

**Geoff Skene**  
Manager, Environmental Education

## **Environmental Education Department Report – August 2006**

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### **1. Conservation Week**

The week of the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> of August was Conservation Week. The Department has been involved in a number of activities in support of this. Conservation Week was launched by the Minister of Conservation at Pataka Museum in Porirua. Pataka was the venue for “Our Big Backyard” a week long programme of events with a conservation theme, including activities for schools and children. A display promoting *Take Action* was in place for the week, alongside another by the Biosecurity Department relating to pest plants.

Displays promoting care groups were also mounted at Parliament for the Conservation Awards and at the usual Conservation Week venue in the Wellington Cathedral. The Wellington Conservancy of the Department of Conservation ran a programme for schools promoting conservation at Catchpool Valley, which we funded St Bernadette’s School to attend. This school is working with us on *Take Action* at present. Students undertook classroom activity, a bush walk, and some planting during their visit to Catchpool.

### **2. Conservation Awards**

A school, individuals, and care groups working with Greater Wellington were recognised at the 2006 Conservation Award ceremony during Conservation Week. Kenakena School won the Young Conservationist Category for its long term environmental education focus and, in particular, its contribution over eight years to the restoration of the Mauapoko Stream at Greendale Reserve in Kapiti. The school has completed *Take Action* twice, undertaken many action projects, and has a long history of planting and other environmental activity.

The Greendale Reserve care group itself received a Merit Award for its extensive work at this site. The group has recently demonstrated that the plant species regenerating in the area include some that were not planted by the group, indicating birds are reintroducing these species, thereby fostering a natural regeneration process.

Tennick Dennison and the Henley Trust received the Habitat Restoration Award for their work at the Henley Wetlands in Masterton. Tennick has enthusiastically led his group for a number of years as they have restored the wader ponds and planted up the waterways and wetlands in the area. An annual feature for this group is the planting of 500 trees by students from Lake View School, one tree for each pupil. This event occurred on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August.

Joe and Trish Taylor received a Merit Award for their many years of effort protecting the foredunes at Riversdale Beach. The Taylors were amongst the instigators of the Dune Management Committee that looks after the beach, and have maintained a very active role over the last 15 years. A number of initiatives have been undertaken by the Committee. These include the establishment of walkways and sand ladders to protect high traffic areas, extensive planting along the beach, the removal of pest plants, and the planting of display areas to educate beach users on the roles of dunes in a coastal environment and the role of plants in stabilising and protecting dunes.

Neil Bellingham received a Merit Award for his for long term commitment to enhancing and restoring the native forest at Maara Roa in Belmont Regional Park. Neil has also worked with the *Take Action* team and has made a big contribution to the care of the Pauatahanui Inlet over the years.

### **3. Take Action**

Term three schools commenced *Take Action* in mid July. There are three self-guided schools and one guided school doing *Take Action* in term three and one school (St Bernadettes) undertaking *Take Action for Air*. The self-guided schools are Wainuiomata Intermediate, Muritai (Eastbourne) and Naenae Intermediate. The guided school is Trentham, where six classes are taking part. At Muritai School, 10 classes are involved.

Otari School has been involved in *Take Action* twice, in 2001 and 2005, and has a strong environmental emphasis. As part of its 2001 involvement some of the junior students spent two days planting with the Otari Wilton care group on the Kaiwharawhara Stream. The site borders the school. Recently the same students returned to release their trees from weeds and are keen to do more planting. The children were struck by the fact that their trees were now bigger than them. The school has also been growing seedlings since that time, provided by Greater Wellington, and will plant these on the school's boundary next winter. Pedro Jensen from the Biosecurity Department will undertake a "weedbusting" programme with the school in the interim to prepare the planting site.

Ngaio school students, working on their action projects, spent a day planting in the Ngaio Gorge in early August. Students from three classes planted native trees and shrubs alongside the Korimako Stream, assisted by members of the Trelissick Park group. Other students from the school have established an environment group, painted murals around the school to raise awareness, and constructed seating for students to enjoy their native arboretum.

#### **4. Take Care**

Care group activity over the last six weeks has focused mainly on planting as groups move into their busiest time of year. A separate report in this Order Paper updates the achievements of the groups over the last year.

#### **5. Corporate Volunteers**

Volunteers from BP and IAG planted 2000 trees on the Kakaho Stream at Pauatahanui in July. This was infill planting at two sites that had been planted by the same people a year ago. The volunteers had a great day and are keen to establish a long term relationship with this project. The land owner is keen to see the stream margins revegetated and provided the majority of the plants, supplemented by 500 trees from Honda Cars through the Honda Tree Fund. The plants will help stabilise the stream banks, provide fish habitat and encourage biodiversity.

On Thursday August 10<sup>th</sup> volunteers from Accor planted another 800 trees at the Moehau Stream in Upper Hutt. Considerable progress has been made at this site in the last year through the combined actions of corporate volunteers, community service workers, Fergusson Intermediate pupils, Upper Hutt City Council, and members of the care group. Trentham School, currently doing *Take Action*, will contribute also next term when they start their clean up and planting projects.

#### **6. Business sustainability**

We are receiving an increasing number of inquiries from businesses seeking guidance in how to become more environmentally sustainable. The cause of this seems to be the increased publicity for the Council which has come about through EnviroSMART and the Get Sustainable Challenge, and the stories in Elements featuring the Council's own worm farms and bokashi system.

Michelle Hayward has commenced work with Wellington City Council on a project to institute waste reduction and recycling in six commercial office towers in the city. This will involve showing the businesses in these buildings how to recycle, in much the same way as was done for the tenants of the Majestic Centre last year. The buildings have been selected and tenders are about to be called for help with running the project (e.g., providing the necessary recycling bins etc). This project is being partly funded by the Sustainable Management Fund. It provides a good opportunity to work with Wellington City Council on a business sustainability initiative.

Participants in EnviroSMART joined together for the first time to commence the programme in July. A presentation will be made to the Committee on this programme and the Get Sustainable Challenge.

Nicola Shorten  
Manager, Resource Policy

## Environmental Policy Department Report – August 2006

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### 1. Maintaining Regional Policies and Plans

#### 1.1 Regional Plan Changes

The High Court has now made an interim decision on **Plan Change 1** to the Regional Freshwater Plan. This decision is now being considered by staff on the Wairarapa Flood Protection department prior to comments being made. The outstanding matter in this plan change related to conditions on a rule requiring resource consent for heavy vehicles to use a stopbank.

Decisions have been made on **Plan Change 2** to the Regional Freshwater Plan (water allocation in the Mangatarere catchment), and no appeals were lodged. The Plan change must now be made operative, which involves final approval by the Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee, and public notification of the date on which the plan will become operative.

Draft Plan Change 3 to the Regional Freshwater Plan was approved for public consultation by the Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee in July 2006. The Plan Change that will limit the taking of additional water from the following water bodies:

- Parkvale, Kahutara and eastern Martinborough Terraces aquifers
- Otukura Stream, Parkvale Stream, Papawai Stream, Makoura Stream, Stonestead (Dock) Creek and Tauweru River.

In 2002, the Council adopted policies (moratoria) from the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee that additional water should not be allowed by resource consents to be taken from these water bodies. Since that time only one resource consent application has been made. It was declined by the Council and has been appealed to the Environment Court.

At the present time, not much weight can be placed on the Council's policies for these water bodies when considering resource consent applications under the Resource Management Act 1991. The draft Plan Change that has been approved for public consultation is the first step in ensuring that appropriate weight can be given to the Council's policies when resource consent applications are considered.

## 1.2 Regional Policy Statement review update

Main areas of work on this project since the last meeting of the Environment Committee have been:

- Councillors Ian Buchanan, Sally Baber and Chris Turver, along with staff, have now attended meetings of each of the territorial authorities in the Wellington region to give short presentations on the Regional Policy Statement review process. This included highlighting relevant issues and questions from *Measuring up 2005* and *Our region – their future* for the relevant council.
- Ninety two submissions were received in response to the discussion document on the review of the Regional Policy Statement “*Our region – their future*” and the community newspaper spread.
- A summary of comments received has been completed, and draft ‘significant resource management issues’ developed for the new Regional Policy Statement.
- A second Ara Tahi workshop has held on 2 August. This workshop was to identify and discuss resource management issues of significant to iwi authorities and how these should be included in the next Regional Policy Statement. Dr Bev James has been contracted to work with staff on this part of the Regional Policy Statement review.
- Staff have met with staff in the Wellington and Wairarapa offices to discuss the draft significant resource management issues and obtain feedback.
- Staff have met with territorial authority staff from the western part of the region (7 August) and the Wairarapa (8 August) to discuss comments received on “*Our region – their future*”, the draft significant resource management issues, and to provide further input into the process.
- A Councillor workshop was held on 15 August. The purpose of the workshop was to provide the Council with a summary of comments received and an opportunity to discuss the draft significant resource management issues recommended for inclusion in the next Regional Policy Statement.

## 2. Regional Policy Statement and regional plan implementation

### 2.1 Submissions on district plans and resource consents

#### 2.1.1 Plan changes

A summary of submissions for a private plan change to rezone an area north of Peka Peka from rural to residential has been received. Staff made a further submission on this application.

The closing date for submissions for a change received on the heritage provisions in the Wellington City District Plan has been extended. Wellington City Council is currently preparing a significant change to the central area provisions of the district plan. It has been decided that the heritage change should be considered in conjunction with the central area review.

### 2.1.2 Notified consents

Four submissions were made on notified consent applications received this reporting period.

A submission was made in opposition to a 6 lot subdivision, Morris Road, Masterton because of flooding issues at the site.

Comments were made on a 4 lot subdivision, Moroa Road, Greytown and a 3 lot subdivision, Underhill Road, Featherston. Both submissions related to nearby or adjacent potentially contaminated site (sites that have a history of storing or using hazardous substances) and possible contamination of groundwater.

A submission was made on a 15 lot subdivision, Lake Ferry Road, Lake Ferry. The submission commented on the need to connect to the community wastewater system, noting the Wairarapa Coastal Strategy and suggesting alternatives to storm water disposal.

Written evidence was provided for the hearing of proposed subdivision at Kinnoull Station, at the end of South Makara Road on the South Coast. The submission (and written evidence) sought that significant vegetation in the gullies and the coastal escarpment be appropriately protected. It also sought that the location of the house sites, on the front two properties, be positioned to ensure they would not adversely impact on the character of the coastal environment.

Ted Taylor  
Acting Manager, Environmental Monitoring and Investigations

## Environmental Monitoring and Investigations Department Report – August 2006

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### 1. Resource Information

#### 1.1 Flood warning

The Environmental Monitoring and Investigations Department provides a flood warning and monitoring service for Wellington Region. Rainfall and river level recorders around the Region automatically relay information to the Regional Council Centre and the Masterton office. When specified rainfall intensities or river levels are reached the system automatically alerts staff who implement response procedures.

Since the last meeting of the Committee the following rainfall and water level alarms were received and responded to from the Wellington office:

21 June 2006	<b>Rainfall:</b> Warwicks
30 June 2006	<b>Rainfall:</b> Warwicks
5 July 2006	<b>Rainfall:</b> Orongorongo Swamp, Transmission Lines, Waikanae, Wainui Reservoir <b>River Level:</b> Birchville, Mangaroa, Waikanae, Manuka Track, Porirua Town, Leonard Wood Park
6 July 2006	<b>Rainfall:</b> Warwicks, Wainui Reservoir, Orongorongo Swamp <b>River Level:</b> Waiwhetu, Te Marua, Porirua Town, Manuka Track, Birchville, Mangaroa
12 July 2006	<b>Rainfall:</b> Warwicks, Waikanae, Transmission Lines, Otaki Depot, Taungata, Centre Ridge <b>River Level:</b> Otaki
13 July 2006	<b>Rainfall:</b> Cemetery <b>River Level:</b> Cemetery

20 July 2006	<b>Rainfall:</b> Wainui Reservoir, Orongorongo Swamp <b>River Level:</b> Birchville Backup, Manuka Track, Leonard Wood Park
24 July 2006	<b>River Level:</b> Birchville
28 July 2006	<b>Rainfall:</b> Transmission Lines
2 August 2006	<b>Rainfall:</b> Waikanae
3 August 2006	<b>River Level:</b> Porirua Town

Forty-one rainfall and water level alarms were received and responded to from the Masterton office in July.

## 2. Resource analysis

### 2.1 Groundwater levels

The Department monitors groundwater levels at 46 sites in the western region and 62 sites in the Wairarapa. We use three of these bores, McEwan Park at Petone, Hautere Plain on the Kapiti Coast, and Baring in Wairarapa as general indicators of the state of groundwater resources in these areas.

#### 2.1.1 Lower Hutt groundwater zone – Upper Waiwhetu artesian aquifer

Aquifer pressure at our McEwan Park monitoring well has been at, or above, the long-term mean this year. The pressure is well above the seawater intrusion alarm levels.

#### 2.1.2 Kapiti coast groundwater zones

Groundwater levels in Kapiti aquifers have been increasing since April. Monitoring at the Centrepoint well on the Hautere Plain, which intercepts a deep rainfall-recharged aquifer, shows that groundwater is still at record-low levels for this time of the year.

#### 2.1.3 Wairarapa groundwater zones

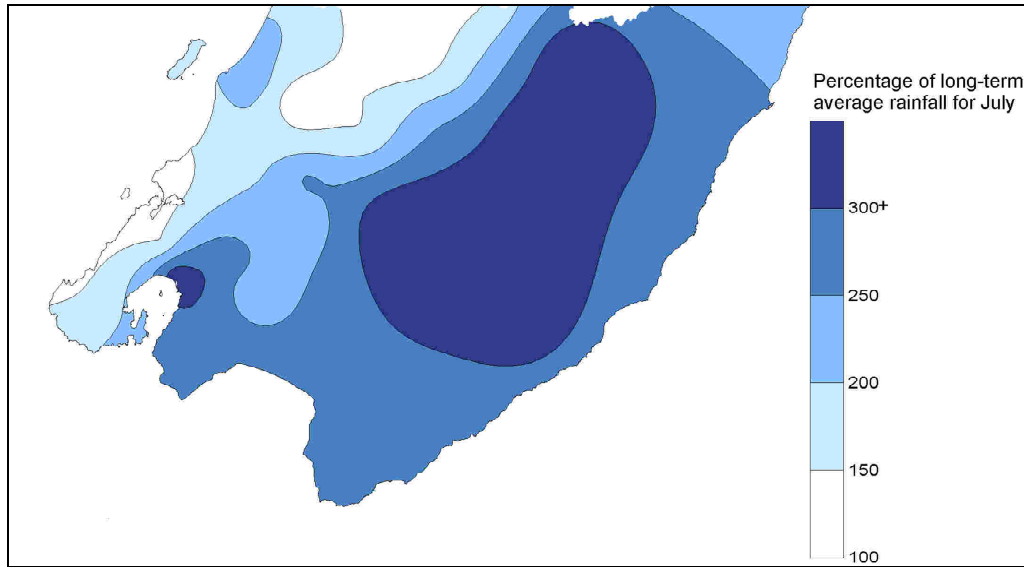
Groundwater levels in the Wairarapa have been increasing since the end of March. Monitoring at the Baring well in Parkvale, located in a deep rainfall-recharged aquifer, shows that groundwater is between the long-term minimum and long-term mean for this time of year. It is still 2.0m below full recovery. High rainfall on the plains has resulted in shallow unconfined aquifers reaching long-term maximum levels.

### 2.2 Rainfall and river flows

July 2006 was wetter than average throughout the region, due to frequent southerly fronts passing over the southern North Island. Very high rainfall totals for July were experienced particularly in the Wairarapa, where rainfall was more than three times the long-term average for this time of the year



(Figure 1). Of note, the July rainfall total at Wainuiomata Reservoir (631 mm) is the highest since the July of 1912, and the second highest since records began in 1890.



Several storm events during July resulted in widespread surface flooding in the Wairarapa and high river flows throughout the region. The most severe storms occurred during the period 4-7 July, and the hydrology and meteorology of these storms have been analysed (see Report 06.391). Other storms of note occurred on 12-13 July, 14-15 July and 20 July. The Wairarapa floodways were in operation for approximately 110 hours during the month, and Lake Wairarapa reached a record-high level of 12.22 metres.

## 2.3 Air quality monitoring

### 2.3.1 Ambient air quality monitoring

We currently monitor ambient air quality at three permanent sites; in Lower Hutt at the Birch Street Reserve, Upper Hutt at Savage Park and Masterton at Wairarapa College. Our mobile ambient monitoring station is located at Trentham Fire Station and will be moved to a site in the Porirua airshed when land access is formalised.

The graphs below represent air quality at these locations where the monitoring results are compared to ambient air quality guidelines. The assessment categories are as follows:

Category	Maximum Measured Value	Comment
Action	Exceeds Guideline	Completely unacceptable by national and international standards.
Alert	Between 66% and 100% of the guideline	A warning level which can lead to guidelines being exceeded if trends are not curbed.

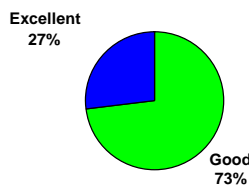
Acceptable	Between 33% and 66% of the guideline	A broad category, where maximum values might be of concern in some sensitive locations, but are generally at a level that does not warrant dramatic action.
Good	Between 10% and 33% of the guideline	Peak measurements in this range are unlikely to affect air quality.
Excellent	Less than 10% of the guideline	Of little concern.

### Results for the past six weeks at Birch Lane, Lower Hutt

8-Hour Average CO at Lower Hutt



24-Hour Average NO<sub>2</sub> at Lower Hutt

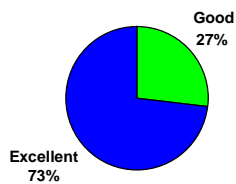


24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Lower Hutt

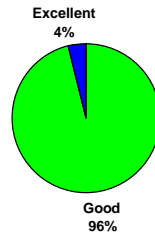


### Results for the past six weeks at Savage Park, Upper Hutt

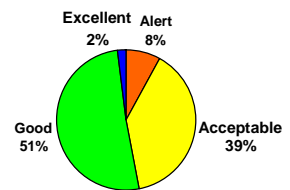
8-Hour Average CO at Savage Park



24-Hour Average NO<sub>2</sub> at Savage Park

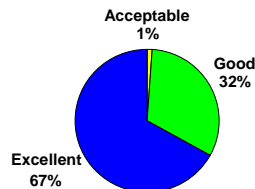


24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Savage Park

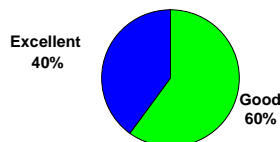


### Results for the past six weeks at Masterton

8-Hour Average CO at Masterton



24-Hour Average NO<sub>2</sub> at Masterton



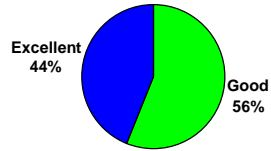
24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Masterton



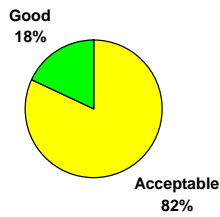
### 2.3.2 Traffic emissions monitoring

#### Results for the past six weeks at Corner Victoria & Vivian Streets

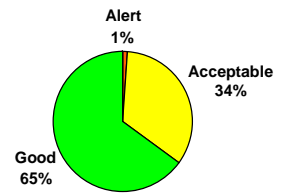
8-Hour Average CO at Corner V



24-Hour Average NO<sub>2</sub> at Corner V

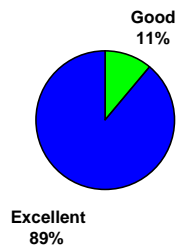


24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Corner V



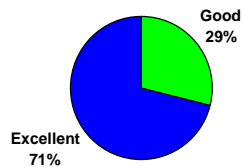
#### Results for the past six weeks at Te Aro

8-Hour Average CO at Te Aro



#### Results for the past six weeks at Ngauranga Gorge

8-Hour Average NO<sub>2</sub> at Mobile Transport 1

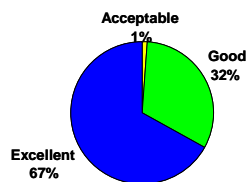


24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Mobile Transport 1



#### Results for the past six weeks at Melling

8-Hour Average CO at Mobile Transport 2



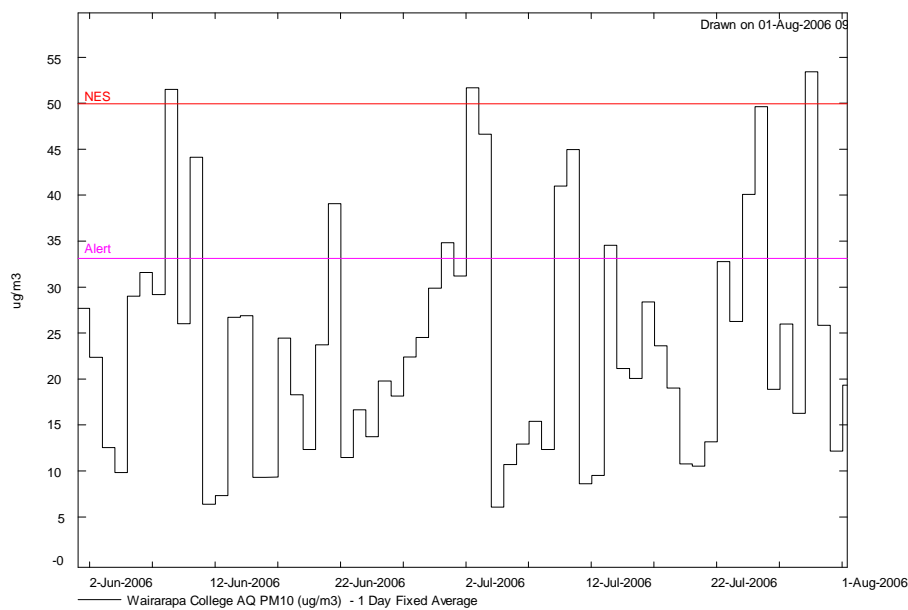
24-Hour Average PM<sub>10</sub> at Mobile Transport 2



### 2.3.3 National environmental standard exceedences.

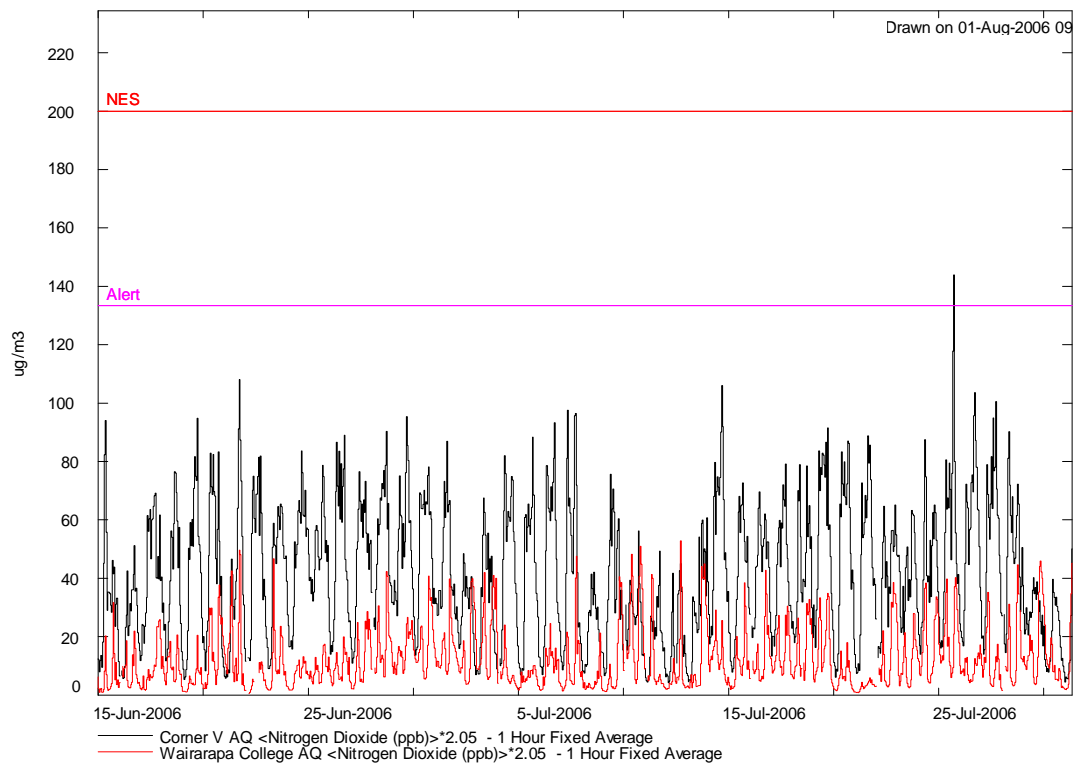
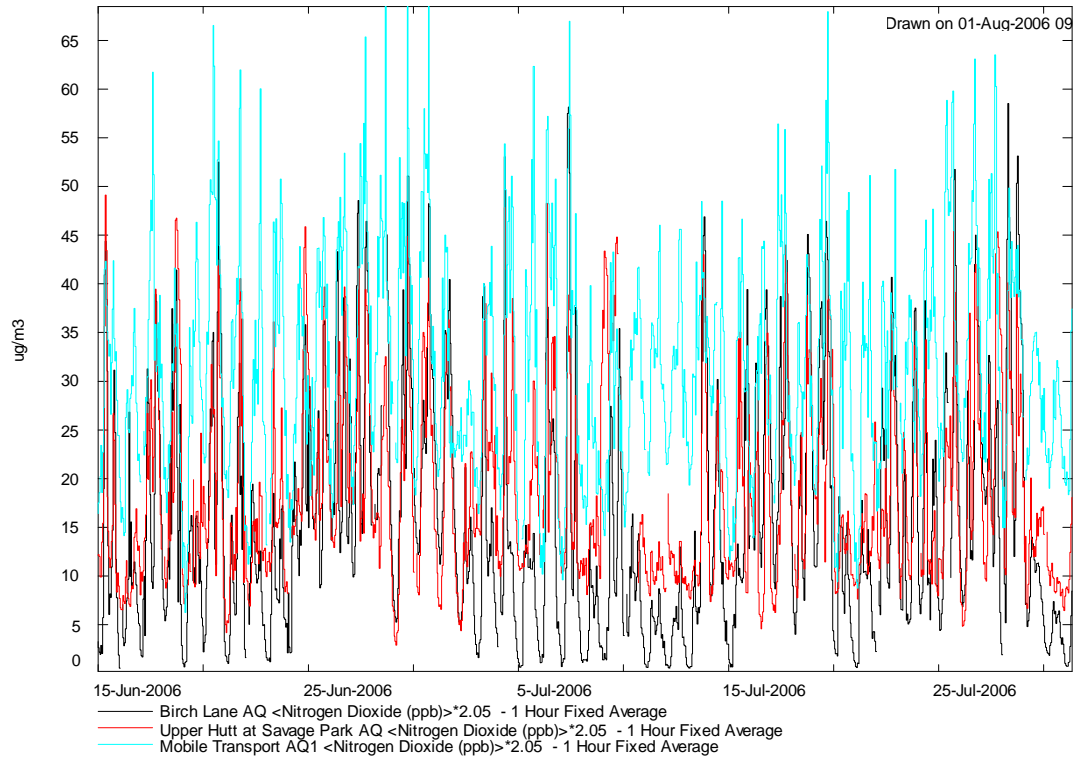
Since the onset of winter and the increased use of domestic fires for home heating, fine particle concentrations in Masterton have shown their seasonal increase. The concentration of particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) in the Wairarapa airshed has exceeded 50 µg/m<sup>3</sup> as a 24 hour mean on three occasions this year (8 June, 2 July and 29 July). The National Environmental Standard allows this concentration to be exceeded once per year and thereafter any exceedences in the year must be publicly notified. This has been done by way of notice in the Wairarapa Times Age on 22 July for the 2 July event and will be done later in August for the 29 July event.

Monitoring results from the Wairarapa College air quality monitoring station for PM<sub>10</sub> are presented graphically below.

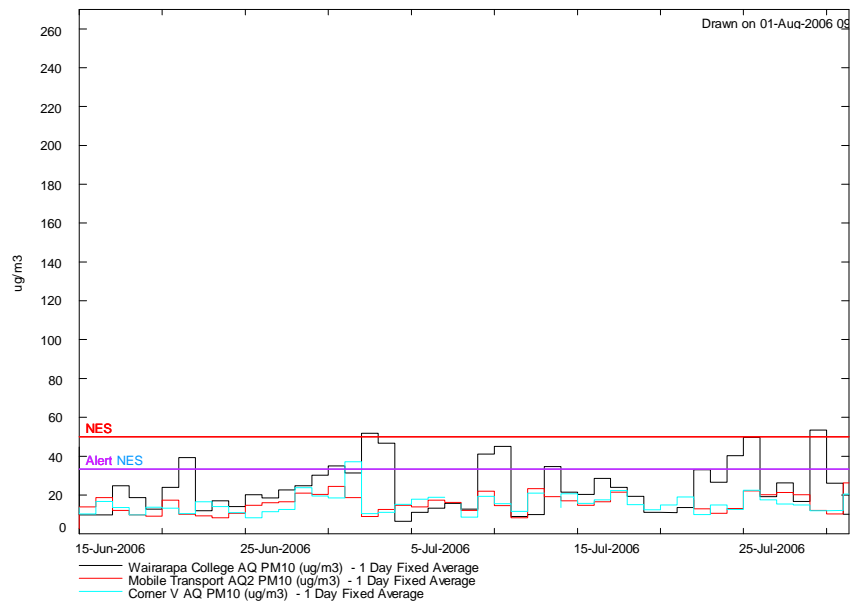
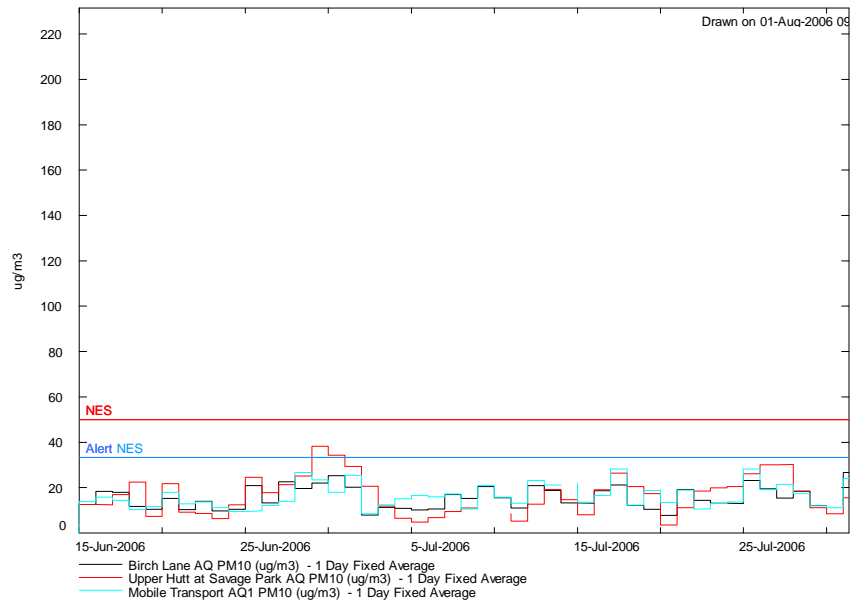


The following graphs compare air quality at our other sites compared to the relevant National Environmental Standards for NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>.

### NO<sub>2</sub> results for the past six weeks - NES



### PM<sub>10</sub> results for the past six weeks – NES



### 3. Staff

Interviews have taken place for an air quality scientist to replace Perry Davy but no appointment has been made.

**Al Cross**  
**Acting Manager, Environmental Regulation**

## **Environmental Regulation Department Report – August 2006**

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### **1. Consent statistics**

The following consents processing data now reflects the entire region. In the period from 1 July 2006 to 31 July 2006 we have received 45 consent applications. This compares with 60 received for the same period last year.

Over the same period, we have processed 44 consents. This compares with 33 over the same period last year.

One consent processed since the last Committee meeting was not completed within statutory timeframes.

Our median processing time for non-notified consents (excluding s37 time extensions) is currently sitting at 14 working days.

A summary of the notified consents we are currently processing is also attached for information.

### **2. Appeals and objections**

#### **2.1 Appeals**

##### **Meridian Energy Limited – Project West Wind**

The Appeals hearing of Project West Wind consent decisions<sup>1</sup> ended on schedule on 7 July. Key issues such as traffic and noise have been largely resolved as much progress was made on Greater Wellington matters such as ecological effects. Landscape, including the proximity of residences to the site, remains as the most significant issue outstanding, and will remain as a critical matter for the Court's consideration prior to releasing its decision.

##### **Greater Wellington: Land and River Operations Department (LARO) – Scadden's stopbank**

The Environment Court has struck out a number of aspects of an appeal by A J Barton<sup>2</sup> on a decision that granted consent to LARO to upgrade an existing stopbank adjacent to the Ruamahanga River. One remaining issue concerning

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<sup>1</sup> The decisions on the jointly processed consents were released on 21 December 2005.

<sup>2</sup> The points struck out relate to consideration of Regional Freshwater Plan provisions and section 5 and 104 RMA considerations.

the use of a paper road is to be heard by the Court and evidence will be exchanged on 28 August, with a hearing date soon to be set.

### **Martinborough Coastal Developments Ltd (MCDL)**

The Environment Court has made a decision on a number of procedural issues raised by an appeal by D T S Riddiford on a joint decision that granted consent to MCDL<sup>3</sup>. The matter has now been set down for mediation on 14 September.

### **A E & S W Benton Partnership**

Mediation was held on 19 June to discuss issues raised by an appeal by the applicant on a decision which declined consent to take groundwater from two bores for irrigation near Kahutara. GW Environmental Regulation staff have agreed to undertake further work which will be progressively submitted to all parties prior to the next mediation set down for 10 October.

### **Masterton District Council**

No progress has been made on the appeal by Masterton District Council against the decision on stage two – the Castlepoint sea wall. The onus is on Masterton District Council to come up with an integrated foreshore management plan.

## **3. Compliance and Enforcement**

### **3.1 General**

All programmed compliance for the last financial year was completed, and compliance work has been relatively light since. However, additional work is being generated from the ongoing inclement weather conditions, and in particular, the regular monitoring of larger earthwork sites.

The sizeable enforcement load carried by Greater Wellington across the region is highlighted now that all compliance and enforcement functions across the region are carried by the Environmental Regulation Department. Key enforcement is summarised below.

### **3.2 Abatement notices**

We have served one abatement notice since the last Committee meeting. This was issued to the director of Staithes Drive Development Ltd requiring effective erosion and sediment control measures to be installed at an earthworks site, and restoration of the stream.

### **3.3 Infringement notices**

We have issued five infringement notices since last Committee meeting.

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<sup>3</sup> Consent was granted for a 30 lot subdivision near Tora which included a communal wastewater system.



We served three notices on the director of Staithe Drive Development Ltd for the unauthorised activities including damming a stream, reclaiming a stream bed, and discharge of sediment into a stream.

Two notices were served on the Greater Wellington Flood Protection Department (Flood Protection) for unauthorised works in the Huangarua River and Awhea River. The stream works in question were found to be outside the Regional Freshwater Plan permitted activity rules in this instance. Flood Protection will be looking to gain global resource consents for such works in the future. In the meantime, Environmental Regulation staff will continue to work with Flood Protection to clarify permitted activities and urgent or emergency works.

### **3.4 Prosecution and enforcement orders**

We have five prosecution and three enforcement order proceedings currently underway.

#### **Lansdowne Developments Ltd and Bruce Buchanan Ltd**

The prosecution against Lansdowne Developments Ltd (Masterton) and Bruce Buchanan Ltd<sup>4</sup> has now been resolved. The case was set down to be heard in the Environment Court on 18 July. Following preparation and exchanging of evidence, the Council agreed to drop one set of charges against both companies, whilst the companies pleaded guilty to the remaining set of charges. In sentencing, the judge imposed fines of \$3000 to each company, a reasonable outcome for the Council given a hearing before the Court was avoided. GW staff plan to talk with representatives of both companies shortly to work existing on site stormwater management matters.

#### **Tonkin and Taylor and Tenga Pickering Contracting Limited**

Information's were laid against Tonkin and Taylor (Hutt City Council's consultant), and Tenga Pickering Contracting Limited for an unauthorised prolonged discharge from a large sediment pond at Silverstream Landfill, connected with Stage 2 landfill works, that entered Hulls Creek and the Hutt River. The discharge in question occurred in January 2006 during summer low flows.

#### **Burrell Demolition Ltd<sup>5</sup>**

No guilty plea has been entered and Mr Burrell has elected a trial by jury, and the case will now continue to a full hearing following a depositions hearing on 10 August. Our legal counsel will now work with Crown solicitors to prepare an indictment – a formal charge against the defendant for trial by jury purposes.

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<sup>4</sup> Prosecution regarded two unauthorised discharges of sediment laden water in March 2005.

<sup>5</sup> Prosecution regarding the unauthorised laying of a culvert in a tributary of Owhiro Stream at C&D Landfill, Happy Valley, Wellington.

### **Paddy Hannan and Drogue Construction Limited**

Information's were laid against Paddy Hannan, Paddy Hannan Contracting Ltd and Drogue Construction Limited (Wainuiomata), for breach of an enforcement order previously issued against these parties. Greater Wellington staff have put in considerable effort to enable the parties to comply with the timeframe for the orders<sup>6</sup> which relate to the removal of non-cleanfill material from a cleanfill site.

### **Brooklyn Holdings and Lance James / 282 Ohiro Road**

Information's were laid against Brooklyn Holdings and Lance James (director), following repeated discharges of sediment onto land and into the Owhiro Stream from the Brooklyn Valley Rise subdivision. We are currently in discussions with the parties regarding the scope of the charges laid.

### **Ohiro Properties Limited / 318 Ohiro Road**

Ohiro Properties Limited withdrew its appeal against an enforcement order sought against the company relating to restrictions on vegetation clearance and earthworks activities<sup>7</sup>. Greater Wellington subsequently withdrew its cross-appeal and sought to lift the stay of proceedings in the Environment Court. We have filed for costs in relation to the abandoned appeal, and we will now proceed in the Court to seek the final substantive enforcement orders.

## **4. Major resource consents and other matters**

### **4.1 Key notified consents update**

#### **Hilton Hotel: Wellington Waterfront Investments**

The public hearing session for Hilton Hotel applications<sup>8</sup> was completed on 31 July and subsequently adjourned pending further information requested of the applicant by the hearing committee. The hearing was formally closed on 8 August, and a decision on the proposal is expected by early September at the latest.

This was the largest hearing hosted by Greater Wellington since the enactment of the Resource Management Act in 1991, and brought with it a number of significant logistical and procedural challenges for both staff and the hearing committee.

Media interest in the proposed development remained high during the hearing and peaked following the release of the officer's and applicant's response at the end of the hearing. We continue to work with the media and expect interest will again be strong around the release of the decision.

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<sup>6</sup> Orders cover the provision of road survey and works plans, and the completion of specific onsite stream and culvert works.

<sup>7</sup> Sought following unauthorised destruction of a small stream in Brooklyn in April 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Proposed for the Queens Wharf Outer-T.

## **Wellington Marine Conservation Centre Trust**

The hearing of the new applications for the Wellington Marine Conservation Centre Trust Aquarium of New Zealand commenced on 8 August. The applicant has brought 30 witnesses to the table, with their submissions expecting to last a week. Greater Wellington matters relate to less substantive aspects of the application including structures in the coastal marine area and discharges associated with construction and operations. The hearing is expected to be completed by early September.

## **Eurocell Sawmilling Limited**

The hearing<sup>9</sup> was completed on 25 July after three days, and a decision has been released. The applicant was able to satisfy the panel that the discharges would not coincide with peak adverse atmospheric conditions. The panel also accepted that the applicant's proposed discharge limits were sufficiently low to protect the health of residents and conditions were imposed to reduce dust nuisance from activities on site. The Officer's work on the proposal did highlight that a lack of monitoring and airshed modelling data will continue to be a challenge for our assessment of applications against the National Environmental Standards for Air (NES).

## **Western Wastewater Treatment Plant: WCC/Capacity**

These applications are for the renewal of a suite of consents associated with the ongoing operation of the Western Wastewater Treatment Plant (the Plant). Assessment work is continuing and we have received the further information previously requested on a range of environmental and infrastructural matters.

The hearing is set to commence on 19 October, to accommodate the availability of the applicant's technical experts.

## **Hutt Valley Waste Water Services**

The Minister of Conservation has approved the applications<sup>10</sup> with no changes and the consents are now in their appeal period, which will end on 25 August.

## **Whitby Coastal Estates**

A decision to grant these applications<sup>11</sup> was released on 17 August and there were no appeals. Conditions on the Greater Wellington consents remained largely unchanged from the officer's recommendations. The conditions cover, amongst other matters, adverse effects of riparian bush removal, and stream realignment and piping, including the attachment of bond conditions to ensure that required stream-side planting will be successful. These conditions set a

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<sup>9</sup> This application is for a discharge to air consent associated with the installation of a wood fired boiler at an operational sawmill at Park Street, Upper Hutt.

<sup>10</sup> This application for a renewal of Hutt Valley's discharge of treated and disinfected sewage to wastewater to the coastal marine area, which reached a negotiated agreement with submitters in relation to recommended consent conditions.

<sup>11</sup> These are joint applications to Porirua City Council and GW for various consents relating to the development of a subdivision at James Cook Drive, Whitby.

precedent in Wellington region for the remediation of the effects of piping and reclaiming streams.

### **Greater Wellington Flood Protection Department**

Five Submissions (including one in opposition, and a petition from local residents in support) were received on applications for gravel extraction in the lower reaches of Hutt River. It is anticipated that matters concerning the submitter in opposition (NZ Fish and Game Council) will be resolved by the applicant thus eliminating the need for a hearing. It is fair to suggest that the lack of submissions received partly reflects the robust consultation process conducted by the applicant.

### **Capital and Coast District Health Board**

Three submissions were received for this application<sup>12</sup> with one in opposition. A pre-hearing has been set for 18 August. The lack of interest in the proposal was interesting given that over 600 potentially affected parties were notified.

### **N & E Reid<sup>13</sup>**

Following the close of submissions and a pre-hearing meeting in March, the applications for discharging piggery wastewater to land and air were placed on hold for further information. We commissioned and have recently received a draft report from Aqualinc Consultants which evaluates the capacity of the soils within the proposed effluent irrigation areas to receive and treat wastewater effluent. The report effectively highlights that more land will be needed to receive the proposed quantity of effluent. A decision on how the processing of the applications will be progressed will be made shortly once we have met with the applicant.

### **Masterton District Council**

Application for managing the closure of the Masterton Landfill and provide for ongoing waste management related activities has been placed on hold for further information. Once information is received, the applications will be notified.

### **Prema Investments Ltd**

We have recently received an application for discharging communal wastewater to land from a 6 lot subdivision at Whangaimoana, and we are currently reviewing the proposed treatment system. I expect the application will be jointly notified with South Wairarapa District Council shortly.

### **M S Creary, MacLand Farms, E P M Handyside, Rotopai Farms**

Replacement applications for taking water from the Ruamahanga River are being processed on a limited notified basis, following the outcome of a pre-

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<sup>12</sup> This is an application to discharge contaminants, including particulates, to air from a number of gas and diesel fired appliances at Wellington Hospital, including the hospital's Total Energy Centre.

<sup>13</sup> These are applications to replace and extend on existing consents for the discharge of piggery effluent to land and odours to air.

hearing meeting held recently. Written approval of affected parties, including Department of Conservation and NZ Fish and Game Council could not be gained.

#### **4.2 Take Charge**

The *Take Charge* programme for the period is discussed in the Pollution Control Report (report 06.392).

#### **4.3 Muddy Waters: Small Sites Guidelines**

We recently completed these guidelines for small earthworks sites, after nearly two years of development. The guidelines, developed in consultation with the territorial authorities, cover appropriate methods for managing site stability, erosion and sediment run-off. The target audience is land owners, consultants, contractors and developers, and deals with sites largely regulated by the territorial authorities. An indication of its predicated popularity has been borne out in orders for the guidelines from the region's territorial authorities totalling around 10,000 copies. The guideline will also provide an invaluable tool for our Pollution Control team and is likely to be provided to relevant consent holders. The guidelines were the major deliverable on the Muddy Waters programme for the last financial year.

#### **4.4 Department integration**

The integration of Environmental Regulation's three teams is going well, thanks to the positive approach to new structure taken by the all members of the new department. I have ensured that we are meeting regularly as a full department and as separate teams, and I am travelling to the Wairarapa on a weekly basis to catch up with the Masterton team. The monthly meetings are providing a useful forum for increasing familiarity with work areas and issues facing both sides of the region, and now seem functionally complete with the welcome addition of the Pollution Control team.

Our work on integrating functions and processes is progressing. We are midway through a trial of an officer's non notified report, and are about to commence work to develop notified, limited notified, and decision reports. Staff from our Wellington Pollution Control team will also be working in the Wairarapa during August to cover a short term loss of pollution response cover. We are also recruiting for a dedicated Pollution Control officer. These developments will also help serve to encourage consistent approaches in pollution control work across the region.

#### **4.5 Staff issues**

Stephen Yeats has left the Wairarapa Consents and Compliance team after 12 years with Greater Wellington. Stephen was one of the original compliance officers in the Wairarapa team, when the team totalled just three. Stephen has made a significant contribution to environmental performance in the Wairarapa particularly for industrial and dairying areas, and his skills and institutional knowledge will be sorely missed. Stephen has left for lifestyle reasons and will

pursue developing business interests in the Wairarapa. We are currently recruiting for a Pollution Control Officer to replace Stephen.

Applicant	Proposal	Date Consent Lodged	Date Submissions Closed	Number of Submissions Received	Pre-hearing Held	Hearing Held	Hearing Committee Members	Date Decision Released	Granted or Declined
Masterton District Council	To construct a sea wall at Castlepoint	02/06/04	09/07/04	10	-	14-15 March 2005	Cr Chris Turver Aka Arthur (Iwi) Dr Michael Hilton (Minister's appointee)	11/04/05	Granted – Under appeal
LARO / Flood Protection	To relocate a stopbank and extend the bed of the Ruamahanga River, South Wairarapa	16/08/04	29/09/04	3	09/12/04	23/03/05	Christine Foster	02/05/05	Granted – Under appeal
A E & S W Benton Partnership	To take groundwater from two bores for irrigation purposes, Battersea, South Wairarapa	09/12/04	09/02/05	9	17/03/05	11/10/05	Christine Foster Tony Cussins	09/03/06	Declined – Under appeal
Martinborough Coastal Developments Ltd	To discharge contaminants from communal wastewater system to land and air arising from 30 lot subdivision	04/02/05	19/05/05	22	-	2-3 November 2005	Paul Thomas Roger Land	14/12/05	Granted – Under appeal
Wellington Marine Conservation Centre <sup>214</sup>	Establish an aquarium at Te Raekaihau Point, Wellington.	02/05/06	07/06/05	Approx 9000	-	Set to commenced on 8 August 2006. (approx. 13 day hearing)	Helen Tobin Ray O'Callaghan Euan McQueen	-	

<sup>14</sup> This application will be heard jointly with the Wellington City Council

Applicant	Proposal	Date Consent Lodged	Date Submissions Closed	Number of Submissions Received	Pre-hearing Held	Hearing Held	Hearing Committee Members	Date Decision Released	Granted or Declined
Hutt City Council	To discharge treated and disinfected wastewater from the Seaview wastewater treatment plant.	07/06/05	02/07/05	3	06/09/05	All parties have signed off on draft conditions. New conditions being considered by Deliberations Committee. RCA will then require Minister of Conservation's consideration for approval.	Deliberations Committee: Glen Evans Byrdie Eyres (Minister's appointee)	Recommendation received from Minister of Conservation. Appeal period ends 25 August	Granted
N & E Reid	To discharge of piggery effluent to land, Carterton	30/06/05	16/02/06	29	13/03/06				
Meridian Energy Limited <sup>15</sup>	Various land use, discharge, and coastal permits associated with the development of the "West Wind" wind farm proposal, Makara.	01/07/05	10/08/05	4000+	-	September to November 2005.	Jim Lynch David McMahon	21/12/05	Granted – Under appeal
Whitby Coastal Estates <sup>16</sup>	Various land use and discharge permits for an 81 lot subdivision in James Cook Drive, Whitby.	06/09/05	29/11/05	18	-	Hearing held on 20 & 27 June 2006.	Cr Sally Baber Robert Schofield	17 July	Granted

<sup>15</sup> This application will be jointly heard with Wellington City Council

<sup>16</sup> This application will be heard jointly with the Porirua City Council



Applicant	Proposal	Date Consent Lodged	Date Submissions Closed	Number of Submissions Received	Pre-hearing Held	Hearing Held	Hearing Committee Members	Date Decision Released	Granted or Declined
Waterfront Investments Ltd	'Hilton Hotel' building and public space proposal, Queens Wharf, Wellington.	23/12/05	27/02/06	Approx 1000	-	Hearing commenced on 3 July, adjourned on 31 July, and closed 8 Aug.	Cr Chris Turver Cr Chris Laidlaw David McMahon Stuart Kinnear Miria Pomare (Iwi)	-	-
Eurocell Sawmilling Limited	Installation of a wood fired boiler at an operational sawmill, Upper Hutt.	15/02/06	26/04/06	59	09/05/06	Hearing held on 18, 19 and 28 July.	Cr Sally Baber Cr Glen Evans Cr Terry McDavitt	10/08/06. Appeal period ends on 31 August.	Granted
WCC Capacity	To discharge treated and disinfected wastewater from the Western WWTP, South Karori, Wellington.	29/03/06	08/05/06	14	-	Hearing to commence on 19 October (2 days)	Cr Glen Evans Miria Pomare (Iwi) Byrdie Eyres (Minister's appointee)	-	-
Greater Wellington Flood Protection Dept.	To extract gravel from Hutt River for flood protection purposes.	15/06/06	26/07/06	5	-	-	Rob van Voothuysen Brent Cowie Liz Burge (Iwi)		Granted
Capital and Coast District Health Board	To discharge particulates associated with the use of gas and diesel fire boilers.	08/06/06	31/07/06	3	18/08/06	-		-	
Dulux NZ Ltd (Limited Notification)	To discharge contaminants, including particulates and volatile compounds, to air associated with paint manufacturing, Seaview.	30/11/05	26/6/06	2	-	Submissions in support. Did not wish to be heard.	-	14/08/06. Appeal period ends 6 September	

**Mike Pryce**  
**Manager, Harbours**  
**Harbours Department Report –**  
**August 2006**

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**1. Harbour navigation aids**

The Barrett Reef buoy has been battered by the recent southerly storms. An inspection revealed that the northern leg of the mooring chain broke-away from its concrete block and anchor. Work is underway to re-secure this.

All navigation lights operated satisfactorily.

**2. Oil pollution**

Three reports of pollution were reported for the period, none required any response.

One staff member was sent on a Fundamentals of Marine Oil Pollution Response Course in Auckland during August.

**3. Other activities**

A meeting between a floatplane operator and water users from Porirua held on 10 July 2006 was chaired by the Harbours Department to discuss navigational safety concerns and solutions.

Karin Wiley has taken over as this region's Marine Oiled Wildlife Response Co-ordinator, as part of the Regional Tier 2 Oil Pollution Response Plan.

**4. Staff**

On 24 July 2006, Greg Meikle resigned his position as Harbour Ranger to take up the position of Maritime Officer with Environment Bay of Plenty.

Greg, who has been with our department since April 1998, will be missed. We are sure that his experience will be beneficial and appreciated in his new position.

## **5. Harbourmasters' Special Interest Group Terms of Reference**

On 16 and 17 August, the Harbourmasters Special Interest Group (HMSIG) meeting was held in Wellington, chaired by the Harbourmaster.

The following outlines the Terms of Reference for HMSIG.

### **5.1 Purpose**

To provide a forum to achieve good navigation and safety practice on the waters throughout New Zealand through the sharing of information and experiences between Regional and Territorial Local Authorities (and others), and to coordinate joint activities between these organisations and where appropriate with external organisations such as Maritime New Zealand, etc.

### **5.2 Objectives**

Liaison, communication and exchange of technical, policy and legal information relating to navigation and safety.

Prepare recommendations to the Regional Council CEO's, via the Resource Mangers Group, that reflect the collective view of the harbourmasters on important navigational and safety matters.

To promote where practical uniformity between organisations involved in navigation and safety management.

To facilitate co-ordination with other agencies.

I will provide an update on the key outcomes of this meeting at the next Environment Committee meeting of 10 October 2006.

**Rian van Schalkwyk**  
**Manager, Emergency Management**

## **Emergency Management Department Report – August 2006**

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### **1. Civil Defence Emergency Management Group**

#### **1.1 Ministry of CDEM**

The new Director for the Ministry of Civil Defence Emergency Management, the acting director and Ministry staff have visited our Group Emergency Operations Centre on 9 August 2006.

They were impressed with our set up and the work that we do in getting our communities more resilient.

#### **1.2 Adverse weather during July/August**

Persistent rain over the period 5, 6 and 7 July, and again on 21 July caused widespread damage to our region. The region was still soggy wet when more heavy rain hammered the region again on 7 and 8 August. Lower Hutt received more than 550mm of rain over a six-week period of which 380mm in July alone. Lake Wairarapa was at its highest level ever (over 12 metres).

During these periods we have received thirty one severe weather warnings (same as February 2004).

The worst impacted areas were the Wairarapa and the Lower Hutt districts.

Several houses had to be evacuated due to slips (25 in Eastbourne – 1 house had to be demolished, and 4 in Kelson – another house had to be demolished) and sewage contamination (about 15 houses in the Wairarapa). More than 20 portaloos (chemical toilets) had to be provided to cater for the demand. Water sources in South Wairarapa were also in danger due to sewage contamination. Regional Public Health played a major role in keeping families informed about safe drinking water.

Many roads were also closed (including our State Highways). A major slip on SH2 (near Horokiwi) caused severe traffic headaches for five days.

The Group Emergency Management Office was monitoring the events throughout. We were in daily contact with all the cities and districts in our region and we managed the information (and media) on their behalf.

### 1.3 Exercise 'Capital Quake'

The Prime Minister has ordered a 'whole-of-government' exercise based on the Phoenix scenario.

Members of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet attended our Phoenix exercises III and IV (2003 and 2005) and recommended to Cabinet that the Wellington exercise should be used on a national basis.

The exercise is planned to take place on 14 and 15 November 2006 and will involve all emergency management agencies from local, regional and central government levels.

The manager, emergency management is one of the three members of the national working group that was formed to plan and execute this exercise.

### 1.4 Other activities

- Ongoing training of volunteer council staff
- Working on Group work programmes (Welfare Management, Public Information and Media Management, Regional Reconnaissance, Sewage Disposal during emergencies, Tsunami evacuation planning)
- Emergency Services Co-ordinating Committee meetings (Wairarapa, Kapiti, Porirua, Wellington, Hutt Valley)
- Emergency management marketing (e.g. participating in ACC Wellington Safety Expo – 15 August, planning for 'Disaster Awareness Week' – mid-October, participating in 'The Earth Rocks' event at Te Papa – Labour weekend, etc.)

## 2. Environment

### 2.1 Earthquake Reports

Since preparing the last report for the Environment Committee meeting 21 reports for earthquakes bigger than 3 on the Richter Scale were received from GNS. The following earthquake was felt in the Wellington Region:

Jul 04 2006 **Mag:** 3.5 **Depth:** 30 km, **Location:** 20 km south-west of Eketahuna

### 2.2 Special Weather Bulletins

Four weather events occurred in July and one in August (up to 10 August) during which we have received thirty one Special Weather Bulletins (sixteen for heavy rain, nine for strong wind and six for heavy snow), equalling the number of warnings for February 2004. All the relevant agencies were notified in time. The Wairarapa and the Hutt Valley were severely impacted (*see section 1.2 of this report*).

## **2.3 Communications**

Weekly tests of the radio communications network are being carried out and the system is functioning well.

Richard Waddy  
Manager, Environmental Support

## Financial Position: 30 June 2006

### 1. Operating Results

We are pleased to report the Division's operating results for the year ended 30 June 2006.

These numbers are provisional and subject to audit confirmation.

<b><u>Environment Division</u></b>				
<b><u>Summary Income Statement</u></b>				
<b><u>For the Year Ended 30 June 2006</u></b>				
<b><u>(under the new structure)</u></b>				
	<b><u>Actual</u></b>	<b><u>Year to Date</u></b>	<b><u>Variance</u></b>	<b><u>Full Year</u></b>
	<b><u>\$000s</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>\$000s</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
	<b><u>\$000s</u></b>	<b><u>\$000s</u></b>	<b><u>\$000s</u></b>	<b><u>\$000s</u></b>
Rates	9,832	9,832	--	9,832
Other Revenue	2,811	2,584	227 F	2,584
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>12,643</b>	<b>12,416</b>	<b>227 F</b>	<b>12,416</b>
<b>Less:</b>				
Direct Expenditure	10,741	10,978	237 F	10,978
Indirect Expenditure	1,639	1,680	41 F	1,680
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>12,380</b>	<b>12,658</b>	<b>278 F</b>	<b>12,658</b>
<b>Operating Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>(242)</b>	<b>505 F</b>	<b>(242)</b>

### 2. Surplus

The Division's finances are satisfactory and the overall result is more than we anticipated in our budgets. For the period the operating surplus came in at \$263,000, compared to a budgeted deficit of \$242,000.

The result translates to a net favourable variance of \$505,000, comprising increased revenue of \$227,000, and lower than expected expenditure of \$278,000.

### 3. Revenue

Total Revenue at \$12,643,000 is some \$227,000 more than our budget target of \$12,415,000.

- Most of the increase arises from Meridian's wind farm consent application and the attendant commissioners' costs (recoverable);
- Additional notified consents processed for a major activity – e.g. Meridian notified consent (\$196,000);
- Biodiversity initiatives - additional grant funds received from DoC (\$51,000);
- Ministry for the Environment contribution towards monitoring air quality (\$34,000); and
- Part-recovery of the wave rider buoy charges (\$22,000).

### 4. Total Expenditure

The Division's total expenditure at \$12,380,000 is some \$278,000 (or 2.2%) less than our budget.

The main reasons for this variance are:

- **Personnel costs** were under budget by \$175,000. Staff movements during the period are the main cause of the underspend. We assume for budgeting purposes that the saving that arises from a staff vacancy will be offset fully by any subsequent recruitment cost.
- **Materials, Supplies and Services** costs were more than budget by \$47,000.

Meridian's resource consent applications for Project West Wind, a wind farm near Makara, have been completed. Commissioners' costs, associated with the application amounted to some \$160,000, and these have been taken into account.

During the period the State of Environment Report (SER) was completed with printing costs slightly less than we budgeted (\$10,000).

- **Consultant costs** were less than budget by \$70,000.

Some of the specialist external costs are at a lower level from those that we anticipated in our budgets. These are mainly for laboratory and technical assistance.

Some of the projects that fall into this category are as follows:



- policy works - special marine studies (\$44,000).
- investigatory works - groundwater (\$45,000) and soil analysis (\$21,000).

In addition, QE11 National Trust work is behind (\$170,000). Although funds have been allocated, invariably, with this type of work there is a significant time-lag from the stage funds are committed to the completion of projects.

These shortfalls have been offset, to an extent, by the additional costs that arose from the independent review of the *Take Care* programme (\$19,000), biodiversity work (\$36,000), pollution response work (\$43,000) and ambient air quality (\$29,000).

- **Internal charges** were lower than budget by \$75,000

Most of the underspend arises from a reduced call for work for consent monitoring from the departments - Wairarapa Technical Services, Harbours and Resource Investigation.

## 5. Capital Expenditure

The capital expenditure programme (after asset disposals) at \$348,000 is generally in line with our budget, after deducting the Harbour - Safety Management Systems (\$200,000) which has been carried over into the new year and the slightly increased spend on the vehicle replacement programme.

The harbour vehicle which had been held-over for use over the summer months by the Harbour Ranger has since been sold (June).

In addition, a vehicle in the Wairarapa due to be replaced this year has been deferred until next year.

The following additional capital items have been acquired:

- A replacement vehicle has been purchased for the new Divisional Manager following the restructure (\$30,000).
- The Air Quality station programme has been completed slightly over (\$120,000 vs. \$80,000) budget. The Transport Division provided funds of \$105,000 towards the station.
- The Upper Hutt - Wellfield monitoring equipment (\$18,000) has been commissioned for the Water Supply, Parks and Forests Division. The project has been funded by that division.