

Report 13.705  
Date 15 July 2013  
File E/11/04/04

Committee Social and Cultural Wellbeing Committee  
Authors Chris Laidlow, General Manager, Water Supply  
Luke Troy, Acting General Manager, Strategy and  
Community Engagement  
Nigel Corry, General Manager, Environment Management

## **General Manager's report to the Social and Cultural Wellbeing Committee on 6 August 2013**

### **1. Purpose**

To inform the Committee of Greater Wellington Regional Council's activities relating to the Committee's areas of responsibility.

### **2. The decision-making process and significance**

No decision is being sought in this report.

### **3. Water Supply**

Water supply for the three months to 30 June 2013 totalled 11,755 million litres (ML), or 129.2 ML/day. This represents a reduction of 3.2% for the fourth quarter year on year, and the lowest fourth quarter total on record. The very low level of June-quarter water use is no doubt influenced by the summer water shortage. While the summer's outdoor water use ban was lifted on 9 April, daily water use remained relatively low. This indicates that individuals and organisations retained at least some of their changed water-use behaviours from the time of the bans.

Water supply during the 2012/13 financial year was 49,685 ML, the lowest annual total on record. Supply during 2012/13 was 2.0% less than during 2011/12 and average daily water supply was 136.1 ML. Each of the four cities reduced its water use year-on-year: Hutt City by 1.5%, Porirua by 2.5%, Upper Hutt by 2.0% and Wellington by 2.2%

The Stuart Macaskill lakes upgrade project is almost complete and filling of lake 1 is due to commence on 5th August. The project is ahead of schedule and within budget.

A benchmarking exercise on Greater Wellington Regional Council's (GWRC) Water Supply has been carried out and the final report is being prepared. The benchmarking, carried out by Price Waterhouse Coopers and GHD, is based on performance criteria taken from Treasury's National Infrastructure Plan. Several other large water suppliers in New Zealand have undertaken the exercise and our results compare very favourably. The report will be presented to a Council workshop in the near future.

## **4. Strategy and Community Engagement**

### **4.1 Parangarahu Lakes Draft Co-management Plan**

The Parangarahu Lakes Draft Co-Management Plan is being jointly prepared by Council and Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust (PNBST) through the joint Roopu Tiaki. Whilst the original timetable was for a draft plan to be prepared by March/April, the Roopu Tiaki agreed to delay finalisation of this draft plan whilst a number of issues are resolved. The intention is to now circulate the draft plan to the Roopu Tiaki and the newly inaugurated Council towards the end of 2013, and commence public consultation early 2014. The key issues requiring further work are outlined below.

The vesting of the water strata above the lakebeds is on hold due to PNBST concerns over possible changes to GWRC's governance following any amalgamation. The Department of Conservation (DOC) have decided to therefore retain ownership, control and management of the water until further notice. GWRC officers are seeking guidance from DOC as to how they want to represent management of the water strata within the plan.

The restoration of eel numbers in the lakes was identified during initial workshops with stakeholders as a key objective for the Plan. A freshwater ecologist has been engaged by GWRC to consider the options and risks of restoring fish passage to the lakes and to advise suitable fish passage design for Lake Kohangipiripiri. This action (improving fish passage) is stated in the draft Plan and recommendations from the report will be included in the final Plan

A draft Biodiversity Action Plan has been completed for the Parangarahu Lakes catchment area. Consultation with stakeholders is being carried out and the final Biodiversity Action Plan will integrate with and support the objectives of the Plan.

GWRC is in the final stages of registering a Forest Sink Covenant (50 year duration) over the regenerating and planted indigenous forest on GWRC reserve land at the lakes. This will not restrict access to the reserve for recreation or impede on vistas from the ridge lines, but will support the restoration of indigenous ecosystems in the lakes area.

GWRC officers continue to work with the private landowner upstream of Lake Kohangatera with regard to the boardwalk at the head of the lake and upstream flooding. GWRC have agreed to raise the boardwalk and are in the process of gaining resource consent for this work.

## 5. Environment Management

GWRC's Parks Department has been working with urgency to remove the 100 metre long boardwalk over Gollans Stream (in the Parangarahu Lakes area of East Harbour Regional Park), in response to the extreme storm events of late June/early July. These events created high water levels that overtopped the boardwalk.

A large mass of vegetation debris from upstream has worked its way down to the boardwalk site, altering the main flow of water through the boardwalk and blocking the previous channel.

We are removing the boardwalk because the size of the vegetation build up is so large that it could not pass underneath or over the boardwalk. It will not be reinstated in the foreseeable future. As this structure was a key component of the Parangarahu Lakes track network, we are investigating other options that may compensate for no longer being able to cross one of the two key wetland systems.

This vegetation mass may well block up the flow path of Gollans Stream and has the real potential to flood parts of the Martin's property. It is for this reason that we are proposing to clear the vegetation from the main channel using controlled blasting. The confines of the site are such that other, more conventional means of removal (e.g. excavators), cannot be used. The objective of the proposed work is to restore the channel to its normal location prior to the flooding event.

We understand, through conversations with GWRC Biosecurity Weed Control, that this proposed removal would not pose any risk of weed transmission downstream. They support the proposed vegetation removal. We are currently consulting with internal and external stakeholders and expect to apply for a consent to undertake the works very shortly.

## 6. Recommendations

*That the Committee*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

**Chris Laidlow**  
General Manager, Water  
Supply

Report prepared by:

**Luke Troy**  
Acting General Manager,  
Strategy and Community  
Engagement

Report prepared by:

**Nigel Corry**  
General Manager,  
Environment Management