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Report to the Landcare Committee
for Rob Forlong, Divisional Manager, Landcare

Divisional Manager's Report

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee about the activities and progress of the Landcare Division since the Committee's last meeting.

2. Managers' Reports

The Departmental Managers' reports are attached.

3. A New Landcare Committee

On behalf of the Division, I would like to welcome the new Landcare Committee. Now that you have been through all the briefings and workshops, I am sure you are looking forward to making some decisions. We have a large and exciting work programme set for the next three years and your decisions will be crucial in making it happen.

4. Minor Flood Event - 22 November 2001

The rain on 22 November 2001 caused considerable flooding in the smaller streams around Wellington, the Hutt Valley and Porirua Basin. The Waiwhetu and Porirua Streams were the hardest hit. While it was a minor event in terms of our flood response, Flood Protection staff managed to get a good work out.

Phil Purves was the Duty Flood Manager and he was kept busy co-ordinating our response in the field and providing updates and forecasts to the Territorial Authority Emergency Management offices.

The Mabey Road crew responded to issues as they arose. At one point, they had to undertake the difficult and dangerous job of cutting down a number of trees to stop them from falling into the Porirua Stream and blocking a culvert.

In terms of WRC assets, preliminary damage reports indicate that:

- there has been damage on a number of tracks (slips, scour etc) in Belmont Regional Park;
- we have lost four foot bridges in the Korokoro Stream (fortunately they were trapped by a debris arrestor so we can recover them); and
- a debris arrestor in the Porirua Stream was outflanked and damaged.

Chris Wootton, Belmont Ranger, immediately placed warning signs up in the affected areas and Landcare field staff have set about repairing the damage.

This was the first flood I have witnessed since coming to the Landcare Division. I certainly learnt that the phrase “minor flood event” is a relative term. The 22 November was pretty much “a normal day at work” for the Flood Protection Group! They coped extremely well and it was a pleasure to observe the teamwork and efficiency of the operation.

5. **Milestones**

Since the last Committee meeting there have been a number of milestones in the Landcare Division.

In September, the Parks and Forests Group received two “highly commended” awards from the Recreation Association of New Zealand. Anne Manley, Susan Edwards and the park rangers were the driving force behind the “*Here and Now*” video promoting the Regional Parks as filming locations. Dean Hearfield, Ross Jackson, Fraser Oliver, and Bruce Andrell worked closely with the Akatarawa Recreational Access Committee on the joint project to replace the old Orange Hut in the Akatarawa Forest.

The Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan was launched in October. Brendan Paul, Daya Atapattu, Alastair Cross, Geoff Dick, Niel Harding, Phil Purves, Kate Sharp, Trecia Smith, and Derek Wilshere have all had significant parts to play in this long-term project.

More recently, Parks and Forests became the first group in the nation to receive bronze and silver Enviromark awards. The awards were accepted on our behalf by Councillor Shields, Chairperson on 15 November 2001. Dr Philippa Crisp led the project with Trecia Smith and the entire Parks and Forests team, all providing input.

6. **Recommendations**

That the Landcare Committee:

- (1) *receive the report; and*
- (2) *note the contents.*

ROB FORLONG
Divisional Manager, Landcare