

1. Environmental Wellbeing Committee

1.1 Biosecurity

1.1.1 Overview



2011-12 was a challenging but rewarding year for Biosecurity. The team completed a full programme of work, with a relatively smooth transition of traditionally Biosecurity programmes to Biodiversity. BioWorks moved back into the department and shifted buildings. Some of our long serving staff retired after 40 (Grant Crawford) and 50 years (Ray Clarey) of service. Excellent new staff were recruited. The Department finished the year with a slight surplus.

GW joined the National Biosecurity Capability Network and had staff available to help with the fruit fly

response in Auckland.

The Department took a significant role in the Lower North Island Partnership (Nature Central) project, which is intended to help Regional Council and DoC cooperate for delivering environmental services to the public.

1.1.2 Department Activity

Key Native Ecosystems, TLA Reserve Programmes

The total programme was completed 5% under budget. This programme consisted of 34 KNE sites (11,453ha) and 58 TLA Reserves (7,898ha). Overall the programme ran smoothly, apart from a few operations that were affected by the goat eradication operation around the South Coast of Wellington. Baiting had to be stopped to allow goat hunting with dogs to take place. There continues to be increased sightings of locally-rare native birds across the region, such as kakariki and bellbird, which helps with support for the control programmes. Mustelid traps were installed on part of the Miramar Peninsula coastline for a Forest and Bird programme to protect little blue penguin. Expertise and assistance was given to Wellington City Council (WCC) to eradicate mice from Taputeranga Island on the Wellington South Coast, which early monitoring indicates has been successful.

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Rooks

The rook control programme for the financial year was achieved with 42% of the budget. This year the weather was favourable and allowed helicopter control work to be completed on time. Staff continue to work with Horizons Regional Council to coordinate annual programme. The number of rookeries at the end of 2011/12 year was (10 in 2010/11 and 21 in 2009/10) although nest numbers were up slightly due to a new rookery being reported after the annual publicity campaign.

There was just one instance of arable crop damage by rooks reported by a Pirinoa farmer. A successful ground baiting operation saved the barley crop from serious harm. The lack of damage across region is a significant achievement for the current rook control method.



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Rabbits

The rabbit population throughout the region remains stable, with no properties above the enforcement level of 5 on the McLean's Scale. There are small pockets of rabbits on the Kapiti Coast which fluctuate with seasonal conditions. These populations usually occur around lifestyle blocks and amenity areas. The budget was underspent by 27%. This was largely the result of rabbits being at very low levels due to a damp spring/summer, particularly in the Wairarapa. The annual blood serum sampling to assess regional immunity levels for rabbit calicivirus disease was undertaken this year, but only in the Western Zone, due to lack of rabbits in the Wairarapa. Results will not be known until August 2012.

Magpies

Demand for the loan of magpie traps continued to be high which contributed to a budget overspend of 12%. Magpie attacks have been lower than previous years, particularly in the Western Zone. Staff believe this is because of the regular magpie trapping that occurs in Makara and Ohariu Valley by private land owners, curbing migration into urban parks which is where most of the attacks occur. Refinements to this programme need to be looked at in the coming years to reduce costs and use traps smarter.

Possums and GW Parks Programme

Possum control in GW Parks and in areas outside of the KNE or TLA Reserve areas, including public response work, was delivered 5% under budget. These operations are largely confined to the Western Zone in areas that do not receive Animal Health Board (AHB) possum control. Most of these works are undertaken on a cost recovery basis.



Staff have been conducting field trials with the Henry self-setting gas powered possum trap. Two trial sites have been monitored for possum density and the results indicate that traps did not significantly reduce possum numbers in their vicinity. One more site is to be monitored. Staff have reported back to the manufacturer and offered suggestions for improvement. The trap is a great concept and if the few issues can be ironed out it will be a good tool. Some traps have also been placed into existing operations as part of the

trial.

Other Pests

The surveillance species, wasps and site-led biodiversity species programmes were delivered 54% under the budget, with the majority of the savings in surveillance species operations. This is an important objective within the RPMS, but discretion was applied in order to make savings.

Pest Plants

The Pest Plants team completed all programmed control and inspection RPMS activities 0.4% (\$5.8K) under budget.

The team was heavily involved in working with Biodiversity staff to set work programmes for the new financial year.

Staff were involved with many national projects including the National Pest Plant Accord, and the National Interest Pest eradication programme. The Manchurian wild rice eradication programme contract for Ministry for Primary Industries (former MAFBNZ) was delivered on schedule. Staff have achieved significant success in reducing the number of targeted plants. The contract method and cost for Manchurian wild rice was renegotiated to reflect the higher level of work required to deal with very few remaining plants and changing site conditions.

Landcare Research (LCR) and the National Biocontrol Collective have advanced a number of research programmes and new biocontrol agents which will be available for release in the near future. The Biocontrol Collective is working on advanced stages of releasing control agents for old mans beard, Darwin's barberry, woolly nightshade, moth plant, boneseed, banana passion fruit, Japanese honeysuckle and pampas grass. GW has supported and promoted dung beetle research and planned releases. The department committed to several biocontrol releases across the region.

Staff organised the inaugural meeting of the Aquatic weeds Biocontrol Collective and took part in the national initiative to work with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) on the review of a number of herbicides suitable for the control of aquatic weeds.

GW and the Bay of Plenty Regional Council Land Management System data base project is progressing to the programming stage. It is likely that Auckland Council will join the project.

Regional Possum Predator Control Programme (RPPCP)

The monitoring for the RPPCP programme was completed in December 2011 and possum control was undertaken in January and February 2012. Control was implemented within five strata over approximately 6,700 hectares. No work was undertaken in the remaining seven strata because monitoring results indicated possum populations remained well under the control threshold of RTC 5%. The programme was delivered under budget.

Animal Health Board Vector Control Programme

The BioWorks AHB programme included 45,100 hectares of possum control, split 30,200ha aerial 1080 control and 14,900ha ground control. The team have also completed 38,000ha of possum surveys in the Masterton and Kapiti Coast District. The BioWorks operating surplus for the year was \$80K above budget, and the funding surplus after asset replacements was 31K favourable.

The aerial control works includes 25,800ha to be treated within Greater Wellington and 4,400ha to be treated within the Horizons area. There are two aerial projects to be completed within the Wellington Region. Most of the planning is completed. Weather has prevented the completion of the Rimutaka Range operation (21,000ha). The Pukeatua (4,800ha) project will commence once the AHB gives sign off that BioWorks is compliant with their SOP. The Horizons aerial project was deferred to the 2012/13 year because BioWorks could not comply with the AHB procedures during the allotted time frame.

Much of the ground control work adjoins aerial control boundaries, so completion of that work too early would not necessarily produce good overall possum control. Only two ground control strata failed the performance monitor during the year and one has since passed a re-monitor.

1.1.3 Financial Reports

Biosecurity Funding Statement For the 12 months ended 30 June 2012	30 June 2012			Last Year YTD Actual \$000
	Actual \$000	Budget \$000	Variance \$000	
Rates & Levies	2,649	2,649	-	3,242
Government Grants & Subsidies	-	-	-	-
External revenue	1,850	1,888	(38)	2,421
Investment Revenue	39	34	5	40
Internal Revenue	1,211	1,177	34	275
TOTAL INCOME	5,749	5,748	1	5,978
<i>less:</i>				
Personnel	2,639	2,761	122	2,792
Materials, Supplies & Services	725	555	(170)	481
Travel & Transport Costs	153	175	22	192
Contractor & Consultants	407	611	204	654
Grants and Subsidies Expenditure	460	520	60	552
Internal Charges	625	528	(97)	625
Total Direct Expenditure	5,009	5,150	141	5,296
Financial Costs	-	-	-	-
Bad Debts	-	-	-	-
Corporate & Department Overheads	509	509	-	552
Depreciation	187	184	(3)	172
Loss(Gain) on Sale of Assets / Investments	(79)	(39)	40	(81)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	5,626	5,804	178	5,939
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	123	(56)	179	39
Add Back Depreciation	187	184	3	172
Other Non Cash	(79)	(39)	(40)	(81)
Net Asset Acquisitions and Capital Expenditure	(184)	(171)	13	(141)
Net External Investment Movements	-	-	-	-
Repaid Debt	-	-	-	-
Net Reserves (Increase) / decrease	(32)	81	113	18
NET FUNDING BEFORE DEBT ADDITIONS	15	(1)	(16)	7
Internal Debt Additions	-	-	-	-
External Debt Additions	-	-	-	-
NET FUNDING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	15	(1)	16	7

Biosecurity Capital Expenditure Statement For the 12 months ended 30 June 2012	30 June 2012			Last Year YTD Actual \$000
	Actual \$000	Budget \$000	Variance \$000	
Total Asset Acquisitions	279	210	(69)	223
Capital Project Expenditure	-	-	-	-
Asset Disposal Cash Proceeds	(96)	(39)	57	(82)
Net Capital Expenditure	183	171	(12)	141

1.1.4 Financial Variance Analysis

Biosecurity finished the year with a \$179K favourable operating surplus, mainly due to BioWorks and possum predator control programme savings. Due to low pest densities, predator control was only required over 6,700ha (of 19,200ha), allowing savings of \$75K to be rebudgeted to the 2012/13 year.

Significant savings were made (\$122K) in the personnel line mostly due to delays in staff recruitment, retirement and transition to new roles and reduced hours.

Savings were also made through the favourable sales (\$39K) of disposable assets.

The department overspent on the materials and supplies (\$170K) mostly due to the purchase of aerial control products for operations which will be completed in the next financial year.

1.1.5 Business Plan Performance Indicators

LONG-TERM targets by June 2019	Actual
<p>There will be no rabbit infestation areas over Level 5 of the modified McLean scale.</p> <p>There will be fewer than five breeding rookeries in the containment zone.</p> <p>Possum numbers in the northern Wairarapa Tb-free zone will be maintained at a residual trap-catch rate of less than 5%.</p>	<p>Rabbit infestations in the region continue to be maintained at very low levels, with no persistent recorded areas exceeding Level 5 on the modified McLean scale during 2011/12.</p> <p>Under the reviewed Regional Pest Management Strategy, the status of rooks changed from Containment species to Total Control. The long-term target has changed from containment to eradication of rooks from the region by 2022. A successful rook control programme has resulted in nine rookeries existing at the end 2011/12, a reduction from 10 in the previous year.</p> <p>The Regional Possum Predator Control Programme continued during 2011/12. The second round of control was completed in January and February 2012 within five strata (out of 12) over approximately 6,700 hectares. The remaining seven strata did not require control as numbers of possums remained below 5% RTC.</p>
Performance indicator	Performance to date
<p>The Operational Plan for implementing the RPMS will be achieved and reported in detail to the Council</p>	<p>The Regional Pest Management Strategy (RPMS) Operational Plan 2011/12 was achieved. An annual report will be presented to the Council for approval in November 2012.</p> <p>A significant reduction in Total Control pest plants has been achieved following the completion of the survey around all known sites.</p> <p>Control operations for Containment species continued to hold target species within the designated zones.</p> <p>Active Site-Led pest control programmes continued in 124 Key Native Ecosystem sites across private land and local authority reserves.</p> <p>The focus on biological control projects continued with the National Biocontrol Collective, including Landcare Research,</p>

	<p>Department of Conservation and other regional councils. Staff made 18 releases of new biocontrol agents involving five species and 229 transfers from established sites. Six new biocontrol species (insects and rusts) were approved for release by EPA.</p> <p>Collaborative operations continued with government agencies and industry in delivering the National Pest Plant Accord and National Interest Pest programmes.</p> <p>Actual costs were \$2,182,000.</p>
<p>Year 2 of the Regional Possum Predator Control Programme in northern Wairarapa Tb-free zone will be implemented to the satisfaction of the Council</p>	<p>This was the second year of the Regional Possum Predator Control Programme. The trend monitoring was completed in December 2011. The first year's programme achieved a significant reduction in the number of possums in the control area (19,200ha). The control was completed in January and February 2012 within five strata (out of 12) over approximately 6,700 hectares. The remaining seven strata did not require control as numbers of possums remained below 5% RTC.</p> <p>Actual costs were \$70,500.</p>

1.1.6 Risk Analysis

The Biosecurity Department is progressing two aerial possum control operations using 1080 in the region. The GW funded Wainuiomata water catchment area and Animal Health Board funded Mangaroa/Kaitoke and Featherston/Waiorongomai Crown operation. The total area covers 28,000ha. The pre-feed application has been completed over more than half of the area. Weather permitting, the operation will be completed before the end of August.

The second aerial project area is Pukeatua near Otaki Forks which covers 5,600ha. All necessary consents and approvals have been received and planning is underway for the pre-feed application.

Pest animal management and the use of vertebrate toxin agents is constantly under scrutiny. The time and costs associated with managing risk is increasing as gaining approvals becomes more time consuming. The National Pest Control Agency is working with regional councils to provide a wide range of nationally acceptable best practice guidelines to reduce risk and improve national consistency.

2. Biodiversity

2.1 Overview

Staff have continued to implement the various programmes and meet existing commitments while making preparations to implement the department's Operational Plan from 1 July 2012.

2.1.1 Department Activity

Department Restructure

The Biodiversity department went through further significant change over the last financial year as the structure of the department was modified to align with the needs of the GW Biodiversity Strategy 2011. This has resulted in the formation of three complementary teams:

- Strategy and Systems team provides policy and planning advice to other departments and external stakeholders on biodiversity matters; designs and maintains the department's reporting systems, and undertakes targeted research into current biodiversity issues;
- Biodiversity Implementation team coordinates the management of high value biodiversity areas across the region on GW, Territorial Authority and private land. The team also provides site-specific expert biodiversity advice to a range of internal and external clients;
- Community Projects team actively involves the local community in priority biodiversity areas; supports ecological restoration across the region and delivers key biodiversity messages to target audiences. An initial focus for the team will be Porirua harbour and catchment and Wairarapa Moana.

The teams begin their new programmes on 1 July while managing the completion of "residual" programmes as they are phased out.

In April 2012 the Biodiversity Monitoring team of five persons transferred to the Environmental Monitoring and Investigations department within the Environment Management Group.

Biodiversity Department Operational Plan (2012-2015)

The Biodiversity Department's first three-year Operational Plan was prepared in the second half of the financial year. The plan sets out the activities for the department over the next three years and defines the roles of each team within the department in contributing to the goals of the Biodiversity Strategy. The Operational Plan was received by the Environmental Wellbeing Committee in May 2012.

Reporting on the Biodiversity Strategy

One of the roles of the department is to report annually to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) on progress in implementing the Biodiversity Strategy. The strategy, which was approved by Council in June 2011, provides a framework to guide Greater Wellington's activities to protect and manage indigenous biodiversity for the ten years ending 2021. A framework for reporting the whole-of-Council progress has been developed and the first annual report will be presented shortly.

Biodiversity Policy and Planning Advice

The department provided assistance, in the form of biodiversity advice, to GW statutory processes including:

- Assisting in the development of rules and methods to protect ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity in the Regional Plan (Environmental Policy);
- Assisting in the preparation of papers for the Natural Resource Management Committee, Te Upoko Taiao (Environmental Policy);
- Preparing submissions on LTP's and notified plan changes of Territorial Authorities (Environmental Policy);
- Providing biodiversity advice for resource consent applications (Environmental Regulation).

Key Native Ecosystems (KNE)



The Key Native Ecosystem programme includes sites throughout the region on private land and TA reserves. Pest plant and animal control to protect biodiversity is the focus of the programme. Pest animal control targets possums at all sites, and for many sites rats as well. Other predators, such as stoats, are being targeted in an increasing number of sites to maximise biodiversity benefits for the management investment. Pest plant control is undertaken to reduce the extent and

density of weed infestations outcompeting native plants.

The programme continued to work in much of the same sites as the previous year. Approximately 40% of these sites are in private ownership and the remainder in public ownership. The Territorial Authorities contribute funding to enable the work to be undertaken in their reserves.

New sites brought into the programme were primarily located on the Kapiti Coast and were focused on pest plant control.

Queen Elizabeth II National Trust Land Protection

The department supported four QEII National Trust covenant applications which, once finalised, will protect 30 hectares of lowland indigenous forests and wetland. All of these areas fall into the Acutely Threatened category in terms of the National Threatened Environments Classification.

In addition, funding for animal and/or plant pest control in eight existing covenants was provided.

Wainuiomata Mainland Island

Intensive integrated pest control targeting rats, possums, mustelids, hedgehogs, pigs, goats and deer was carried out across the 1,200ha mainland island. The network of 1224 rodent bait stations, 600 possum traps and 154 mustelid traps were cleared and re-baited every ten weeks and bait stations and traps on the boundary and on the main ridges and valleys within the mainland island were checked more regularly by volunteers. The result of a possum monitor in September was 0.5% RTC (residual trap catch), exceeding the target of 2% RTC. Rat monitoring recorded tracking of between 1 and 11% which was compared to tracking in the non-treatment site outside the mainland island of between 77 and 93%. Three periods of culling resulted in 58 pigs, three deer and one goat being destroyed either inside or outside but close to the boundary of the mainland island.

A new proposal to translocate North Island robins into the mainland island from Kapiti Island was prepared, and approved by the Department of Conservation, and a large amount of planning to complete the translocation early in the next financial year was carried out.

Streams Alive Riparian Programme

The Streams Alive programme focused on working with 25 landowners in the Mangaroa and Waitohu catchments. Work was also undertaken with landowners at Ration Creek (Pauatahanui catchment), Otaki, Wainuiomata and Karori catchments.

Many of the sites had been planted previously and the work carried out was mostly to maintain these plantings to ensure plant survival. New plantings were established on twelve properties on which over 6500 ecosourced plants were planted.

Providing For Fish Passage

Previous work on identification of instream barriers to fish enabled prioritising projects to provide for fish passage.

A rope ladder was installed to provide fish passage on the lower Korokoro Dam and a mechanism installed on the Rangiruru floodgate at Otaki Beach to provide greater opportunity for fish to swim through.

Monitoring to determine the effectiveness of these measures is underway. Some initial work was also done to scope potential actions to improve fish spawning habitat in the region for when budget becomes available to undertake these improvements.

Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Programme

A survey of the significant habitats of coastal birds in the Wairarapa was completed alongside a survey of the riverine birds working with Flood Protection.

The department assisted with fencing significant areas on the Paekakariki Escarpment, Whitireia and Waitohu.

The department also assisted several other organisations and projects by providing:

- materials to the Aorangi Forest Trust for the construction of nest boxes for little blue penguin on the South Wairarapa coast,
- financial assistance to the Wellington City Council's goat eradication project on the Wellington South Coast, and
- assistance to the Dune Restoration Trust of New Zealand's backdune restoration demonstration project, particularly with weed control at significant coastal areas including Rocky Bay, Waitohu, Paekakariki Escarpment, Pekapeka and Riversdale.

Take Action Education Programme

Environmental education through the *Take Action for Water* programme was delivered to 14 schools (45 classes) in the region over the last year. The review of the programme and department structure meant that the number of classes reached was lower compared to previous years. The *Take Action for Water* programme will not be continued in the 2012/13 financial year as the department prepares to reach schools and wider communities associated with priority areas with high biodiversity value. All resources relating to the *Take Action* programme will, however, be made available on the website.

Take Care Community Projects

Greater Wellington has assisted groups at 32 project sites during the year. Most of these projects were administered through the *Take Care* programme.

The *Take Care* contestable fund was disestablished as part of the department review process. Existing funding agreements will be honoured until their expiry. Nine groups came to the end of their funding arrangements (Waikanae Dune Restoration, Albemarle Stream, Onoke Spit, Whitireia Park Restoration Group, Petone Wharf Dune Planting Project, Silverstream, Waipahihi Stream, Whangaehu River and Riversdale).

From the 2012/13 year onwards new programmes will focus on reaching communities in priority areas of high biodiversity value.

Pauatahanui Project

Since 2007, Greater Wellington and Porirua City Council have promoted the retirement of erosion-prone land and the fencing and planting of streambanks in the Pauatahanui catchment. This programme arose from a key action in the Pauatahanui Inlet Action Plan aimed at reducing sediment entering Pauatahanui Inlet. The Councils offer financial assistance to landowners if they agree to contribute financially.

In the year under review planting and fencing work was undertaken with seven landowners resulting in:

- Planting of 6,200 indigenous plants in riparian areas;
- Planting of 1,700 exotic plantation trees on erosion-prone land;
- 1,680 metres of riparian and flood channel fencing;

- Exclusion of stock from an additional 1000 metres of the Horokiri Stream and tributaries

Porirua Harbour Project

Greater Wellington is collaborating with Ngati Toa, Wellington City Council and Porirua City Council in a project to protect and enhance the many significant values, including ecological, of the Porirua Harbour and its catchment.

In April this year the Porirua Harbour and Catchment's Strategy and Action Plan was officially launched by the four agencies at a well attended event in Porirua. The strategy had been earlier approved or endorsed by the governance bodies of the four agencies.

Work is well advanced in identifying and preparing project plans for those key actions in the strategy that are to be implemented by Greater Wellington. In addition to the ongoing science programme of monitoring of water and sediment, undertaken by the Environmental Monitoring and Investigations department, the Biodiversity department will be commissioning and implementing an estuarine revegetation programme and a whole of catchment revegetation plan. Additional funding for both the science and implementation programmes was made available in the Council's Long Term Plan 2012-2022.

Honda Tree Fund

The Honda Tree Fund was created in 2004 as a way to offset car emissions. It ensures that for every new Honda vehicle sold, 10 native trees are funded and planted. The trees are planted in association with regional councils all over the country, providing a measurable way to absorb some of the carbon monoxide produced by motor vehicles. Honda customers are also invited to donate to the Honda Tree Fund at the time of purchase and then join in the planting of the trees with their Honda dealer and regional council. Monies allocated to Greater Wellington are split between the Environment Management Group (now the Biodiversity Department) (40%) and the Water Supply, Parks and Forests Group (60%). This year the Honda Tree Fund provided GW with \$26,760.

Regional Biodiversity Monitoring

Landcare Research NZ Ltd have been contracted to complete an estimate of the sampling effort required for Biodiversity State of the Environment reporting purposes. A field trip with the Landcare Research scientists is planned for mid-July.

Wairarapa Moana

It has not been possible to monitor the lakeshore birds in June as programmed as the lake levels are too high due to the blockage of Lake Onoke. When the levels are so high that the mudflats are covered many birds leave or retreat into the wetlands further away from the lake. It is planned to complete a winter count as soon as lake levels allow.

A kakahi (freshwater mussel) survey of the lake and some of the surrounding wetlands has been completed by contractor, Amber McEwan. She found kakahi at five of the eight study sites (Barton's Lagoon, three sites in Lake Wairarapa and Lake Pounui). The highest kakahi densities were found in Lake Pounui, but it is of concern that no juvenile kakahi were found at any of the sites surveyed. This lack of recruitment is likely to have been caused by declines in host native fish. The

kakahi need their larvae to attach themselves to the gills of native fish species to complete their life cycle. Previous studies of fish species in the lake have shown a dramatic shift in the fish communities, from indigenous to exotic dominance. Some of these exotic fish, such as perch, prey on native fish species. The changes to the hydrological system caused by the drainage scheme instigated in the 1970's may also be affecting native fish numbers.

A restoration report for Jury Island has been completed by Wildland Consultants. It was originally planned to aerially control alder on the island, but concerns were raised about the effects of the spray on the native plants in the area. The restoration report details pest plant control methods and planting opportunities for the island.

Five edge wetland sites have been chosen as candidates for restoration as part of the Fresh Start for Water funding. A report detailing the ecological values of the selected areas has been completed.

Project Kaka

Bird monitoring results have been released by the Department of Conservation. Rifleman numbers significantly increased in the Project Kaka area, as did whitehead and kakariki, but there was no change in tomtit abundance. In the Hutt water collection area, rifleman and kakariki numbers fell, but whitehead and tomtit numbers continue to trend upwards. While there is some variability in these results, they are reflecting the findings that have been previously reported from bird monitoring associated with 1080 operations in the Council's forests. These reports have shown that bird numbers typically increase the second year following a 1080 operation (as is the case with Project Kaka) and fall over time as rat numbers increase (it is three years since the last Hutt water collection area possum control operation).

The result of a rodent monitor in May shows that rat tracking has decreased from 39% in February to 17%. The major fall in numbers however occurred in the high altitude Maymorn ridge area where tracking fell from 22% to 2%. This drop in numbers may be a reflection of the cold temperatures at that site in the winter months.

Parks and Forests Monitoring and Investigations

The robin release planning for the transfer of robins from Kapiti Island to Wainuiomata Mainland Island has involved organising catchers and equipment as well as ensuring that the health of the birds is a priority when preparing for the event. A decision was made to go ahead with the transfer of the 60 robins at this time, even though the 1080 operation has not been completed. The opportunity for the birds to thrive in the pest-free conditions following the 1080 operation was considered to be too good to miss. National bird experts have given backing to this decision, as the risk to robins from the 1080 bait is low in comparison to the benefits of completing the transfer at this time. The transfer is planned to take place on 22 July.

Rodent monitoring in Wainuiomata Mainland Island showed an increase in rat numbers (11%, up from 4% in May), but the planned 1080



operation will dramatically reduce those numbers when it is completed in the next month. The non-treatment site was tracking at 88%.

In the East Harbour Regional Park, there has been an exponential rise in rat numbers. The May result showed rats to be tracking at 54% inside and 60% outside the area. In February rats were recorded at 6% and 14% respectively. This rise in numbers is thought to have been caused by a beech mast seeding year (the northern East Harbour forest is largely beech forest). It seems that the rats are not so interested in the toxic bait when there is abundant food to be found in the forest. A change to a more attractive bait has been made and monthly monitors have been initiated to check that rat numbers fall before the bird breeding season begins in September. The high rodent numbers have caused concern because robins were transferred into the East Harbour mainland Island area in March of this year.

Permits

Four permits have been received and processed during this quarter. Two were for university research (collection of particular plant species for use in experiments), while one was a collection permit for growing plants for restoration. The fourth permit was for a Te Papa researcher to collect orchids from East Harbour Regional Park for morphological and anatomical study.

2.1.2 Financial Reports

Biodiversity Funding Statement For the 12 months ended 30 June 2012	30 June 2012			Last Year YTD Actual \$000
	Actual \$000	Budget \$000	Variance \$000	
Rates & Levies	4,365	4,365	-	-
Government Grants & Subsidies	18	-	18	-
External revenue	225	213	12	-
Investment Revenue	-	-	-	-
Internal Revenue	160	156	4	-
TOTAL INCOME	4,768	4,734	34	-
<i>less:</i>				
Personnel	1,690	1,674	(16)	143
Materials,Supplies & Services	410	382	(28)	-
Travel & Transport Costs	90	65	(25)	1
Contractor & Consultants	771	1,115	344	29
Grants and Subsidies Expenditure	-	-	-	-
Internal Charges	1,265	1,341	76	-
Total Direct Expenditure	4,226	4,577	351	173
Financial Costs	-	-	-	-
Bad Debts	-	-	-	-
Corporate & Department Overheads	360	360	-	-
Depreciation	22	22	-	-
Loss(Gain) on Sale of Assets / Investments	-	(11)	(11)	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	4,608	4,948	340	173
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	160	(214)	374	(173)
Add Back Depreciation	22	22	-	-
Other Non Cash	-	(11)	11	-
Net Asset Acquisitions and Capital Expenditure	(33)	(45)	(12)	-
Net External Investment Movements	-	-	-	-
Repaid Debt	-	-	-	-
Net Reserves (Increase) / decrease	(168)	248	(416)	-
NET FUNDING BEFORE DEBT ADDITIONS	(19)	-	(19)	(173)
Internal Debt Additions	-	-	-	-
External Debt Additions	-	-	-	-
NET FUNDING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(19)	-	(19)	(173)
Biodiversity Capital Expenditure Statement For the 12 months ended 30 June 2012				
	Actual \$000	30 June 2012 Budget \$000	Variance \$000	Last Year YTD Actual \$000
Total Asset Acquisitions	33	70	37	-
Capital Project Expenditure	-	-	-	-
Asset Disposal Cash Proceeds	-	(25)	(25)	-
Net Capital Expenditure	33	45	12	-

2.1.3 Financial Variance Analysis

Contractor expenditure below budget due to savings for QEII protection and delays to pest control operations in regional parks.

\$131K for the Akatarawa 1080 drop was postponed from 2011/12 to 2012/13 to fit in with other planned aerial work.

\$75K of the QEII covenant land protection programme to be rebudgeted to 2012/13. Once covenants have been approved the land owners carry out the work and claims are processed via the QE II National Trust, so there are delays in expenses coming through to GW.

Internal contractors \$76K behind budget due to savings for KNE programmes.

2.1.4 Business Plan Performance Indicators

LONG-TERM targets by June 2019	Actual
The ecological health and diversity of key native ecosystems will improve.	Active pest control programmes operate in 124 Key Native Ecosystem areas. Regular monitoring of representative sites indicates low numbers of possums, rodents and mustelids in the treated areas. There is a corresponding increase in the number of native birds in the region. Monitoring indicates that pest plant control in the region has reduced the competitive dominance of exotic plants in treated areas. Restoration sites are showing improvement through natural regeneration and/or planting with eco-sourced plants.
30km of streams and rivers will be enhanced (or maintained following enhancement) by fencing and plantings.	In 2011/12, 12 properties were added to the programme. This year the focus was on maintaining existing plantings on 25 properties. The Streams Alive programme will be discontinued from 2012/13.
SHORT-TERM targets by 30 June 2012	Actual
The biodiversity implementation programme will be progressed through the following programmes:	
Pests will be maintained at very low levels in the following Key Native Ecosystems within a budget of \$600,000: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 wetlands 	In total there are 94 sites totalling 15,540ha (average size of 90ha) in the KNE programme under active management which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 wetlands

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 native forest areas • 4 coastal escarpments • 2 dune ecosystems <p>The budget was increased to \$632,000 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67 native forest sites • 7 coastal escarpments • 8 dune ecosystems • 7 river/estuarine areas <p>Actual costs were \$369,000.</p>
<p>Implement the Wetland Action Plan, within a budget of \$94,000.</p> <p>The budget was reduced to \$65,000 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GW fenced significant wetlands on nine separate properties across the region. • Weed control was delivered on six significant wetlands. • Traps were provided to help some landowners control predators around Wairarapa Moana. • Restoration Plans were completed for Taumata Island and Kaiwaka. Plans have been started for Katihiku, Haruatai and Rikihana Wetlands. <p>Actual costs were \$57,000.</p>
<p>Support the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust private land-protection programme, within a budget of \$88,000.</p>	<p>Support was provided towards four QEII National Trust covenants which will protect 30 hectares of lowland indigenous forests and wetland. All four areas fall into the Acutely Threatened category in terms of the National Threatened Environments Classification. In addition, funding for animal and/or plant pest control in eight existing covenants was provided. Actual costs were \$13,000.</p>
<p>Implement the Freshwater ecosystem programme, within a budget of \$60,000.</p> <p>The budget was reduced to \$25,000 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.</p>	<p>Previous work on prioritising instream barriers to fish enabled two high priority projects to be implemented.</p> <p>Monitoring to determine the effectiveness of these measures is underway.</p> <p>Information on instream barriers to fish was gathered to assist define the future priorities location to provide for fish passage.</p> <p>Actual costs were \$17,000.</p>
<p>Implement the Streams Alive riparian planting programme, within a budget of \$207,000.</p> <p>The budget was reduced to \$182,000 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.</p>	<p>Landowners in the Mangaroa and Waitohu catchments, Pauatahanui, Otaki, Wainuiomata and Karori catchments were assisted with much of the work involving maintenance of existing plantings</p> <p>New plantings were undertaken on 12 properties, with a total of 6,646 native</p>

	<p>plants planted.</p> <p>Actual costs were \$160,000.</p>
<p>Implement the Pauatahanui Inlet Action Plan, within a budget of \$53,000.</p> <p>The budget was reduced to \$40,000 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.</p>	<p>Planting and fencing work was undertaken with seven landowners resulting in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting of 6,200 indigenous plants in riparian areas • Planting of 1,700 exotic plantation trees on erosion-prone land • 1,680 metres of riparian and flood channel fencing • Exclusion of stock from an additional 1000 metres of the Horokiri Stream and tributaries <p>Actual costs were \$40,000</p>
<p>Support Coastal ecosystems, within a budget of \$59,000.</p> <p>The budget was increased to \$69,000 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A survey of the significant habitats of coastal birds in the Wairarapa was completed alongside a survey of the riverine birds • Fencing of significant areas on the Paekakariki Escarpment, Whitireia, and Waitohu was undertaken • Materials were provided for penguin boxes on the South Wairarapa coast for a project being led by the Aorangi Forest Trust • WCC's Goat eradication project on the Wellington South Coast was supported • The Dune Restoration Trust of New Zealand's backdune restoration demonstration project was supported, notably at Whitireia, Riversdale and Waitohu • Weed control at significant coastal areas including Rocky Bay, Waitohu, Paekakariki Escarpment, Pekapeka and Riversdale was undertaken <p>Actual costs were \$60,000.</p>

3. Land Management

3.1 Overview

The preparation of the first five Land Environment Plans (LEP's) in the Mangatarere catchment has progressed very well. A late withdrawal has meant the final Plan will be completed in August. Works implementation will begin shortly and a list of supportive landowners for the next 10 Plans is being prepared.

The Wellington Regional Erosion Council Initiative (WRECI) continues to grow with another 15 new Farm Plans completed bringing the total number to 40. Annual programmes have again been well supported and the project planting milestones are ahead of initial targets.

Akura Conservation Centre has returned a strong financial result for the year. Costs have been very well managed especially in the contract area. It has been disappointing that the lease of new nursery land has been delayed.

3.1.1 Department Activity

Winter Planting programmes

The good spring rainfall has been well supplemented by exceptional falls through the last three months. Average rainfall in the eastern Wairarapa hill country for the January – March period is 435mm which is double the long term average for those three months. Some of the heaviest falls have been recorded at Te Wharau where 650mm was measured over the last three month period.

Interest in planting for the 2012 winter has been very strong. Expressions of interest from clients high suggesting that demand for poplars and willows will probably exceed our ability to supply. It is pleasing to note that a good number conservation woodlots in both the WRECI and Afforestation Grant Scheme programmes have been scheduled.



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Akura Conservation Centre

The Centre has returned a good performance over the last year. A feature of the result has been the effective management of expenditure especially in contracted services such as pruning and spraying.

It is frustrating that progress in securing the lease of 13 hectares of land for a new nursery adjacent to the Centre were stalled due to issues relating to access to groundwater for irrigation.

The new storage shed has been completed at Akura to store plant and equipment from the earthquake prone sheds at Chapel Street. Hydrology and monitoring equipment will also be stored on a temporary basis. Eventually this equipment will be stored at the upgraded Ngaumutawa Road depot.

Land Environment Plans

Four Land Environment Plans (LEP's) have been completed for landowners in the Mangatarere catchment. A fifth was cancelled at the last minute. However, a new landowner has been contacted in the Beef Creek sub-catchment and it is envisaged that this Plan will still deliver a works programme in the next couple of months. Beef Creek is a sub-catchment of considerable interest as some the poorest water quality is found in this area.

Staff have been working closely with the Mangatarere Restoration Society Inc. (MRS) over the last six months culminating in a very successful 'Trees and Waterways' seminar and stream walk. A management committee, including two staff from Greater Wellington, has been set up to prepare a strategy and action plan. A number of local events are planned over the coming months to foster continuing interest from the public and other key stakeholders.

The Envirolink project (\$230k over two years) is due to begin in July and will complement the LEP work by providing 'farm-scale solutions to catchment-scale issues'. This methodology will be very important in the future as the LEP work is expanded to farms in and around Wairarapa Moana.



Wellington Regional Erosion Control Initiative (WRECI)

WRECI has now completed three years of activity. A total of 40 WRECI Plans have now been completed and a further 15 are programmed for 2012/13. Landowner interest in this programme is high and a waiting list is being worked through to finalise properties to join the programme next year. The establishment of 9,175 poles and 63.7 hectares of permanent land retirement is ahead of targets of 6,250 poles and 50 hectares originally set for the programme in 2011/12.

The Upper Taueru catchment will be a focus for next year and it is intended to establish a small community based group to ensure collaboration is achieved across the entire catchment. The Upper Taueru is a tributary of the Ruamahanga River and the relationship with this small community group will provide an excellent platform for an integrated catchment management framework.

Overall Result to Date

The Akura Conservation Centre ended the year with an operating surplus of \$94K compared to a budgeted operating surplus of \$25K.



3.1.2 Financial Reports

Land Management Funding Statement For the 12 months ended 30 June 2012	30 June 2012			Last Year YTD Actual \$000
	Actual \$000	Budget \$000	Variance \$000	
Rates & Levies	1,583	1,583	-	1,651
Government Grants & Subsidies	145	183	(38)	138
External revenue	838	840	(2)	696
Investment Revenue	9	9	-	8
Internal Revenue	137	76	61	136
TOTAL INCOME	2,712	2,691	21	2,629
<i>less:</i>				
Personnel	847	794	(53)	866
Materials, Supplies & Services	51	134	83	93
Travel & Transport Costs	51	46	(5)	51
Contractor & Consultants	693	734	41	569
Grants and Subsidies Expenditure	25	25	-	25
Internal Charges	667	548	(119)	617
Total Direct Expenditure	2,334	2,281	(53)	2,221
Financial Costs	-	-	-	-
Bad Debts	-	-	-	-
Corporate & Department Overheads	338	338	-	329
Depreciation	59	65	6	59
Loss(Gain) on Sale of Assets / Investments	(23)	(20)	3	(14)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,708	2,664	(44)	2,595
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	4	27	(23)	34
Add Back Depreciation	59	65	6	59
Other Non Cash	(23)	(20)	(3)	(14)
Net Asset Acquisitions and Capital Expenditure	(51)	(44)	7	(37)
Net External Investment Movements	-	-	-	-
Repaid Debt	-	-	-	-
Net Reserves (Increase) / decrease	(21)	(28)	7	(29)
NET FUNDING BEFORE DEBT ADDITIONS	(32)	-	(32)	13
Internal Debt Additions	-	-	-	-
External Debt Additions	-	-	-	-
NET FUNDING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(32)	-	(32)	13

Land Management Capital Expenditure Statement For the 12 months ended 30 June 2012	30 June 2012			Last Year YTD Actual \$000
	Actual \$000	Budget \$000	Variance \$000	
Total Asset Acquisitions	74	64	(10)	51
Capital Project Expenditure	-	-	-	-
Asset Disposal Cash Proceeds	(23)	(20)	3	(14)
Net Capital Expenditure	51	44	(7)	37

Akura Conservation Centre Funding Statement For the 12 months ended 30 June 2012	30 June 2012			Last Year YTD Actual \$000
	Actual \$000	Budget \$000	Variance \$000	
Rates & Levies	-	-	-	-
Government Grants & Subsidies	-	-	-	-
External revenue	199	312	(113)	239
Investment Revenue	-	-	-	-
Internal Revenue	572	507	65	522
TOTAL INCOME	771	819	(48)	761
less:				
Personnel	52	73	21	62
Materials,Supplies & Services	459	532	73	477
Travel & Transport Costs	8	10	2	9
Contractor & Consultants	107	125	18	102
Grants and Subsidies Expenditure	-	-	-	-
Internal Charges	5	-	(5)	5
Total Direct Expenditure	631	740	109	655
Financial Costs	4	11	7	8
Bad Debts	-	-	-	1
Corporate & Department Overheads	30	30	-	30
Depreciation	12	13	1	13
Loss(Gain) on Sale of Assets / Investments	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	677	794	117	707
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	94	25	69	54
Add Back Depreciation	12	13	1	13
Other Non Cash	-	-	-	-
Net Asset Acquisitions and Capital Expenditure	(5)	(107)	(102)	-
Net External Investment Movements	-	-	-	-
Repaid Debt	(56)	2	(58)	(13)
Net Reserves (Increase) / decrease	-	(10)	10	-
NET FUNDING BEFORE DEBT ADDITIONS	45	(77)	238	54
Internal Debt Additions	-	76	(76)	(55)
External Debt Additions	-	-	-	-
NET FUNDING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	45	(1)	46	(1)
Akura Conservation Centre Capital Expenditure Statement For the 12 months ended 30 June 2012	30 June 2012			Last Year YTD Actual \$000
	Actual \$000	Budget \$000	Variance \$000	
Total Asset Acquisitions	5	7	2	-
Capital Project Expenditure	-	100	100	-
Asset Disposal Cash Proceeds	-	-	-	-
Net Capital Expenditure	5	107	102	-

3.1.3 Financial Variance Analysis

- The Land Management total operating surplus for the year was 23K unfavourable;
- Farm Plan expenditure (WRECI Plans, Property Plans and Sustainability Plans combined) was ahead of budget by \$75K;

- Personnel costs were ahead of budget by \$53K, primarily due to payroll and overtime.

3.1.4 Business Plan Performance Indicators

LONG-TERM targets by June 2019	Actual
<p>6,300ha of erosion-prone farm land will be treated using sustainable management practices.</p> <p>75% of erosion-prone land will be under farm or sustainability plans.</p>	<p>In the past three years 1,848ha of erosion-prone land has been planted using sustainable management practices. Poplar and willow poles cover 1,066ha and conservation woodlots are established on 782ha.</p> <p>74% of erosion-prone land is currently covered by farm or sustainability plans.</p>
SHORT-TERM targets by 30 June 2012	Performance to date
<p>15 new farm or sustainability plans will be prepared and approved by the Council, within a budget of \$116,000.</p> <p>The budget was reduced to \$110,000 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.</p>	<p>18 new farm or sustainability plans were prepared and approved by Greater Wellington.</p> <p>Actual costs were \$117,000.</p>
<p>530ha of erosion-prone land will be protected, within a budget of \$595,000.</p> <p>The budget was reduced to \$565,000 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.</p>	<p>479ha of erosion-prone land was planted. A further 37ha was planted under the Afforestation Grant Scheme.</p> <p>Actual costs were \$540,000.</p>
<p>Catchment schemes will be progressed in accordance with agreed workplans, within a budget of \$104,000.</p> <p>The budget was reduced to \$100,000 in the Annual Plan 2011 /12.</p>	<p>The six catchment schemes completed their respective works programmes in accordance with the annual works programmes approved by each scheme's advisory committee.</p> <p>Actual costs were \$117,000. The higher costs resulted from the storm damage repair in the Homewood Catchment.</p>
<p>15 events with a land management focus will be supported by Greater Wellington, within a budget of \$13,000.</p> <p>The budget was reduced to \$12,000 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.</p>	<p>15 events with a land management focus were supported by Greater Wellington.</p> <p>Actual costs were \$12,000.</p>
<p>The Akura Conservation Centre will break even or make a profit, within a budget of \$21,000</p> <p>The budget was increased to \$25,000 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.</p>	<p>The Akura Conservation Centre made an operating surplus of \$94,000.</p>
<p>23,000 three-metre poplar poles will be supplied, within a budget of \$164,000.</p> <p>The budget was increased to</p>	<p>26,000 poplar and willow poles were supplied to internal and external clients. The additional production cost was fully recovered from pole sales.</p>

\$187,500 in the Annual Plan 2011/12.	Actual costs were \$214,000.
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3.1.5 Risk Analysis

The national forestry schemes have recently been reviewed by government including the Hill Country Erosion Programme that funds WRECI. The risk around ongoing funding of this programme will not be known until August 2012. The 2012-2022 LTP budget for WRECI allows for no Crown funding i.e. the worst case scenario.