Reidy, attended a meeting of the Gravel Users Group regarding the decision of the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee to increase shingle royalties from 50c to \$1.00 per metre from 1 July 2002. The Gravel Users Group represents the larger gravel operators. They were unanimous in their disapproval of the increase without any consultation.

The reason for the increase was explained and assurances were given that consultation will occur in the future. Annual meetings are planned and the royalty fee will stay at the proposed level until the next LTCCP.

2.3 Waiohine Bridge Replacement

A letter has been received from Transit New Zealand (copy attached to this report) requesting a contribution of \$300,000 to the construction of a longer Waiohine Bridge. The project will not proceed at this time as it does not achieve the trigger cost benefit ratio of 3.5. Clearly this is a different approach by Transit New Zealand. Further analysis of the flood benefit, and discussions within the Council and the Waiohine Floodplain Advisory Committee, will be required to establish how these various communities see this project.

2.4 Staffing

- Rachel Hornsby has been appointed as Resource Advisor to the Planning and Policy Section. Rachel comes from Victoria, Australia, with experience in planning and consents at both Shire (District) and State level. She commences duties in late July.
- Steve Summers has been appointed on a year's contract with the Consents and Compliance Section. He is filling the vacancy created by Stephen Thawley's year's leave of absence. Following graduation from Victoria University, Steve was employed with Ministry for the Environment.
- Una McCafferky, an Irish environmental student has been comparing Wairarapa ground water nitrate level information with landuse as part of her New Zealand work experience.

3. Operations Department: (Ian Gunn)

3.1 Riversdale Beachcare Community Group

There has been considerable activity at Riversdale in the last month. Firstly, boulders have been placed at strategic sites in front of the southern reserve to prevent motorbikes from damaging the layer of peat that lines the front of the reserve. During July a planting programme will be undertaken to further protect this area. Native shrubs will be used.

The dunes to the south of the reserve have been subject to a programme of planting as well. This involved a dozen pupils from Masterton Intermediate School and some local volunteers planting the foredune area with a mixture of native sand binding grasses, including spinifex and pingao. The local Ratepayers Association have also organised a planting day. This will take place in early July and involve the planting of 150 native shrubs adjacent to the southern carpark and new toilet block.

3.2 Soil Moisture Conditions Improve

The recent spell of wet weather has done much to improve the soil moisture levels throughout the Wairarapa. It has enabled a tentative start to be made to the winter planting programme, targeting woodlots establishment and pole planting in some of the wetter areas. The overall situation is still marginally dry and the major part of the programme will be delayed until conditions improve.

3.3 Enaki Riparian Field Day

A riparian management field day was held at the Dalefield Hall in late May. Attendees came mainly from the group of farmers working on the Enaki Pilot programme, but also included industry representatives and dairy farmers from other districts.

The first part of the day focussed on the benefits of riparian planting, the options to achieve industry standards, and a demonstration of planting techniques and tree handling. After lunch the group looked at examples of riparian planting completed last year and undertook a field exercise to determine fence alignment and planting regimes along a representative section of the Enaki Stream.

It was a most successful day and there was a general willingness amongst the attendees to incorporate the key messages of the day into self-regulation. It was very evident to staff that this co-operative approach had the ability to work well on a catchment basis.

3.4 Upper Ruamahanga Scheme Review

The Special Order notification process for the new Upper Ruamahanga, Middle Ruamahanga, and Lower Ruamahanga Scheme rating classifications is now complete. No opposing submissions were received, and the new Scheme rating classifications were confirmed at the June Council meeting.

3.5 June Floods

A moderate sized flood event occurred in the Ruamahanga River and eastern tributaries on 18th June. The maximum stage observed at Waihenga Bridge (Martinborough) was 4.8 metres, which was equivalent to a two year return period flood. The Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme floodway systems operated, and staff inspections so far have identified only a few relatively minor problems. Urgent repairs are in hand using the emergency provisions of the Regional Freshwater Plan, and at this stage it appears unlikely that there will be a need to call on flood damage reserves.

3.6 Safety & Health

Divisional standards for the loading of trucks and trailers have been introduced, and work permitting systems for non-standard works put in place.

3.7 Technical Services Activities -

- Upper Ruamahanga Classification Scheme work on upper and mid sections
- Completion of Mangatarere benchmark surveys
- Work on converting Wairarapa GIS data to corporate data
- Work on GIS system for Rangitaane, Wahi tapu sites
- Meetings with SWDC and CDC on Flood Hazard areas
- Produced a roads and tracks pamphlet for Soil Conservation
- Gravel Licence System – processing of gravel returns
- Completion of stopbank survey at Fullers Bend
- GIS meetings with Wairarapa staff and Richard Jongens on future directions of data storage
- Radio training given to Planning & Resources Dept staff
- Computer draughting work on soil conservation farm and sustainability plans
- Work for external customer enquires for maps and information
- Assist with replacement of ropes on Barrage Gate number 3
- Vehicle tracking test for Operations and report to Dept Manager
- 6 monthly resurveys of gravel extraction reaches on Waiohine, Tauherenikau and Upper Ruamahanga Rivers
- Work on Operations Dept vehicle management and repairs to vehicle radios.

3.8 Logging at Hiwinui

A Skyline Hauler has been operating in Hiwinui, harvesting one of the difficult remnant blocks.

A skyline was rigged from one side of the gully to the other over a span of 540 metres and tied off to a D7 crawler tractor. The operation was technically difficult because of this distance. Although the hauler had a 650 metre skyline, the weight of the line and the logs extracted, each drag created so much deflection that a 300 metre extension was required to maintain the span. The combined weight was such that the equipment was tested to its limits. On one occasion the D7 was dragged off the bench it was sitting on and over the bank.

Volume figures are not yet available, but approximately 2000 tonnes of logs are expected for the month.

3.9 Tauanui Access

Positive progress is being made on securing legal access into Tauanui.

A draft agreement on the alternative route is being considered, but is currently on hold due to a family bereavement.

3.10 Stoney Creek Silviculture

Steady progress continues with 527 hectares of pruning and 415 hectares of thinning completed at the end of May.

4. Planning & Resources Department: (Steve Blakemore)

4.1 Chris Van Krayenoord

Steve Blakemore and Peter Cameron attended a recent function at Massey University that formally endorsed the recognition given to Chris in the recent Queens Birthday Honours.

Chris is New Zealand's foremost and internationally renowned poplar and willow scientist. Through his Ministry of Works team he can be credited for the selection and introduction of poplars and willows to our landscape for shelter, soil conservation and aesthetics.

Chris has had a long and close association with the Wairarapa and provided the science and practical advice to the Council's nursery operations. You do not travel far anywhere in New Zealand without seeing the results of his work.

4.2 Environmental Incidents

<i>Date</i>	<i>Incident</i>	<i>Details</i>
21/05/02	Water pollution causing cattle to refuse to drink out of a stream, South Wairarapa	Under investigation
23/05/02	Very smelly fire in residential Masterton	Under Investigation
24/05/02	Rubbish in Tauherenikau river bed, Featherston	On going problem site. Offenders difficult to trace.
30/05/02	Slimy froth floating on Ruamahanga River, Martinborough	Under investigation
30/05/02	Willows on Taueru River have been sprayed.	Consent application requested to cover subsequent debris removal.
5/06/02	Dust from neighbouring industrial site	Minor amount of dust noted during site visit.
11/06/02	Drainage of wetland, Carterton	Not considered "wetland", no consent required. Farmers have agreed to retire and plant section of waterway.

12/06/02	Dust from neighbouring industrial site causing problems.	Company agreed to water yard immediately
12/06/02	Neighbour burning treated timber	Complainant was going to approach neighbour, no need for Council involvement at this stage
15/06/02	Weirs on farm drain being used for unconsented flood irrigation that was affecting downstream water users near Carterton	Irrigation had been occurring for a number of years. Landowner advised that activity is unconsented and is required to stop. Followed up with a letter.
17/06/2002	Concern at cutting of Motuwaireka Stream directly to sea. Worried about effect on stream life in de-watered section	Copy of permitted activity requirements sent to complainant
18/06/02	Stream diverted by cutting trench across Riversdale beach	Permitted by a rule in the Coastal Plan.
19/06/02	Stormwater run-off from industrial site causing drainage problems on neighbouring farm.	Under investigation

4.3 Enforcement

Abatement and Infringement Notices

No notices have been issued since the last report.

Waingawa Chemical Spill

The joint prosecution of Renalls Ltd is proceeding with informations laid and pleas to be heard on 11 July 2002.

4.4 Notified Consents

It has been a very busy year for notified consents with 17 granted this financial year, compared with only 5 in the previous year.

Carterton – Kaipatangata water take	Submissions closed 23 May 2002. Awaiting further information from applicant.
Featherston Sewage – discharge	On hold awaiting full assessment of effects and consultation. Application expected soon.
Martinborough sewage – discharge	Granted. Appeal period closes mid July.
Masterton Sewage – discharge	Application received and notified. Submissions close 10 July 2002.
Owahanga Station – coastal	Meeting held with owner's representative to clarify scope and requirements. No further progress.
Balance Agri-Nutrients – Discharge to land	Jointly Notified. Submissions close 19 July.
Renalls Ltd – air discharge	Granted with no appeals.
East Coast Abalone, Tora – Coastal permit	Jointly Notified. Submissions close 10 July 2002

Water Races - 6 – Masterton, Carterton and South Wairarapa District Councils	Applications received for all races. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ AEEs assessed for Masterton races with further information requested. ◦ Carterton full AEE now received. ◦ South Wairarapa AEE's assessed, some additional information being provided.
Tyer – Coastal Permit	Jointly Notified. Submissions closed. Proceeding without a hearing.

4.5 Coastal Strategy

The discussion document has been forwarded to all key stakeholders, seeking views on coastal issues and possible solutions with submissions closing on 30 June 2002. (A copy has been provided to Committee members for their information).

Boffa Miskell are making good progress with the Landscape and Ecology Technical Reports and will be making a presentation at the next meeting of the Coastal Strategy Group.

4.6 Agri Chemical Collection

A front page lead article with a “captivating” photograph resulted in a large upsurge in responses to the collection. As of 31 May 2002 the final responses were:

Registrations received	289	
Collections completed	195	
Total chemical collected	11.8 tonne	60.5 kg per property
Quantity needing to be exported for disposal	7811 kg	66%
Quantity able to be disposed of locally	2452 kg	21%
Quantity able to be re-issued	1539 kg	13%

4.7 WELA Study

This comprehensive report covering the Wairarapa's engineering lifelines is close to publication. The hazards, civil services and transport chapters have been professionally edited and photographs selected. The remaining chapters covering telecommunications and electrical, and critical facilities are close to completion.

4.8 Hazard Fact Sheets

As part of the Council's hazards strategy, ten fact sheets have been prepared. The sheets communicate the hazard information held by the Council and are intended to raise awareness and knowledge of hazards. Subjects covered to date include general earthquake, landslides, tsunami and wildfire. Future sheets will be added to include Wairarapa meteorological hazards and earthquake hazards. These will summarise the outcomes of recent WELA research.

4.9 Customer Satisfaction Survey

AC Nielson have undertaken a repeat biennial survey of customer satisfaction covering consents and compliance activities in both Wairarapa and Wellington. The survey looks at four groups of customers:

- Consent applicants in the last two years.
- Those with existing consents
- Submitters to consents in the last two years
- People who have made a complaint about a consented or unconsented activity in the last two years

The results of the survey will be presented at the next Committee meeting.

4.10 Strategic Directions

As a first step towards development of the Council's next Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) staff have been participating in teams set up to review a variety of activities within the Council. These range from underground water to Iwi and have incorporated staff from across the Council. Key questions have been:

- What do we do now that we no longer need to do or should reduce?
- What do we need to do more of?
- What should we be doing that we don't currently do?

Group recommendations will feed into workshops involving Councillors and management.

4.11 Waste Management Wairarapa

The Wairarapa Regional Waste Management Plan has received a favourable peer review by consultants and awaits formal adoption by Masterton District. Questions of governance and funding between the three districts now need to be agreed so that progress towards one Wairarapa regional landfill can proceed.

A workshop was held to identify and discuss risks associated with the proposal. Consultants are to report back on several issues raised at the workshop.

4.12 Dairying Impacts

The Fish and Game Council "Dirty Dairying" campaign has received further publicity with the recent release of a NIWA report that examines the environmental impacts of dairying in New Zealand.

It is intended to provide an overview paper on Wairarapa dairying trends and impacts to the next meeting of the Committee.

4.13 Hydrology

Rainfall

Rainfall figures for May showed a continuing ‘drying out’ trend. For both the Lower Valley and the eastern hill country the figures were below those for April. Alloa only recorded 36mm (93mm in April), 36% of average and Tanawa Hut 32.5mm (37mm in April), 24% of average. Tararua rainfall at Angle Knob (445mm) although more than twice the total for April (215mm) was still well below the May average of 602mm.

Tanawa Hut’s May total 32.5mm has not been this low since 1963 (30mm) whilst the 36 mm recorded at Alloa was the lowest since 1991 (23mm).

The predominant weather pattern tended to be ‘dryish’ southwesterlies with a series of deep lows passed down below New Zealand. It was only in the last week of May that we had the first couple of good frosts for this year.

The tables below are for 3 representative rainfall sites showing rainfall figures for May and also April for comparison.

Site	Location	May 2002 (mm)	May Average (mm)	% of average
Angle Knob	Tararua Ranges	455	602	76
Alloa	Middle Valley	36	99	36
Tanawa Hut	Eastern Hills	32	134	24

Site	Location	Apr 2002 (mm)	April Average (mm)	% of average
Angle Knob	Tararua Ranges	215	530	41
Alloa	Middle Valley	93	83	112
Tanawa Hut	Eastern Hills	37	110	33

Rivers

River flows for May were much on a par with last month’s figures in terms of percentage of average.

Waihenga’s May flow of 37.6m³/s was the second lowest on record since 1976 (lowest 21m³/s in 1997) and the Waiohine flow of 14.6m³/s the fourth lowest since 1979 (lowest 6.8m³/s in 1997).

The predominance of southwesterlies bringing heavy seas, combined with low river flows, meant that for most of the month the opening through the spit at Lake Ferry was closed.

The table below contains May flow statistics for 2 representative sites, April’s data is also repeated to show comparisons.

Site	May 2002 Flow (m ³ /s)	Average May Flow (m ³ /s)	% of Average
Waihenga	37.6	82.3	47
Waiohine	14.6	23.4	62

Site	April 2002 Flow (m ³ /s)	Average April Flow (m ³ /s)	% of Average
Waihenga	31.4	63.5	49
Waiohine	11.5	20.7	55

Floodwarnings

	May	Financial Year to Date	Previous Year to Date
No. of events	1	6	17
No. of Lists Issued	4	27	136

5. Biosecurity Department: (Wayne O'Donnell)

5.1 Hornwort

Agreement has been reached to fund the initial control of Hornwort at Forest Lake north of Otaki. WRC, DoC, owners and interested parties have agreed to fund and assess the results of initial herbicide application. This follows a quote from an aquatic plant control specialist, based at Rotorua, to carry an initial application of the herbicide diquat. The initial work will be carried out in three stages over approximately one month. A NIWA scientist will be utilised to monitor the success of the initial application. Diquat is successful against Hornwort only in clear water situations. While the water quality at Forest Lake has been assessed as satisfactory for diquat use, only a trial over a large water sample can satisfactorily determine its effectiveness.

The trial application over five hectares of infested water is planned to take place in mid to late August. If successful two further areas will be treated over the following eight weeks to complete the initial programme.

5.2 Old Mans Beard, Urban Wairarapa

On 31 May, an inspection and control programme of Old Mans Beard in urban Wairarapa areas was completed. These inspections were carried out by a fixed term employee over the period November 2001 to May 2002. A total of 1013 sites were inspected made up of:

- Number of previously recorded sites inspected: 888.
- Number of recorded sites found to be clear: 283
- New sites advised or located during the programme: 125
- Other pest plant species located during the inspections -

Smilax 2, Banana Passionfruit 4, and Moth Plant 1.

5.3 Dumping of Garden Waste

The regional problem of the illegal dumping of garden or green waste was discussed at a meeting held at Kapiti Coast District Council on June 7. In attendance were officers from KCDC, Wellington City Council, Hutt City Council, Horowhenua District Council, Department of Conservation and Wellington Regional Council. It was agreed that there are two aspects to this escalating problem:

- The disposal of garden waste into Council or DoC reserve from adjacent residential properties, i.e. “over the fence dumping”.
- Deliberate dumping on roadsides, waste areas, bush and river reserve. In this case material was being moved some distance but not to a formal landfill.

The meeting agreed that the issue requires urgent attention with publicity and public education the most practical means of achieving a result. A representative group has been established to co-ordinate a publicity campaign and will meet in early July. Letters have been written to each of the Wairarapa district councils inviting them to participate.

5.4 Mount Bruce- Pukaha Restoration Programme

Councillors and staff were privileged to be invited to a function at the Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre to celebrate the release of the music CD “Pukaha – songs from the forest”. The CD features birds native to Pukaha/Mount Bruce and was produced especially to help fund and support the restoration project through the purchase of traps and bait stations for predator control. It is predicted to ‘go gold’ in New Zealand which requires the sale of 17,000 copies. The function was jointly hosted by the community partnership of Rangitaane o Wairarapa, Department of Conservation and the National Wildlife Centre Trust.

5.5 Rook Control – Ground Baiting

Thirteen ground baiting operations were completed over the past 12 months with an estimated 600 rooks being destroyed. Only seven of the operations could be classified as successful with the remainder having to be discontinued because of poor bait acceptance or the presence of non - target birds such as ducks or seagulls. Ground baiting of rooks always has an unknown outcome due to the vagaries of nature. This is why direct baiting of the nests using a helicopter during the rooks breeding season is now the favoured method. The 600 destroyed is still significant in that it represents 75 percent of the regions rook population disclosed at the last census in October and November last year. The unknown factor however, is the number of rooks that have migrated south into our region, and the possibility that some rookeries may have been missed in the census. Another census will be conducted by nest-count this spring.

5.6 Key Native Ecosystem Programmes

These are ongoing at several sites throughout the region with current emphasis on endeavouring to complete the initial or maintenance phase before the end of the financial year. Forward planning and programming is also being undertaken, particularly with a view to a reassessment of priorities and developing more integrated management regimes. The six key areas are:

- Widespread protection of indigenous forest structure through maintenance and consolidation of existing KNE possum control programmes;
- Expansion of the KNE possum control programme on a self-help basis, with some financial support from the Biosecurity Department;
- Increasing the range of terrestrial habitats protected under the KNE programme, focussing on ecosystems under-represented in the current KNE portfolio (e.g. coastal environs).
- Surveys of KNE's for pest plants and integrated pest plant control in recommended priority areas.
- The highest level of protection and recovery of native fauna in a selection of the best indigenous forest KNE's through intensive predator control.
- The highest level of protection, recovery of fauna and re-introductions of threatened species under 'mainland island' type proposals.

5.7 Memorandums of Understanding with Territorial Local Authorities

In February of this year the Western Zone TLA's were approached seeking a mutual semi-formal agreement with them towards supporting biodiversity and optimising ecological health in their districts. Progress on the matter had stalled principally because our Regional Pest Management Strategy (which is an integral part of such an agreement) still awaits ratification of the Environment Court following the appeal of Safari Club International. All the TLA's who have responded are enthusiastic about the proposal. Formalising the agreements will proceed following approval of the RPMS.

5.8 Bovine Tb

(1) Operational Progress

The 2001/02 programme consisted of approximately 330,000 hectares. All except approximately 30,500 hectares will be completed. Uncompleted work has been scheduled for the 2002/03 year.

Some of the 2001/02 control will be completed during July. Completion was not possible due to some reworks being required.

Areas untreated during the 2001/02 year include:

- 12,000 ha Bideford - withdrawn from control and put into 2002/03 programme
- 2,000 ha Tinui - withdrawn from control and put into 2002/03 programme
- 15,000 ha Mangaroa-Kaitoke - problems implementing control
- 466 ha Mt Bruce Reserve – removed from control
- 953 ha Te Wharau – stock removal problems. Agreement has been reached for control to be implemented in 2002/03.

(2) Staffing

The Bovine Unit's permanent staffing level is currently 18 and four fixed term staff.

This compares with 22 permanent and 6 Fixed Term employee staff as at July 2001.

5.9 Monitoring

The following post monitoring results are available:

Operations Unit

	%	
Kahutara-Pirinoa (7 stratas)	1.8	
Tinui HR	1.9	
Waingawa (2 stratas)	0.6	
Featherston-Waiorongomai Aerial	8.4	(south)
Featherston-Waiorongomai	0.6	(north)
Featherston-Waiorongomai	1.4	(1kg/ha)
Waiorongomai Aerial	0.0	
Mt Bruce-Mikimiki Aerial	1.5	(1kg/ha)
Mt Bruce-Mikimiki Aerial	0.9	(2hg/ha)
Waiorongomai (5 stratas)	0.5	

Private Contractors:

Bideford	MR	3.8
Pakowhai		1.4
Ponatahi-Longbush	HR	0.3
Stronvar	HR1	1.1
Stronvar	HR2	2.0

We are waiting for final monitoring results of all stratas for the following operations:

Castlehill
 Featherston
 Holdsworth-Carterton
 Mataikona
 Mt Bruce-Waipoua
 Owahanga
 South East Wairarapa – Stage 1
 Taueru-Maungaraki
 Taueru-Maungaraki Extension
 East Alfredton
 Woodside

5.10 High Profile Operations – 2001/02

South East Wairarapa – Stage 1

This operation caused considerable concerns during the setting up phase.

An agreement was reached with all occupiers to undertake possum control on their properties.

16530 hectares treated by private contractor
 29029 hectares treated by the Bovine Unit
 2453 hectares Notice of Direction (Snowy Range)

It is expected that the private contractors and the Bovine Unit will achieve their performance targets. Monitoring will be completed in July.

The Notice of Direction (Snowy Range) failed to achieve the performance target. The result achieved was 7.7% RTC. The occupier has been issued a further notice to complete this work by 31 January 2003.

Mangaroa-Kaitoke

- The MoH has granted approval.
- The Resource Consent has been approved.
- Upper Hutt City Council has not yet granted approval.
- The operation plan has been revised to include:

Aerial 1080	8447 ha
Ground 1080	403 ha
Feratox	5067 ha
Trapping/Brodifacoum	5649 ha
- All but a handful of small occupiers have agreed on control methods for their property.
- Brodifacoum and trapping control methods have commenced. 1080 and cyanide control will not commence until the Upper Hutt City Council have given their approval.

- Members of the Upper Hutt anti-1080 action group, and the Upper Hutt SPCA have applied for an injunction against the aerial component of this operation.

5.11 2002/03 Programme

- No contracts for the 2002/03 programme have been let.
- Trend monitoring results have been difficult to achieve due to the large amount of performance monitoring to be undertaken.

Trend results available to base management decisions on include:

	%
Martinborough	13.1
- JK Donald Reserve	11.3
Pakowhai MR	1.8
Taueru-Maungaraki Ext MR	3.6
Ponatahi-Longbush MR1	5.0
Ponatahi-Longbush MR2	1.5

5.12 Bovine Tuberculosis Infected Herds

AgriQuality NZ has reported that there are 61 infected herds in the Wellington Region as at the end of the 2001/02 year. This compares favourably with the June 2001 figure of 76.

Currently there is one infected deer herd within the Wellington Region (South East Wairarapa Stage 2 operational area).

Infected herds for June include:

- 2002 61
- 2001 76
- 2000 80
- 1999 108
- 1998 150
- 1997 198
- 1996 265
- 1995 295

6. Recommendation

That the report be received and its contents noted.

Ian Gunn
Acting Divisional Manager, Wairarapa