

Report 03.685
Date 10 November 2003
File E/06/16/03

Committee Landcare
Author 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. Preparation for the summer season

The field staff are all hard at work at the moment preparing things for a busy summer. The Assistant Rangers are giving all the Parks a "once over" to make sure they can cope with the big increase in visitation that we get in summer. From my recent visits, I think the parks and forests are in very good condition and ready for the influx.

In the western sector the team has been particularly busy. Battle Hill sustained significant damage in the 3 October downpour and Belmont and Queen Elizabeth Park were also affected. Matt Ballantine and his team have worked very hard to get those parks back into good condition.

On the eastern side we are expecting a big increase in visitation to Kaitoke as the Lord of the Rings Premiere attracts people to Rivendell. If we do get the predicted upsurge in visitors the new track and bridge will be worth their weight in gold. I've walked a small part of the track and while the terrain is steep the Assistant Rangers have done a great job in its construction.

Flood Protection is also a hive of activity at the moment. Thanks to the sustained maintenance programme put in place by the Area Engineers and meticulously implemented by the riverhands, we sustained little damage during the 3 October storm. I believe this low level of damage is a direct result of our asset management plans. In recent times both Garry Baker and Jeff Evans have commented to me that the damage would have been far more serious had the events occurred a few years ago.

4. Capital works

Things are really starting to move on the capital works front. After all the planning and consultation around the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan construction starts in earnest this month. By the time you read this report the first stages of the Belmont Edge Protections work will be under way. The work is due to be completed before the end of the financial year.

That will be followed by the commencement, before Christmas, of the preparatory work for the Strand Park Realignment. On the Kapiti Coast we have let the contract for the Otaihanga Flood Wall which will also be completed this financial year.

Parks and Forests are also making good progress on their capital works programme. The major items presently under construction are new toilets at QEP.

5. East Harbour start-up

A big highlight this month will be the start of the East Harbour ranger service. East Harbour Regional Park has massive potential and the ranger service will help realise that potential. The Hutt River ranger service has produced huge benefits there and we expect the same in East Harbour.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. *receive the report.*
2. *note the contents of the report.*

Report prepared by:

Rob Forlong
Divisional Manager, Landcare

Attachment 1: Departmental reports