

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

Report for Period Ending 16 November 2001

1. Waikanae River Floodplain Management [Graeme Campbell]

1.1 Otaihanga Road Raising

This is a project that will protect small areas in the Otaihanga community from flooding. The first section of road was raised last financial year. During the roading raising process there were some concerns expressed about the concept so we are now contacting individual owners affected to confirm they have no outstanding issues.

We are also contacting all owners affected by the next two stages to confirm that they are happy for the work to proceed. If they do not wish to continue with the works then this item will be shelved and considered again at the Waikanae Floodplain Management Plan review in 2007/08. In the interim, the properties will remain floodable.

1.2 Gravel Extraction Consent

Gravel in the estuarine reach of the Waikanae River has built up, with the potential to alter the river alignment and to a lesser extent, affect flood levels. We consider that some of this gravel should be extracted in accordance with the policy for gravel management in the Waikanae Floodplain Management Plan. The extraction work is outside limits set in our operational consents and accordingly requires a further resource consent. Work on the consent application has been completed and the document is ready to be lodged. The application should be notified in early December 2001.

1.3 Friends of the Waikanae River

The annual walkover of the river was held on 18 September 2001, about 30 people attended. A few minor issues were raised that will be addressed over the next year; none of these have budget or programme implications.

The Friends are now progressing with the next stage of their Care Group project, funded by the Council's Environment Division.

2. Otaki River Floodplain Management [Graeme Campbell]

2.1 Rangiuru Outlet Structure

This is a relatively small project to duplicate the capacity of the existing Rangiuru outlet structure. Tenders were received for the construction works and a contractor is appointed. Work is expected to start on 1 December 2001 and be largely completed before Christmas. While the lowest tender is below the original tenders we received in April, it is still above the project budget. Financial approval to proceed with the work was given as part of the first quarter review process.

2.2 Friends of the Otaki River

The annual walkover of the Otaki River was held on 2 October 2001. The day was well attended with over 40 people present. One of the key matters identified by the group was for them to initiate an environmental enhancement project, in order to help meld them into a more broadly focussed organisation. Their energies have, over the last year, been absorbed by the demands of the Otaki River water extraction consent application

We gave an undertaking to progress, the thorny issue of access through the Winstone's Aggregates Plant. If obtained, this access will allow the opportunity to walk from the State Highway 1 Bridge to the sea, on the right bank of the river.

A few days later the Otaki Friends held their AGM. Fifty attended the meeting.

3. Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (HRFMP) [Daya Atapattu]

3.1 Plan Publishing

The HRFMP launch held on 9 October 2001 concludes more than a decade of work investigating the status, developing options and policy, consulting on and writing the Plan. The WRC, Hutt City Council (HCC) and the Upper Hutt City Council (UHCC) have all formally adopted the Plan. The Plan has been distributed to libraries, councils, iwi and many other interested parties. It will also be available on the Internet in the near future.

3.2 Plan Implementation

The Ava Bridge to Ewen Bridge (Ava to Ewen) reach upgrade is the highest priority work in the HRFMP implementation; it includes waterway improvements at the railway crossing, realignment of the main river channel, stopbank reconstruction on the east (Strand Park) and west (Alicetown) sides of the river, and other related work.

A feasibility study to identify practical options for improving the Ava Railway crossing waterway was completed. I hope that an upgrading strategy will be agreed with Tranz Rail by the end of June 2002. Discussions with Tranz Rail will re-commence in late January 2002, following a legal opinion on respective WRC and Tranz Rail liabilities.

A complicating issue for this project is the training bank of the Opahu Stream outlet channel, which currently blocks one span of the Rail Bridge within the floodway; both the WRC and HCC have responsibilities here. A joint feasibility study with HCC has concluded that a pumping station, and corresponding removal of the training bank, benefits both HCC and the WRC functions. I would like to consider a strategy for installing a pump station and to agree an outcome with HCC by the end of June 2002. Discussions with HCC officers will commence in early December 2001.

Non-structural Measures

We are currently preparing a scoping report. This report will detail the tasks and activities to implement the non-structural measures through plan changes in Upper Hutt City and Hutt City's district plans. It will also cover the emergency management strategy contained in the Plan.

Development of base material for the plan changes (objectives, policies and rules) is expected to commence in late January.

4. Mangaone Stream Flood Hazard Assessment [Phillip Purves]

The outcomes of the flood hazard assessment were reported to the 6 September 2001 Landcare Committee meeting. The report noted that the flood maps, determined by computer modeling, need to be corroborated with the known or observed flood risk in some marginally floodable areas, before the flood hazard maps are finalised.

We have arranged a meeting with the local community for 29 November 2001. At the meeting we will discuss stream management issues, present the flood hazard assessment to the local community and receive feedback.

5. Planning and Development Services [Phillip Purves]

The following summarises the formal, written requests for information or advice attended to during August, September and October:

	<u>Aug/Sep/Oct</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Requests brought forward	5	5
Additional requests received	47	47
Responses provided	47	47
Outstanding requests	5	5

The design approved for the debris deflection barrier at Melling Substation now requires that a small section of it be located on WRC land, in order to avoid existing high voltage cables. We have agreed to this "temporary" occupation (up to 20 years) of the currently unusable area of land. The proposal is an interim measure that is consistent with the ultimate development strategy for the substation site; whereby all critical equipment will eventually be located beyond the 80 metre erosion hazard zone in the HRFMP. Both the licence and resource consent place on-going management and structural responsibility for the structure with Transpower.

The Wellington City Council has designed a debris arrestor for the lower end of the Takapu Stream (east of the motorway in Tawa). Construction of the debris arrestor allows WCC to relax the planning controls for the industrial sites upstream of the “informal” flood detention area. Final details are being worked through at present, but the intention is that WCC will build the structure on WRC land and hand it over to the Flood Protection Group for ongoing maintenance and management.

BRENDAN PAUL

Manager, Flood Protection (Strategy and Assets)

Flood Protection Operations Manager : Geoff Dick

Report for Period Ending 16 November 2001

1. Manager's Comments

Jeff Angus has joined the team at Mabey Road as the new '7th Riverhand'. The addition of Jeff to the team is to provide the capacity to maintain the river trail and the general ongoing environmental enhancement work

We recently took delivery of a new tractor to operate the reach mower. The replacement tractor, a larger and more powerful model, is proving to be well matched to the mower unit.

2. Hutt River

The work programme is, so far, proceeding as planned thanks to the absence of any significant floods.

The annual cross blading programme has commenced. Work in the lower river at Melling has been completed, and the machine will now shift to the upper river.

Heavy spring grass growth is keeping our mowing resources, both in-house and contract very busy.

3. Kapiti Rivers

Mowing stopbanks and spraying noxious weeds was a key activity for Kapiti staff over the period. Work completed included releasing of the native plants around Chrystalls Bend planted during last year's Arbor day.

A 70 metre length of Barrett's fascine edgeworks on the left bank was strengthened by cabling in a row of concrete blocks and planting a further 157 willow poles.

"Warning" logs were erected on the upstream ends of Ramsbottom and Tracey left bank debris fences.

Preparations are well underway for cutting the Waikanae river mouth in early December. The necessary approval has been obtained from the Department of Conservation and letters advising of the cut sent to adjacent residents.

4. **Watercourses**

We are becoming concerned with the amount of weed growth in the Waiwhetu Stream. Complaints have been received, and the periodic detention team are making little progress with clearing the weed. Unless there is a substantial lift in the hand clearing effort, it is likely that a spray run will be required later in the year.

Annual maintenance runs were completed in the Wainuiomata River, and over 3 kilometres of the Mangapouri Stream.

A public meeting is scheduled for Thursday 29 November at Te Horo to meet with residents along the Mangaone Stream to discuss the outcomes of the recently completed flood hazard assessment study. We will also discuss the stream maintenance we currently undertake.

5. **Pool Riffle Counts**

The resource consents for the Hutt, Otaki, and Waikanae rivers specify that pools and riffles shall not fall below a set number as a result of maintenance activities. The first three yearly counts were completed with Fish & Game staff, using aerial photography flown in March this year.

The Hutt River easily met the count requirements, while the Otaki and Waikanae were still affected by flood damage repairs and were slightly below par. Fish and Game accepted the reason for this and were generally pleased at the results.

6. **2,4-D Contamination, Waikanae**

Consultants Pattle Delamore Ltd completed their soil investigations of the site last month. The outcome of the investigation was that two further isolated spots with high concentrations of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T in the soil were located.

Both contaminated “hot spots” have now had soil to a depth of about 300mm removed and some further soil was removed from an existing clean up pit.

Samples were collected from all three sites for analysis to determine if we have cleared the sites of contaminated soil to an acceptable level. Once ‘clear’ results have been obtained, the sites will be back-filled with fresh soil and grassed.

7. Quarry Investigations

We have been investigating new potential sources of rock rip-rap, following the closure of the rock quarry at Haywards. A promising site has been identified in Upper Hutt and some preliminary testing of the rock quality is underway.

Existing local quarries are set up to produce aggregates. Small quantities of armour grade rock are produced as a by-product but not enough to meet upcoming demand, particularly for capital improvement works. Currently the nearest source of large quantities of rip-rap are either Palmerston North or North Wairarapa. The long haul distance from these sites increases rock costs significantly.

8. Wellington Botanical Society

The Flood Protection Group and Wairarapa Operations Section recently held a 'get to know you' meeting with some executive members of the Wellington Botanical Society. The Society is promoting the use of native plants for river edge protection and regularly forwards a submission to the annual plan process along these lines. A lively discussion took place on whether natives could perform as well as willows in some of our modified river systems.

A joint field trip is planned to view some good examples of where native plants are naturally re-generating in existing willow lines and how this can be encouraged. The visit will also look at possible sites for field trials using natives as front edge protection.

9. Gravel Extraction

Horokiwi Quarries Ltd successfully completed their first extraction under the new licence agreement for the Hutt River. A total of 10,425m³ was extracted from a large beach under the Kennedy-Good Bridge.

GEOFF DICK
Manager, Flood Protection (Operations)

Parks and Forests (Strategy & Marketing)

Manager : Susan Edwards

Report for Period Ending 16 November 2001

1. Manager's Comments

Hutt City Land Swap

We have been working with officers from Hutt City Council over the last few months on the Hutt City land swap project. The project is designed to rationalise land ownership and/or control between the two agencies. Work is progressing and will be reported to the Policy and Finance Committee in December.

Recreation Association Awards

We were pleased to receive two *highly commended* awards from the New Zealand Recreation Association in September. The award winning projects were the *Here and Now* filming video and the *Orange Hut* project with the Akatarawa Recreation Action Committee.

2. Resource Management and Planning (Anne Manley, Victoria Owen, Philippa Crisp)

Parks and Forests Management Plan Reviews

The parks and forests management plan reviews have occupied a lot of Anne Manley and Victoria Owen's time over the last few months. They have prepared a separate report on this Order Paper covering the scope of the reviews and project timelines. This will be a major area of work for the Strategy & Marketing team for the remainder of the year.

Environmental Management Strategy (EMS)

The Parks and Forests Group has completed the first two levels of the *Enviromark* EMS certification. *Enviromark*, which has been developed by Landcare Research, is a web-based approach to the EMS process. An independent auditor completed an audit of these first two levels (compliance and risk ranking procedures) on 30 July 2001. Landcare Research awarded the Bronze and Silver Certificates to Councillor Shields on 15 November.

Philippa Crisp is currently working on the next step in the process (Gold Certification), which is the development of objectives and targets to reduce environmental impacts.

3. **Community Connections (Ross Jackson)**

Paekakariki Focus Group

Parks and Forests staff met with the Paekakariki Focus Group on 14 November to discuss the design and location of a water feature to replace the boating pond (removed in July). We have reached agreement that the water feature will be a wetland on the Wainui Stream near the entrance to the Park. We will be undertaking further work on the detailed design and reporting back to the Group.

Hutt River Trail

The combined Hutt Valley Rotary clubs continue to work on additions and improvements to the Trail. Co-ordinated by Hutt Rotarian Robin Maud, they have recently installed 10 new seats in good viewing locations and tidied up a number of existing seats. They have also designed an excellent “user friendly” map and have budgeted to install 25 of these along the Trail. The clubs have negotiated with Upper Hutt Council to pay up to \$10,000 or 50 percent towards a footbridge over Hulls Creek.

The Rotary clubs have also identified a number of long-term projects in the Hutt River Environmental Strategy they would like to be involved with.

Pakuratahi Valley Riparian Recovery

The Council’s plantation forestry logging contractors have recently logged the former Summit railway station area on the Rimutaka Incline Walkway. The logging has left the area with an exposed and open feel and an appearance similar to what it must have looked like 100 years ago when Summit village was settled.

Plantation Forestry agreed that it would not be appropriate to replant the Summit yards in Pine trees.

The decision has provided an opportunity to not only highlight what life must have been like in Summit and interpret some significant historical rail remnants, but also to address the riparian management of the streams in and around the site. We will be involving a number of community groups in riparian planting alongside the numerous streams at Summit. The restoration will help create some very pleasant areas for picnicking and camping while retaining something of the historic feel of the area.

Motorised Recreation in Akatarawa Forest

Over the last few months we have been working through a process with the Akatarawa Recreational Action Committee to identify which tracks in the Akatarawa Forest are available for motorised recreational use. The process follows our work developing the motorised recreation guidelines and will feed into the Forest Lands Management Plan review. There have been some contentious issues but the good working relationship between the parties has meant we are identifying solutions we all accept.

4. Marketing (Graham Laws)

The *Regional Outdoors Summer Events Programme* was printed during October (copies were distributed to Councillors through the Bulletin). The first two months of events are now on the Council's web-site. We have organised 40 events in this year's programme, some involving other Divisions, (e.g., Water Group, Environment, Biosecurity). An additional 11 events are being organised by other agencies in the Parks, (e.g., New Zealand Festival of the Arts) and these are also advertised through the *Regional Outdoors* programme. Promotion and advertising is being worked on with Corporate Communications and involves advertising on radio and in newspapers, press releases and interviews. To date, we have had both good turnouts to the events and plenty of positive feedback.

5. Capital Works Projects (Graham Laws)

Paekakariki Toilets, Queen Elizabeth Park

The Architects have prepared the design and contract documents for the replacement toilets in the vicinity of picnic grounds 1 and 2 at the Paekakariki end of Queen Elizabeth Park. Tenders closed on 20 November 2001.

Rimutaka Incline Walkway Bridges

The design and contract documents for the Ladle Bend and 3 metre bridge restoration projects on the Rimutaka Incline Walkway are completed and are currently being tendered. Tenders closed on 13 November and are currently being analysed.

Stratton Street Woolshed Extension

The contractor has started constructing the extension to the Stratton Street Woolshed for use as a classroom for the environmental education trails. He expects to complete the work by the end of December, in plenty of time for the launch of the trails in February.

Parks and Forests (Operations) Department
Manager: Bruce Andrell
Report for Period Ending 16 November 2001

1. **Manager's Comments**

Environmental Asset Management [Bruce Andrell]

Water Group have approved in principle the 2001/02 environmental asset management programme for the active water collection areas. Dr Philippa Crisp presented the state of the catchments, monitoring and pest control programme for the vegetation management contract to the Water Group.

The vegetation monitoring programme is progressing well. We have set-up and measured new permanent vegetation plots in East Harbour Regional Park. Members of the Mainland Island Restoration Organisation assisted with measuring the East Harbour Regional Park permanent vegetation plots, which is having the added benefit of providing them with an opportunity to learn vegetation monitoring protocols.

Philippa Crisp has been working with the park and forest rangers to establish baseline flowering and fruiting (phenology) monitoring of plant species on Council's land. The species chosen are canopy trees, native bird food species or rare plants. The results of this work will be analysed along with our other monitoring to give us a better indication of forest ecology and health. The information will also be useful for predicting pest animal population fluctuations and for monitoring rare plant species. The monthly recording means rare species are being constantly monitored and the rangers will know when seeds are ready for collection. The seed can then be used to grow plant material for our restoration projects.

The Biosecurity Department have been contracted to run a possum control operation in the Akatarawa Forest. The northern half of the Akatarawa Forest was treated with 1080 on 26 November 2001. The southern half was treated earlier this calendar year, achieving a 2.5 percent residual possum trap catch. The effectiveness of the northern operation will be measured early in the New Year.

A small professional culling operation removed 19 animals from the head-waters of the Wainuiomata water collection area. The pigs were damaging a neighbours pasture and the forest floor of the water collection area.

2. **Western Sector [Matt Ballantine]**

2.1 **Battle Hill Farm Forest Park**

The “Spring Visits” Programme is proving popular again this year. All the available spaces have been booked out. A number of schools and pre-schools are returning again after their children had such an enjoyable visit last year. There are also a number of first time groups visiting.

A visiting group of Japanese students were given a guided tour of the farm. They watched the farmer mustering stock and enjoyed touching the sheep. Visiting a working farm was an enthralling experience for the students who had never been outside a city before.

2.2 **Belmont Regional Park**

Waitangirua Farm re-opened public access on 30 October. The year’s lambing went well, with mild spring weather conditions and Park users generally abiding to the closure restrictions.

On the structures side, staff have been replacing handrails and anti-slip mesh on footbridges in the Korokoro Valley. They also thinned pine and gum trees at Oakleigh Street entrance; neighbours helped by removing the wood!

Chris Wootton (Belmont Regional Park Ranger), Police and Ambulance Services responded to one search and rescue and two mountain bike incidents in October.

Dry Creek, 11 October. Mountain bike rider fell from bike on the Loop Track suffering a minor head injury. Chris Wootton assisted in locating and bringing out the injured person.

Oakleigh Street, 29 October. A mountain bike rider fell and broke an ankle. Police and Ambulance services attended.

Hill Road, 31 October. Two people reported themselves lost (by cellphone) within the Landcorp block. Chris Wootton assisted in locating and bringing out the people.

2.3 **Queen Elizabeth Park**

Twenty new picnic tables have been installed to replace tables at the end of their useful life.

New track signage has also been installed on the re-routed section of Inland Track at Whareroa to direct users away from the closed off pa site.

Recently, the Conservation Corps helped build a shade house at the MacKays Crossing workshops with recycled materials. Native trees and grasses will be propagated and grown on for the Battle Hill Farm Forest Park and Queen Elizabeth Park wetland and bush restoration projects. There is interest from local people to help collect seed and help propagate the plants.

2.4 **Whitireia Park**

Possum monitoring results have confirmed that a control operation is required. We will consult the Park Board on the control options at the next Whitireia Park Board meeting.

A contractor has been working on pest plant control throughout the Park. Boneseed, box thorn and koro are the main target species.

A 100 metre section of fence was replaced around an important bush remnant that provides seed source for the Park and Mana Island.

3. **Eastern Sector [Fraser Oliver]**

3.1 **Akatarawa Forest**

Water tables and road surface maintenance has been completed on approximately five kilometres of the Pram Track. The Cannon Point main access road has been hydro-mowed and the Valley View Forest vehicle training area metalled.

3.2 **Pakuratahi Forest**

Maintenance staff have tidied the Rimutaka Incline Walkway entrance car park. Work has included mulching of the gardens, replacing edging, re-hanging the entrance gate, painted the signs and picket fencing. The full length of the walkway has been graded and water tables cleared; and metal has been applied to the section above Ladle Bend.

Rangers have provided on-site direction for the landscaping of the logged over portions of the summit yards. When completed, the area will be suitable for picnicking, camping, provide access to the stream and an old historic culvert.

3.3 **Kaitoke Regional Park**

Work continues on the beautification of the *Lord of the Rings* Rivendell site. Picnic tables have been installed, weed species and exotic trees removed, and the Arbor Day plantings maintained.

The popular 800 metre long Swingbridge Track has been remetalled, old structures removed or replaced, and new seats and a brochure rack installed. The track is scheduled to be opened as a *Kiwi Walk* in March 2002.

Maintenance staff have removed a number of gum trees in the campground area, mulched and sprayed the gardens and carried out arborcultural work on the willows. Three thousand trees have been planted along the Pakuratahi River, with assistance from the Upper Hutt Police youth aid work scheme.

Vandalism increased over the September school holiday period. Toilets and picnic tables were damaged, windows broken, and buildings graffitied. Some offenders were caught and reparation has been sought.

3.4 **Wainuiomata**

The first of the 'open individual' catchment tours went ahead on 28 October. This was a balloted walk for members of the public not associated with clubs. Over 40 people turned up for the walk and Strategy and Marketing staff were on hand to support Rangers during the day. As a trial run, the event was considered to be very successful with some good group participation and feedback. The general feeling was that everyone enjoyed the day's activities.

3.5 **Hutt Water Collection Area**

Maintenance on the Hutt Water Collection Area 4WD access road has been completed.

An illegal hunters shelter was discovered and removed from the Eastern Hutt Valley. The shelter was well hidden. We believe it had been built in February 2001. We will increase the patrols of the area over the summer period.

BRUCE ANDRELL
Manager, Parks and Forests (Operations)