

Flood Protection Manager's report for period ending 19 September 2003

1. Manager's comments

We are now well underway with this year's maintenance work programme. On the capital works front, the major Strand Park realignment project is progressing steadily towards, hopefully, an early December date for awarding the contract. At Belmont on the Hutt River we have a recommendation for letting the contract for the edge protection improvements. We are also now close to resolving the land ownership issues with the new floodwall by the Otaihanga Domain, Waikanae.

I recently completed visits to three of the significant lower North Island quarries that are able to supply rock to our various river works projects. The visits didn't come up with any significant new opportunities to reduce costs or improve quality and availability, but were very useful to confirm the capabilities of each of the quarries and maintain relationships.

Garry Baker, Area Engineer for Kapiti, will be attending the NZ Rivers Supervisors and Victorian Waterways Managers Field Staff conference in Victoria, Australia between 5 and 11 October 2003. The conference includes a bus tour through parts of Victoria to look at a range of river management projects. Both the tour and conference offer a unique opportunity for waterway personnel from both sides of the Tasman to share their experiences, successes and failures, and inspect and discuss a broad range of catchment and waterway issues. Garry will be making a presentation of his findings to the Department once he returns.

2. Waikanae River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]

2.1 Friends of the Waikanae River

The Friends Executive Committee met on 27 August 2003 to discuss their activities for the coming year. The annual walkover for the Waikanae River has been confirmed for 22 October 2003. Details about the time and meeting place will be confirmed nearer the date and notified in the Councillors Bulletin.

The Friends of Waikanae River were awarded a *Certificate in Recognition of a Meritorious Contribution to Conservation* by the Department of Conservation and the Wellington Conservation Board at the 2003 Wellington Region Conservation Awards. The Certificate was awarded at a Ceremony at Parliament Buildings by the Minister of Conservation, Chris Carter.

2.2 Capital works

Work is progressing on the two Waikanae River capital works projects as follows:

Otaihanga floodwall

Construction of the Otaihanga domain floodwall remains delayed because we have yet to finalise KCDC landowner approval. However, lawyers from both Council's have now drafted an access agreement and we hope to have KCDC approval within two weeks. Tenders are ready to be called as soon as approval is given.

Jim Cooke Park realignment

This is a three year project with the preparation of design and consent applications programmed for this financial year. A detailed project scope for the project is now being prepared and we plan to shortly commence negotiations with the landowner affected by the works.

3. Otaki River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]

3.1 Friends of the Otaki River

Two planting days were held at the Otaki River mouth on 9 and 16 August 2003 with a good turnout on both days. Approximately 1,500 plants were planted adjacent to the carpark area established last year. A local school also assisted with some planting around the vehicle barriers constructed as part of the lagoon enhancement project undertaken last year.

The Friend's Committee met on 13 August 2003 to confirm arrangements for the coming years activities. The annual walkover will be held on 15 October 2003 and the AGM on 29 October 2003. Details of these events will be put into the Councillors Bulletin.

3.2 Flood hazard mapping

Submissions on the proposed District Plan change have now been collated with Greater Wellington having 105 submissions to evaluate. Our initial assessment is that it will take at least two months to work through and respond to the 105 submissions. KCDC will be responsible for mailing out the responses to landowners.

A strategy for responding to the Otaki public meeting has also been drafted. The additional technical investigations work required has commenced and should be completed and reported back to the Landcare Committee and the community in February 2004.

3.3 Winstones walkway

Work is progressing on the preparation of a construction plan for the section of walkway adjacent to the Winstones Aggregate Plant. A draft plan of this critical section of the walkway has been prepared with the final plan proposed to be presented on the Otaki walkover on 15 October 2003. Construction is programmed for March 2004.

4. Hutt River floodplain management [Daya Atapattu]

4.1 Ava to Ewen project

The Hutt River Advisory Committee held a special meeting on 25 September 2003 to consider options for advancing the Alicetown stopbank completion date as close as practical to June 2006. We investigated a number of accelerating options and the outcomes of these investigations were considered by the Advisory Committee on 25 September 2003.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) land is now through the Maori Protection Mechanism and Sites of Significance process. Submissions closed on 12 September 2003 with two submissions received by the Office of Treaty Settlements (OTS). The OTS officials committee convened to discuss the claims on 23 September 2003 and decided in favour of clearing the land.

In addition to the two submissions, the Wellington Tenths Trust and Palmerston North Maori Reserves Trust sent a letter of support for the land being cleared through the protection mechanism process so it could be made available urgently for flood protection purposes.

The next step is for MOE's Accredited Agent to report the OTS decision to LINZ. We expect LINZ approval by mid November 2003. In accordance with the MOE/GWRC agreement, GWRC will be granted access to and possession of the land at the time LINZ approves the transfer.

Our property consultant is currently negotiating with the Department of Conservation for an exemption to the requirement for a marginal strip to be set aside on the disposition of Crown owned land that adjoins a river.

At this stage we hope to award the river realignment contract in early December 2003.

4.2 Belmont improvements

Resource consents for the Belmont edge protections were granted by the Environment Committee on 4 September 2003.

Tenders for the construction of the edge protections closed on 22 September 2003. A separate report in this Order Paper deals with the tender evaluation and makes a recommendation on the appointment of a contractor.

4.3 Whirinaki Crescent stopbank upgrade

Topographical survey and geotechnical investigations for the preliminary upgrade design commenced in September. Adjoining property owners, Upper Hutt City Council, Wellington Golf Club and St Patrick's College were contacted before commencing the survey. St Patrick's College has objected to our surveyors entering their property. We hope to meet with school representatives to discuss their issues.

4.4 Port Road improvements

Hutt City Council is progressing well with developing a vision for the Seaview area including the adjacent section of the eastern Hutt River bank. We expect a report from them by the end of September 2003. We should then be in a position to finalise our edge protection design. We hope to commence reconstruction of the section of the existing demolition edge works upstream of the Waiwhetu Stream mouth during the coming summer (2004).

4.5 Non-structural implementation

The Non-structural Working Group met on 9 September 2003 to discuss the process and timing for implementing District Plan measures.

Hutt City Council officers expect to seek Council approval to notify the proposed changes to their District Plan in March 2004. Upper Hutt City Council officers plan to notify the changes to their District Plan shortly after their Plan becomes operative. The target date for making the Upper Hutt Plan operative is December 2003.

Emergency officers of the three councils, co-ordinated by Debbie Cunningham, will meet in late September 2003 to finalise an implementation programme for the six emergency management projects.

5. Planning and development services [Phillip Purves]

The following summarises the formal, written requests for information or advice attended to during August 2003:

	August 2003	YTD
Requests brought forward	23	29
Additional requests received	9	20
Responses provided	14	31
Outstanding requests	18	18

Project management of the Department's Environmental Management System has been taken over by Sharyn Westlake, following Trecia Smith's move to Parks and Forests. EnviroMark[®] New Zealand audited the Department's systems in early September and only three small non-compliance matters were detected. Once these have been addressed the Flood Protection Department will retain its Gold Standard for 2003/04.

6. Investigations [Phillip Purves]

6.1 Waitohu flood hazard assessment

Good progress continues to be made with this project. Results of the important hydraulic modelling component are still expected to be available by the end of September.

We have now commissioned the *sedimentation and river morphology* investigation component. The scope of this important component was enlarged to ensure that a good understanding of the physical processes is established and can be confidently discussed with landowners during the upcoming consultation phase.

7. Operations

7.1 Wellington [Jeff Evans]

Hutt River

We have now completed this year's willow and native planting on the Hutt River. There has already been some theft of native plants from areas in both Upper and Lower Hutt. We will continue to monitor these areas until the plants become more established.

Work continues on preparing for the upcoming bed control survey on the river. All the survey site points have been checked and missing sight points have been logged for resurveying.

The sand bag stocks held at Mabey Road have been turned over and where necessary bags refilled. We hold 20,000 empty bags and 500 full bags in stock for emergencies.

Hutt River Trail

The Estuary Bridge walkway is now complete including extension of the footpath on the down stream side of the walkway back up to Waione Street. The Hutt Rotary Club funded this extra work.

A new pedestrian boardwalk has been installed onto the side of the Stokes Valley Road Bridge. This completes another important link on the river trail. Greater Wellington, the Hutt City Council and the Hutt Rotary Clubs jointly funded the work.

Hutt River ranging service

Patrolling and ranging services are continuing. We have been liaising with the Department of Conservation in relation to some issues with whitebaiters on the lower river. There have also been problems with trail bikes gaining access into the Totara Park horse paddocks.

A Hutt River poster has been developed and is ready for printing. This will be useful to hand out during school visits and planting days, and will promote the river in a positive way.

On 30 August 2003 Maidstone Intermediate school held a “River Rubbish Clean Up Day”. It was also a fund raising initiative for the school. They managed to pick up several hundred bags of rubbish from Maori Bank to Silverstream. Greater Wellington supplied the bags and disposable gloves. We also collected the rubbish from the disposal points and took it to the landfill.

Watercourses

Fallen trees have been removed from the Porirua Stream at Tawa. At Collins Creek two trees were removed and a concrete block retaining wall was repaired.

With the heavy rain over the last few weeks, staff have been busy clearing the debris arrestors at Porirua, Takapu, Korokoro and Speedy’s Streams.

Work for other departments

A level gauge has been fitted to the Groundwater site at Seaview. We have also recently installed a new platform, and completed cableway repairs, on the Otaki recorder station site for NIWA.

7.2 Kapiti [Garry Baker]

Kapiti Rivers

All major catchments – Waikanae and Otaki Rivers and the Waitohu Stream – experienced some welcome rainfall over the past two to three weeks resulting in raised flow levels. Many rural households and landowners are looking for more however.

The annual “willow planting” programme on the Kapiti Coast is complete. In total we planted 1,220 willow stakes and poles cut from the Otaki River “stands”; 7,780 willows, 500 Yeogi poplars, 400 alders bought in from local nurseries; and 30 transplanted willow clumps on the Waitohu Stream.

Otaki River

After an absence of over two months Winstone Aggregates recommenced extraction from the Otaki River on 1 September 2003.

Interestingly, since the October 2000 floods the number of willows purchased annually has fallen from 20,000 to 8,000 primarily because of a drop in losses of “front-line” plantings. The relative stability of the overall river channel over the past three years has seen the establishment of some 11,600 willows along the base of the previously vulnerable “clifftops”.

Waikanae River

A draft of a new concept plan for the development and maintenance of Pukekawa Reserve has been received and will be discussed in conjunction with KCDC Reserves staff. It is proposed to substantially upgrade the appearance and development of Pukekawa Reserve and the adjacent Greenaway Road end. The installation of log barriers at the end of Greenaway Road to exclude 4WD-vehicle access into the river has drawn mixed reactions and comments.

Watercourses

Kapiti staff met a delegation of landowners whose properties are either intersected or bordered by the Ngatotara Stream. They voiced their concern at increased bed and water levels over the past five to six months, while there appeared to be little or no rain. Traditional machine drain clearing maintenance had been suspended due to previous landowners' desires to change land use, and fencelines which have been constructed in such a way to prevent machines getting close enough to the drain to carry out drain-cleaning operations. Further meetings are planned.

Gravel extraction

Gravel extraction figures up to the end of August 2003 are set out below.

			Year 2003/04 (cubic metres)		Year 2002/03 (cubic metres)
River	Area	Contractor	Period	Year	Full year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	3,906	6,468	40,362
	River		2,335	3,561	13,364
Otaki	River	Winstones	0	0	54,004
Waikanae	Above Greenaway Road	Various	0	0	7,472
	Below Greenaway Road	Various	0	0	2,617
TOTALS			6,241	10,029	117,819

7.3 Operations support [Steve Murphy]

Waiwhetu Stream – flooding Hayward Terrace

A further meeting was held with Hayward Terrace residents, this time with Councillor Thomas in attendance. Residents seemed genuinely pleased with the proposal to carry out a limited flood hazard study, using current data. This study will look at options available to prevent flooding of their properties in an event similar to that experienced in November 2001. Phillip Wallace, a former staff member, has been contracted to carry out the work.

Asset management

Councillors will recall the 2002/03 asset monitoring report prepared for the August Landcare Committee meeting. Part of that report sets out the planned improvements to the system for the 2003/04 year. While a number of tasks were highlighted, early emphasis will be on the development of improved reporting systems so that at year-end we have up to date records on the true state of assets. While standard reporting systems are ideal from a system management point of view, I am mindful of the paperwork involved for field staff and use will be made of existing reporting requirements wherever possible.

Health and safety

Jacky Cox is currently reviewing our health and safety system and has already come up with a number of recommended changes.

One of the more interesting aspects is a review of our safety training for our riverhands. The work they do is unique and specialised with its own OSH Code of Practice. Currently however, there is no external record of the skills they have developed. The plan is to develop, over a number of years, a formal qualification for riverhands. This process has already commenced with a recent chainsaw course sourced from a recognised NZQA training provider. Most riverhands are now on their way with some NZQA points.

Geoff Dick
Manager, Flood Protection

Parks and Forests Manager's report for period ending 19 September 2003

1. Manager's comments [Murray Waititi]

We have completed a range of planting projects throughout the parks, and are now moving forward with the works programmes for the year. Major projects include the new toilet block at Queen Elizabeth Park, and development of facilities and services at East Harbour Regional Park as we prepare to assume full management responsibilities.

1.1 Walkway across Whareroa Farm

Landcorp Farming Limited has agreed in principle to a walkway across Whareroa Farm as part of a link between Queen Elizabeth Park and the Akatarawa Forest. However, as the State Highway 1 MacKays Crossing realignment will involve building relocations and other construction hazards, they have asked that the decision on the exact route for the track be deferred until the roading project is completed.

1.2 Rural fire plans

Updated copies of the rural fire protection plans and contracts have been sent to all Territorial Authorities to sign off prior to the new fire season which commences on 1 October.

The plan states the contract procedure we would like to see used for any fire on Greater Wellington (GWRC) land and describes the level of preparedness we will maintain during the summer months. It also lists our personnel with fire-related knowledge and experience, and how that expertise can be used against fires on GWRC land and other regional fires.

1.3 Wellington tourism

Together with Rob Forlong and Amanda Cox, I met with Tim Cossar and Christine Weatherall of Positively Wellington Tourism (PWT) on 19 September to learn more of that organisation's roles and future direction. Given PWT's planned focus on 'nature-based tourism,' there seem to be many opportunities for developing a close relationship and leveraging our collective resources to boost the domestic and international profiles of our parks and forests. The first step in the process will be a familiarisation tour for Tim and Christine of Kaitoke, Belmont, Battle Hill and part of the Rimutaka Rail Trail on 16 October.

1.4 Matters raised at the last Landcare Committee meeting

A number of matters were raised on the State Highway 1 upgrade at MacKays Crossing.

1.4.1 Ongoing road maintenance responsibilities – QEP

At the last Landcare meeting I was asked to clarify the responsibility for ongoing maintenance of the roads adjoining State Highway 1 at MacKays Crossing. The responsibility for the roads outside the memorial gates rests with Transit New Zealand as they own the land. The gates at Queen Elizabeth Park lie on the boundary, so we maintain the road from the Park entrance.

1.4.2 MacKays Crossing

The MacKays Crossing upgrade plans allow room for a railway platform, but there is no planning or funding provision yet for such a facility. If and when the platform is constructed, rail passengers will need to cross the on-ramp to the northbound lane of State Highway 1 to reach the Park entrance.

Once the design and build contract for the road works is awarded, we will recommend that the contractor provide for a pedestrian crossing to a foot, cycle and horse path on the north side of the Park access road, and a second one over the south bound exit road from State Highway 1. These two crossings will cater for rail passengers, plus any pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders crossing to and from Whareroa Farm and neighbouring properties. Through channelling people towards crossings over one-way, relatively low volume access roads we can minimise any hazards to pedestrians and vehicles.

1.4.3 Munitions dump and wetland development at Queen Elizabeth Park

The QEP munitions site has been cleared by the army bomb disposal staff and a survey of the site undertaken. A contractor will be back on site in the next few weeks to fill the pit and create a mound over the area. Once covered the site will be planted. The wetland site can now also be completed with some wetland pond edges and track work to be finished off.

Ranger staff have been busy making the most of the winter months planting up the wetland areas. A large portion of newly created wetlands has been already planted.

1.4.4 Current status of South Coast Trail

We will shortly develop a brief detailing our requirements and to engage consultants to carry out the work. We anticipate that the South Coast Trail investigation will take place early in the new calendar year.

1.4.5 Arboretum proposal

We have started investigating the options available for an arboretum at Battle Hill. Ideally these will complement the extensive and relatively recent planting plans that already exist for the property. The evaluation will include key aspects such as aims for the project, access for immigrant communities, availability of land, and some idea of the associated costs.

2. Planning and policy [Dr Philippa Crisp]

2.1 Regional parks network management plan

The Network Plan has been approved by the full Council with a few minor technical amendments. DoC are currently seeking legal advice as to whether they need to approve the plan.

2.2 Belmont Regional Park management plan

Work has begun on the Belmont Regional Park management plan. Our intention to review the plan has been advertised and we have written to interested parties advising them of this and seeking their feedback. Meetings have commenced with landowners and Iwi. We are currently scoping the issues needing to be addressed in the plan. A communication/consultation strategy has also been developed. Public consultation will occur in October.

3. Marketing and design [Amanda Cox]

3.1 Information boards and brochures

We have made considerable progress with our development of new information boards and brochures for all parks and forests. Amanda Cox and Annabel Riley will be working closely with each ranger to develop individual park project plans and budgets, calling on other staff to help as the need arises.

We have also identified sites and activities to feature in the park 'image strips' and other promotional material. We have invited a final year photography student to take the photographs, which will feature in her major assignment for the year. Greater Wellington is providing transport, film and 'talent' to feature in the photographs, while making considerable cost savings compared to commercial photography fees. We plan for all photography to be completed by 3 October.

We also revised and updated the copy for the 2004 Hutt Valley Visitor Guide, of which 40,000 copies will be printed. Once again this will feature Belmont, East Harbour and Kaitoke Regional Parks and the Hutt River Trail.

3.2 Wellington regional tourism

Positively Wellington Tourism held a tourism forum on 20 August, attended by about 185 people from all sectors of the regional tourism industry. Featuring addresses from PWT, Tourism NZ, Tourism Research Council and Victoria University, it provided a very good insight into the current state and future direction for the market. Three key issues stood out:

- the need to promote a regional approach to tourism, to leverage our collective resources
- the concept of 'nature next to the city' represents a distinctive positioning opportunity not just for Wellington City but for the region
- international tourism demands significant growth in commissionable (money making) tourism product for the region for overseas agencies to promote our region.

3.3 Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park

The meeting on 14 August was a chance to update the Establishment Group on recent developments and continue drawing out people's ideas of what they appreciate and would like to see at Queen Elizabeth Park. This in turn will help the group decide exactly on the purpose of the Friends group, and underpin the Terms of Reference.

3.4 Hutt River Trail

Graham Laws attended a meeting of Hutt Rotarians at Councillor Evans' home in early September to further discuss the Trail Extension Project.

The Rotarians agreed in principle to set up two working groups for this project; one for the Trail extension itself and one for an event to celebrate its opening. Every Rotary club in the Hutt Valley will be fundraising to support both these goals.

The Hutt Valley Rotary clubs now need to individually approve the proposal, whereupon the working groups will be established and the project started.

3.5 Conrad Pharazyn memorial planting

Approximately 70 family and friends of former colleague Conrad Pharazyn attended a memorial tree planting at the Te Marua end of Kaitoke Regional Park on 23 August. Among those attending were Crs Evans, McDavitt, Werry and former Chairperson Stuart Macaskill, who also officiated.

3.6 Landscape architect projects

3.6.1 Battle Hill

The planting plan for the Battle Hill homestead garden was completed and forwarded to the western depot team for implementation. The northern bed, camellia hedge and the large cherry trees will be planted out in early September, with the remaining beds to come as the budget allows.

3.6.2 Paekakariki-Wainui coastal carpark and recreation area

This two year project will provide well organised and safe areas for visitors to recreate on the valuable flat land adjacent to the beach while having minimal impact on the coastal environment.

This will involve simplifying the traffic flows with separate car parking bays, planting shade trees and creating picnic areas next to the beach. Much of the foredune area has already been fenced off, and we will support defined access areas to the beach and the toilets, minimising hazards to visitors. A draft plan will be taken to the Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park Establishment Group for their comment.

3.6.3 Kaitoke rangers' office

The aim here is to integrate the new rangers' office into the surrounding landscape through planting appropriate native species, defining pedestrian access and retaining views into and out of the office. Planning and implementation should be completed by the end of September.

3.7 125th anniversary of the Rimutaka Rail Trail

Planning is well under way for this event, to be held on Saturday 18 October. Catering for around 200 people, it will involve driving 25-seater buses up the Rail Trail while interpreting points of interest along the way. The ceremony at the Summit will include the unveiling of the IPENZ plaque, a commemorative totara tree planting, speeches and refreshments. Attendees will be able to choose between walking to Cross Creek or bussing straight to the Fell Museum in Featherston for a second unveiling ceremony.

4. Environmental asset management [Dr Philippa Crisp]

4.1 Hutt Catchment 1080 possum control operation

The Medical Officer of Health gave approval to recommence water take from the Hutt River on 2 September, after the 1080 content of the bait on the ground fell to below specified levels. Letters have been sent to hunters informing them that they can apply for Hutt Catchment hunting permits after 23 September as per MAF guidelines. The message that "no dogs are to be taken into the area" will be stressed. Checks of the Hutt River for possum carcasses will continue to be made after any flood events and the public will be warned if any carcasses are found.

4.2 Other control operations

Prohunt have culled 12 goats, 4 pigs and 1 deer in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area, during a check of the Judas goats in August. Pest plant control operations across the parks and forests include:

- pampas, holly, sycamore and privet in Pakuratahi Forest
- brush wattle, montbretia, tradescantia and an old dump site at Dry Creek
- Japanese honeysuckle, ivy and holly in the Wainuiomata recreation area
- Japanese honeysuckle and ivy at the Korokoro dam.

4.3 Karori Sanctuary tomtit transfer

Staff from Karori Sanctuary have completed the capture and transfer of tomtits from the Akatarawa Forest. A total of 14 tomtits were caught; 11 male and 3 female birds.

4.4 Monitoring

Preparations are underway for the spring bird monitoring operation to commence across Council lands. Parks and Forests staff have also attended a refresher training session on bird identification, organised by the Ornithological Society of New Zealand.

4.5 Environmental management system

Parks and Forests currently hold Landcare Research's EnviroMark© Gold Certification for their Environmental Management System (EMS). Workshops have been held with all staff to determine new objectives for the coming year. An external auditor undertook an audit of the Parks and Forests EMS on 2 September. One minor administrative improvement was requested by the auditor, who was very impressed with the standard of work and level of staff involvement in the system. We expect to receive this year's Gold certification by the end of October.

5. Western sector [Matt Ballantine]

5.1 Battle Hill Farm Forest Park

5.1.1 Maintenance

Stock proofing of the Swampy gully wetland area was completed prior to the planting of 500 cabbage trees and 100 flax. This was a matter of tidying up areas of the original fence line that runs the length of the gully.

Planting of streamside areas in the Bush Reserve where weed control has been carried out previously was also undertaken. This is part of a continuing process of weed control and replanting in the Bush Reserve area.

The Battle Hill education sheep have also had all their shots, drenches, dips and footrot treatments in preparation for the lambing season. The farm leaseholder's sheep have begun lambing and we are expecting the education sheep to start lambing in mid to late September.

5.1.2 Ranging services

The Conservation Corps have recently spent time working enthusiastically at Battle Hill. Jobs included the removal of tradescantia from the Bush Reserve and helping with the landscaping currently underway around the homestead.

5.1.3 Events held

The Eastern Hutt District Scouts chose Battle Hill this year to host their annual district jamboree. Approximately 70 scouts and their leaders made Battle Hill home for a weekend. Split into several groups, the scouts had to display their abilities in being self sufficient while learning about the outdoor environment at the same time.

A BBQ for all the volunteers who help out with the Wainuiomata Catchment walks was held at the homestead. Battle Hill was chosen so they could visit somewhere different to the usual area they are involved with. The BBQ was held to acknowledge all the help these people provide to the rangers who look after the Wainuiomata Catchment area.

During the past six weeks we have also had visits from two school groups, Windley School from Porirua and a group of special needs children from Newlands College. Both visits were enjoyable days out for all involved.

5.2 Belmont Regional Park

5.2.1 Maintenance

Staff have continued to repaint all signs within the Park. Staff have almost completed the Cannons Creek footbridge. Assistance has been given to Friends of Maara Roa with their continuing plantings at Cannons Creek.

5.2.2 Ranging services

The Ranger has been involved with site visits and introduction talks to Victoria University students and students from Wellington School of Medicine studying environmental health. Students combined their field trip to Belmont Regional Park with trips to water treatment plants and visits to East Harbour Regional Park and Pencarrow Lakes.

5.2.3 Events held

The New Zealand Conservation Authority launched the New Zealand Walkways booklet at the Stratton Street woolshed classroom. The event was attended by a number of people including the Minister of Conservation Hon Chris Carter and Chair of New Zealand Conservation Authority Mr Kerry Marshall. It was appropriate that the booklet was launched in the Park, as there are a number of walkways designated mainly across Landcorp farmland.

An orienteering event was held in the Park based at the Stratton Street woolshed classroom. Orienteering is an event where participants find their way through unfamiliar terrain using maps and clues. Participants can run, walk or cycle their way through courses. The Stratton Street course offered a good range of courses along the valley floor, most of which were suitable for family groups to enjoy.

5.3 Queen Elizabeth Park

5.3.1 Maintenance

Maintenance has included staff completing new steps on a steep section of track between Whareroa and Raumatī South. Beach access marker posts have been installed adjacent to beach access ways to encourage visitors to stay off the sensitive dunes.

A number of the secondary tracks are being resurfaced to help prevent sand blowouts. Metalling these tracks reduces wear and tear and the tracks are less prone to sand erosion which can become a significant problem during summer droughts or prevailing winds.

5.3.2 Ranging services

Despite the recent cold southerly blast, spring has officially arrived on the Kapiti Coast and with the new season comes the new plant growth. We are pleased to report that we have had a high percentage of seeds sourced from the Park, germinate in the nursery this year. Should the good fortune continue we will have a good supply of plants for next winter. The high level germinating means that there will be a lot of work to be done, pricking out seedlings and potting them. Rangers will be asking for volunteer help to 'pot up' over the next few months.

This year's planting is now winding up with most of this season's 14,000 plants in the ground. A final volunteer planting day will be held in late September in the newly created wetland area at MacKays Crossing.

6. Eastern sector [Fraser Oliver]

6.1 Akatarawa Forest

6.1.1 Maintenance

Metalling of the Cannon Point walkway continues using inmates from Rimutaka Prison. Our own maintenance gangs have assisted where machinery is required, but the vast majority of the metalling has been completed by the inmates using wheel barrows and shovels. The inmates also control vegetation throughout the entire length of the Cannon Point walkway. This is achieved by using slash hooks and machetes.

Feedback from walkway users has been very positive, and tends to support our own theory that upgraded track surfaces appeal not only to the elderly but also to mothers with prams and young children.

Road and track maintenance throughout the Akatarawa Block has been mainly routine i.e. water control, watertables, culverts and cut off drains. Although we have been experiencing a lot of wet weather, fortunately the rain we have been receiving has been consistent but light in volume therefore no significant damage has occurred to any road surfaces.

Minor rock falls have occurred in several areas as a consequence of the small earthquakes we have experienced lately.

6.1.2 Events held

Events held during this period have included one car rally by Kapiti Car Club, three four-wheel drive outings, one army exercise and several trips into the forest by club members to plan routes for coming events.

6.2 Pakuratahi Forest

6.2.1 Maintenance

Ongoing routine maintenance throughout the entire Rimutaka Incline Rail Trail continues. This consists of regular inspections and cleaning of watertables, culverts and cut off drains to prevent build up of sediment carried within all watercourses that feed them. These activities are especially important at this time of year, as large amounts of autumn debris (i.e. dead leaves and other dead vegetation) clog waterways.

Inmates from Rimutaka Prison continue riparian planting of the watercourses and mulching of the planted areas in and around the Summit Yards. The mulch will not only inhibit weed growth but reduces moisture loss from the ground immediately under the newly planted seedlings and gives a degree of stability in windy conditions.

Pest control around the newly planted areas has been ongoing since logging operations finished. Following logging an increased volume of food for pests becomes available as grass and weeds initially form the predominant ground cover. This situation will continue to occur for at least the next three to four years until the seedling pines create an effective canopy.

6.2.2 Events held

Use of both Tunnel Gully Reserve and the Rimutaka Incline Rail Trail is steadily increasing as the memories of the last 1080 operation recede. At present Tunnel Gully Reserve and the Mt Climie area are being used by Adventure Education Wellington for training young students in navigation and map reading with the aim of acquiring Unit Standards in these skills.

6.3 Kaitoke Regional Park

6.3.1 Maintenance

The rangers' office continues to progress with all electrical and internal plumbing work now completed. The outside decking is nearly finished and carpet will be laid shortly.

6.3.2 Ranging services

A local kereru population of between 30-40 birds has migrated into the campground area to feed on the new willow buds and shoots. It was this time last year that 14 of these pigeons were shot in the campground, so patrolling of this area has been increased accordingly.

6.4 Wainuiomata

6.4.1 Maintenance

Work on the fence along the catchment boundary is progressing well with the section from below High Misty to Mount Devine nearing completion. Rangers have completed chainsaw work on the boundary line between Devine and Moores Valley ridge, the final section of the northern boundary. Earth moving contractors have already started ground preparation for this section of fence line and are scheduled to complete works by mid September.

Murray Waititi
Manager, Parks and Forests

Landcare Support, Divisional Accountant's report for period ending 19 September 2003

Direct expenditure

Total direct expenditure to date is \$111,000 or 8.5% behind budget. Within this variance is a saving in personnel due to having five to six full time positions vacant for the first two months of the year. The balance of the favourable result (\$84,000 or 6%) is the result of timing variances within both Parks and Forests and Flood Protection.

Landcare Division				
Financial Summary Statement				
For the 2 months ending 31 August 2003				
\$000				
	Year to Date			Full Year
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Budget
External Revenue	2,310	2,313	(3) U	13,862
Internal Revenue	155	179	(24) U	1,075
TOTAL REVENUE	2,465	2,492	(27) U	14,937
Direct Expenditure	1,193	1,305	111 F	9,087
Indirect Expenditure	613	658	46 F	3,877
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	1,806	1,963	157 F	12,964
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	659	530	130 F	1,973
Net Asset Acquisitions	4	15	11 F	612
Capital Projects	39	96	57 F	2,335

Indirect expenditure

A combination of savings in depreciation and loan funding resulting from lower than planned capex spends for Flood Protection in 2002/03, and an unplanned gain on sale for the disposal of two vehicles early in the year have created a \$46,000 favourable variance for the year to date.

Capital projects

Work has commenced on all of the Flood Protection capital expenditure projects planned for 2003/04 although they are slightly behind target (timing issue only).

Tina Walker
Divisional Accountant, Landcare