



Report **05.105**
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Committee **Rural Services and Wairarapa**
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Kopuaranga River Enhancement Project

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of progress on the Kopuaranga River Enhancement Project.

2. Background

Greater Wellington has been receiving requests for 2-3 years to investigate willow clearing on the Kopuaranga River.

Floods in 2004 highlighted the flooding problem in the Kopuaranga Valley. Residents in Mauriceville were cut off and unable to commute to Masterton on a number of occasions. One house was flooded. Landowners were affected by flooding, poor drainage and high water tables. The cause was high river flows impeded by “willow blockages” within the Kopuaranga River channel.

A well attended public meeting in August 2004 requested Greater Wellington to initiate a Kopuaranga River Enhancement Scheme focusing on removing willows and replanting, as appropriate, and commencing in the 2005/06 financial year.

The scheme will not be initiated in 2005/06. Instead an isolated works project has been approved for 2005/06 with a total budget of \$60,000. The project will be funded \$12,000 by the Masterton District Council and \$18,000 by Greater Wellington, with the balance to come from the affected landowner(s).

Masterton District Council has committed the \$12,000 to initiate works in 2005/06.

A further well attended public meeting, chaired by Cr Buchanan, was held on 21 February 2005 in the Kopuaranga Hall. The meeting was informed about the status of the project. Those attending were still keen to see a fully developed project implemented in 2006/07.

Maps showing the flooded area downstream of Mauriceville and the impact of recent clearing works on the river channel were presented at the meeting.

A sub-committee was formed to both advise on proposed works in the coming financial year, to assist in the preparation of a new scheme, and the development of a fair rating classification. The sub-committee comprises – Lawrence Cheetham, Neil Cameron, Phil Palmer, Lane Penn, Andrew Wharrie, Gavin McLachlan, John Percy, Graeme Stuart, Duncan Stuart, Cr Roddy McKenzie and Alec Birch (Masterton District Council), and a representative from Rangitumau and Hastwell.

The meeting discussed the benefits of completing an integrated catchment management study. Other issues discussed was the concern at the speed of river flows when the river had been cleared, clarification that the scheme would concentrate on blockages and not a whole clearance of trees, benefit of rating schemes, potential contributors to the rating such as Masterton District Council and NZ Rail, and the high recreational status of the Kopuaranga River.

An initial meeting of the sub-committee is expected to be held after Easter.

3. Summary

The Kopuaranga River Enhancement Project will be initiated in the next financial year as an isolated works project. Funding will come from the Masterton District Council, Greater Wellington, and landowners. A sub-committee has been created to investigate and prepare an equitable rating scheme.

4. Communications

A newsletter will be forwarded to ratepayers during this coming year.

5. Recommendation

That the report be received and the information noted.

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