

Report 15.96  
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Committee Strategy and Policy Committee  
Author Wayne O'Donnell, General Manager, Catchment Management  
Wayne Hastie, General Manager, Public Transport  
Jane Davis, General Manager, Strategy and Community Engagement

## **General Managers' report to the Strategy and Policy Committee 25 March 2015**

### **1. Purpose**

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

### **2. Catchment Management**

#### **2.1 Public participation**

At the previous Strategy and Policy Committee meeting, Tom Haliburton spoke to item 6 on the agenda – Hutt Valley Public Transport Review. Mr Haliburton commented on the barriers that have been installed along the Hutt River trail to restrict motorised vehicles, particularly motorbikes, and how these prevent access along the trail. A review of the purpose, location and design of the barriers is currently being undertaken; unnecessary barriers will be removed and old barriers will be progressively replaced in accordance with national standards.

#### **2.2 Flood Protection**

- Hutt River - City Centre Upgrade Project - Investigations on the Integrated Concept Design options are progressing with the aim of commencing community consultation in July 2015.

The options and those selected for community consultation will be presented at workshop sessions of the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee (HVFMS), Hutt City Council and the Strategy and Policy Committee before seeking sign off by the HVFMS.

- Jim Cooke Park stopbank reconstruction - The detailed design and the consent application have commenced on the basis of the preferred stopbank option endorsed by the Strategy and Policy Committee on 11 February 2015 (Report 15.9 refers).
- Hutt River edge protection works (Belmont and Ebdentown) - The design and rock procurement for the urgent edge protection works are underway.
- Damwatch has commenced the comprehensive safety review of the Stebbings and Seton Nossiter Dams.
- Beca, selected to carry out the Pinehaven flood hazard mapping independent audit, have commenced the audit.
- Te Kāuru Upper Ruamāhanga Floodplain Management Plan option development aims were approved at Te Kāuru Upper Ruamāhanga Floodplain Management Plan Subcommittee meeting held on 10 March 2015.

## **2.3 Biosecurity**

### **2.3.1 Regional Pest Management Strategy**

The 2014/15 Regional Possum Predator Control Programme in the Wairarapa covers approximately 42,000 hectares across 18 project areas. To date, control has commenced in 12 projects with two completed.

The Wellington/Kapiti programme covers approximately 28,000 hectares. Control is completed in the Porirua and Moonshine projects.

### **2.3.2 TBfree NZ Contracts**

All four Whangaehu strata, covering 9,679 hectares, have been completed, with excellent results.

Three of five Mt Bruce/Waipoua survey and detection projects (5,295 ha) have been completed. Very few possum detections have occurred. The remaining two projects covering 3,944 ha will be completed by the end of March 2015.

Significant possum numbers have been caught in the Tararua Range buffer project. To date 794 possums have been caught in this project, which only covers 272 hectares.

The summer drought has caused delays to Project Aorangi and the remaining area (500ha) to be treated has been rescheduled for May.

Consultation is due to commence shortly on the Eastern Tararua aerial, which covers 11,089 hectares, and control is planned for the 2015/16 year.

Consultation and inspections have commenced on the Aohanga aerial, which covers 3,000 hectares, and control is planned for the 2015/16 year.

## **2.4 Land Management**

### **2.4.1 Forestry Cutting Right**

The Principals Plan relating to Health and Safety of visitors in the forest has been agreed between the various parties and will come into effect by the end of March 2015. PF Olsen is required to submit a report every three months as part of their Health and Safety reporting and auditing responsibilities. GWRC have an ability to carry out an audit and inspection regime at its sole discretion to ensure compliance by all persons in the forests.

### **2.4.2 Akura Conservation Centre**

Demand for native seedlings and poplar and willow poles is again very high and it is anticipated that upwards of 80,000 native plants will be sold.

Plans are underway to celebrate 30 years of activity at the Akura nursery with a public open day prior to the start of the trading in late May 2015. The original Akura nursery was established in 1985 when 20 hectares of land was purchased by the Wairarapa Catchment Board. Prior to this, the Board operated a number of satellite nurseries, largely located on farms scattered throughout the Wairarapa hill country. Since that time, a further 5 hectares of freehold land and 13 hectares of leasehold land have been added.

### **2.4.3 Mangatarere/Otaki Farm Environment Plans**

Work is being finalised on the ten Farm Environment Plans (FEP) being prepared in the Mangatarere catchment (8 plans) and Otaki area (2 plans). Once these are complete, almost every dairy farm within the Mangatarere catchment will have entered into the FEP programme.

FEP work within the Otaki area has involved collaboration with the Biodiversity Department to work with landowners around Key Native Ecosystems (KNE) sites, namely Lake Wairongomai and the Forest Lakes. A number of wetlands and interconnecting drains have been fenced from stock through the FEP programme.

### **2.4.4 Wairarapa Moana**

In the second quarter of 2014/15 project work continues on 51 on farm projects on 42 farms as part of the Wairarapa Moana clean-up project. Work this quarter has focused more on implementation of projects and less project development work as the projected overall budget is on track to be met by the completion date of October 2015.

Highlights for this quarter have been the completion of two constructed wetlands and the commencement of a third, along with numerous riparian and wetland restoration projects. The second quarter spend of \$167K has brought the total project spend to \$600K, of which farmers have contributed 50%. Overall the project has seen 11km of fencing put in place and over 47000 native seedlings.

### **2.4.5 Land Management Field Days**

The Land Management Department have identified a greater need for advice and education around good farm practice, in particular with the changes around regulation of stock exclusion, break feeding and cultivation in the draft Natural Resources Plan. This need is best addressed with groups of farmers in a field

day environment rather than the traditional one-on-one farm plan method of engagement.

Land Management staff held a field day at the farm Matariki in February 2015 as part of the Homewood discussion group. The field day focussed on the effect of winter break feeding on water quality and how, by changing farm practice, great improvement could be made with negligible expense required. Staff have received good levels of positive feedback from attendees.

A field day with local farmers and Environment Policy staff was held in the Whareama Catchment in March 2015. The purpose of the field day was to discuss the draft rules in relation to stock exclusion and break feeding, and to show farmers and staff how the rules would affect farming practice.

A field day is planned to be held in the Mangatarere catchment on 15 April 2015. The theme of the day is grazing of winter crops. This follows on from previous successful field days on effluent storage and soil compaction.

## **2.5 Biodiversity**

### **2.5.1 Key Native Ecosystems**

Kākāriki (yellow-crowned parakeets) have recently been sighted several times in the Porirua Western Forests KNE site. This regionally rare bird is the third self-reintroduction to the site (after bellbirds and whiteheads) since intensive pest control began in 2001 under the KNE programme.

After a year-long stakeholder engagement process, resource consent has now been sought for herbicide spraying into water at the Parangarahu Lakes Area and Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui KNE sites. The work is planned for autumn and will target aquatic weeds in Gollans Wetland and in the Wainuiomata River.

#### **QEII Covenant Support**

The QEII National Trust and the Biodiversity department are both currently developing systems to assess the condition of high value biodiversity sites and the effectiveness of management. The parties have agreed that working together will maximise chances of success in this work and benefit sites where both are involved in management activities. Currently there are 50 QEII covenants within 19 KNE sites.

### **2.5.2 Collaborative Restoration: Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Project**

In early March, project partners hosted Wetland Wonders Discovery Day at Lake Domain, organised by Biodiversity staff. Around 100 members of the public attended this event which featured guest experts speaking about the geological setting of Wairarapa Moana and about kākahi (native freshwater mussels). GWRC and project partners also delivered informal and interactive presentations on a range of wetland features.

### **2.5.3 Collaborative Restoration: Porirua Harbour and Catchment Project**

A successful snorkelling event was held at Whitireia Park as part of celebrating Seaweek 2015. The event was fully booked with around 50 people attending, and feedback from those who took part was universally positive. Discussions on the day focused on the marine biodiversity of the harbour. This event

contributed to GWRC's implementation of the Porirua Harbour and Catchment Strategy and Action Plan as well as the Parks Department's Great Outdoor Summer Events programme.

#### **2.5.4 Seaweeek 2015**

GWRC coordinated Seaweeek 2015 for the Wellington region in late February-early March 2015. A range of public events focused on the marine theme, including coastal and underwater clean-ups, guided coastal walks, training in underwater photography, expert lectures and a range of activities for schools. GWRC promoted the events through print and online media.

### **3. Public Transport**

#### **3.1 Porirua Station Road Renewal**

Construction work started on 2 March 2015 to renew the road surface and kerbing at Station Road in Porirua. While the work is being undertaken the road and bus interchange have been closed and 5 temporary bus stop locations have been created on Lyttelton Avenue. Work on the road is progressing well and no delays to construction or issues with the operations of the temporary bus stops have been reported. In addition, the Metlink Call Centre has received no complaints regarding the works or use of temporary bus stops. The project is expected to be complete by the end of June 2015.

A marketing campaign was launched a number of weeks before the construction commenced, advising the public of the upcoming road closure. Over 1,800 flyers were handed out to passengers going to and from the railway station, and over 150 parking flyers were put on parked cars on Station Road and various parts of Lyttelton Avenue, advising motorists of the reduced parking during the construction phase. Signage was erected on the station platforms and bus station bus stop, advising passengers of the pending closure and a where to locate their services at the temporary bus stops. During the first week of construction, GWRC staff were on site every peak morning and peak evening period to direct passengers to the correct bus stop location.

#### **3.2 Upper Hutt Station replacement**

Work continues at Upper Hutt Station; light poles, drainage and shelter foundations are currently being laid in the southern platform. Tenders for the main station building development have been received and are currently being evaluated.



Fig. 1 New lighting poles being installed due to be switched on later this month



Fig. 2 Foundation cage being installed for new butterfly shelters

### 3.3 Tawa park and ride development

Work is now underway on constructing the extension to the Tawa station park and ride. Once the work is complete in June 2015, an additional 129 free all-day commuter car parks will be available.



Fig.3 Map showing planned new park-and-ride car parks at Tawa Station

### 3.4 Matangi2 project

The first of the new Matangi trains are expected to begin the journey to Wellington by ship in April 2015.



Fig. 4 Production photo: Unit 1 (TC01) preparing for the bogie swing test, February 2015.



Fig. 5 Production photo: Unit 35 carbody, February 2015

### 3.5 Mana and Takapu Road stations

Plans have now been approved to install new shelters at Mana and Takapu Road stations. Removal of the existing shelters will take place over the Easter holidays and the new shelters will be erected as soon as possible afterwards (access and weather permitting).



Figs 6 and 7 Planned new shelters at Mana and Takapu Road stations

### **3.6 Rail services**

Despite a variety of recent network incidents (signalling trips, power outages, damaged points in the yard, and a large tree falling on the overhead and in the path of a train) rail passenger growth (5.5% year-to-date) continues to be strong across all lines, both in the peak (6.0%) and off-peak (5.0%). The 12 month rolling average has now surpassed 12 million passenger journeys.

Noise is still an issue on the Johnsonville Line, which has been made worse recently with the necessary runs of the track inspection machine requiring the switching off of the various noise mitigation measures. Work continues to review the initiatives and investigations to date, and to arrange for the new Matangi trains to be fitted with noise reducing wheel dampers prior to their introduction.

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

### **4.1 Draft Regional Land Transport Plan 2015 consultation**

At its meeting on 2 December 2014, the Regional Transport Committee approved the draft Regional Land Transport Plan 2015 (RLTP) for public consultation and established a subcommittee to consider all submissions.

Consultation ran from 19 January until 20 February 2015 (five weeks).

572 submissions were received on the draft RLTP. The majority of submissions, 475 (83%), came in using a form provided on the Generation Zero website and had a Wellington City centric focus. Formal submissions were received from two territorial authorities in the region (Kāpiti Coast District Council and Wellington City Council), in addition to a submission from Horizons Regional Council and the NZ Transport Agency.

53 submitters appeared in support of their written submission at the hearings on 9 and 10 March.

Following its consideration of submissions, the RLTP Hearings Subcommittee will report its findings and recommended changes to the draft RLTP to the full Regional Transport Committee on 28 April 2015. The final RLTP must be adopted by GWRC and submitted to the NZ Transport Agency by 30 April 2015.

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

No decision is being sought in this report.



## 5.1 Engagement

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

## 6. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

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

Report approved by:

**Wayne O'Donnell**  
General Manager, Catchment  
Management

Report approved by:

**Wayne Hastie**  
General Manager,  
Public Transport

Report approved by:

**Jane Davis**  
General Manager, Strategy  
and Community Engagement