

# **Flood Protection Manager's report for period ending 29 April 2005**

## **1. Manager's comments**

### **1.1 January 2005 flood event**

We are well through the follow up work from the January flood event.

We now have an improved flood warning procedure in place for Otaihanga. House raising/flood proofing at Otaihanga is also progressing steadily. Some work is still required for a flood warning procedure for Hathaway Ave in Lower Hutt.

Most recently we met with both the Waimarie Croquet Club and the Manor Park Golf Club. Both these meetings were very positive in coming up with plans to manage ongoing flood risks. Agreed actions from the meetings are underway.

We still have a large amount of flood repair work to do, some of which has been held up by rock supply. However a recent meeting with the Linton Quarry suggests we should be able to get all the required Waikanae River rock trucked in over the winter, and possibly some of the Hutt River rock requirement.

We are making good progress with reviewing extraction requirements in both the Waikanae and Hutt Rivers. The flood risk at Otaihanga and Hathaway Ave, Lower Hutt is sensitive to bed levels, and increased extraction rates are proposed in both rivers.

### **1.2 Capital works**

On Friday 22 April I had the pleasure of walking over the Strand Park realignment works. This major project is materially complete a month ahead of programme. The list of 'tidy up' works was about what could be expected, and has been sent to the contractor. The follow up planting and landscape work is expected to get underway very shortly.

The additional work from the January floods has caused some delay to the Jim Cooke Park realignment project. However considerable effort is going in now to get the design completed and tender documents prepared, so construction can proceed next summer.

### **1.3 Waiwhetu flood investigation**

Getting the Waiwhetu project scoped and underway has been a significant additional task to the Department's work programme. Thankfully Brendan Paul has been available to undertake a big part of this work. The next key step to keeping this project on track will be to employ a project manager for what we expect to be a challenging job.

## **2. Waikanae River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]**

### **2.1 Cross section survey**

The initial analysis of the 2004 river cross section survey, and the post January 2005 flood resurvey, has been completed. The results are contained in a separate report in this order paper (report 05.172).

## **2.2 Jim Cooke Park**

The detailed design of the alignment works is almost complete. A design workshop with our consultants undertaking the design was recently held to go through the plans and approval has been given to commence the preparation of the tender and resource consent documents. This work should take about four weeks to complete.

## **2.3 Friends of the Waikanae River**

The Friends of the Waikanae River have continued with planting and maintenance work at various sites on the south and north banks of the Waikanae River. Recently they also met with Flood Protection to resolve some of the issues arising from the gravel extraction at Otaihanga. The Friends also continue to advocate for improvements to the Haul Road track on the south bank to make it more suitable as a walkway.

## **2.4 Otaihanga house raising**

Good progress is being made with the three houses approved for raising and flood proofing work. Flood proofing of the Samuels property at 73 Makora Rd is now substantially complete and the funding assistance agreement and title covenant documents are now being prepared in preparation for payment of the Greater Wellington contribution.

Ian Ashby at 15 Toroa Rd is still finalising quotes for raising his house. A survey has been completed around the McLachlan property at 21 Makora Rd and options for a small stopbank to protect the house are now being considered.

## **3. Otaki River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]**

### **3.1 Capital works**

The Winstones rock lining extension is complete. The final cost of this work was \$12,000 over the \$288,000 budget as a result of additional work that had to be carried out following the January 6 floods. The extent of extra filling and diversion work turned out to be greater than we had hoped.

### **3.2 Friends of the Otaki River**

The Friends are progressing the development of their plant nursery to be built at the Flood Protection Otaki Depot. The nursery will be funded from their Take Care funding, and a grant from the Kapiti Coast District Council.

The Friends have sufficient funding to build the nursery and equip it. The funding will also extend to buying plants that can be used in planting projects in the 2005 planting season, as well as a large number of seedlings that will be grown on for future years plantings.

## **4. Hutt River floodplain management [Daya Atapattu]**

### **4.1 Ava to Ewen project**

Cashmore Contracting Ltd has made very good progress with the Strand Park river realignment contract. All structural works are now substantially complete, about 1 month ahead of schedule. Work complete includes the supply and transport to site of 30,000 tonnes of rock from the Linton Quarry. Cashmore's are confident that all planting and landscaping works can be completed well before the required completion date of 31 August 2005.

Truebridge Callender Beach Ltd (TCB) is progressing the Opahu Stream pump station design. A pump station layout using the new stopbank alignment has been prepared. Hydraulic design is complete and the structural design of the pump station has commenced. TCB has also commenced preparing tender documents for procuring the pumps required for the pump station.

Opus International Consultants Ltd has commenced the review of the design and tender documents for the Alicetown stopbank upgrade. We expect to call tenders for this contract in June 2005.

#### **4.2 Belmont improvements**

The extension of the rock groyne at the end of Charles Street is complete. Mabey Road staff also completed some improvements to the walkway at the ends of Charles Street and Richard Street.

The mechanical design of the floodgate for the Norfolk Street stopbank is complete. This work is being undertaken by Council's Engineering Consultancy Department.

Cashmore Contracting expects to commence the Charles Street stormwater pipe extension by early May 2005.

#### **4.3 Whirinaki Crescent stopbank upgrade**

Truebridge Callender Beach Ltd has completed a preliminary design for the Wellington Golf course stopbank. We have also asked TCB to investigate a second floodwall option that should reduce the number of existing trees affected by the stopbank proposal. The floodwall feasibility design will be completed by mid May 2005. Following this, we will meet with the Wellington Golf Club with the aim of preparing an agreement for construction of this section of the stopbank. We expect to be in a position to make a recommendation to the August 2005 meeting of the Landcare Committee.

#### **4.4 District plan measures**

Hutt City Council notified District Plan Change No. 6, Hutt River Flood Hazard Areas, on 15 March 2005. Submissions closed on 22 April within eight submissions received including a GWRC submission supporting this plan change. We recently received a copy of the submissions from Hutt City Council.

### **5. Planning and development services [Phillip Purves]**

The following table summarises the situation in regard to the number of formal, written requests that have been attended to during March:

	March 2005	YTD
Requests brought forward	8	16
Additional requests received	15	108
Responses provided	12	113
Outstanding requests	11	11

## **6. Investigations [Phillip Purves]**

### **6.1 Waiwhetu Stream floodplain management study**

Work on this project is now picking up pace. Key areas of progress include:

- Registrations of interest for the position of Project Manager have now closed. This is a part time contract position which is not able to be currently resourced from in the Department. To get the necessary expertise we have invited a number of the major consultant engineering firms to nominate a suitable candidate(s) for an initial 12 month term. The final appointment will need to be agreed with officers from Hutt City Council.
- The first meeting of the Waiwhetu Stream Advisory Committee was held on 26 April. Committee members were provided with a thorough briefing on the project, including the Waiwhetu Stream restoration project. The key issue raised by Hutt City Council members was that flood mitigation works are needed urgently and could the investigation be completed more quickly. The minutes of the meeting are provided for in the Landcare Committee's consideration as a separate report.
- Work has commenced on setting up the computer hydraulic model.
- The results of the industrial/commercial damage survey carried out by GNS are expected shortly.

### **6.2 Waitohu flood hazard assessment**

Good progress is being made with drafting a summary report of the study which we plan to present to the June 2005 Landcare Committee meeting.

### **6.3 Mangaroa River flood hazard assessment**

A site walkover was held with the consultant on Friday 1 April and their surveyor is now preparing to carry out the control survey. There are currently no accurate survey marks in the valley and LINZ has indicated a desire to contribute to the survey to ensure that appropriate marks are established. The consultant's surveyor is negotiating with LINZ on this.

### **6.4 Pauatahanui Stream flood hazard assessment**

A request has been received from the Porirua City Council to contribute to a flood hazard assessment of the Pauatahanui Stream from about the BRANZ site downstream to the inlet. Flooding has become a significant concern to some landowners and to Transit New Zealand in recent years. The investigation would be useful to confirm the extent of the flood risk, and restrictions to flood capacity which is likely to include at least two of the SH 58 bridges. The flood mapping would be used by Porirua City Council for planning purposes including assessing subdivision and building proposals.

A copy of a work proposal, prepared by consultants Connell Wagner Ltd for Porirua City Council has yet to be assessed. Any contributions from GWRC would be by way of the existing small streams investigation budget. It is expected that Transit NZ would also contribute to any investigation.

## **7. Operations**

### **7.1 Wellington [Jeff Evans]**

#### Hutt River

The repairs to the basket work upstream of the Maoribank bend are almost complete. This job has proven to be a particularly challenging with staff working in flowing water at times up to chest level.

The Avalon rock line extension and groyne repairs are complete. Repairs to the adjacent debris fences are underway with new rail irons now driven as a first step to rebuilding the failed ends of the fences.

We have extended the Bluff rock line above the Silverstream Bridge by 65 metres. This area was badly eroded out after the January floods with the river only 15 meters away from undermining the State Highway 2 road formation. The Croft Grove rock line has also been extended to stop further erosion above the Estuary Bridge. This rock work will also help protect the river trail walk way under the bridge.

Gravel extraction below the Kennedy Good Bridge is in full swing, with 16,000 cubic meters removed so far this financial year.

#### Hutt River trail

The upgrade of the trail at Belmont is now complete. This work was done in conjunction with the protection work upgrade. The re-vamped section of the trail takes out the steep trail gradients and forms a better line for future trail development. Other trail work has included surface maintenance and debris removal.

#### Hutt River ranging services

March was much cooler than February. Even so there were still a large number of people swimming in the river, walking, cycling, picnicking and generally enjoying the environment.

Berm patrols continued over the period. It was pleasing to note that rubbish dumping was down on last month, but unfortunately there has been an increase of trail bikes riding on the berms. We have spoken to the local police about the issue and they are keen on speaking with several of the riders who are riding recklessly and at excessive speed along the access roads.

The two annual events along the trail during this period included the Hutt 10K fun run that attracted nearly 400 participants. The other major event was the Hutt River trail marathon/half marathon where numbers were down on last year.

#### Watercourses

Extraction of gravel from the lower Porirua Stream was a major project over the last period. Working in conjunction with Porirua City Council (PCC) we removed 4,400 cubic meters of gravel from the city centre reach to the PCC landfill. PCC provided free tipping for this material.

A clearing run was completed in both the Takapu Stream and Stebbings Stream.

Rock rip rap has now been placed alongside the Korokoro arrestor to halt further erosion and stop the arrestor getting out flanked.

#### Work for the other departments

Staff assisted Engineering Consultancy Group with the construction of new rock works to protect the intake pipe in the Wainuiomata catchment area.

## 7.2 Kapiti [Garry Baker]

The recent long spell of fine and settled weather has enabled good progress with the additional work resulting from the January flood event. However to help process the ongoing paper work, and maintain a presence in the office during this very busy period we have employed a part-time administration Support Assistant on a fixed term contract. Shirley Wood commenced on 29 March and is at the Otaki depot from 9 am to 12 noon, 5 days per week.

#### Waikanae River

Extraction of gravel from the tidal and Pukekawa reach is complete for the current season. Work has commenced on the reinstatement of the left bank access road from El Rancho to Jim Cooke Park.

#### Otaki River

Flood damage repair works are progressing well. Work completed so far includes bank edge reinstatement at Hunns' on the left bank, and repairs to the Chrystalls and Mangahanene Island rock linings.

Winstone Aggregates are continuing to extract gravel from the Otaki River at a steady rate. It is expected they will take their full allocation of 40,000 cubic metres this financial year.

#### Waitohu Stream

Gravel extraction has re-commenced at the "deposition zone" on the Waitohu Stream.

#### Mangapouri Stream

A hand-clearing and edge spraying stream run was carried out through the majority of the stream at the rear of the residential properties between County and Freemans Roads.

#### Waimeha Stream

A further section of this stream behind properties on Park Avenue was cleared by both hand and machine.

## 7.3 Operations support [Steve Murphy]

#### Waiwhetu Stream

We are becoming increasingly concerned at the potential cost of manually clearing weeds from the Waiwhetu Stream. Our clearing contractor does a good job within the available budget, but it is increasingly obvious that the weed is growing quicker than they can control it. There is also rising concern from some members of the public that these manual methods are not providing the standard of control required. Unchecked weed growth raises flood levels, and can block stormwater outlets.

While the Department holds a resource consent for the use of herbicides, they can only be used as a measure of last resort. Our management policy, and the resource consent, requires that stream weeds be controlled by manual methods in the first instance, with chemicals only to be used as a last resort. Flood Protection has had to exercise its right under the consent and spray the stream on two recent occasions to prevent weed growth completely blocking the channel.

We plan to review our aquatic weed control approach and come up with some possible changes. We will need to consult with interested parties, particularly local Iwi and the Waiwhetu Stream Working Group. This work is also appropriate now as it has a connection to the current Waiwhetu flood study.

#### Flood and erosion damage advice

The advisory work resulting from the flood event of 6 January is now largely complete. The last letters are being prepared and will shortly be sent out.

Enquiries came from all over the western region, but the two worst hit areas of Reikorangi and Akatarawa generated most calls. Staff involvement has ranged from a conversation over the telephone, to a comprehensive property examination and preparation of sketch plans. The work has generally been additional to normal duties and consequently has taken longer to finalise than desired. Nevertheless most landowners have been very appreciative of the visits and advice given.

#### Asset register

Asset management work has concentrated on checking and updating, the asset registers. A university student helped over the summer period by undertaking ground checks and physical measurements. The record sheets from last year's annual asset maintenance visits are also being used as a further check. Some discrepancies are appearing, and any necessary adjustments to the register will be confirmed during this years inspection visit. The work is planned for completion by 30 June.

### 7.4 Gravel extraction

Gravel extraction figures to the end of March 2005 are set out below:

River	Area	Contractor	Period Year 2004/05 (cubic metres)		Year 2003/04 (cubic metres)
			Period	Year	Full Year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	9,282	37,800	40,698
	River	Horokiwi	12,096	15,969	10,380
Otaki	River	Winstones	17,110	31,072	28,088
Waikanae	Above Greenaway Road	Various	0	0	0
	Below Greenaway Road	Gary Holland Earthmoving	7,760	8,578	7,310
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>46,248</b>	<b>93,419</b>	<b>86,476</b>

**Geoff Dick**  
Manager, Flood Protection

## **Parks and Forests Manager's report For period ending 29 April 2005**

### **1. Manager's comments [Murray Waititi]**

#### **1.1 Orange Hut**

The [new] Orange Hut, in the Akatarawa Forest, was found burnt out on Saturday 16 April in a suspected arson attack.

The Akatarawa Forest is the only sizeable piece of public land that 4WD groups and trail bike riders with permits are allowed. The hut has been used regularly as a focal point for events, as an emergency shelter and as a search and rescue base since the late 1950s.

The [new] Orange Hut was built in 2001 and was the result of a huge effort by the Regional Council, Akatarawa Recreational Access Committee (ARAC) and many local businesses and volunteers that donated their time and materials in order that the hut be built. The hut was insured and will be rebuilt as soon as possible.

#### **1.2 Staffing changes**

We are very pleased to welcome Penelope Evison as Parks & Forests' new Events and Promotions Advisor. Penelope was working for Greater Wellington over the summer as the Regional Outdoors Programme coordinator, and has now come on board in this permanent role. Key elements of Penelope's role will be to promote the parks and forests through productive relationships with third party organisations e.g. Visitor Information Centres, retailers, libraries, other agencies and operators; and developing and running events in conjunction with Parks & Forests staff.

During April we farewelled Annabel Riley as she moves into the challenge of motherhood! We hope to see Annabel back with us on a part time basis at the end of the year.

We also said farewell to our Western Sector Mobile Ranger Simon Griffin. Simon is going overseas on his OE, starting in Asia. We have appreciated his efforts in Queen Elizabeth Park and Battle Hill over the last couple of years and wish him well on his journeys. Simon's position has been filled by Nikki la Monica. Nikki joins us fresh from Rhode Island, USA where she has been working for a wildlife sanctuary for several years in a number of different roles.

#### **1.3 Flooding in the Orongorongo Catchment**

A powerful rain event hit the Orongorongo Catchment area on the March 30. This event was isolated to an area extending from above the Orongorongo Weir to Department of Conservation land in Rimutaka Forest Park. Rangers assessed the damage on Sunday April 3. The first priority was providing safe access for all staff. The carpark at the end of the road was washed away. Initial access was gained via the train tunnel. A large slip had blocked the tunnel preventing water from escaping. This was cleared by hand and the tunnel doors removed. Vegetation was cleared from two other slips on the Weir access track and a ladder put in place down a large washout. Large amounts of gravel were washed out of a tributary stream raising the river bed level and removing a section of the Orongorongo water pipe. A massive slip from a side creek on the southern boundary



formed a dam in the river. Bulk Water staff were informed of the damage and were able to access the site.

## **2. Planning and policy [Dr Philippa Crisp]**

### **2.1 Pest control operations**

#### **Pest animal control**

Planning for the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Water Collection Area 1080 possum control operation is well underway. Neighbouring landowners and other interested parties have been informed and a news release about the operation was published in the Wainuiomata News in early April. Resource consent to complete the work has been granted and an application has been submitted to the Medical Officer of Health for their approval. The bait will be aerielly applied between July and September 2005, depending on weather conditions.

A pre-operational possum monitor was recently completed in Kaitoke West, Kaitoke Regional Park and in Akatarawa Saddle in Akatarawa Forest. The result of 9.2% is above the threshold set for damage to forest health of 5% RTC. A 1080 possum control operation is also being planned for this area between July and September 2005.

At present, a network of bait stations and traps are serving to keep possum numbers down within the northern forest of East Harbour Regional Park. At a meeting with MIRO in early April it was decided that a more intensively trapped core site within the MIRO area could be set up to ensure that rats are also controlled. This will be of great benefit to birdlife in East Harbour. A plan was made to set up rat bait stations in a 150m by 100m grid over a 300ha area that encompasses Butterfly Creek headwaters and the lower portion of Gollan's Valley. Line cutting and marking of this grid is now underway.

#### **Pest plant control**

Pest plants controlled in the parks and forests over the past two months include:

- Holly, old man's beard, ivy, buddleia, Japanese honeysuckle and montbretia in Akatarawa Forest.
- Ivy, holly, tradescantia, buddleia and Japanese honeysuckle in Wainuiomata Recreation Area.
- Tradescantia, Japanese honeysuckle, blackberry, jasmine, hawthorn, cotoneaster and selaginella at Kaitoke Regional Park.
- Old man's beard and climbing asparagus in East Harbour Regional Park.
- Lotus in the Eastern Hutt water collection area.

### **2.2 Monitoring**

Tawa fruit-fall plots were re-measured in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area. It has been a poor fruiting year for tawa, but the results show that a high proportion of fruit have been chewed by possums. This would be expected given the high numbers of possums currently present in the area.

The re-measurement of the eleven vegetation plots in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area has been completed. This monitoring will show if the work we are doing is helping the forest to regenerate, and gives an indication of the health of the indigenous forest. A Landcare Research scientist has been engaged to audit the re-measurements of some of these plots to ensure that our data collection techniques are up to standard.

Landcare Research acts as a custodian of a national database that stores data collected from plots such as these around the country.

Panoramic photographs of the Lakes Block have been taken by the Environmental Technician. These photos will provide a useful reference over time as re-vegetation of the Lakes Block progresses.

## **2.3 Surveying**

A vegetation mapping project has been initiated on Council land. Pacific Eco-logic has been engaged to run a pilot study for setting up a consistent mapping system for the indigenous vegetation found on Council land. This work will aid our knowledge of these lands and improve our ability to manage them appropriately.

## **2.4 Capital works**

### **QEP Ranger's office design revised**

Tenders for the new Ranger's office at QEP came in over budget. Small changes to the building design and negotiations with the lowest tenderer failed to achieve sufficient savings. The architect is reducing the size of the building design and negotiating a revised price with the contractor who has a gang available to start work in May.

### **Kaitoke SH2 underpass installed**

The SH2 realignment contractors have installed the underpass under the new highway at Kaitoke. Officers are discussing forming the access tracks to link the underpass with Kaitoke Regional Park with Transit New Zealand.

## **2.5 Asset management**

Graham Laws has been updating asset data (track locations and new assets) on GIS and the asset management plan database. He carried out field inspections at Queen Elizabeth Park and will visit the other parks over the next two months to verify data and re-assess asset condition. These inspections will verify whether or not our asset management regime is achieving the desired service levels for those assets. Consulting engineers have been engaged to inspect vehicle bridges in Queen Elizabeth Park.

## **2.6 Management planning**

### **Plan updates**

The final draft of the Kaitoke Regional Park Management Plan was approved by Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. The plan is currently being published. Hearings were held for the Forest Lands Plan on 18<sup>th</sup> March. The Hearing Committee's recommendations have been incorporated into the final plan and will be considered by Council on 17 May.

Following the Queen Elizabeth Park workshop held on 16<sup>th</sup> February, an "issues and options" paper was published in the 11 March Councillors Bulletin. Since that time, activity has focussed on preparing the draft management plan for QEP, which has included researching the park, holding internal working group meetings, and reviewing submissions received during the initial consultation period. The draft plan is was also sent to key stakeholders and iwi for comment and their comments have been incorporated into the draft that the Landcare Committee is considering at this meeting (see report 05.176). Preparations for the second phase of consultation are under way.

The East Harbour Management Plan review has begun, with public submissions called for during the months of May and June. Officers are liaising with Iwi, the Hutt City Council and the Department of Conservation on how the most appropriate ways for including them in the process. Environmental groups and other community groups have been contacted by letter to ensure that they are also aware of the review and the submission period. Greater Wellington's website will also be updated so that information is easily accessible online. As with previous management plans, newsletters will be produced so that people can remain informed about the process and how they can be part of the review.

### Resource information

Archaeologist, Mary O'Keefe has been contracted to complete a review of the parks and forests heritage information. She recently visited East Harbour Regional Park to check the condition of the area's archaeological sites. This presented a great opportunity for staff to learn about these sites first hand prior to the management plan review.

## **3. Marketing and design [Amanda Cox]**

### **3.1 Brochures**

The Battle Hill brochure was published in March and distributed to several outlets.

A draft East Harbour Regional Park brochure has also been developed including updating the park maps with several new tracks in the lakes block. The brochure will shortly be sent to the designers for layout, and we expect to have this printed by early May.

The next brochure to be developed will be the new brochure for Belmont Regional Park. When we produce this we will be assuming the current landholdings within the park will remain unchanged. If landholdings change, we will update the brochure accordingly.

### **3.2 Belmont information panels**

The new Belmont Regional Park information panels are underway. We are working on two panels at most of the nine main entrances to the Park. We are currently writing the text, developing maps and aerial perspective images with help from Environment Division, sourcing photos and pulling it all together for the designers. We are also working with Porirua City Council to develop some specially carved posts for the panels to be located at Cannons Creek Lakes Reserve.

We expect the design aspect of this work to be completed in the current financial year. With the timeframe around the naming of the new 22km track from Dry Creek to Cornish Street, we have deferred funding for the printing and installation of the signs until the new financial year.

### **3.3 Memorandum of understanding**

An MOU between Porirua City Council and Greater Wellington is in the process of being signed by the two Councils to guide the management of Cannons Creek Lakes Reserve. The MOU clarifies the maintenance responsibilities of the respective Councils within the reserve.

### **3.4 East Harbour information panels**

A further five panels are in the process of being developed for the southern end of East Harbour Regional Park to go with the original 20 for the northern block. These will provide visitors with track information, how to care for the park and “dos and don'ts” in the park.

### **3.5 Parks research framework**

Following a review of our progress to date we have decided to delay the full visitor calibration project until next summer. Instead we will purchase several visitor counters in this current financial year and get these installed in Belmont Regional Park and East Harbour Regional Park. The remainder of the counters will be purchased next financial year as well as running the first calibration project.

Parks & Forests is once again running a phone survey in conjunction with Emergency Management in May, to gauge awareness, use and satisfaction with the regional parks and forests. The sample size (500 respondents) will be drawn from across the region according to each area's proportion of the total population.

### **3.6 Regional Outdoors Programme**

We are delighted with the overall results and feedback for the 2005 Regional Outdoors Programme. Further details are contained in a separate report (see report 05.159).

### **3.7 Website development**

We have been working with the designers and now have an events calendar for each of the parks and the Parks & Forests network. Further developments include a Park News page which includes items such as track closures e.g. for lambing or flood damage, or other developments such as the new track name in Belmont Regional Park.

### **3.8 Hutt River Trail / Rimutaka Rail Trail**

We have been meeting with Rotary and Upper Hutt City Council to investigate possibilities for linking the Hutt River Trail from Gemstone Drive through Te Marua to Kaitoke Regional Park. From here the trail will pass the Stuart Macaskill lakes up to the new underpass under SH2 at the Kaitoke Summit to link up with the Rimutaka Rail Trail. Currently a walkway under the Mangaroa Bridge to link Te Marua residents with the Trail is being constructed. This is being funded by the Phoenix Trust.

Hutt River Trail maps for trail extensions are currently being updated, and signs that have been damaged along the trail will be replaced. Staff have also attended site visits with Rotary Club, Transit NZ and Upper Hutt City officers to facilitate extending the Trail from Birchville to Kaitoke.

### **3.9 State of the environment landscape report**

Ross Jackson has been working with John Holmes from Environment Division over the last past few months to prepare this report. An evening workshop was held with several experienced landscape architects in December where they debated a series of set questions on the region's landscapes. This proved to be very informative and a similar workshop was held with planning staff from all the Local Authorities recently to discuss a lot of the problems and issues they face.

This report will be presented to Council later in the year.

### **3.10 Restoration Day to be held at Queen Elizabeth Park**

For the past four years GW staff members involved in community restoration projects have worked with DOC and the NZ Ecological Network to put on a Restoration Day for members of environmental care groups. It is an opportunity to celebrate ecological restoration in the Wellington region and this year the event is being held at Queen Elizabeth Park on Saturday 21 May. The Tramways Museum will be the main base and the keynote presentation given by David Bergin from Forest Research of Rotorua on coastal dune issues. A series of workshops and field trips around the Park will be held and around 150 people are expected to attend.

### **3.11 Whareroa Stream restoration project**

The resource consent applications are at present with the consents team awaiting approval. A site visit was held with DOC staff, who had no concerns with the project going ahead. Plans and the resource consent applications were sent to Ngati Toa, Ngati Haumia and Te Ati Awa ki Whakarongotai for their comments.

Once the resource consents have been approved, earthworks will begin. All the work is to be completed this financial year.

### **3.12 Interpretation of Rimutaka Rail Trail**

This is a joint project between DOC and Greater Wellington to develop a consistent and seamless interpretation trail across the whole rail trail from Kaitoke to Cross Creek.

An interpretation plan for the Kaitoke to Cross Creek side of the trail has been developed indicating key messages and locations for the panels. Initial drafting of wording is underway on the DOC side and graphic design concepts have been developed for both sides. We have worked through construction detailing and materials to develop a high quality interpretation trail. We plan on completing our side (from Kaitoke to Summit) in the 2005/2006 year.

## **4. Western Sector [Matt Ballantine]**

### **4.1 Belmont Regional Park**

#### **Korokoro Valley**

Staff have been working on raising footbridges in the lower Korokoro stream. As you may remember, these bridges always sustain damage in flood events. Once the bridges in the lower valley have been raised, they will be able to better withstand flooding events than in the past.

A possum control programme in the valley has also started with lines being cut and bait stations being filled. We have also been negotiating with a private landowner to allow access down into the Korokoro Valley in order to clear windfall pine trees that block track access in the area.

#### **New seats in Porirua**

We provided bench seats for the Friends of Maara Roa. The seats are placed in areas which give good views from the Park back to Porirua and also in bush areas where the volunteer group have been working in.

## Dry Creek

Staff have noted car break-ins at the entrance. We have informed the police of these incidents and intend to take practical measures with the redevelopment of this area to discourage criminal activity.

The Hutt Valley Multisport Club held a successful Mountain Bike race at Dry Creek during April, and the Pencarrow Guides held a camp.

The entrance redevelopment is progressing well with the car parks and turn around area being formed, and a huge amount of vegetation being removed by the Western Landscape team. Edging of car parks, sowing of grass areas, planting and sealing are the next stages.

## Other

Chris Wootton helped record a “Country Life” radio programme about Waitangirua Farm and its association with Belmont Regional Park for National Radio which was broadcast in March. Copies of the programme have been distributed to all councillors.

Chris has also noted two incidents of off road vehicles being driven in areas of the park over the period. Drivers of these vehicles have been warned about their actions.

He has also met Kaumatua Tramping Club members who visited the Stratton St entrance of the park.

## 4.2 Battle Hill Farm Forest Park

### Country Festival proves a huge hit with the public

This years Pauatahanui Country Festival held at Battle Hill was bigger than ever and is going from strength to strength. Although the weather was not too good in Wellington it was bright and sunny at Battle Hill and the day was a real hit.

This year the Park was closed for the weekend and all the campground and front paddocks were used for car parking. There were cars parked for a kilometre down the road as well! Estimates for number range from 8,000 to 10,000 which is well up from last years figure of 3,000. This year the Plimmerton Rotary Club who run the event brought in a professional event manager and increased the profile. New additions this year were a Monteiths beer tent, wine tasting and a lot of new food with a wild flavour from some of Wellingtons leading restaurants.

The entertainment was increased and included the ever popular Beat Girls. On top of all this were the country styled demonstrations. Pony rides, 4WD trips, sheep mustering, helicopter rides, rural fire fighting, wood chopping and much more. The response from the crowds was enthusiastic. This event seems to be well on the way to becoming an icon event for Wellington and is helping to raise the profile and increase awareness of our Parks and Forests.

### “Shrek” comes to Battle Hill

Battle Hill served up its own version of Shrek the sheep last month. A very large ram that had gone AWOL and missed several shearings was finally mustered in to face the shears. It took two people to catch him and sit him down for the shearing and the shearer really earned his money. The shorn fleece was not weighed but it was a real armful. Even with his fleece off, the Battle Hill “Shrek” looked huge.

### **4.3 Queen Elizabeth Park**

Maintenance has included continual tidy up after the January floods and repairing, track damage to the Coastal and Inland tracks.

#### **Ranging**

The Park Ranger is busy supervising the construction of a new wetland area and associated walkway system. These wetlands are part of the MacKay's over bridge project and are being constructed in association with Transit New Zealand. These wetlands are extremely accessible to the public and will be used for educational and recreational purposes. A walkway will be created to link these wetland to the Arbor Day site, the remnant bush and the open water wetlands near the US Marines memorial boards.

#### **MacKay's Crossing -- SH 1 upgrade**

Staff have been working closely with Transit NZ consultants and contractors Fulton Hogan on this project. Work is underway to restore the wetland at the MacKays Crossing entrance. Upgrading of the drainage system to better cope with storm situations is also to be carried out as part of the project. The wetland will be ready for planting by early June and it is planned to have an Arbor Day there. Further detailed design work for the replanting at the entrance will be completed over the next three months.

#### **Events held**

The park has hosted orienteering, harrier and horse events. The coastal recreation areas are also still popular with casual users enjoying the lovely autumn days.

## **5. Eastern Sector [Fraser Oliver]**

### **5.1 Kaitoke Regional Park**

#### **A busy summer**

The shorter days and colder weather of autumn have signalled the end of what has been a busy summer in the campground. The fees collected represent over 4,800 adult camping nights which is up approximately 800 nights on last summer. Generally good weather over long spells has contributed to this. Ranging staff have noted many regular campers with one family visiting on five different occasions. There has also been an increased use from organised groups such as the girl guides, boy scouts, church groups and schools. Swimming, bike riding, and ball games are the favourite activities and many positive comments have been received about the clean facilities and natural setting. The Pakuratahi River Walk linking the campground to the tracks at the Pakuratahi Forks has been well used. Improvements to the water supply last spring have proved timely and portable toilets were hired for the busy periods over New Year and Anniversary weekend.

Autumn maintenance of the campground has been completed with all the gardens being mulched, weeds sprayed and over-hanging vegetation on the loop road cut back. All grassed areas have been chained off to prevent vehicle access over the winter. Annual maintenance on the Hutt Water Catchment Area access track has been completed. All roading work has been completed including asphaltting of the rangers office access way.

### Flood Protection works hold firm

The flood protection work in the Pakuratahi River above the Waterworks Road access to the park has held up well in the recent flooding that caused so much damage in the Orongorongo Valley. There is still a large amount of rock material being deposited in this section of the river during these flood events and ongoing maintenance will be required.

### Thieves at work

There have been over a dozen thefts out of vehicles at the Pakuratahi Forks carpark since the start of the New Year, with tour operator vehicles being targeted. This is the work of professional thieves who strike quickly and have been targeting the Upper Hutt Valley. Ranging and Police patrols of the car park have been increased accordingly.

### Planting events

Over forty students and teachers planted out an area at “Rivendell” as part of Plateau School’s ongoing commitment to the park and to celebrate Arbor Day. This is the fourth year in a row the school have had Arbor Day in this area and the plants are all thriving.

The riverside planting restoration area has thrived over the summer and work has been completed on weed spraying. Ongoing planting is now in full swing using labour from the Department of Corrections Community Service.

## **5.2 East Harbour Regional Park**

### Tracks work continues

The last of the major track upgrades for the Eastbourne area have been completed for this financial year. The Mackenzie track, previously one of the most degraded tracks in the park, has now been re-benched and in some places re-routed. Once again, helicopters were used to carry machinery and equipment to and from the site. The track now offers spectacular harbour views and can be accessed by a wider range of people because of the easier grades. The tracks maintenance team, Jeremy Collyns, Gary Sue and Dustin Ovens, have put a huge effort into upgrading the track network over the past year and park users are now benefiting from their work.

A contractor has completed an upgrade of the Puriri track on the Wainuiomata side of the park and is currently working on the Howard Road track between Wainuiomata hill and Point Howard. The latter track is a key route into the northernmost part of the park.

On the construction side, a small bridge at the entrance to the Puriri track has been upgraded to meet building code standards. A barrier has also be erected at the site in a effort to stop mountain and trail bikes.

A small boardwalk has been installed near the entrance of the Fern Gully track also on the Wainuiomata side of the park. This track, along with the Lees Grove track provides a well used loop walk. A resource consent for a 75m boardwalk is currently being processed. All going well the construction will act as the key link in the Lakes Block track network.

### Events held

Summer events came to a close at East Harbour with the Lighthouse and Lakes event held in early March. The trip was fully booked and the weather couldn’t have been better. Dr George Gibbs, Eastbourne resident and ecologist, gave some excellent interpretation throughout the day and feedback suggests that this was much appreciated.



On April 3 the Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club held the hill run section of a mini multisport event at the park. The 6km run made use of the Bus Barn, Kowhai and Mackenzie tracks. This was an inter-club challenge with tramping club teams being represented from around the Wellington region.

### **5.3 Wainuiomata/ Orongorongo Catchments**

#### **Boundary fence**

Stage three of the boundary fence is close to completion. The bulldozed track up the Moores Valley Ridge has provided excellent access to the site for both the fencing equipment and the contractor. Although some hard rock was encountered the posts were able to be rammed into a solid base. No main gates or deer jumps are being built in this section of the fence which has helped speed up construction. Ladders are being built at the end of the bait station lines so the fence is not damaged by staff when servicing these lines. This stage of the fence continues to be of a very high standard and will be a great asset to the catchment.

#### **Ranging activities**

Vandalism of the front carpark area has been more frequent lately. There has been an increase in tagging and the new information sign was damaged. The sign was repaired and a protective cover added, the graffiti was cleaned off and painted over.

Planning for this years 1080 operation is well underway. Biosecurity staff and staff from the Medical Office of Health were shown around the recreation area and locations for warning signs were identified. Because there are only two main access points to the recreation area issues are minimal.

#### **Annual public balloted hunt**

The annual public ballot hunting period is complete. As in previous years external security staff have been involved in the administering of day to day activities. Robin Allen has stayed on site and signs the hunters in and out, checking firearms licences and providing information about the terrain in each block. This system provides information of who is in the area, where they are and when they have left, which is used for the safety of hunters and staff working in the area. Although disrupted by the storm event, this year's hunt has gone without incident and enjoyed by all. Total animal numbers were 25; 13 deer, 3 goats and 9 pigs

Regular patrols of the boundary have been in place over the hunting period to help prevent poachers entering the catchment. Staff have also provided assistance to hunters and the security staff.

#### **Walking tours**

The Wainuiomata walking tours were put on hold over the hunting period however a walk was held on May 8. Although attendance numbers are actually lower than the original tours the enthusiasm shown by the guides and staff continues to be of a high standard providing a quality experience for all involved.

## 5.4 Akatarawa/ Pakuratahi Forests

### Maintenance pays off

During this period maintenance has included ongoing clearing of watertables, runoffs and culverts using our own staff and digger together with assistance from our prison crews. It is pleasing to see our regular maintenance has paid off as we have not received any significant damage to our roading infrastructure throughout both forests as a result of recent weather incidents. This is in contrast to many other landowners in the same areas.

### Boundary fence replacement

It has become necessary to replace a boundary fence between the Rimutaka Incline walkway and an adjoining dairy farm unit owned by Owen Burrell. This has been achieved on a shared cost basis and Owen is extremely happy with the results. Ensuring good communication and relationships with adjoining landowners is extremely important for GW. Assistance with road maintenance was also provided to landowners on Station Drive, a section of road that we use for management purposes.

Pest control continues throughout both forests with moderate numbers of goats being removed especially in the Pakuratahi Forest. Possums are slowly increasing in the Pakuratahi Forest and this is evident by controlled night shoots.

### Ranging activities

During a lot of this period the Forest Ranger has been assisting the East Harbour Ranger with track upgrades in East Harbour Regional Park. Other work, however, has included identifying and coordinating work for the prison crews and a community service detainees.

### Events held

During this period we have had two driver training exercises by the police, two motorcycle driver training exercises held by the Army and four motorcycle events (one of which was the annual Kapi-Mana enduro event, which proceeded well with no injuries or complaints). We also have had the annual Karapoti Classic Mountain Bike event with 1,200 riders participating.

Five club event days were held by various four wheel drive clubs from around the region. We also had the 24 hour adventure triathlon, which consists of mountain biking, running and canoeing.

Finally, a "Dance Party" was held in the Tunnel Gully reserve. As this event is held during the hours of darkness it does not conflict with the general use of this area. Tunnel Gully reserve is well distanced from any urban area and as such the noise produced by this event was not an issue.

**Murray Waititi**  
**Manager, Parks and Forests**

## Landcare Support, Divisional Accountant's report for period ending 29 April 2005

### Year to date funding position

At the end of March 2005, Landcare has a net funding surplus of \$985,000 which is \$775,000 ahead of budget. The most notable variance in the results is the year to date savings of \$460,000 in debt repayment and interest costs resulting from the Mabey Rd sale. Of the balance of the variance, another \$160,000 is savings in debt repayment and interest costs relating to the capital expenditure programme being behind schedule.

<b>Landcare Division</b>						
<b>Financial Summary Statement</b>						
<b>For the 9 months ending 31 March 2005</b>						
<b>\$000</b>						
	<b>Year to Date</b>			<b>Full Year</b>	<b>Full Year</b>	
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	
External Revenue	10,803	10,550	183 F	14,133	14,565	
Internal Revenue	721	808	(91) U	1,077	1,065	
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>11,524</b>	<b>11,358</b>	<b>93 F</b>	<b>15,210</b>	<b>15,630</b>	
Direct Expenditure	6,594	6,670	165 F	9,271	10,221	
Indirect Expenditure	(310)	2,948	3,181 F	3,955	697	
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE</b>	<b>6,284</b>	<b>9,618</b>	<b>3,334 F</b>	<b>13,225</b>	<b>10,918</b>	
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>5,240</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>3,500 F</b>	<b>1,985</b>	<b>4,712</b>	
Add back non cash items	(2,351)	708	(3,059) U	969	(2,056)	
Net Asset Acquisitions	(3,305)	250	3,555 F	250	(3,284)	
Capital Projects (loan funded)	3,126	3,660	534 F	4,647	4,897	
Net Reserve/Investment Transfers	342	226	(116) U	354	756	
New loans	(3,126)	(3,660)	(534) U	(4,647)	(4,794)	
Internal Debt Repayment	4,867	1,762	(3,105) U	2,350	5,286	
<b>NET FUNDING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>775 F</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(205)</b>	

### Full year forecast

Our full year funding position forecast has not materially changed from the December estimates. However, we have now included the operating and capital expenditure rebudgets to 2005/06. These total \$974,000 for operating expenditure and \$766,000 for capital expenditure. Even with these expense transfers, the Division is forecasting to spend an additional \$950,000 (10%) of operating expenditure above budget.

**Tina Walker**

Divisional Accountant, Landcare