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Report 02.205

15 April 2002

File: E/6/16/3

klis-#16147

Report to the Landcare Committee
from 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 included in **Attachment 1**.

3. Catching Up in Flood Protection

Flood Protection has made major progress in catching up on their backlog of work. You may recall that at the Councillor workshop in November I advised you that Flood Protection was having some difficulty as they struggled with a shortage of staff and a large workload resulting from the 1998 and 2000 flood events as well as the completing the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan.

This year the Flood Protection (Operations) Department has had a clear run with no major floods. As a result the maintenance programmes on the Waikanae River and Waitohu Stream are already virtually complete. Thanks to Garry Baker and the team for their efforts. Jeff Evans and his crew are also on target to complete the maintenance on the Hutt River by the end of the financial year.

The Flood Protection (Strategy and Assets) Department has been able to turn its hand to dealing with some of the issues that were sidelined in order to complete the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan. The day to day work is all on schedule as are the capital works which remain in the Annual Plan.

The Department has also recently brought the Flood Response Manual up to date. That may not sound like much, but the previous version was well out of date and our ability to provide a consistent response during a flood is quite reliant on that document.

4. **Summer in the Parks and Forests**

The end of summer has meant that our busy season is coming to a close. If staff are not out ranging and collecting camp fees then they are issuing permits, leading guided walks, or responding to telephone inquiries.

The capital works programme is looking good with the Stratton Street wool shed extension (education centre) completed and the restoration of bridges on the Rimutaka Incline formation well in hand. In addition the earthworks for the wetland restoration project at Battle Hill will begin in the next few weeks.

A highlight of the summer is always our Regional Outdoors Summer Programme. This year, the variable weather put some pressure on the programme. Nevertheless the Summer Programme team coped admirably and a number of the events were fully booked.

One feature of the Summer Programme is the assistance given to Landcare staff by their partners and families. Landcare staff seem to invite their partners and families to the event and then promptly give them a job to do!

Thank you to both the official (Parks and Forests staff) and unofficial (families of Parks and Forests staff) Summer Programme team.

5. **Divisional Reorganisation**

I have appointed Geoff Dick and Murray Waititi as the Managers of Flood Protection and Parks and Forests respectively. Geoff and Murray have many challenges in front of them but I am confident that the new departments will prosper under their leadership.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Brendan Paul, Bruce Andrell and Susan Edwards to the development of the Division. All three have had a large role in moving our focus from “stopbanks and tracks” to integrated land and floodplain management.

6. **Recommendations**

That the Landcare Committee:

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

Report prepared by:

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Divisional Manager, Landcare

Attachment 1 : Departmental Managers' Reports